

# **Minutes of Hopesay Annual Parish Meeting**

**Annual Meeting in Aston on Clun Village Hall, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019, 7.00pm**

The evening started at 7.00pm with refreshments being served, and informal chat and discussions. Residents were encouraged to post ideas, suggestions, and concerns on the several displays provided.

The meeting started at 7.25pm.

**Present:** Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr. R Loynes (Chair), and approx. 25 members of the public, including five parish councillors, and Unitary Councillor David Evans.

**Clerk:** Mrs Meg Gwilliam.

**1. Welcome and Introduction:** The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and introduced the meeting.

**2. Minutes of previous Annual Parish Meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018:** The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

**3. Unitary Councillors Report, and other Community reports:** Unitary Councillor D Evans introduced himself. He reported that Shropshire Council was short of funds and social services were hard pressed. Potholes were another hot topic and Cllr Evans was working hard to get potholes filled despite restrictions on funding. Other items being chased up were parking at the Arbor Tree, and road closures – roads over 3 metres wide now had to be closed for repairs. Place Plans were being updated, and Shropshire Council hoped to raise funds by building and selling houses. Cllr Evans took questions from the floor on potholes, Shrewsbury shopping centre, parking at the Arbor Tree too close to the junction, and road traffic accidents. The Chairman thanked Councillor Evans for all he had done for the parish.

**Aston on Clun Village Hall:** Mr Jeff Else reported that last year's plans to extend using grant funding had not been successful. The Village Hall Trustees still hoped to upgrade the heating and this was ongoing. The hall had been valued recently and would apparently now cost £477,000 to rebuild. The Village Hall Trustees, with a contribution from the Community Shop, had financed the Remembrance Sunday lunch. The Hall's finances were in a good state and the hall is one of the best used in Shropshire. Mr Else took questions from the floor on whether the hall was considered to be too small – answer no, but an extension would make the hall more accessible and adaptable. Thanks were extended to the Village Hall Trustees and helpers for all their hard work.

**Community Shop:** Ms Christine Flitney reported that the shop was in its sixth year and had steady trade. It provided good quality produce to the community using local sources wherever possible. Profit margins were modest, and partly went towards a building fund for a future replacement shop. Other profits went towards the shop run community grants scheme. There are many benefits to the community of having a shop in the village but more volunteers were always needed, some to serve on the management committee and to help with financial management. Thanks were expressed to the shop committee members and volunteers.

**Hopesay Parish Trust:** Mrs Anne Weller spoke about the Trust, which was set up after the closure of Aston village primary school. The Trust gives grants to children and young people up to age 25 within the parish for educational purposes which are not covered by the local authority; such as educational equipment, swimming and dancing lessons.

**Arbor Day:** Mrs Ruth Brassington and Mrs Sandra Spence told the meeting that last year had been a wash out – there was no parade due to the weather. This year's Arbor Day had a "birds" theme and there will be a procession, with stalls, a dog show, and raffle, and music in the village hall with refreshments. There is no longer a committee and volunteers are needed to organise next year and future years. Thanks were expressed to the Arbor Tree Group for organising the Day each year.

**West Mercia Police** had sent a brief report, specifically asking residents to please report rural crimes even though they might feel that there was no point. The more crimes that are reported, the more chance there is of getting better funding to police rural areas. Under-reporting gives a false view of rural crime.

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**4. Financial Report:** The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer Mrs Meg Gwilliam gave a report on the parish council's finances, including total income and payments for the previous year, and funds carried forward. She explained the national guidelines and advice on how much local authorities should keep in reserve and why. A summary sheet of receipts, payments and reserves had been distributed to the meeting.

A member of the public asked why the parish council had not used more CIL Local Fund for one of the projects identified in the 2016 CIL parish consultation. Council had raised the issue of CIL funding for 3 potential projects with Shropshire Council. Eligibility criteria for use of CIL Local Fund may regrettably rule out most parish council projects.

**5. Chairman's Annual Report:** The Chairman gave a report on the past year's activities, including new furniture for Aston Green and green management improvement, assisting members of the public with rights of way matters, dealing with planning issues and enforcements, visibility at junctions, the Aston Post Box consultation, and the WW1 centenary. The Chairman thanked councillors and the Clerk for their efforts.

A member of the public expressed appreciation at the current management of Aston Green. The paths, and the grass cutting, and general appearance were much improved.

**6. Activities for the Year Ahead:** The Parish Council had set up a Working Group to organise the improvements at the Arbor Tree enclosure, including the seating. Some repairs to fencing and rotten timbers were necessary. The Council could only take on one project at a time and this was the project for the next year. There were various options for replacement seating being looked at, and flag supports. It was estimated that there would be between £3000 - £4000 to spend on the area.

The meeting expressed views including a wish to keep the current notice board structure, and to retain the post box in the enclosure.

Other projects for the future included a play area and/or adult exercise area at Aston Green, and speed control measures including speed monitoring signs.

The Chairman then asked for questions and comments from the floor:

## **7. Residents' Questions, matters of concern, suggestions, ideas and comments; and discussion on possible future parish projects:**

Residents joined in a general discussion and various issues were raised, including:

the P3 Group, more parish volunteers were needed to support the work of the group.

Aston Green play area, the meeting expressed a desire for a play area on Aston Green and a willingness for the parish to pay for it. The Parish Council would investigate further. However, a play area would mean a requirement for a dog waste bin. Some residents expressed the view that the parish council consultation questionnaire on the subject had been heavily biased against having a dog waste bin, which had affected the outcome of the parish consultation on the matter.

The meeting was also in favour of tackling speeding in the parish, even though vehicle activated signs cost over £3000.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Signed by Chairman:

Date: