

# **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting Held on 16th April 2012 At the Village Hall Hoghton**

**PRESENT: -**

**Mr. J. Baldwin Mr. D. Dickinson Mr T. Greenwood, Mr. N. Peter, Mr. J. Proctor, Mr. T. Sharratt, and Ms M Urry, and Mr T. Harkness (Clerk).**

## **1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN.**

Mr. D. Dickinson was appointed Chairman for the Parish Meeting.

## **2. MINUTES OF LAST ANNUAL PARISH MEETING.**

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 18th April 2011 having been previously circulated were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. ANNUAL REVIEW – 2011/12.**

The Chairman presented his annual review of parish activities for 2011/12.

This was the last Annual Review before the election of a new Council in May 2012 he was pleased to say that at the last Parish Council Annual General Meeting in May 2011 I was re - appointed Chairman and Trevor Greenwood was re - appointed Vice Chairman.

He welcomed back Councillor Proctor following his illness.

County Councillor Devaney was County Council representative for the Parish. He had attended several of our meetings and was in regular contact with the Parish Council. He assisted in resolving several issues relating to highway and footpath matters. There had also been visits from County Councillor Otter the Parish Council's Champion at the County Council and District Councillor Ms Hoyle Standards in Public Life Mentor from Chorley Council.

Turning to Parish matters, once again it had been a very busy and challenging year for the Parish Council.

Unfortunately because of the need to budget for election expenses the estimates for 2012/13 showed an increase for the first time in four years.

The Parish Council continued to press for better services for the Parish but it was not easy in the current economic situation.

Members of the Public had attended meetings and raised topics as well as registering their concerns with us. The Parish Council always welcomed members of the public raising issues and was happy to take them forward.

As last year crime in the Parish had not been as big a problem that said the long running problem of speeding traffic persisted. The police did monitor the situation but there did not appear to be any great improvement.

During the year the Police Authority undertook a review of policing in the County in view of the need to make substantial reductions in their expenditure.

In May 2011 they undertook a consultation exercise based on their proposals.

The major issue for the Parish was the possible closure of Wheelton Police Station

The parish Council felt this was a retrograde step because it would lead to a reduction in policing in the Parish.

The Chairman of the Police Authority gave assurances that this would not be the case.

Superintendent Robinson attended the Parish Council meeting in January 2012 to explain the way policing took place would be different from what had been experienced in the past

The Police Community Beat Manager Chris Evans left the post in July 2011 and was not replaced until October however, there was now a new Community Beat Manager PC Mark Etheridge and the area finally had its full complement of Support Officers in Michelle Appleton and Michael Jones. That said these officers would be responsible for a much larger area

The police now attend Parish Council meetings on a more regular basis.

Minor changes had been introduced in that the local police newsletter was no longer published. The police now issue a County wide newsletter.

The PACT meetings continued and there was now a quarterly meeting of the Air Support Unit.

The parish Council continued its membership of the Lancashire Association of Local Councils.

However, a problem had arisen regarding representation of the Chorley Area Three Tier Forum. The County Council would only allow one parish council representative for the whole of Chorley and this had not been welcomed.

Indeed Councillor Sharratt argued that the whole Forum concept was undemocratic.

LALC had also notified the Parish Council of the disbanding of the Audit Commission and the abolition of the Standards Board. They would be send advice on the adoption of a new Code of Conduct.

The Chairman and Councillor Ms Urry attended the Annual Conference at County Hall where the two Parish Council resolutions on Chinese Lanterns and the Eradication of Ragwort were adopted by the Conference.

Councillor Sharratt informed the Parish Council of the subsequent development by the County Council relating to requests to occupiers of County Council owned land not to launch these Lanterns.

He also attended on our behalf the Briefing session on the Revised Parish Council Charter.

So far as Highway and Footpath matters were concerned, gritting was not such a problem this year as the winter was not as severe as in previous years.

The Slow markings were repainted on Gib Lane and United Utilities had dealt with the problem of water draining onto the carriageway.

Potholes which required attention were frequently reported; this situation had been made worse with the bad weather. The parish Council would continue to make sure that potholes were dealt with promptly.

The problem with the public footpath at Finnington Lane was constantly monitored but this issue seemed to be in abeyance as the property where the footpath goes was currently up for sale.

The erection of a Chorley boundary sign at Moulden Brow was raised by Councillor Sharratt well over twelve months ago and still needed to be sorted out.

Councillors Proctor and Sharratt reported the large potholes in Private Road and that the road surface was becoming dangerous, the County Council filled in the potholes and would resurface the road in the next financial year starting in April 2012.

A local resident asked again that a salt bin should be sited on Private Road but as this road was in fact on the list of routes to be gritted a bin would not be provided.

The repair and restoration of the footpaths at Hoghton Bottoms was started in August 2010 and was now complete.

Fly tipping and litter remained a problem and John Peet the Neighbourhood Officer made regular visits to try to keep on top of the situation.

The Probation Service tidied up the footpath by the Parish Church and the Parish Council is looking into providing a more permanent solution.

Turning to Planning Matters the Parish Council had been consulted on planning applications but there were two issues to note. The first was the redevelopment of Stanley Grange though strictly speaking this was in South Ribble it affected the Parish. It was felt that the parish Council should have been consulted by South Ribble and not have to find out about it from local residents.

The parish Council was totally against the proposals and had informed South Ribble. The Vice Chairman (Councillor Greenwood) Councillors Peter and Sharratt attended a public meeting about it but they were not happy with the way it was dealt with.

The other issue was that of Helicopter Flights from Beeston Manor again this premises was in South Ribble but there was concern about the flights over the Parish and the issue was raised with them. The Parish Council received a copy of the planning permission regarding flights and would monitor the situation.

Councillor Peter attended a Planning Workshop on 23rd January on our behalf.

The restoration work at the Pinfold had been completed but other projects would be developed.

Chorley Council donated a bench and it had sited on the Pinfold.

The Parish Council was looking at maintaining the land as well as providing a Story Board detailing the history and the work carried out.

This year is the Diamond Jubilee of the Queen's Accession to the Throne and Councillor Sharratt suggested the occasion be marked by erecting a flagpole so that a flag could fly at appropriate times.

The Pinfold was the best site for this and the parish Council was currently investigating the possibility. The Women's Institute had asked to plant flowers at the War Memorial to commemorate the Jubilee.

The Parish Council had applied for a grant towards the cost of restoring the War Memorial.

The Parish Council attended the Remembrance Day Parade. The occasion was well attended with even larger numbers than in the past.

The Parish Council was aware of the problems facing the Village Hall Management Committee and would continue to give support and assistance wherever possible.

The annual inspection of the notice boards and benches revealed that generally they were in a good condition.

The Parish Council supported organisations with grants towards their costs including the Autumn Club, and the Air Ambulance.

It also continued support to the campaign to re-open the Colne to Skipton Railway Line with the view to strengthening the case for a rail halt in the Parish.

The Chairman referred to being the Parish Council representative on the Chorley Area Committee of LALC and on the LALC County Executive Committee

Councillor Ms Urry was the Parish Council representative on the Chorley Equality Forum and at the Council at the Borough Parish Liaison meetings.

Risk assessments and a Crime and Disorder Audit had been carried out and the Freedom of Information Act implemented.

Finally the Chairman (Councillor Dickinson) concluded his review by thanking everyone in the Parish for the interest they had shown over the past year. He also thanked his Vice Chairman (Councillor Greenwood) the other Members of the Parish Council County Councillor Devaney, the Neighbourhood Officer, and the Clerk for their support since last April.

The Annual Review of Parish Activities during 2011/12 was accepted and the Chairman thanked for his work during the past year.

## **5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT.**

The Clerk submitted a financial statement (circulated) indicating that the precept was £4, 400.00, total deposits of £8487.88 (including the precept) were made in 2011/12 withdrawals amounted to £5417.87 leaving a balance of £3070.01. The Accounts had been audited and a precept of £5000.00 had been set for 2012/13.

The financial statement 2011/12 was accepted.

**There being no further business the Chairman declared the Meeting closed at 8.05 p.m.**

**Signed  
Chairman**

**15TH APRIL 2013**