



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ASHMANHAUGH **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

held in the Preston Room on Tuesday 14th March 2017 at 7.00pm

Parish councillors present:

Mr A Buxton Mr H Buxton (Chair)
Mr N Coleman Mr A Wiseman

Clerk: Mrs C Male

8 Parishioners were present.

The Chair welcomed all attending and stated that this was not a Parish Council meeting but the Annual Parish Meeting. After the usual reports, parishioners could raise any matters of concern to them or the village.

- 1 To confirm the minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting held on 8th March 2016.**
Minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record and then signed by the Chair.
- 2 Cllr Dixon - District and County Councillor**
Not present.
- 3 PCSO Report for the village.**
Not present.
- 4 Annual Chairman's report - Harry Buxton.**

The Parish Council has met six times, public attendance continued to be sparse, I would like to express the Parish Council's thanks to Cllr Dixon who attended each meeting to advise us of the bigger picture at both District and County level.

Marta Gibbons has resigned from the Council due to pressures of work and there is currently a space for a councillor. If anyone is interested please contact Clare Male the Clerk, or alternatively they can talk to any of the existing Councillors in the first instance.

This year saw a complete restoration of the Village Sign. Thanks to Noel Coleman and Jason Greenberry our Village Blacksmith who both gave up their time towards the project.

A number of planning applications were dealt with and work to improve the Common continued.

Minutes of all meetings are published in the newsletter, on noticeboards, and on the website. Can I take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to Mr N Sharpe for his work on the newsletter, which has come to an end in September of this year and may be resurrected in some form next year.

A balance of £ 6285.32 was brought forward at April 2016. This amount has been slowly increasing to allow us to build a reserve for on-going works.

Parish Council meetings are held on the first Tuesday in May, July, September, November, January and March at 7.00pm in the Preston Rooms. Parishioners are encouraged to attend.



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5 Church Warden report - Anne Mulhall

In this last year 28 services have been held at St. Swithin's including special celebrations at Christmas, Candlemas, Easter, Harvest and Remembrance Sunday. Since last year we have welcomed Rector David and Angela Smith, and we look forward to working with them for many years to come.

Thanks to go out to many who have supported the church over the year. During the inter-regnum Rob Hume, Barbara McGoun, Pauline Simpson and several retired clergy did a fantastic job so we were able to have the normal number of services. As ever organ players are in short supply and the purchase of a hymnal for use across the benefice has been very useful. However, there is nothing like the real thing and so many thanks go to Hazel Flavell and Richard Greenslade who have stepped in for key events. Another thank you must go to Harry Buxton who has remained as fabric officer for us despite stepping down from the PCC. Liam Mulhall has, after 6 years, decided to step down from the PCC and his post as treasurer. Many thanks to him for his service to the PCC. Finally, thanks are due to our team of flower arrangers, church cleaners, and graveyard maintainers who ensure St Swithin is such a lovely church to visit and worship in.

We had two very generous donations this year. One in memory of Jill Sharpe enabled us to purchase cushion seats for every pew in the church. The other involved the construction and installation of new enclosed noticeboards in the church entrance. These were kindly donated by Paul Rowan.

We also managed to secure a grant from the EDP Community Chest Initiative and this enabled us to purchase 6 soft chairs with arms for use at our Preston Rooms events.

Congregations at the major festivals were between 22 and 46, but at our regular services only 6 or 7 attended. This leads me to the issue of finance. In 2016/17 the annual expenses were £9807 and the income £9276 a deficit of £531. In line with Diocesan policy the benefice is moving towards attempting to meet the realistic costs of having an incumbent, thus the costs of running St Swithin and maintaining our services are increasing on an annual basis. I would like to record our heartfelt thanks to both those who actively engage in our fund raising, and the parishioners of this and nearby villages who give so generously at our events. We are dependent on the goodwill of the whole community and those who support us from outside the village, but it is likely that this year will see us continuing to run with an even larger deficit, which will be met from the reserves. Only some of this increase can be met by fundraising and quite honestly I do not believe that we can raise much more by running events. We will not run any coffee mornings in the coming year as they do not appear to be as popular as they once were and the work involved is quite onerous. As in 2016 we will be running the fete in conjunction with the Preston Rooms Committee and we will run our usual Autumn events. The other option to events is to increase giving, and since our congregations are so small this means looking to those who are willing to support the church even if they are not regular attenders. We are investigating setting up a Friends group to help expedite this. The reserves will be able to cover the deficit for approximately five years. Difficult times ahead.

6 Preston Rooms report - Steve Newstead.

Good progress has been made on the fabric of the building with three new heaters being installed. The electricians have also been tested and unfortunately failed, but the fuse board has been upgraded and an RCD installed. All the smaller windows, including the kitchen, have been replaced with double glazed units. The big windows will be replaced at some point in the future.



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An insert has gone into the Horning Reach asking for people to become members of the Preston Rooms which entitles them to a discount on booking and emails on events.

Please note the AGM is on Tuesday 21st March 2017 and please enter the Potato competition for 2017.

7 Cricket Club report.

Anne Wallace, General Secretary, sent her apologies. Harry Buxton said a few words on their behalf. They are undergoing due to changes last season. On the downside the 1st and 2nd teams were relegated and the 3rd team disbanded. However the Sunday team has been promoted and the Juniors did very well especially the under 9's and under 11's. The future of the cricket ground in Ashmanhaugh is of concern to those in the village. ABWCC are putting a package together to improve the Pavilion and the ground, including signage and a list of fixtures. There is a new Director of Youth cricket, Harry Buxton with new nets (30 attended last week) and an ECB sponsored programme. In Senior cricket there are some new players and there will be two teams based at Barton Turf and a Sunday team at Ashmanhaugh.

8 Light Railway report - John Pond.

Has seen an increase in members, now standing at 24 members, and a completely new engine joining the group this year, making 11 in total. This is a new experience as all engines have previously been secondhand. Thanked Hazel from the Preston Rooms for operating a fundraising book stall during open days. Planning permission for the clubroom extension was granted in January and building work has begun. Lots of information about the railway is available on the website. Open days in 2017 are: 7th May, 4th June, 2nd July, 6th August, 3rd September, 1st October from 2pm to 5pm.

9 Poor's Land report - Rachel Buxton

The Board now has a full complement of Trustees. They are Mrs Rachel Buxton (Chair), Ms Sarah Hewitt, Mr William Mulhall, Mr Neal Sharpe and Mr Terry Childerhouse who has now joined the Board. The Board has three regular meetings a year but will call extraordinary meetings if necessary.

The objective of the Trust is

- The relief of poverty
- To improve the quality of life for those residents who have need by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantages.
- The advancement of education.
- The advancement of community development.
- Greater use of community buildings.

The annual return to the Charity Commission has been completed and is available on the website. Currently, the Trust has some £5,000 of uncommitted funds available for grants.

In the current financial year, the Trust is providing a grant to the village hall for heating improvements.

10 Parishioners' Matters.

Comment: Fundraising

Fundraising opportunities are available for local organisations to tap into at Hoveton Hall events. For example spaces are available for stalls at the Country Fair in May. Speak to Rachel or Harry Buxton for more information.

Question: Problems with dog fouling in the village.



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Asked whether some new signs could be put up. Previously discussed dog bins but they were cost prohibitive. To be added to next Parish Council meeting agenda.

Meeting closed at 7.40pm.

Clare Male
Clerk and RFO to the Parish Council
16th March 2017