

# COLDWALTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD

ON TUESDAY 25th APRIL 2023 @ 7.30PM

At the SANDHAM MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL

**Those Present:** Cllr G Nelson Chairman  
Cllr J Evans Vice – Chairman  
Cllr C Dennis Cllr O Dudman  
Cllr S Hewer Cllr K Coughtrey

Mrs LD Sherlock-Fuidge Parish Clerk

**Parishioners:** Mr A Hewer

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting

### 1.00 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Lane & Davies

### 2.00 TO APPROVE AS CORRECT THE RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 26th APRIL 2022.

Minutes of the last meeting held on the 26th April 2022, were signed as a true and correct record.

### 3.00 MATTERS ARISING

The dispute about the hedge has been somewhat resolved, however, will not be settled completely without legal advice by the residents.

### 4.00 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Thank you to those who have stood for re-election. There are two residents, from our parish, who are standing in the District Council Elections.

Appreciation was expressed to those who have been active for the Parish over the last year, especially John for his 'The Link' contributions which also summarize

much of the Parish Council's activity, which has included resolving issues over boundaries, appeals over dumping and local car wars; and to the planning 'duo' of Celia and Andy. Thank you also to Andy D for the Jubilee tree.

It has been an interesting time with the closure of the A29 at Church Hill, councillors were disappointed with WSCC over the delays in reopening the road. It had generated a great lack of confidence in the WSCC.

Cllr Nelson highlighted that the Village Plan is due for review in 2024. This would be five years since the last update and ten since we republished the plan. He reminded those present that this is a different document to a Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Coughtrey volunteered to lead this.

Thank you to John and Celia for their sustained efforts over traffic and the A29. Cllr Evans updated those present regarding these traffic items:

- Council will continue to hold WSCC to their commitment to review the status of the A29 through the village.
- Sadly, there is not a functioning Speed Watch group currently working in the village. When the group are ready to start up again, the police will issue body cameras to record the abuse received by volunteers. It was noted that once any surveillance ends, examples of bad driving return as soon as the group leaves the site.
- Various road safety issues were completed: road markings were re painted and two signs have been re-instated at the crossroads at Brook Lane/Waltham Park Road.
- Council have recently put in a bid for £16K funding, on the advice of Chris Patterson, for two Speed Indicator Devices and new speed signs attached to village gates. The bid has been acknowledged. Currently he is in conversation with both WSCC Highways and SDNP with regards to planning and highways permissions, so that the installation need not be delayed.

Locally other Parish Councils are addressing this issue in different ways: Bury PC are attempting to go at this from a different way by applying for pinch points along their stretch of the A29 – which might be difficult as the A29 is designated a trunk road. Fittleworth PC have six positions for two speed cameras and are employing someone to move their cameras about the village. Also, West Chiltington PC are installing speed devices.

- The recent resurfacing in Silverdale area has not been very successful, two inches of new surface has been laid over the road, but this has made the kerbs lower which means that the surface water now runs off into residents' drives.

The recent Boundary Commission review of constituency boundaries, saw this parish due to be joined with the coastal town of Shoreham. The Council campaigned to remain in a more rural parliamentary constituency, which would better reflect our character. With modifications it does seem as if our views were taken on board.

Thanks were expressed to the Parish Clerk for her support to the whole Council. The financial accuracy of the accounts continues to be demonstrated in the audit reports.

Reminder that the Coronation Street Party outside the Labouring Man is on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May, there is no entry fee, and all are welcome.

#### **5.00 REPORT ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRMAN OF ALBAN HEAD PLAYING FIELDS**

The committee continues to work hard, to preserve and protect our precious Alban Head Playing Fields. As Trustees and as local residents we take our custodian role very carefully.

It has been a mixed year, we had a very bad insurance experience, replacing the pavilion roof following storm damage, this cost an unplanned £4K. The committee face something of an issue over the coming years, with the rising costs (including insurance) which we are all aware of. The committee had considerable difficulty setting a balanced budget this year. A quote for much needed repairs to the showers, requires an additional £500. Essentially this is getting harder, with our ageing ground equipment and buildings. As a result, the committee has had to significantly increase the cost of hiring the field to clubs.

Fundraising continues, a fete is planned for the beginning of September, and Matt, our manager, is currently looking at grants to upgrade the grass cutting equipment. Costs are also managed by using volunteers for projects, recently, thanks to Mrs and Mr Charman, the trees round the carpark were cut back for a fraction of the expected cost.

However next year, despite fundraising which is very challenging in terms of time and effort, and all the other actions listed above the committee are going to have to ask for greater funding from the Parish Council.

The field continues to be in good shape and much beloved by its regulars, two recent deaths have led to offers of new benches. Matt, our manager, continues to work hard to bring new users to the facilities and to complete the groundworks with Joe.

The additions to the children’s play area have been welcomed and are increasingly being used, following repairs to the older equipment we received an excellent health and safety report from Fields in Trust.

As with previous years the finances of the Alban Head have been kept in good order by Dona, and we are grateful for all her work on behalf of the playing fields.

The committee continues to meet regularly and comply with the expectations of our community and meets all the requirements of good and effective governorship as laid down by external guidance of the Charity Commission. The committee continues to work closely with the Parish Council.

The Alban Head remains a wonderful asset for our community and we are proud to take good care of it.

#### **6.00 FINANCE REPORT FROM THE PARISH CLERK**

The Clerk to the Parish Council presented the audited accounts for both the Parish Council and the Alban Head Playing Field for the Year 2022-23.

The Parish Council has ended the year with reserves of £7605, which reflects the Parish’s usual level of funding, a small increase on last year. In December 2021, the Parish Council agreed a budget of £16415, a small increase on the previous year, also setting the Precept of £16668. The Parish Council ended the year £400 over budget, increases in the insurance premiums and salary arrears for the clerk.

The Alban Head Committee account balance has decreased to £6410. This is a decrease on last year’s as reserves were used to fund the pavilion roof repairs not fully covered by insurance. The pavilion has been surveyed to reduce this position in the future. The Alban Head took advantage of CIL funding, received in April 2023, to complete essential repairs to the old play equipment in the children’s play area. Over the last two years the Children’s play area has seen over £15,000 investment.

#### **7.00 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No additional items were discussed.

*The meeting closed at 8.35pm.*

Chairman:.....

Date:.....