

EAST HARPTREE PARISH

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 27th APRIL 2017.

Present: Peter King (Chair), Mike Jennings, Andrew Jones, John Darvill, Paul Waldron and thirty two members of the public. Alan Butcher (Parish Clerk) who took the minutes.

Apologies: John and Barbara Fox and Cllr Tim Warren.

Edwin Pope from Admiral Taverns outlined the current situation with The Waldegrave Arms following the demise of the previous tenant. A caretaker was now in place to safeguard the property and plans were afoot to refurbish the property and make improvements to include an upgrade of letting rooms. Offers had been made for the freehold of the pub but these had been refused and Admiral Taverns intended to retain the property as a pub. They were in support of the application to make the building an ACV and would return to the community with plans when available. They hoped to have a new tenant in place during the summer and works would start at the beginning of their financial year.

Minutes of the meeting held on 17th May 2016 were read by the clerk and agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report:

The following report was read out by Peter King:

At the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, the AGM, Peter King was re-elected as chairman with Andrew Jones as vice chairman following Mike Jennings decision to stand down from this position. Councillors expressed thanks to Mike for his service in this role over the years. A further vacancy was filled during the year with the co-option of Richard Coombs onto the council. There is still a vacancy which the Parish Council needs to fill. Alan Butcher continued as clerk during the year.

A total of 27 planning applications were considered during the year being an increase of over 50% on 2015/16. The Parish Council now has to bear the cost of printing plans and other documents for each application which has cost the council approximately £300 in the current year. Two applications, in particular, have taken a great deal of Parish Council time: the proposal for housing on the site of Kielder, Church Lane and for dwellings at Pinkers Farm, Middle Street. Both applications were submitted and then re-submitted and the Parish Council responded in detail in each case but unfortunately both applications were subsequently granted.

In considering planning applications the Parish Council seeks to ensure that matters such as parking, which have a big impact on the narrow roads around the village are properly addressed. The council has also endeavoured to address parking issues in the centre of the village during the year and signs have been erected to deter parking at the bottom of Middle Street where large vehicles can be obstructed by parked cars. Equally, parking in Whitecross Road has been discussed and BANES have been asked to renew the white lines defining driveways and areas where parking can cause obstruction.

The Parish Council monitors parish highways and byways and reports problems and defects to the local authority highways department. As well as potholes, there have been several instances of blocked drains and gullies which cause local flooding. The Parish Sweeping Agreement remains in place and Paul Sperring continues to do an excellent job in this regard. Both the Place Making Plan and The Chew Valley Neighbourhood Plan have been finalised and are now in place. Councillors have worked hard to incorporate East Harptree's requirements into these plans and have attended many meetings in the regard.

The Parish Council set up a photographic competition for local children during the year with a cup and small prize awarded to the winner and with the twelve best photo's being produced as a calendar for sale. Although the sales of the calendar were disappointing the competition continues with the cup being presented at the Flower Show.

The Parish Council has also discussed the provision of broadband to the village and has made representations in this regard and is also developing a strategy for dealing with flooding events in the village. A budget had been included for the refurbishment of the clock which was completed during the year. The council is also supporting the village group preparing an application to register The Waldegrave Arms as an Asset of Community Value.

The website continues to give details of meeting minutes, financial information, councillors interests, etc. and the village email list allows the council to contact parishioners directly about matters of import. The council continues to support the playing field financially and is working with them via the Playground Refurbishment Committee to obtain grants for the refurbishment of the play equipment at the playing field. It has also given a number of smaller grants in support of local organisations. The Parish Council received its requested precept as well as the government subsidy at the start of the year. I would like to thank councillors for their work and assistance during the year.

Peter King.

Any Other Business.

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm