

## **LONGSDON PARISH COUNCIL.**

### **Minutes of the Longsdon Annual Parish Assembly held on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup>. May 2014 at St. Chad's Church Room, Leek Road, Longsdon, Staffordshire Moorlands.**

Present: Councillors T. Beastall, L. Bills, R.P.A.Lovell, J. F. Sargeant, C. Taylor & S. R. Weston.

In attendance: John Bourne, Clerk to the Council.

#### 1. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received from District Councillor N. Hawkins.

#### 2. Minutes of Last Annual Parish Assembly.

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Assembly held on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup>. May 2013 were read and approved as a true record.

#### 3. Matters Arising.

The current Chairman, Councillor Sargeant, thanked each Councillor for their good work and time spent in consideration of parishioners throughout the year.

He was pleased to report excellent attendance at the meetings with Councillors achieving 92% of all possible attendances. Once again Councillors Taylor & Weston have been exemplary and missed none.

District Councillor Hawkins has been to nearly a third of our meetings and provided both moral and financial support.

He thanked Councillor Bills for her steadfast support as Vice Chair and her challenging role of both chairing the Longsdon Memorial Hall Management Committee and concurrently acting as our representative. That was not an easy task but she still found time to warm the Church Room for our winter meetings.

He also thanked Councillor Taylor for solid attendance at the Moorlands Parish Assembly on our behalf.

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, John Bourne, has once again exceeded the bounds of his duties. He has not only produced excellent, concise minutes, clear financial statements, accounts and communications on our behalf but he has also given up his own time to provide practical help, not least in securing the bus shelter after its treatment by the recent storms. He thought that both the reduced number of meetings and the new venue have worked well. The Council had saved money and the meetings have become slightly more accessible for the public.

#### 4. To Receive a Report for the Year 2013 / 2014.

Councillor John Sargeant was re-elected as Chairman with Councillor Bills re-elected as Vice Chairman at the Annual General Meeting of the Council.

Councillors Sargeant and Taylor were again elected as representatives on the Staffs. Moorlands Parish Assembly and Councillor Bills was re-appointed as the Council's representative on the Longsdon Memorial Hall Management Committee.

John Bourne, Clerk to the Council, was appointed as the Responsible Financial Officer.

Despite the efforts of Councillors a vacancy on the Council still remains unfilled.

Estimates for the next financial year were prepared and the Council agreed that the current Band D rate should remain unchanged. Information had been received from Staffs. Moorlands District Council setting out guidelines for calculating the precept. The Council, even though it had decided to keep the Band D rate unchanged, would actually receive an increase of approximately £17 – 45 in the precept.

The annual accounts of the Council were submitted to Grant Thornton, the new official auditors, after the usual internal auditor had scrutinised them. The internal auditor commented that the accounts had been kept to a high standard and were in good order. There were no adverse comments from the official auditor although he had asked for a sum of £30 – 00 to be moved from one category to another. Due to the turnover involved there was no charge for the official audit.

The Council's Two Year Bond with Leek United Building Society matured and this was re-invested in a One Year Bond with the same Society.

The Council's Risk Assessment policy was also reviewed.

A favourable quotation for the Council's insurance needs was received from a previous insurance company and this was accepted.

The owners of The Rez, the Council's meeting room, informed the Council that the premises were being sold and could no longer be used for meetings. A letter of thanks for the use of the room was forwarded. An alternative meeting room was arranged at the Church Room at St. Chad's Church, Leek Road, Longsdon.

The Council awarded a grant to Werrington Young Person Support Group in the sum of £25 – 00 and paid the annual maintenance charge for St. Chad's Church clock.

A wreath was again purchased for the Remembrance Day service and the village tubs were again planted for the summer period.

The Council's normal contractor was again employed under the lengthsman schemes of Staffs. County Council and Staffs. Moorlands District Council.

The postal box at the junction of Leek Road and Sutherland Road was stolen together with a number from neighbouring parishes. Representations to Royal Mail have not yet produced a replacement.

The bus shelter on the A53 near to School Lane was blown from its foundations by severe gale force winds. The shelter was righted by a neighbouring landowner and was then secured to its foundation.

Numerous planning applications were commented on, the majority with no objections, but, after representations by neighbouring properties, numerous objections were forwarded in respect of a proposal at Dunwood Hall, Leek Road for a change of use from residential to Mixed Use of Residential & Event Venue & Car Park. This action was taken on two similar planning applications.

A report was also forwarded to the Planning Enforcement Department of Staffs. Moorlands District Council about a possible breach of planning at a property in Sutherland Road. This was also reported by a neighbouring property.

Various items in connection with highways were duly reported to the highway authority and there was also a visit to the parish by the Highways Community Team.

Requested "Unsuitable for Heavy Goods Vehicles" signs were erected in Honeysuckle Lane.

A meeting with Endon Parish Council had taken place regarding the state of the lay-by at Endon which spanned the parishes' boundary. It was agreed to request that the surface be repaired and suitable signs erected. No major transformation has taken place.

A decision was taken to investigate the possibility of providing a defibrillator in the parish.

Information was obtained from the British Heart Foundation and it was agreed to request one to be sited, possibly, at the Memorial Hall.

A presentation was made to the Council by a representative from Churnet Valley Living Landscape Project. This outlined details of the project and the availability for grants etc.

#### 5. Any Other Business.

Mention was made of cars being parked in front of St. Chad's Church in spite of planning permission being refused at an earlier date. This matter would be discussed in the normal Parish Council meeting.