

Minutes for Stockton on Teme Parish EGM

Held on Monday 12th June 2023 at 6.30pm in St Andrew's Church

Attendees

Kate Oakley – Chair
Lexie Taylor – Clerk
Pete Taylor
Michael Oakley
Bill & Sally Webb
Margaret Danby
Andy Haylar
Brian Marsh
Alison Tidmarsh
Jules Lever
Susan Dufton
Russell Willis

Guests

Stu Mees (Chair of Pensax)
Nancy Gould (Pensax Parish Councillor)
Peter Clarke (PCC, FoSA) Andrews)

Apologies

Mick & Jo Aldred
Fran Kellett

1. **Apologies and welcome** - the chair called the meeting to order, welcomed all those attending and gave apologies on behalf of those unable to attend. The chair also welcomed our guests Stu and Nancy from Pensax Parish Council and Peter Clarke (Honorary Treasurer of Teme Valley North PCC and Treasurer of The Friends of St Andrew's).
2. **Approval of Minutes** - it was agreed that the minutes from the previous AGM held on 12th March 2023 were a true reflection of matters discussed. Proposed by Pete Taylor and seconded by Sally Webb. The minutes were duly signed by the chair Kate Oakley, Pete and Sally.
3. **Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/2023** – the clerk has completed this year's Agar report; an internal audit has been carried out by Bill Webb. The total gross income for 2022/2023 is £1309 (which includes a donation from the Marquee Fund), the total annual gross expenditure is £482 which includes the premiums for the Lengthsman's Insurance and the Lengthsman's (Chris Bunn) first invoice for works completed. It was suggested that we also include a statement explaining where the additional income has come from. The clerk will prepare the statement. The Agar report was agreed and duly signed by the chair and clerk. The signed Agar report and statement will be uploaded to the parish website as agreed.

N.B Annual reports and minutes are available to view on the following Parish website:
e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish

4. **Lengthsman Scheme** – the chair gave an update on the Lengthsman role and also the new PROW scheme: Our Lengthsman Chris Bunn has been issued with a new contract from May 2023 – end of April 2024. Our revised budget is £2,080.89p, and the chair has instructed Chris to work within this. The money is earmarked for us by WCC Highways; we pay Chris from Parish funds when he submits his time sheets, and claim the money back from WCC. New for 2023-4 is a PROW scheme, which has a small, separate budget to pay a Lengthsman for any work he may deem necessary to implement, to ensure access to Public Rights of Way.

5. **Items arising from previous meeting:**

- a. **Coronation** - the chair thanked all those who contributed to our two fantastic Coronation Events: the New House Farm party on the Saturday, kindly hosted by Paul and Hazel Marsh, was a huge success, despite the pouring rain. It brought together different elements of our community, and fun was had by all in spite of the gentle rain that fell that day. The chair was particularly impressed by the food table – neighbours all brought lovely picnic things to share, and this really illustrated just what we can achieve as a community. The cake table was magnificent! About 60 people came. The next day a tea party was held on the Rectory lawn, following a service in the village church, and this was attended by 38 people.
- b. **Speeding traffic** - this is a perennial concern: communication from Robert Haynes re speeding traffic on Stockton Lane – Robert has visited the area with his County Council Highways colleague and consideration will be given to placing SLOW road markings, as well as ‘pedestrians in road ahead’ signs which have been installed this week, on either side of the bend. Robert has advised that regarding 20mph speed limits or any reduction in speed limit, certain criteria must be met and any request must be sent to Worcestershire County Council to assess. A suggestion was also made regarding ‘20 is plenty’ wheelie bin stickers. Although there was initial opposition to the stickers believing that they are ineffective, those in attendance subsequently agreed to try them, as well as agreeing to Stockton applying for a 20mph speed limit. The chair will follow this up with WCC as well as continuing to compile a list of haulage companies who use the A443 and writing to these companies to request that their wagons are driven slowly through Stockton. Other suggestions raised were to propose a By-pass around Stockton and digital speed signs. It was also stressed that it is vital for all accidents/damage to property to be reported to ensure that there is a full record of incidents.
- c. **Defibrillator** – there is an offer from Pensax Parish Council to provide a defibrillator in Stockton, funded by proceeds from the sale of Pensax Parish Hall. The chair has asked Richard Powell if the defibrillator could be mounted on the wall of Stockton Court Farm; he is very supportive, and has obtained permission from Ian, the actual owner, for this. Stu Meese, Chair of Pensax Parish Council, has provided a fully costed plan for us, including training in how to use it. He reiterated that the fund is able to provide capital expenditure for the purchase but not maintenance, which would be the responsibility of Stockton Parish. An estimated annual budget of £100 to cover replacement pads and battery was suggested by Stu. This could be funded by Stockton Parish funds, in line with increase to the precept that we agreed at the AGM in March. A vote was taken and it was unanimously agreed to go ahead with the defibrillator.

6. **Development Plan** – Nancy Gould from Pensax was introduced and asked if we would be interested in joining with Pensax Parish Council in commissioning a Development Plan, to be funded by a grant from MHDC (a quick decision is needed, because the window of opportunity to apply for grant funding is soon to open and is short). Nancy said they have been working with a professional planning advisor, with a view to creating a Development Plan. In essence, this is a document which identifies a village's natural assets, its unique character, matters of architectural styles, history and heritage, conservation, bio-diversity and features of the landscape that need to be protected – eg areas of outstanding natural beauty. Ultimately it produces a set of working parameters reflecting the needs and wishes of the community, which will inform future planning decisions, when applications are made. It would seek to make things clearer for people considering planning applications, and perhaps make things less random, and less personal, once decisions are made. A “gold standard” example of such a Development Plan is the one commissioned for Abberley back in 2014, and which governs the new build developments springing up in that much bigger village. Ours would NOT be anything like as extensive – for one thing we are designated as “OPEN COUNTRY” and are protected from building developments, mainly because the lack of transport links, shops, schools mean we are not suitable. But domestic extensions, change of use applications, and proposals for new agricultural facilities do occasionally come up; this is where a village Development Plan would come into play. Nancy elaborated on the scheme and explained that joining with Pensax in commissioning a Development Plan will still preserve the integrity of separate parishes, and will involve public consultation and a referendum. After Nancy's clarification a vote was taken with a unanimous agreement to join with Pensax, with Alison Tidmarsh volunteering to join Kate Oakley on a working party to explore this project.
7. **Bus shelter proposal** – a bus shelter for corner of A443 and Pensax Lane has been proposed which is another of the short list ideas that came out of the consultation process for how to use funds from the sale of Pensax Village Hall: It is proposed to provide a safe bus shelter for bus users in Stockton and Pensax. To have any chance of making this actually happen we need to come up with a fully costed plan. The chair has approached Fran Kellett, who lives opposite, for help with this. Fran is happy to make more enquiries and request some quotes. Initial objections were raised as it is not seen to be a busy bus stop and is under-utilised. Then however, it was agreed that costs could be obtained and further discussions are to take place regarding a second bus shelter on the A443 and the matter will be reviewed at the next AGM.
8. **Friends of St Andrew's News** - Peter Clarke was introduced and he explained that to have access to grants for upkeep and improvements to St Andrew's church we had to demonstrate an interest in using and taking care of the building. Since the initiative was raised in September 2022 the Friends of St Andrew's group has been created with 23 members and a core team of 12. Since its inception there have been three church services with social events and £300 has been raised. Peter is the treasurer and the PCC is helping to fund events and support us. Villagers have arranged a tidy up of the church grounds, an architect has been instructed to review the building and surrounding area, a need for remedial electrical work has been identified and also a tree survey has taken place. We have just agreed to a five year contract to test the lightning conductor on the church roof, only to realise that we don't have a conductor, this is now a priority. The PCC is planning to install electrical time locks on the church doors, to automatically lock at night, so that the building complies with insurance regulations. Last Saturday we held our first coffee morning in the grounds of the church,

other will be held monthly during the Summer months, and there is another Friends meeting on Tuesday 13th June.

9. **AOB** - the chair shared that Sarah Pepperell, in conversation with Sally Webb, has offered the use of Stockton House garden as the venue for a village fete in Summer 2024. The Friends of St Andrew's would be very interested in providing support, manpower and contributions. Peter Clarke suggested a combined Parish/Friends event, sharing the profits 50/50. This was agreed unanimously and the chair will have further talks with Sarah, to see if she is in agreement and to begin making plans.

No other points were raised and the chair brought the meeting to a close at 8pm

Minutes proposed by

Seconded by

Approved by Parish Chair Date.....