

KINGSTON SEYMOUR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the 124th Annual Meeting of the Parishioners of Kingston Seymour held on
Monday 30th April 2018 at 19.30
In the Kingston Seymour Village Hall

Councillors Present:

Mike Sewell (MS) - Chairman
Peter Harris (PH)

Paul Cox (PC)
Mike Wallis (MW)

Ian Wariner (IW)

In attendance:

Steve Dixon (SD) Clerk & RFO

29 Parishioners

Later: PCSO Rachel Sellars

1. Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed the parishioners and guest speakers and hoped that everyone would find the meeting interesting and informative.

2. Minutes of the 123rd Annual Meeting

It was proposed by Mark Humphries and seconded by IW that the Minutes were a true record of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 4th May 2017.

3. Matters Arising from the 123rd Annual Meeting

MS stated that any relevant areas would be picked up during this meeting.

4. Parish Report

Summarising the activity of the Parish Council over the preceding year, the Chairman noted:

- That the Councillor team of seven had remained in place throughout and that they had worked and supported each other well across the period. The Clerk had settled in.
- That the village gates were currently being enhanced to create a greater visual impact on drivers.
- There had been no increase in the Parish precept for 2018/19.
- That support had continued for the Post Office, Churchyard maintenance and the Village Magazine. In addition, the PC has been funding the Village Hall wi-fi which enables all parishioners to gain cost free access to the internet whilst in the building.
- A new village bench has been purchased and recently installed on the village green.
- The trees that were threatening the War Memorial have been removed and work on the memorial itself is being scheduled for summer 2018.
- Three Heartstart courses were run last year – sponsored by the Parish Council and the Village Hall – to increase knowledge of how to cope in an emergency and to be able to confidently use the defibrillator in case of need. The defibrillator has had its due new battery pack
- The Village website has been visited 3,400 times since it's launch a year ago and the 10 average daily visitors are looking at 2.5 pages per visit. MS asked for new information about village events and news to be passed to the Clerk for inclusion
- Yatton schools had become part of a Multi Academy Trust with Backwell which makes sense for our young people in the near term. However, we are faced with the challenge of a new "free" school being built nearer to us at North End and this could have implications on progression to senior school. There has been an issue about sixth formers paying for a place on the school transport and MS has worked hard to resolve this.
- MS reported that the Parish Council was acutely aware of "*things that are being done to us*" – namely, the Hinkley Point connection, possibly fracking (which is a separate agenda item) and the Cycle Route and Coastal Path – both of which are being progressed – albeit quite slowly. MS advised that the PC was also monitoring the Bristol Airport Expansion and the prospect of "managed motorways" being installed on the M5.

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Delivering the Financial update, SD reported:

- That the figures were currently “unaudited” but that process was underway. There would be a statutory period (11th June to 20th July 2018) when the accounts could be formally examined by members of the public and notice of this would be posted in due course. He would also be happy to answer any questions outside this period.
- That the Council’s financial assets had increased this year by £3,037.81 and stood at £12,542.34 at the end of March 2018.
- All areas of expenditure were in line with expectations with the reserves restored following the exceptional item last year.

Looking to the 2018/19 financial year, SD reported:

- The Council had not increased the Parish precept
- The budget was to be discussed at the next meeting but would include £2700 earmarked for War Memorial restoration work (although a grant to mitigate this is possible) and the possibility of funding an autumn hedge trim to make the village’ roads safer for the winter
- Other items were broadly as in previous years

Moving on to Community presentations, the Chairman introduced Andy Gillam on behalf of the Village Hall and Mark Humphries on behalf of the Friends of All Saints Church.

5. Andy Gillam – Our Village Hall

Key points

- The land and buildings are vested in a charity and a new Management Committee now run all of the day to day activities of the hall
- New chairs have just been delivered for the main hall and new ones for the skittle alley are imminent.
- The bar is being renovated and opened up so that direct access into the main hall is enabled
- Are seeking corporate bookings for day time use of the hall – filling a currently largely unused – period in the day.
- The installation of wi-fi has increased bookings and the introduction of Friday night “pub nights” has enabled the Village Hall to make a profit for the first time in 13 years!
- The Village Hall now has its own website with on line enquiry and booking facilities
- Solar panels will shortly be installed with the aid of grant funding and low energy lighting will follow.
- Working closely with the Friends to stage better events for overall benefit.

6. Mark Humphries – Friends of All Saints Church

Key points

- The Friends are focussed on maintaining the structure of All Saints Church and have taken a leading role in restoring the lead to the roof following the theft in 2017. Mark gave credit to Pete Briscoe and his team for saving £’000s by undertaking the lead replacement work.
- The Friends are working hard to repay all of the loans generously granted by individuals to them to repair the roof.
- Extra events are being organised to help raise these funds and working more closely with the Village Hall should deliver more enjoyable and profitable events.

7. Fracking – Steve Dixon

Key points

- A licence to explore for shale gas has been granted to South Western Energy Limited and will run until July 2021.
- Our area – along with a large area that runs all along the Somerset coast as far as Minehead has been licenced for such exploration.
- Any progress beyond “desktop” analysis and modelling will be subject to planning permissions and other permissions from various authorities
- The Parish Council has contacted the MD of South Western Energy Limited and will do so again in due course.

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- Much information and opinion exists on the internet and parishioners should seek to inform themselves of the possible implications.
- The Parish Council would welcome the views of parishioners on the subject so that the PC may be aware of local opinion in advance of any further specific event.

8. Battle's Over – Mike Sewell

Key points

- The weekend of 9th to 11th November 2018 is to be a celebration of 100 years since the end of the First World War
- A working group of village organisations has created a plan of special events for that weekend
- There is no aim to make money from these events but any surplus will be donated to the Royal British Legion
- The events planned are:
 - Friday 9th – Concert
 - Saturday 10th – Village Wartime History Trail
 - Saturday 10th – Cream Teas in the Church
 - Saturday 10th – Period Dinner in the Village Hall
 - Sunday 11th – Wreath laying & Remembrance. Village decorations
 - Sunday 11th – Bonfire and fireworks on the coast in the evening

9. Open Forum

The following comments were made:

- Fracking; A parishioner stated that the licenced fracking company were close to raising funds to continue to the next stage. There had been a 40% reduction in house prices in affected areas in Lancashire. Many towns and councils are declaring their areas "frack Free" in advance of any permissions being sought. The Forest of Dean has successfully had its licence to explore removed.
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- Traffic Calming; Some parishioners were frustrated that since the APM in 2016, that the situation regarding traffic calming had changed little and the traffic speed through the village was getting higher. The village gates were not considered to be effective in slowing traffic. Concerns were raised as to whether the Parish Council could do more to manage speed in the village particularly in Lampley Road. MS confirmed to the meeting that speed in the village was an ongoing item within the PC and that it would be discussed at the next PC meeting (*to be 16th May - 20.00*) where public attendance and representation of all views is invited.

The Chairman thanked the speakers and everyone for their participation and, there being no other business, the meeting formally closed at 9.00pm.

S C Dixon

Steve Dixon,
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer,
8th May 2018