

MINUTES OF PILLING'S ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28th APRIL, 2021 AT 7.00 PM

HELD VIRTUALLY

Present: Councillors; J. Savage, Chairman,
J. Barton
Mrs. E. Cookson,
N. Cookson,
G. Curwen,
P. M^cWhirter
Gillian Benson, Clerk to the Parish Council

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were sent from Cllr. E. Moorat and Cllr S. Phillpotts and Wyre Cllr. G. Holden.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting, held on 10th April, 2019, having been circulated were agreed and signed as a true record. Meeting was postponed from 2019; due to the pandemic

Resolved; The Chairman signed the minutes.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters raised from the minutes.

4. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN

Last year when the pandemic spread across the world, we little suspected that twelve months later it would still be affecting us. However, life has to go on. We are told that communities thrive when people get involved, give up their time and come together to take action on the issues that they care about. It is possible to respond to adversity both negatively and positively. We are fortunate that in our community we have many people of the latter category, people who have put themselves out to serve the village. In particular I would wish to mention Ken and Anne Whiteside and the staff at Stakepool Stores. They have performed sterling service by keeping the business open and delivering orders to people unable to leave their homes and we thank them.

In Pilling Parish Council, our relevance as the first tier of local government rests firmly on our supporting and improving our community and being at the heart of local place shaping. We should rightly be ambitious for our people and places and indeed we are. As the first tier of government our uniqueness is the local knowledge of people and places, representing streets, neighbourhoods and the whole village.

As such we are concerned about the development of our village, taking note of plans for new buildings and while we would wish to encourage expansion and the creation of new businesses, we have to take into consideration the effect these may have on existing properties. The development on the former Tayban site on Garstang Road caused a number of problems for nearby residents, but meaningful interventions have brought about a solution to these difficulties. While we work as a team, there are times when it is appropriate for individual councillors to take the lead and I would like to pay tribute to Councillor Phillpotts and Councillor Cookson who have worked tirelessly to bring about this conclusion.

New buildings bring new pressures on the infrastructure of the village; this has been shown in the continuation of the difficulties with the sewage pipes on Taylors Lane. While longstanding work has finished, problems are already recurring. The work has not produced a permanent solution. Indeed the sewage system throughout the parish is feeling the effects of expansion and like a lot of work that is needed in the village it suffers from a lack of investment due to a shortage of funds.

The flood action group has continued to develop and to provide vital aid whenever flooding is imminent. In the present economic situation it is vital that landowners play their part by keeping dykes clear.

The Parish Council keeps an eye on a variety of situations within the village from ambulance response times, which have been a cause of concern, to the difficulties brought about by the closure of the two public houses in the parish. To increase the safety of parishioners bollards have been installed in front of the bus shelter on Lancaster Road. While much of the village life during the past twelve months has of necessity been put on hold, we were at least able to hold the Remembrance Sunday service, so important in the 75th year since VE Day and VJ Day. It is hoped that a suitable commemoration can take place during this year.

During all the upheaval, one thing that has changed is the new village hall which is now complete. It is my hope that it will provide a focus for bringing people together and out of the pandemic, leading the way to a new community spirit and sense of involvement. Where local councils work well, this is in no small part due to relationships and partnerships; good positive relations both in and out of councils are the key to delivering for our communities. In our parish council we are fortunate in having a group of people who possess the ability to do this and with a common aim in improving the lot of our parishioners. We welcome Alf Whiteside who has recently been co-opted and hope that he will enjoy serving on the council.

The pandemic has created many problems, but to quote the anthropologist Margaret Mead, 'never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.'

We may not seek to change the world, but we do seek to stand up for those who live in Pilling and to improve life for them. In this I am aided by my fellow councillors, our lengthsman Stan and our clerk Gillian, and to them I extend my thanks.

John Savage
Chairman, Pilling Parish Council.
Resolved: The report was accepted.

5. REPORT FROM THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

Carried forward:		Year end:
Nat West:	£6,643.41	£5,571.46
Furness Building Society:	<u>£52,584.73</u>	<u>£23,781.99</u>
	£59,162.28	£29,353.45

The precept was set £70,000 in 2020 – 2021; raised in line with inflation and to build funds for on-going projects including a water pump for the sea embankment, defibrillator

maintenance and reserves. This year saw the impact of Covid 19 with lockdown and the suspension of Parish Council meetings and surgeries.

The Parish Council has always supported Pilling Village Hall when the committee appealed for a loan of £49,000 to complete construction work. This follows £20,000 donated in 2018. The hall is ready, but Covid restrictions need lifting before opening. The loan impacted on Reserves and will be recouped through the precept over five years.

Pilling in Bloom; despite curtailed residents involvement Stan single handily planted all the floral displays and Broadfleet Sensory Garden and received sponsorship. The Parish Council is rightly proud of his diligence in the parish.

The Parish Council received grants; from the Moons Trust used towards the defibrillator and case at the new Village Hall and Grantscape towards the defibrillator and ANPR on England Hill. A number of donations have provided seats.

After tracking down the new owners to Cherry Tree Close Grass cutting contracts have been settled and County doubled its Parish Lengthsman payment.

Employee costs have increased slightly as the Parish Lengthsman pay scale was increased. The Parish Council purchased a defibrillator and case and five replacement batteries with pads; and the replacement bus shelter at the Elletsons Arms, which with the addition of two bollards, will hopefully not be damaged again!!

Covid has curtailed many of the Parish Council's projects; Senior Citizens' Christmas Party cancelled; no newsletter, VE Day abandoned and no training.

Gillian Benson,
Responsible Financial Officer, Pilling Parish Council
Resolved: The report was accepted.

6. REPORTS

Lancashire County Councillor Salter

Concern was expressed at the lack of attendance of the councillor, who has not attended a Parish Council meeting for many months.

Wyre Councillor Holden

The councillor reported he is dealing with concerns of access and dogs on Pilling embankment. It was suggested Councillors will revisit the signs to ensure they are valid and correctly worded. What chance of success would prosecution by the Environment Agency have? There has been an increase in dog nuisance incidents with more people at home due to the Covid impact.

The Parish Council will need to discuss with the Environment Agency; being the landowners of the embankment. The Parish Council insisted on this ownership when the embankment was built in 1982.

Pilling in Bloom

The Parish Lengthsman has confirmed with Wyre Council that North West in Bloom and Best Kept Village Competitions are going ahead this year; starting in early July. Wyre in assuring Bloomers the funding will be the same this year. Improvements have been made

to the planting bed at the mill, replacing the shrubs and setting up two root shredders, which will be added to with bedding plants. The bank in front of the treatment works on Back Sands Lane was sown with wild flower seeds and a planter installed. Once completed a bench will be placed behind it on top of the bank, donated in memory of Howard and Harvey Whiteside, which had been at the Golden Ball.

The Best Kept Village Competition will start judging on 1st June, but litter pickers are needed on some roads each week to ensure the village is kept up to standard.

Carter’s Charity

Cllr. Mrs. E. Cookson reported Carter’s Charity Trust is to be wound up. With last year’s grant to St. John’s School the balance left is £100 and this will be given to the school.

Pilling Village Hall

Cllr. P. McWhirter reported the new Pilling Village Hall construction is completed, including a disable lift to the stage. The surrounding area has been landscaped and seeded. The committee is planning for a soft opening on the weekend of 5th and 6th June; to allow visitors to drop by. Local organisations are attending with displays.

8. MATTERS RAISED BY RESIDENTS

There were no residents attending.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.35p.m.

Date

Chairman

***The next annual meeting of the Parish Council will be held on
Wednesday, 13th April, 2022.***