

COLDWALTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD
ON TUESDAY 27th APRIL 2021 @ 7.30PM
held virtually**

Those Present:	Cllr G Nelson	Chairman
	Cllr J Evans	Vice - Chairman
	Cllr J Bowler	Cllr C Dennis
	Cllr O Dudman	Cllr S Hewer
	Cllr A Hewitt	Cllr A Lane
	Mrs LD Sherlock-Fuidge	Parish Clerk
	D Cllr B Donnelly	District Councillor
	D Cllr D van de Klugt	District Councillor

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting

1.00 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Davies and Angela Scriven

2.00 TO APPROVE AS CORRECT THE RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 23rd APRIL 2019.

Minutes of the last meeting held on the 23rd April 2019, were signed as a true and correct record.

3.00 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4.00 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman's report is attached as Annex A to these minutes.

In addition, the chairman noted his determination to campaign for a lower precept rise next year as the 2.5% was higher, in his view, than the actions of the council justified, especially as the original intention had been to keep it to 2%.

Cllr Evans suggested an official letter of thanks on behalf of the Parish to the Labouring Man in recognition of all their efforts over the past year.

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

The report from the Chairman of the Alban Head Committee is attached as Annex B to these minutes.

6.00 FINANCE

The Clerk to the Parish Council presented the audited accounts for the Parish Council and the Alban Head Playing Field; her financial report is attached as Annex C to these minutes.

7.00 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr Nelson passed on comments he had received prior to the meeting from Mrs Scriven, regarding the new school fence which she thought was out of proportion to the need of the school; however Cllr Nelson had advised that we had nothing to do with the school's decision regarding the design, with all funding

coming from WSCC.

Also, Mrs Scriven noted that a road sign had broken along the A29 before the junction for Old London Road.

Cllr Bowler noted that the caravan along Brook Lane had been removed before returning a few days later. Cllr Nelson advised that it did appear to go and then returned, this time with the help of the police it has gone now.

Cllr Hewer noted that the potholes along Sandy Lane are due to be filled in the next week.

D Cllr Donnelly highlighted the main development issues that might be affect our parish are at Mayfield/Henfield Site and Rockwood golf course on the outskirts of Horsham. Horsham District Council have a duty of co-operation with Crawley and Brighton & Hove councils. The biggest development is to build over 34,000 houses west of Horsham, over the next 10-20 years. Also the proposal to build 4,500 homes at Adversane, but this will take longer to go ahead, as this will involve building a bridge over the railway.

The other more local issue is the parking at Swan Corner, the Pulborough Wardens have been liaising with the two companies operating by the Swan Bridge to ensure that people park responsibly. However, both Swan Bridge and Stopham Bridge will be closed this summer, as they will be covered in scaffolding for repairs, the companies are moving about ten miles to another site for access to the river.

Cllr Evans noted that the numbers of homes built north of the parish, although not built in the parish does affect the parish as those residents' cars don't just go north.

The meeting closed at 8.05pm.

Chairman:.....

Date:.....

DRAFT MINUTES - Not confirmed until the next meeting

APPENDIX A

Chairman's Notes for Annual Parish Meeting April 27th 2021

It has been a very strange year for us all dominated by the Covid-19 Pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns.

Although we have met only virtually, we have been busier in our community than before; running the COVID community hub meant we were more directly involved in many people's lives than ever. In this we were highly successful and a big thank you to all members of the PC who were able to help, especially in the first lock down, with food deliveries, medicines and other contacts. At this point we do not know what the future holds on this issue, but I am confident we will continue to be able to rely upon members of the PC to step forward when needed. We were also helped by other members of the parish and for their time and support we are incredibly grateful.

Despite Covid we have continued to be active in our work as a PC; campaigning on traffic and environmental issues, supporting the Alban Head and other local organisations. We continue to try to respond to resident's requests for help and to improve our village. Our minutes reflect the work we do and actions we take.

It is only a matter of some sadness to repeat my previously made comment (for instance in 2019) that some of those who complain the most are still unable to put themselves forward as members of the PC: this is a continued source of frustration as they would greatly benefit from sharing their views before publication with a genuine cross section of the parish, which we represent. They would then, from the feedback, have more balance and weight behind their opinions.

Planning continues to be a key issue for many in our community (as elsewhere) and we welcome all who come forward with their views on all planning applications. I stated two years ago that we need to put some of the discord caused by planning behind us and I hope the relatively lower level of acrimony over recent applications reflect this.

In 2019 we surveyed the village consulting on our village plan, and I am confident that we are continuing to fulfil the commitments we made to our community, reflecting the issues raised by them during this process.

I am personally grateful that we have successfully re-allocated important roles in the PC and I am grateful for the support of the Vice Chair and Planning lead.

We will sustain our close links with HDC and WSCC and wish to thank Pat Arculus as our County Councillor for her unstinting support for the parish over recent years and wish her well in her political retirement.

Our clerk continues to be a beacon of excellence and support to the whole Council and to me directly. Thank you. Her financial accuracy and tracking have just been fully demonstrated in our audit reports.

Thank you again to all members of the PC for their support over the last year.

Guy Nelson Chairman

APPENDIX B

Alban Head Playing Fields Report April 27th 2021

We continue to work hard, despite adverse conditions and unique external pressures, to preserve and protect our precious Alban Head Playing Fields.

The external demands of the weather have affected the outfield badly and we seem to be suffering consistent extremes of weather, too wet or too dry to make 'working' the field easy. This will need looking at in terms of investment over the next few years. The impact of Covid 19 led to a significant reduction in income and difficulties for our much-valued local sports clubs. And challenges for our regular field maintenance patterns.

Matt, our manager, continues to work hard to bring new users to the facilities, however the restrictions during the year has made this difficult to bring to fruition. Matt continues to also lead a small team doing the grounds work and weekly maintenance.

We are hopeful that the usage of the grounds will return in 2021/22. If there is a return to some form of 'normality' we aim to continue to try to expand the use of the field over the next few years.

One specific issue needs to be highlighted. The playing field was the victim of a crime over the last 18 months where a stile was deliberately vandalised at least six times by people /person determined to destroy things they do not like. This was not opportunist or the actions of people with nothing better to do but an organised campaign by people bringing tools to the site to achieve their aim. The stile has now, at considerable cost, been replaced by a gate. This completely unprecedented event caused us extra work and costs and demonstrates that the beauty of any area does not preserve it from the mindless actions of criminals.

Most of the money received this year is donations for the development of the children's play area. We are incredibly grateful to the fundraising work by Fiona Charman, a committee member and for the donations by members of our community.

Expenditure has also reduced with less usage of the playing fields spending on maintenance is lower. The age of the equipment remains a cause of concern.

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. Our accounts have been externally audited. We always make sure that we gain good value for the money we spend.

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. We continue to work closely with the Parish Council.

The Alban Head remains a wonderful asset for our community and as its custodians we take good care of it.

Guy Nelson Chairman

APPENDIX C

Finance Report for Annual Parish Meeting April 27th 2021

Copies of the audited Receipts & Payments Schedule and Reconciliation for the Parish Council for the end of 2020-21 year were circulated prior to the meeting. The Parish Council has ended the year with reserves of £11634, a significant increase from last year £6489. This increase is mainly due the Alban Head not using all their precept portion, because of the to the COVID pandemic.

In December 2019, the Parish Council agreed a budget of £15871, a very modest 1% increase on the previous year, and setting a Precept of £16180. The Parish Council ended the year saving £500 against the budget which council have donated to the Alban Head Playground development project.

A copy of the audited accounts for the Alban Head Committee has also been circulated. This balance has decreased to £8638. There has been large decrease in revenue owing to the COVID pandemic as most of the sports teams have not played much this season.

This deficit has been reduced by a remarkably successful fundraising campaign by Fiona Charman, a member of the Alban Head Committee, raising money for the development of the children's play area, to provide equipment for younger children.

Dona Sherlock-Fuidge, Clerk to Coldwaltham Parish Council

DRAFT MINUTES - Not confirmed until the next meeting