

Berrow Parish Annual Meeting

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 16th May 2017 at 7.30 pm at Berrow & Pendock Village Hall.

Present: 7 Members of the Parish and the Clerk

The meeting commenced with a prayer in memory of Richard Fellows and thoughts and condolences to his family.

- 1. Apologies:** There were no apologies for absence.
- 2. Minutes:** The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 18th May 2016 were confirmed as correct and signed by the Chairman of the meeting.
- 3. Vice-Chairman's Report:** Firstly I have to report the sad loss of our Chairman Richard Fellows, who passed away quite suddenly last month after a short illness. Our condolences go to Pauline, Simon and Sarah and all his family. Richard was a parish councillor since 1976 and Chairman for over 16 years. He served the Parish in its best interests, very rarely missing a meeting and will be sadly missed. A letter of condolence has been sent to Pauline on behalf of the Parish Council.

We have also lost Geoff Shail as due to ill health, he was unable to attend some of the meetings this year - unfortunately we therefore have had to implement the "failure to attend a meeting in a six month period" rule. The clerk has sent Geoff a letter about this. Geoff served on the Council since 1979 and we valued his local knowledge. We wish him and his family well and look forward to his return to the Parish Council in due course if his health should permit.

Onto better news - The financial standing of the Parish council was such that in June 2016 we were in a position to repay in full the loan taken out with Pendock Parish Council to help pay the legal fees relating to the renewal of the lease of the village hall.

The Chairman attended a Malvern Hills District Council meeting earlier in the year where they considered the adoption of the Tree Preservation Order on Dingle Hill and with the help of his re-iteration of the parish Council's views was able to help with the lifting of the order.

Two telephone boxes in the parish are to be removed by BT because of NIL use and it was agreed that the one at Sledge Green (being of the classic red design) was worth adopting. We are awaiting confirmation that it is ours to do as we like with.

Contractors started work on the two motorway bridges in January this year, this has created a considerable amount of disruption in the Parish with more traffic than usual having to use the B4208 and driving considerably faster to make up time for the diversion. Also Netherley Lane suffered with its margins falling away as it is being used as a cut through. Whiting Lane is also experiencing a higher volume of traffic passing through. Councillor Tom Wells from Worcester has managed to get a number of signs in place to discourage much of the traffic which has made a small difference but the saving grace has been the very dry period allowing much of the verges to harden off. Pendock Stores has suffered a serious fall in their takings due to the decline in passing trade and it is understood the County Council and Cllr. Tom Wells have placed strategic signs on the highways in the hope of encouraging more trade again.

In May last year the clerk renewed the Lengthsman's contract with the Highways and Mr. Moore for the coming year and this work continues to be of benefit to the council and the community.

Finally I would like to thank everyone for their contributions this year and also to thank our clerk Judy, for all her hard work.

- 4. Statement of Accounts:** The Finance Officer presented the Statement of Accounts for the year to 31st March 2017 which showed a deficit in cash flow of £334.25 as the Parish Council had been able to repay in full the loan to Pendock Parish Council . Receipts were solely the precept of £1750 and expenditure was in line with budget at £2074. This left a healthy bank balance of £1,753.09.
- 5. Berrow & Pendock Village Hall Report:** Unfortunately through the year we have seen a down turn in regular users, no Yoga and similar activities but a turn-around in other hire which has doubled in turnover. Hopefully this is due to the refurbished toilets and the result is that for the first time in many years the village hall has made a surplus of just under a £1000.

We had hoped to get some repairs done on the roof, but finding someone to do the work has been impossible, I will have another attempt this summer if I can find the time to chase. The bank balance is now sitting at a healthy £5,200 and I would like to keep a general reserve fund at no less that £4000.

During the winter we had a series of three lectures – if anyone would like to see a similar programme of events next winter please get in touch with ideas and suggestions.

Di shail has continued to manage the bookings, and everyone greatly appreciates the work she does especially under present circumstances and wishes Geof a speedy recovery.

- 6. Berrow Charities Report:** Following two meetings of the Trustees it was decided that there were sufficient funds to consider a distribution by way of donating a defibrillator to the parish. It was agreed that by donating the funds to the Parish Council they would be in a better position to purchase, install and maintain the equipment. There was £1,516.93 in the bank at 31st March 2017 and the annual income would be easily sufficient for maintenance of the equipment.

7. Any Other Business:

- i. Mike Thomas raised the issue of the compulsory retirement of Geof Shail from the Parish Council. The Clerk referred to the Local Government Act 1972 which requires that any Councillor who fails to attend a meeting for six months must retire. It was however hoped that Geof would make a recovery and be able to return to the council in due course.
- ii. The Rev. James was in a position to perhaps find someone prepared to look at roof repairs on the Village Hall. The clerk agreed to send her the job specification in the hope that something could be done.

The meeting closed at 8:00 pm.