

TIDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at 7pm on Wednesday 12th April 2017 at Tidenham War Memorial Hall, Coleford Road, Tutshill.

Present: Parish Councillors: Mr J Powell - Chairman, Mr R Birch, Mrs S Bollen, Mr R Duff, Mrs H Molyneux, Mr R O'Toole, plus District Councillor Maria Edwards, County Councillor Patrick Molyneux plus PC Nick Assirati, and 5 members of the public.

Also Present: Mrs C Hinton – Parish Clerk, Mr K Duffin – Admin Assistant

- 1. Apologies:** were received from Councillors N Bullivant, N Evans and S Gregory,
- 2. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on 13th April 2016:** Having given the public time to read the Minutes they were approved and duly signed.
- 3. Matters Arising:** Councillor Birch asked for an update on the state of the roads – K Duffin confirmed that Castleford Hill is not scheduled for repair and that various other potholes throughout the Parish will be dealt with when funds allow.
- 4. Chairman's Report:** Mr Powell welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting. Mr Powell read his Annual Report, which included his report as Chairman of the Planning and Highways Committee and thanked councillors for their hard work and support during the past year for both him and Steve Ford.
- 5. Police Report:** PC Assirati presented his report detailing crime figures in the area. Hazel Evans asked if names are now recorded if assault not serious and PC Assirati confirmed that cyber-bullying is included under 'Harassment'. The figures showed a significant reduction in burglaries which PC Assirati attributes to more foot and mobile day patrols. Cllr Birch asked if the old Wye Bridge closure had reduced crime figures but burglaries have stayed down even after the Bridge reopened. K Duffin asked if burglary with assault was classed as 2 offences which it is not. The report showed that non-dwelling burglaries were up by 3 but these were due to one individual who is now in prison. Cllr Molyneux asked whether figures under 'Harassment' included sexual or racial crimes. PC Assirati stated that this category includes domestic issues and other harassment that created public fear such as name calling (some of which are difficult to categorise). There were 2 racist crimes included in the figures. District Councillor Edwards ask if there were any crimes under section 18 (GBH) – PC Assirati thought not. Cllr Birch commented that District Council reports used to show reductions in staff numbers which would be useful for Parish Council use. Hazel Evans asked for an update on the reported assault on the A48 steps – PC Assirati confirmed that the police were not looking for anybody in connection with this. K Duffin enquired about the rationale for the age ranges for sexual crimes – thought to be based around under13 being pre-pubescent and 16 being age of consent and the physical / mental maturity. PC Assirati reported that overall police numbers are down, efficiency savings having been made but his understanding was that numbers are due to be increased particularly within neighbourhood policing. Liz McBride asked if Special Constables were still used. PC Assirati confirmed that this was the case. There are to be more PCSOs and Special Constables used leaving police to deal with prisoners and other warranted duties. Special Constables tend to be used for Friday and Saturday nights but they do lack expertise. Natalie Lang is due back from maternity leave shortly. Colin Pears thanked PC Assirati for the

encouraging figures. PC Assirati reported that he intends to retire at the end of the year. Cllr Powell requested that a replacement be in place before he leaves. PC Assirati confirmed that he is making a case for this and for more officers in the periphery parts of the County like Tidenham. If the Parish Council wished to consider making representations to the Police he would be willing to advise on this. Liz McBride expressed concern over the rise in cyber-crime / scamming. PC Assirati confirmed that the elderly and vulnerable are more likely to be targeted with cold calls and that such crimes are difficult to investigate. He urged people to spread word of the dangers to those at risk. PC Assirati also reported that thefts from cars are generally from unlocked cars. Cllr Powell thanked PC Assirati for his hard work during the year.

6. Tidenham Parish Council Committee Reports:

Amenities Committee – Councillor Duff, Chairman of Amenities Committee, read his report and thanked members of the committee for their work. Hazel Evans reported that green waste has re-appeared by the bridge at Daneshill (K Duffin will report again). K Duffin also reported that the grass cutting at Tylers Way / Park View will only be cut as a verge by Highways unless there is a visibility issue – the Parish Council only contract to cut grass on its own land. Liz McBride reported that during a recent litter picking session with the Brownies she was pleased that there was not much around. Also that the land by the A48 steps is full of unsightly rubbish – K Duffin reported that it is due to be cleared by specialist operatives in harnesses. Colin Pears commented that the Wyebank Road fitness equipment was not easily accessed by wheelchair, with no lower kerb. K Duffin to look into. Liz McBride and Hazel Evans thanked Councillors for the grants to the Brownies and Historical Group.

Planning, Development Control and Highways Committee – Councillor Powell had included this in his Chairman's report.

7. To Receive Financial Statements from:

Tidenham Parish Council – Councillor Molyneux thanked the Clerk, Admin Assistant and Councillors for their work on the annual accounts. There were no questions about the accounts other than to change one of the dates shown to 2017.

Mopla Cottages – Councillor Bollen reported that most of the work at No.1 had now been completed. Both cottages have been rented for the past year. Cllr Birch asked if there were any further works planned – Cllr Bollen confirmed that there is further work to deal with condensation at No. 1, a new washing machine at No. 1 and cavity wall insulation in the bathrooms at both cottages. Hazel Evans thanked Councillors for the grant to the Historical Group.

8. To Receive Reports from:

Tidenham War Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground Trust - Councillor Molyneux read the report from the Hall Chairman. Hazel Evans offered contact details for Jane Hall who is very good at obtaining grant funding.

Sedbury and Beachley Village Hall Charity – Councillor Bollen gave an overview of her report as acting Chair of the management committee. Colin Pears asked how bookings were in general. Cllr Bollen reported that they have improved – the new disabled toilet and refurbished room helps and there has been interest in booking from outside of the area. The next project for the Hall will be updating the old toilets.

Poor's Allotment Trust – Councillor Molyneux gave an overview of the report as treasurer to Poor's Allotment and the report from Kevin Caster on completed and planned works. A copy of a report from St David's Hospice thanking the Trust for a donation was also available. Colin Pears asked for thanks to be passed to Kevin Caster for his detailed report which Cllr Molyneux will do.

9. Items Submitted by the Public:

There had been no items submitted.

Councillor Birch expressed disappointment at the number of members of the public present. Mrs Pears commented that the meeting was during Holy Week and other may have been attending church events. Cllr Birch is also concerned that the slipway at Beachley, owned by the District Council, should not be sold to private owners but stay in Council ownership.

Councillor Powell expressed disappointment that very few people attended Parish Council and Committee meetings, although they expressed opinions on decisions made after the event.

Patrick Molyneux, attending as County Councillor, confirmed that Jane Hall is an excellent fund raiser. He confirmed that the poor condition of the roads is being worked on. Hazel Evans asked for information on the roads in the area should the Mabey Bridge development go ahead. Cllr P Molyneux confirmed there have been discussions with Monmouthshire CC and the possibility of a Chepstow bypass road around Sedbury is being explored, particularly considering the future closure of Beachley Barracks, but this will be a long time ahead. He has also been looking at improving train services, particularly to Bristol and South Wales. Cllr Powell expressed concern about the preferred route. Hazel Evans asked about the possibility of a new bridge across the Severn, but Cllr P Molyneux stated that traffic models do not show a need for this. He is looking into the possibility with Mabey Bridge though now that Stroud Council are planning big improvements to Sharpness, including M5 access which would lend itself to another bridge to link up with the Forest. Cllr P Molyneux is also pushing for a 2 way toll on the Severn Bridges to help ease traffic flow through the Forest and Parish.

District Councillor Maria Edwards introduced herself as Vice Chairman of the District Planning Committee. She hopes in future to attend more Parish meetings, particularly Planning Committee meetings but will meanwhile be happy to help with planning queries where she can.

The meeting closed at 8.18pm