

Iken Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on Thursday 21st May 2020 online via Zoom commencing at 6pm

Present

Neville Howe (Chair), Sir Thomas Hughes-Hallett (Vice Chair), Colin Chamberlain (RFO), Cllrs Dr Norman Johnson, Loulou Cooke, Kate Kilburn

Members of the public: Audrey Power, Annabel Chamberlain, Robert Gillespie, Jonathan Rutherford, Lady Katherine Gieve

Colin Chamberlain announced the sad passing of Nick Turner who will be greatly missed in the village, especially with the church. Our hearts go out to Jill.

Chairman's Review

The chairman welcomed everybody to this first remote meeting in the history of Iken Parish Council and thanked everybody for their attendance. He explained how the meeting would proceed, with the first meeting being a snap-shot looking back over the past year then we would start with the first meeting of the New Year. Documents that had been circulated to everyone in order to be as open as possible were the Agenda, Financial Statement, Minutes of previous meeting, Chairman's Report.

Neville explained that his review had noted all the matters dealt with over the year and he would be going into these in more detail later in the meeting.

We had asked for reports from Dr Theresa Coffey and Ray Herring but had not received any response from them, which is understandable under the circumstances.

The Chairman went on to say that six Councillors were elected at the beginning of the year. There remains one vacancy and any interested parties are encouraged to approach the Parish Clerk. It would be great to have a full complement of members. Kate Kilburn had indicated that her term would be coming to an end in November this year so a plea goes out for more people to come on board. He went on to explain that he and Sir Thomas Hughes-Hallett had swapped roles during the year and the intention was to swap back in November to complete a year each.

Cohesion within the village was one of the subjects which had been discussed resulting in the first village party which was a very good mark. Reflecting back it wasn't strictly a parish council event, it was a village event and we used the village hall grounds and had a chance to get the village together.

The Chairman paused for any questions. Colin Chamberlain raised the matter of membership to the council and advised that Iken villagers who are on more than one electoral register can put up for council. Norman Johnson added that technically you do not have to be on the Electoral Register at all, you just have to own property or work just within a three mile radius of Iken. Individual cases can be considered.

Finance

The annual accounts had been circulated previously. Colin Chamberlain advised that the precept had been set at £1500 last year and he thought we might be considering reducing it a little bit because we only spent £750 although there is another £400 to consider which relates back to last year for the church mowing but even so only comes to £1150. There is just shy of £3000 in the account at the moment. Colin asked if there was support to pay another £400 for this year's mowing of the church and the village hall. It was asked if last year's mowing was already in the accounts. Colin responded that although we had agreed to pay £400 he didn't actually pay it out until after the accounts had been made up. So there would be twice as much paid out in the coming year. Colin thought we shouldn't really be getting a precept that is vastly more than we spend. Payment for the grass cutting was supported.

On the Town Estate all the money is in the Monmouthshire Building Society. Colin had spent quite a lot of time moving the money into the charity high interest account only to receive notice the previous week that they were reducing the interest rate to .15%. He asked if anyone has any more bright ideas for a building society paying more then please let us know.

Iken Village Hall is a charity that we own but does not hold any assets or money. The chairman gave everyone options to ask any questions.