

LONGSDON PARISH COUNCIL.

Minutes of the Longsdon Annual Parish Assembly held on Thursday 14th. May 2015 at St. Chad's Church Room, Leek Road, Longsdon, Staffordshire Moorlands.

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

In attendance: John Bourne, Clerk to the Council.

1. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C. Taylor & District Councillor N. Hawkins.

2. Minutes of Last Annual Parish Assembly.

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Assembly held on Thursday 1st. May 2014 were read and approved as a true record.

3. Matters Arising.

The current Chairman, Councillor Sargeant, congratulated each Councillor on their uncontested re-election as Parish Councillors. He said that he was delighted that once again each of them is prepared to put in the effort needed to try to keep Longsdon as pleasant as it is for everyone but he was also disappointed that no-one else was sufficiently interested in the well being of the village to stand for election as a Councillor.

He thanked all for their excellent attendance at 2014/2015 meetings. Councillors Beastall, Lovell, Taylor and Weston hadn't missed a single meeting.

It had also been a pleasure to have District Councillor Norma Hawkins present at so many of the Parish Council's meetings and congratulated her on her re-election in the Horton Ward by polling four times as many votes as her one opponent.

He thanked Councillor Taylor for his support at the Staffs. Moorlands Parish Assembly and Councillor Bills for being both Vice Chair and the Council's representative on the Memorial Hall Committee which was particularly beneficial in respect of the defibrillator.

Most of all he said how much he had enjoyed the good humour that had greatly enhanced the meetings. So often it had made a potentially dry and lacklustre topic unexpectedly entertaining.

Finally, he gave a big thank you to the Clerk, John Bourne, for excellent minutes, stalwart performance as Responsible Financial Officer and the extra mile that he has always gone in providing practical help, not least in affixing the defibrillator cabinet.

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

Councillor John Sargeant was re-elected as Chairman with Councillor Bills again 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.

The vacancy for a Councillor on the Council still remains unfilled but elections are due in the new year.

Estimates for the coming financial year were prepared together with figures, showing the Council Tax Support grant, from Staffs. Moorlands District Council. Councillors agreed that the precept should be increased by £500 – 00. This was the first rise in the precept since April 2008 and would show an increase of £1 – 94 on the current Band D property parish rate.

The annual accounts of the Council were audited by the usual internal auditor. He had commented that the accounts had been kept to a high standard and were in good order. There were no adverse comments. The accounts were then submitted to Grant Thornton, the official auditors, and were certified with no official comments. There was no charge for the official audit. The Council's One Year Bond with Leek United Building Society matured and this was re-invested in another One Year Bond with the same Society. The Council's Risk Assessment policy was also reviewed. The Council's insurance was renewed with the current insurance company with its quotation being the lesser of two received.

The Council awarded a grant £450 – 00 to St. Chad's Church for work on the clock, belfry etc and also paid the annual maintenance charge for the clock.

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

A defibrillator was purchased from the British Heart Foundation for the sum of £400 – 00 and an external cabinet for the machine was purchased for the sum of £249 – 00. After meetings with the Management Committee of Longsdon Memorial Hall the cabinet and defibrillator were fixed to the front wall of the Memorial Hall. Training sessions would be arranged

A replacement bench seat was purchased for the canal towpath and this was fixed by the Canals & Rivers Trust. A grant towards the project has been approved by the Churnet Valley Living Landscape Project.

The Council's normal contractor was again employed under the lengthsman schemes of Staffs. County Council and Staffs. Moorlands District Council. The total money received from both Council's schemes were obtained and utilised to the full.

The agreed siting of the replacement postal box for the one stolen at the junction of Leek Road and Sutherland Road has been approved by Staffs. County Council Highways Dept. for fixing near to the telephone box in Sutherland Road.

The bus shelter on the A53 near to School Lane was again blown from its foundations by severe gale force winds. The shelter was righted by a neighbouring landowner. Repairs to the shelter opposite to the old New Inn were carried out by Staffs. Moorlands District Council.

Numerous planning applications were commented on, the majority with no objections.

The Planning Enforcement Department of Staffs. Moorlands District Council investigations about a possible breach of planning at a property in Sutherland Road is still ongoing.

It was agreed that minor planning applications should be determined by the Chairman & Clerk but other applications to be distributed to all Councillors as usual.

The Staffs. County Council's Highways Community Team visited the parish on two occasions to complete requested work.

Numerous complaints about the speed of vehicles in the parish were received and reported to the police. It was suggested that a Community Speed Watch team be formed but no volunteers came forward.

Communications had been sent to Staffs. County Council regarding an upgrade to the pedestrian crossing in Leek Road but to date no action has been taken.

Discussions took place on the Staffs. Moorlands Core Strategy regarding the number of houses to be built in the parish. Representations were made to try to reduce the proposed number but the scheme has now been delayed until after the next local Council elections.

5. Any Other Business.

There was no business under this item.