

COLDWALTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD

ON TUESDAY 23rd APRIL 2024 @ 7.30PM

At the SANDHAM MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL

Those Present:	Cllr G Nelson	Chairman
	Cllr J Evans	Vice – Chairman
	Cllr O Dudman	Cllr C Dennis
	Cllr A Davies	Cllr K Coughtrey
	Cllr I Dregar	
	Mrs LD Sherlock-Fuidge	Parish Clerk
Parishioners:	Simon Berry	Mark Eyre
	Chrissie McGinn	Richard Hewitt
	Chris Glithero	Rosemarie Glithero
	Mike Clenshaw	

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting

1.00 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from D Cllr Ellis Brown and Ken Rowsell

2.00 TO APPROVE AS CORRECT THE RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 25th APRIL 2023.

Minutes of the last meeting held on the 25th April 2023, were signed as a true and correct record.

3.00 MATTERS ARISING

None arising.

4.00 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cllr Nelson thank members for the continued support on the council and also to the many other volunteers who do other things around the village. For all activities that role might take writing letters, emails, campaigning on local issues like Church Hill or the Post Office. A campaign taken up in the past, was the opening of the Permissive Path in Watersfield, which sadly has had to close, as Barlavington Estates have sold the property that the path travelled over.

Cllr Dreger contributed regarding the campaign to reduce vehicle speeds along the A29 though the village, He suggested that speeds are possibly increased as cars enter the village from Pulborough arrive at 60mph but are part way through the village before slowed down to the 30mph. A committee has been formed looking at ways to slow the traffic down, having looked at what Bury PC have managed regarding the reduction of the Speed limit to 40mph.

Chief objectives are: reduce vehicle speeds to comply with the 30 mph limit through our villages; reduce the speed limit between Pulborough and Coldwaltham to 40 mph; properly reinstate and maintain the footway between Watersfield and Pulborough to improve access for cycling and walking along the A29. The aim is to submit a Community Highways Scheme Application (CHSA) to WSCC Highways by the end of July.

Cllr Nelson observed that he had received apologies from Ken Roswell, who had intended to speak, advising that Ken will be standing down as editor, and Fiona Champness is taking this over this role. The Link is now delivered to each household in the village, and feedback had been positive. However, it wasn't certain that income is covering the costs.

5.00 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 2023-24.

The Parish Council has ended the year with reserves of £7661, which reflects the Parish's usual level of funding, and is very similar to the previous year's figure. In December 2022, the Parish Council agreed a budget of £17,454, an increase on the previous year, also setting the Precept of £17,168. The Parish Council ended the year on budget.

The Alban Head Committee account balance has increased to £11,164. This reflects the £4100 donation received from the Village Autumn Fayre.

The Alban Head continues to be a major asset supported by the Parish Council.

7.00 TALK WITH SIMON BERRY, CHAIR OF THE SANDHAM HALL COMMITTEE

Simon Berry introduced himself, having moved to the village in 2018, having run a rural development charity.

Simon explained that the parish of Coldwaltham doesn't really have a village centre, the post office had previously carried out this role until it closed. However, the Sandham Village Hall could take on this role as it is centrally located, has a car park, is close to the school and the church, and has fibre broadband.

If the Post Office returns, this would signal a great opportunity for the Sandham Hall to increase its role as a focus for the village, looking at Fittleworth, and how their post office is centrally situated.

On the subject of the Post Office returning, much campaigning has taken place with the Post Office Ltd (PO Ltd), who have agreed to a proposal to trial open the post office in the Sandham Hall for six months. After initially rejecting this, PO Ltd, offered 2 hours, but before agreeing, they wished to consult with the community. This went out to as many resident's email addresses as were known, Facebook and printed copies in the Sandham Hall and the Labouring Man, already received 97 responses (about 25% of households).

Currently hoping to trial run the post office in the hall on three mornings a week starting from July, with increased signage on the road, to encourage passing traffic too. The Committee intends to build around the re-opening, with a range possibilities being looked at; possibly set up a refill shop, set up an office space utilising the broadband, a coffee shop. With this in mind, the committee's next step is to engage with Champs Hill for use of the surrounding land.

Rosemary Glithero said that the Thursday Coffee Club would welcome the Post Office opening up again.

Residents highlighted that there should be better promotion for events in the village, suggestion that a flyer to the village to highlight the opening date. Chrissie McGinn said that it is often only by chance that the people are aware of things going on, even with the Sandham Hall noticeboard.

Simon concluded that it was important to build on the post office opening three days a week and make those days busy and important in the village. Even if initially, utilising pop-up facilities as a way forward to test the concept.

8.00 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The meeting welcomed the group set up to campaign for improvements to transport and hoped that it will continue beyond July as the issues along the A29 will not go away. Cllr Dreger had heard rumours that Church Hill might remain open to single file traffic, but with a larger footpath for the long-term.

There was an enquiry over the Village Help Scheme which has closed, are there any thoughts regarding this going forward? Simon Berry advised that the equipment used by the scheme was being stored at the Sandham Hall. Rosemarie Glithero mentioned the driver's scheme is still being used. Mike Clenshaw advised that Christine Lindsay runs the Pulborough Community Scheme.

Residents suggested that Coldwaltham should have a representative on 'The Link' management committee, Cllr Nelson welcomed this.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Chairman:.....

Date:.....

These minutes will be signed at the next Annual Parish Meeting in April 2025