

LONGSDON PARISH COUNCIL.

Minutes of the Longsdon Annual Parish Assembly held on Thursday 28th. May 2009 at The Rez Country Café, Sutherland Road, Longsdon, Staffordshire Moorlands.

Present: Councillors R. Dawson, J. F. Sargeant, C. E. Taylor & S. R. Weston.
Two Members of the Public.

1. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T. Beastall and L. Bills.

2. Minutes of Last Annual Parish Assembly.

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Assembly held on Thursday 8th. May 2008 were read and approved as a true record.

3. Matters Arising.

Chairman R. Dawson thanked all Councillors for their efforts during the year and also expressed thanks to the Clerk for his work.

4. To Receive a Report for the Year 2008 / 2009.

Councillor R. Dawson was elected as Chairman with Councillor T. Beastall as Vice Chairman at the Annual General Meeting of the Council.

One vacancy occurred on the Council when Councillor J. J. Leah left the area. A letter of thanks for his service was sent to him. The vacancy was advertised by Staffs. Moorlands District Council Electoral Office and at the January 2009 meeting of the Council a letter was received from Mrs. Lorna Bills expressing an interest in joining the Council. She was duly co-opted as a Parish Councillor making the number of Councillors complete.

After studying estimates for the next financial year, the Council agreed that due to the current economic climate the precept of £3,500 – 00 would remain unchanged for the coming year.

The Council again gave a grant of £500 – 00 to the Dunwood First Responders Group and again paid for the annual maintenance of St. Chad's Church clock. A grant of £100 – 00 was paid towards the expenses of Olympic local athlete Anna Bebington who had gained a bronze medal in her sport of rowing.

The Council again contributed funds to buy suitable plants for the plant tubs around the village which were again generously maintained by the Kent family voluntarily.

The annual accounts of the Council were this year again checked by the Council's internal auditor and then forwarded to the Commission. They were returned with no adverse comments.

The village lengthsman was employed throughout the year under the two normal schemes. Litter picking took the majority of the time spent. Monies due under the scheme have been claimed from Staffs. County and Staffs. Moorlands District Councils respectively, although the County's scheme was underspent this year.

The ongoing saga with the owner of the pond area in School Lane continues unabated. He wishes to obtain information from the Council's records to which the Council has never refused access. He duly reported the Council to Information Commissioners' Office stating that he had been refused the information in spite of the fact that he had been invited to numerous Council meeting where the information could have been viewed. He has again employed his solicitor in the matter.

A Complaints Officer from the Commissioners' Office is mediating to try and find a solution to the problem of where the information can be viewed and/or copied at a venue which is suitable to both parties. The Council adopted the new Model publication Scheme under the Freedom of Information Act which came into force on 1st. January 2009.

The anomaly over an incorrect planning consent for a site for polytunnels on Leek Road was still being investigated. A conclusion, of sorts, was eventually reached with the owner. The Council continues to comment on planning applications received with comments that two

proposed blocks of stables in parts of the parish were too large. One was reduced in size while the other decision is awaited. The Council's comments have generally been accepted.

The promised donation of 25% towards the cost of the new wooden bus shelter, sited near to the New Inn on the A53, from First Bus PMT was duly received. Perspex panels were fitted to the two windows of the shelter to give more protection against adverse weather. Repairs to the two other shelters were undertaken by both the Council and Staffs. Moorlands District Council. The Council's insurance policy cover was increased to cover the three bus shelters in the parish.

Various items of complaint regarding highway matters were duly submitted to the Clarence service of Staffs. County Council with many being rectified.

A complaint was received about the profusion of the weed Himalayan Balsam on the canal towpath. Information on the subject was obtained and plans are being formulated to remove the weed during the next growing season.

The condition of the canal towpath near Horse Bridge has been improved by British Waterways and repairs have been promised to a damaged bridge in Denford Road. A road closure has been in place while the railway bridge in Sutherland Road was re-constructed.

Information was received of a scheme, Project Carbon, which aimed to give advice to businesses, individuals etc. on energy saving schemes. It was agreed that a workshop be held in the village in the near future.

5. Any Other Business.

There was no business under this item.