

Minutes of Cusop Annual Parish Meeting held in Cusop Village Hall on 18th April 2018

Present: Cllr M Hainge (Chairman), Mrs C Cundale, Cllr P Gilbert, Mr P Graves, Mrs K Hainge, Mr L Harris, Mr B Henderson, Mr I Jardin (Clerk - minutes), Mr N Jones, Mrs S Marsh, Mrs A Matthews, Mrs M Morgan, Cllr P Price, Mr A Rice, Mr S Street, Mr P Walter, Mr J Winter, PCSO F Witcher (items 1-2), and Cllr Mrs P Wordley.

In Cllr Wesley's absence due to illness, the Vice Chairman Cllr Hainge took the chair.

1. Minutes of the last Parish Meeting

Draft minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting on 19th April 2017 were circulated. The meeting agreed the minutes and the chairman signed them as a true record.

2. Local Police Team Report

PCSO Witcher reported that it had been a quiet year in Cusop for their team which was currently down to two officers. In answer to questions she said that the police needed hard evidence to make litter prosecutions, that there would be normal police cover during the Festival, that complaints about obstructive parking would be investigated while making allowance for the unusual circumstances of the Festival, that they did not have enough cones for temporary 'no parking' areas and that she would find out what if any measures were planned for Newport Street due to the How the Light Gets In Festival.

3. Parish Council Reports

The chairman read out Cllr Wesley's report which thanked his fellow councillors, officers, and volunteers and highlighted the adoption of the neighbourhood plan, the removal of litter bins, and the installation of self-closing footpath gates during the year.

The Clerk introduced the provisional Parish Council accounts for 2017/18.

Mrs Marsh introduced herself as new Footpaths Officer, described the work she had done so far and hoped to do including improvements and involvement in a Hay walking festival.

The Clerk reported that the tree warden role was now vacant due to Mr Ferguson's recent move from Cusop after many valued years in the role. Mr Rice suggested that his successor might usefully draw attention to the problem of unstable roadside trees, highlighted by falls during the heavy winter snow.

Mrs Matthews reported that the website now seemed to be running smoothly and welcomed suggestions for additions.

4. Herefordshire Councillor's Report

Cllr Price reported on Herefordshire Council's procedures and improving record for dealing with road repairs; on the Booker's Edge housing development including the affordable housing element (for which he confirmed Hay people would also be eligible); on Dorstone Parish Council's initiative to secure a package of improvements to the B4348; and on the Hereford Bypass public consultation. He also stressed his concern about how temporary event notices for How the Light Gets In Festival had slipped through and said that the Festival would be carefully monitored. In answer to questions he confirmed that the B4348 initiative would draw on existing funds and noted that more signage and better thought-through routes were needed for diversions.

5. Reports from Community Bodies

St Mary's Church: Mrs Cundale circulated a written report describing services and special events, the mission action plan, and the role of local volunteers. She added that a new rector had now been appointed.

Mr Rice reported that there would be an open garden day at his property to raise funds for the church.

Village Hall: Mr Jones reported on a successful year with a high percentage of use and highlighted the work done by volunteers. Mr Rice, endorsed by Mr Graves, expressed concern that regular bookings were crowding out bookings by local people. Mr Jones said that the committee had recently reviewed and confirmed its bookings policy, but would look again.

Playing Field: the Clerk read out a report from Cllr Fryers confirming the field's continuing popularity and its maintenance, including the recent removal of a fallen tree by volunteers, and the Supporters Group's provisional ideas for using the developer contributions due from the Booker's Edge development. The Group would welcome new members.

6. Discussion: Parking on the Parish Roads

Several residents commented on problems generated by parking in the dingle, including near to the Church Road junction and Upper Dulas. Parking on pavements was a particular problem. In discussion it was agreed that it needed to be made clear to everyone in what circumstances parking could be obstructive and attract police intervention. Use of the parish newsletter and website was mentioned. The chairman summarised and said that the Parish Council would follow up the proposals.

7. Discussion: Use of Contributions from the Booker's Edge development

There were suggestions for use of some of the fund for road safety improvements on Newport Street and Hardwicke Road and for Dulas Brook ecology projects. In discussion it was noted that a decision was not urgent, although the real value of the fund would diminish over time, and further thought and consultation were possible. The chairman summarised and said the the Parish Council would take account of the comments made before making a decision.

8. Comments or questions on any other matters

Mr Henderson asked about the Parish Council's plans for monitoring the How the Light Gets In Festival in 2019. The chairman said they would be the same as this year and that residents should make a record of this year's Festival to present to Herefordshire Council for next year. In discussion residents asked whether Herefordshire Council had shown due diligence or properly judged the public nuisance effects in considering the notices for this year's Festival, whether the Parish Council had been duped by the Festival about this year's hours or had protested about it, whether an environmental permit had been obtained, and whether the police had been involved in the planning. There were also comments that many residents liked the Festival and the problem was only with how late it went on. Cllr Price said that the Herefordshire Council licensing department was generally very strict, but might have been blindsided on this occasion. Some residents said that they would monitor noise levels this year.

Mr Rice updated the meeting about the Marcher Apple Network orchard on his land.

The Chairman closed the meeting.