

## **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in Potterne Village Hall on Wednesday 9 May 2018**

**Welcome and apologies:** Councillor Peter Balls, Chairman of Potterne Parish Council welcomed Councillors and members of the village to their Annual Parish Meeting.

**Apologies had been received from:** Councillors Carol Clifford and Robert Hunt-Grubbe, and Revd. Ali Bridewell, St Mary's Church.

There were 33 attendees.

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 26 April 2017:** It was proposed by John Chandler, seconded by Andrew Huntley and agreed that the minutes were signed as an accurate record.

**Matters arising:** There were no matter arising from the previous meeting.

**Report of the Chairman of the Parish Council:** Councillor Peter Balls explained the purpose of the Annual Parish Meeting. It is a meeting of all local government electors for the Parish. It is NOT a meeting of the Parish Council.

He introduced himself and said he was elected chairman of the new council, made up of seven previous Councillors and four new Councillors.in May 2017. He was humbled to succeed Clive Hoddinott as chairman and would want to thank him again for his eye-catching 34 years as Chairman. He is thankful to Councillor John Chandler as Vice Chairman and delighted with Liz Starling as the new Clerk. The Parish Council is dependent on a good link to Wiltshire Council and relies on its unitary councillor, Anna Cuthbert to liaise between the two.

The Parish Council currently has about £40,000 in the account – of which £25,000 is in contingency for the Church Wall. Much of the annual expenditure is tied into maintenance, insurance and the Clerk's wages, with a comparatively small discretionary spend. An increase in Precept was requested for 2018/19 with a view to delivering the village's aspirations that fell from the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Council priorities have been to make decisions taken in the interest of the village as a whole and to try to be more proactive – there is a need to see progress. The mandate has been the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan and especially its Community Aspirations (Appendix C). These aspirations came from the village survey that was carried out.

**Report from PCSO Georgina Dodd (brought forward as PCSO Dodd had another meeting to attend):** PCSO Dodd said that she often drives through Potterne and does try to stop and walk around the village or will drive around. Residents said they would welcome a visible police presence in the village.

**Reports from members of the Parish Council:** Each individual councillor has taken on a 'workstream' or responsibility based on the Community Aspirations from the Neighbourhood Plan and they gave a short summary of what they have done to date and plan to do in the future.

- Road Safety, Vehicle Parking and Public Transport (Whole Council) – Cllr Balls reporting:
  - Wiltshire Council looking to open up a railway station for Devizes at Lydneyway.

- Parish Council have been campaigning for crossing points along the A360 at Ryeleaze steps and from the George and Dragon across to Blounts Court. Wiltshire Council have now agreed that informal crossings can be put in place.
  - Wiltshire Council have recently carried out a consultation on proposed parking restrictions in the village. It is proposed to make the junction of High Street and Court Hill 'no parking at any time' (double yellow lines), also the same for the bend of Whistley Road by the pump. Parking is one of the biggest issues in the village – there is not enough space available.
  - The Parish Council are looking to put a proposal to Wiltshire Council for the installation of village gates on the approaches to the village, also 20mph limits on Potterne Wick, Court Hill and Whistley Road. The Parish Council will be contributing towards the costs of whatever is agreed.
- Leisure Facilities, Appearance and the Environment (Councillors John Chandler/Andrew Huntley) – Cllr Chandler reporting:
- Two main issues are litter and dog mess, both of which are very anti-social. In it's management of the three main areas affected, Ryeleaze field, Blounts Court field and the cemetery, the Parish Council have purchased additional litter bins and carry out occasional litter picks. Please can dog walkers ensure that they pick up after their dogs and 'bag it and bin it'. We have a pleasant village but it takes work to keep it good.
  - Wiltshire Council's Parish Steward carries out non-discretionary works on the highway for one day a month but is occasionally taken away to help with pot holes and weed spraying in the county.
  - Ryeleaze Field – looking at ways to improve this amenity, new fencing to be put in place, pitch to be improved, possible purchase of play equipment. We have also changed our grounds maintenance contractors.
- Residential Development (Councillors Richard Clark/Robert Hunt-Grubbe) – Cllr Clark reporting
- All planning decisions are made by Wiltshire Council; the Parish Council are consulted for their view on applications within the parish boundary. Parish councillors visit each site, gauge the reaction of neighbours, liaise with the relevant WC case officer before reporting back to full council and making a decision. If it conflicts with the Neighbourhood plan, we will object however we do try to act reasonably. Since last May we have had 32 applications referred to us; most were straightforward but 9 needed more time spent on them in order to report fully and fairly back to the Parish Council. Of these 9, one was supported but with certain condition (WC agreed with the Parish Council and granted permission with those same conditions attached); the other 8 were refused for various good reasons (WC refused all but 2 of them which they allowed with conditions).
  - Due to the widespread support for the Neighbourhood Plan from the village it means that villagers and the Parish Council are on the same side so far as planning matters are concerned. There have been cases of building works etc being carried out without the necessary permission and the Parish Council can't do anything unless we know about it. It would be helpful if the council were informed (through the Clerk or direct to Cllr Clark), anonymously if need be, so it could be investigated before it is too late.
- Community and Learning (Councillors Nesta Pudney/Carol Clifford) – Cllr Pudney reporting:
- Commemorative tree planting – Cllr Clifford is leading on this Wiltshire Council project. The idea is to plant a tree for everyone in the village who died in WWI. The location will be Blounts Court Hill and thanks go to Robert Hunt-Grubbe for giving the Parish Council permission to plant there.

- Cllr Pudney liaises with the school on various matters.
- Commercial Development (Councillors Richard Clark/Chris Twiney) – Cllr Clark reporting:
  - The Parish Council continue to push for the roll-out of high speed broadband to the whole of the village – some have it, some don't.
  - Councillor Twiney is trying to produce a business directory of local traders.
- Footpaths and Cycle Ways (Councillors Rob Edwards/Philip Abbatt) – Cllr Edwards reporting:
  - Potterne has some terrific footpaths and bridleways; in answering the question, "How do we enforce requirements that landowners have to comply with?" the Parish Council have produced a document that can be sent to landowners. Tasks for the next year are to define the main thoroughfare and routes through the village and to keep them open. The key paths are used a lot but get overgrown with nettles etc or flooded. There is also a long-term project to improve the link to Devizes; this will include improving the footpath alongside the A360 and improving/creating cycle way through Drews Pond.
  - Please report any footpath issues to Cllr Edwards, Cllr Abbatt or the Parish Clerk.
- Communications (Parish Clerk Liz Starling/Councillor Tony Molland). – Parish Clerk reporting:
 

The Potterne.info website has been updated and this is now used for all Parish Council matters. The Council now have its own Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/potternepc](http://www.facebook.com/potternepc) or follow us on Twitter: @potterneparish1. We do our best to get information out to the rest of the village. Cllr Molland writes for the Parish Magazine and gives a precis of the Parish Council meetings.

Cllr Balls concluded the reports from councillors by thanking them all for the work that they do.

#### **Potterne Charities:**

Andy Huntley read the report from Potterne Charities. He reported the sad news that Joe Brewer recently passed away. Joe had been involved with Potterne Charities for many years and will be sadly missed.

The annual accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 showed an income of £3,819 an increase of £133 over the previous year. Investment income from the ten charities in Potterne came to £1,238 and income from land amounted to £2,581. With the available money the trustees at Christmas were able to maintain the individual grant to £50, a total of £1,250. This year the grant was split into two equal parts (£25 x 2) to give more choice of suppliers. Grants to village organisations amounted to £1,580. These amounts were plus expenses of £598. The contribution of £133.48 to the Worton & Marston charities leaves a balance of £2,203.

#### **Report from Wiltshire Councillor Anna Cuthbert:**

Cllr Cuthbert unable to attend and no report received.

#### **Reports from Local Groups and Organisations:**

##### **Village Hall:**

Nesta Pudney, Chairman of the Village Hall committee said they have had a good year; hiring has been consistent. A major project this year was to replace the fascia boards around the kitchen; there are plans also for improvements to the wall around the railing. Several successful fundraising events have been held; thanks go to the committee and to the punters.

**Social Club:**

Jerry Wilmott said that there are a number of people at this meeting who are not members of the Social Club – commiserations to them!

The Social Club used to be Potterne Working Men's Club situated at the top of Mill Road on the left-hand side. It is now just behind the village hall in Whistley Road and is no longer men only. There is a concern that it is becoming insular; it is a community club as well as a social club. The committee believes that it has a responsibility to hand the club on to future generations.

There are major structural changes coming up – rebuilding the skittle alley and repairs to the roof. The club has received £5,000 from Devizes Area Board toward the cost of the roof repairs.

Jerry urged everyone to be a member of a club that is at the heart of the community.

**Potterne Panto group:**

Janet Carpenter reported that she had had the honour of being Chair for the last 3 years. She thanked the previous chair, Jackie Sawyer for her support and guidance. After 32 years the Panto Group is still going strong and through the Panto Performances have been able to gift many thousands of pounds to village groups and associations. Last year Five Lanes School received a major donation which will go towards their aim to provide an outdoor class for art and theatre. Other groups also received donations.

Last year the Tony Bailey Award was set up with the school, aimed at year 6 children and supported by the Parent Friends Association (PFA). There are 3 categories: Performing Arts, Literature and Artwork (using any medium). There were many entries and the 3 winners received gift vouchers and certificates, along with very stylish boxed presentation pens kindly donated by Gerry and Betty Kingston who were long-standing friends of Tony. Rachel Bailey played her part by putting together a beautiful present photo album to show just who this award represented. The Panto Group hope that the link with the school will bring benefits in some way for the children's futures.

There are several young people from the village in the Panto Group and they certainly bring the group to life with their enthusiasm and their energy. Youngsters wishing to join must be 12 years old at the start of rehearsals in the New Year. Further information will be found in the Parish Magazine later this year.

A recent and major project is to provide a defibrillator for the village hall. With the support of the community, nearly £1,000 has been raised. Donations have been gifted from the Village Hall, the Social Club, bucket collections after the last 2 pantomimes and the Victorian Music Hall show. Further funds have been donated or promised from the Potterne Mummers, the George Day Tent fund and the Panto Group. Thank you to all the community and all who have contributed, however large or small, every penny has helped and the target has almost been reached to enable the group to go ahead and purchase the unit.

Putting on the pantomime requires a great deal of time and planning, but the most important ingredients are people, time and commitment. People are needed to assist with set construction, scenery painting, costume support, lighting and sound – the list is long! Please make contact if you can help.

**Potterne Youth Centre:**

John Chandler reported that the village has a marvellous, modern facility in the Youth Centre but it is underused. The Committee has recently reviewed the Youth Centre constitution, and this will be adopted at its AGM on 23 May.

John reminded everyone that the Youth Centre is the facility and the Youth Club is the people. Steve Dewar works for Youth for Christ, a Christian charity, and has been in place as a youth worker in Potterne for 7 years. The club on a Friday night attracts about 15 young people; there are also activities on a Wednesday afternoon. There is a struggle to find enough volunteers.

There has been engagement with young people and all generations through the Ryelease Community Garden.

Those involved have a heart to engage with young people and to make them feel valued. There is no charge for the activities. Volunteer training is available through Youth for Christ. Everyone can play a part in supporting the young people in our village. /the challenge is that it sometimes can be a hard slog, but the young people see the determination and effort that is invested in them.

“We want to support all of our people, the best we can for as long as we can.”

**Potterne Cricket Club:** Ian Wheeler (treasurer) reporting:

The cricket club started 45 years ago with one team. Over the years the club has developed and they now play in the West of England Premier League, Premier One. They have won an award for our pitch.

Income comes from sponsorships, match fees, subscriptions; also from fundraising of which there is one big event – the beer festival.

They have 150 junior members age 5-15 years signed up for this year. They supply members to the county team. They are still a village club though and are proud of that albeit a very successful club. Last year they raised £13,000 for Julia’s House and hope to raise more that that this year for Julia’s House, Canons House and Dorothy House.

Ian finished by informing everyone that a full English breakfast at a cost of £6 is served on a Saturday morning.

**Potterne Mummers:**

Bob Berry reporting on behalf of the mummers, a team of people that raise thousand of pounds for charities and goodwill gestures in the area.

The mummers gather each year, much as they have done for the past 46 consecutive years, in the days running up to Christmas Eve, and perform their ancient and honourable play to countless numbers of people. This ancient rite is performed in order to keep the tradition alive. There are over 350 similar groups across the country ranging from just a few men to dozens.

The consequence of all of these performances is that the audience is encourage to part with small amounts of cash which is then passed on to worthy charities. This year the mummers performed their play over 31 times to audience as far as Pewsey and Bromham. Donations will benefit the following organisations:

|                           |      |                           |      |
|---------------------------|------|---------------------------|------|
| Wiltshire Air Ambulance   | £500 | Potterne Youth Club       | £150 |
| Julia’s House             | £350 | Potterne Youth Centre     | £100 |
| British Heart Foundation  | £250 | Potterne Community Garden | £50  |
| Prostrate Cancer Research | £500 | Clean Up Devizes Squad    | £100 |

This is a total of £2,000. Bob said he was proud to be part of this organisation which should be saluted, supported and continued well into the future and seen as a true village tradition.

**Royal British Legion, Potterne Branch:**

John Chandler reported that the Poppy Appeal was quite successful with nearly £1,400 collected from Potterne.

This is a Centennial year (1918 to 2018) which is important time to reflect and remember. In connection with this there will be a tree planting ceremony Friday 25 May in the Ryelease Community Garden where the President and Vice President will plant a commemorative tree (not to be confused with the WWI Commemorative Tree Planting on Blounts Court Hill which is a civic event). This will be the last outing as present for General Pascoe.

Next event will be the Grand Afternoon Garden Party, Sunday 22 July, 2pm at Five Lanes Farm. All welcome.

Potterne Branch will be taking part in the Great Pilgrimage 90 (GP90), a tour to WW1 battlefields and cemeteries to mark 90 years since the Great Pilgrimage. On 8 August 2018, two representatives from every branch and county or their local community will carry their standards along the same route in Ypres to the Menin Gate, representing an entire generation that served while defending their country. Ron Frazer will be the standard bearer for Potterne and Teresa Chandler will be the wreath layer.

Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday coincide this year.

“Lest we forget”.

**Cllr Balls summed up the reports** saying that we are incredibly blessed as a community with the organisation that we have. Thank you to everyone for coming along and updating the meeting. Need to commit to bring others along next year to spread the word on what happens in the village. There is money available from Devizes Area Board for organisation and you are encouraged to put in bids for your group.

#### **Presentation of the Jubilee Cup:**

The Jubilee Cup is presented to an individual or an organisation from the village that has given their services to the community in the past year.

This year the Cup is awarded to Mrs Pat Straw, former Vice Chairman of the Parish Council, for a multitude of things including her work for our footpaths and highways, attendance at Devizes/County meetings, work with the Parish Magazine and organization of the village Clean Ups. Never complaining, always a doer and with an ability to get the best and what Pat knows she needs from an individual.

#### **Presentation of the Alan Mead Memorial Award:**

This award is in recognition of services to the village and youth of Potterne, by a young person from the village. Founded and paid for through a legacy from a former Potterne resident. Both recipients will have their name engraved on the shield and receive a cash prize of £100 to use as they see fit.

This year there are joint recipients and they are Lauren Harding and Josh Little.

**Lauren Harding.** Lauren was nominated by the Potterne Pantomime Group. Universally regarded as a thoughtful and caring young lady who has grown in confidence and been an inspiration to others.

**Josh Little.** Josh was nominated for the award by Potterne's Senior Youth Worker (Steve Dewar). He is an organised, polite, determined and well-mannered young man who sets a good example to other young members of the Potterne Youth Club. He is helpful toward the community and supportive to those around him, including his family with its strong connections to The Royal British Legion.

They are both most deserving of this prestigious award. Josh is receiving his cheque from the village tonight at an important Cadet Parade at Lavington School.

**Any Questions:** Cllr Balls asked those attending this evening whether they had any questions for the Parish Council.

It was suggested that the Social Club could benefit from signage on the main road. The Parish Council will discuss this and if they agree will put it forward to the Community Area Transport Group for consideration.

There were no further questions.

**The meeting ended at 9.05pm.**