

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Ashford Parish,  
Held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 7.00pm in the Church Hall, St Peter's Church,  
Ashford**

**Present:** Councillor P Hughes, Chairman  
Mrs Victoria Woodhouse, Locum Parish Clerk

16 Parishioners  
County Cllr P Maskell  
North Devon Cllr R Knight

**1. Presentation of the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 29th April 2021**

It was noted that the minutes were not available.

**2. Any Matters Arising from the Minutes**

None.

**3. Chairman's Report**

The Chairman reported on the year explaining that elections were held in May 2023 and the Parish Council has once again taken an active role within the community. The Parish Council was lucky enough to engage the services of Mrs Woodhouse as Locum Parish Clerk and has now commenced the recruitment process for a permanent Clerk. The website has been updated thanks to the hard work of Cllrs Lawson and Furse and Cllr Furse has also designed a logo for the Parish Council for which the Council would extend its thanks to Cllrs Lawson and Furse. The Chairman explained that the Parish Council generally enhances the community through its meetings where it discusses and agrees to improve the environment with projects such as:

The purchase of a second defibrillator.

Installation of signage.

Grass cutting.

Clearing the sides of the road.

Supporting the Speed Watch Scheme, for which more volunteers are required.

Then there are the unseen self-help activities that the Parish Council undertakes and supports such as clearance of drains and vegetation and litter picking events of which a further event is being organised for May, the Chairman extended his thanks to all those involved.

The Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council had agreed to keep the precept the same and an extra meeting was held in September to discuss the sale of the land in Meadowside and whilst it was acknowledged that the Parish Council did not have the funds to purchase with such a short timescale, agreements were pursued to ensure the land remained open for public use.

The Chairman thanked all the Councillors that are on the Parish Council to serve the village.

**4. To receive reports from:**

- Village Coffee Mornings  
Attached as Appendix A.
- St Peter's Church.  
Attached as Appendix B.
- Community Speed Watch

The Co-ordinator explained that he had undertaken the training, it is non-confrontational to motorists and will not result in direct prosecutions, however, the Police will come and investigate if there is a persistent issue. The question now is whether there is a will behind the initiative three more volunteers are required before the scheme can proceed, the training is about an hour online. Once there are enough volunteers, sites can then be identified which the Police will then risk assess and teach the group how to use the equipment. A member of the public asked how often the group would undertake speed watch it was explained that this would be entirely up to the group to decide.

**5. Matters relating to the parish raised by parishioners**

A member of the public explained that two years ago he had suggested the Parish Council consider visibility mirrors at strategic junctions around the village and noted that residents have put them in in places, he felt that this was an obvious, affordable safety measure that could be implemented and urged the Parish Council to think creatively about highway safety measures. He did not feel that the Speed Watch would identify issues in the areas where it is not undertaken and felt that a lower speed limit for the village should also be pursued.

Cllr Maskel explained, as previously advised to the Parish Council, that Devon County Council, as the Highway Authority, do not allow mirrors unless very specific criteria is met. The Highway Authority is not supportive of mirrors and will remove them unless an individual householder erects them on their own land. Cllr Maskel also explained that the criteria for a 20mph limits is quite tight, and a Speed Watch is required as part of the case, generally 20mph limits have only been considered where there are facilities such as shops and schools and Ashford has not met the criteria. DCC is looking at changing the criteria.

It was asked if a sign at the end of the road could be erected to say this road is shared with pedestrians, Cllr Maskell agreed she could investigate.

A member of the public explained that the Parish Council had investigated mirrors and, apart from permission being required from the Highway Authority, there was also the issue of insurance and liability if the Parish Council erects mirrors, it was felt as a public body the Parish Council could not accept the liability.

There being no further business Cllr Hughes thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.30pm.

Signed .....

Dated .....

### Coffee Morning

In December 2022 Heather Bruce and Jane Bosley started up a regular monthly coffee morning in the Parish Hall following the release from Pandemic restrictions.

This has continued monthly successfully with numbers varying from a dozen people to two dozen people, sometimes dependant on the weather. We pay £20 for hire of the Village Hall and £2 for coffee, tea, biscuits and cake.

Our profit then goes to various charities namely so far Age UK, Nadada, Food Bank and Young Minds. Everyone who comes feels it is well worth while and if the chatter is anything to go by it is enjoyed by all.

## **Report on St Peter's Church and its activities in Ashford.**

FAO Ashford Parish Meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024

At St Peter's Church in Ashford there has been the good news of an increase in the number of local people gathering for worship since the end of the pandemic. Our parish is the united parish of Pilton with Ashford and the current parish vicar is the Reverend Martyn Tyrrell, who was installed on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

We meet at 9 am each Sunday, with refreshments served afterwards. We read from the Bible, pray for our community and worship Jesus with well-known hymns! We often hold other occasional evening services on special seasonal occasions such as Rogation, St. Peter's day, Harvest and Christmas.

St Peter's Church also offers Bible Study which is open to anyone who would like to attend. There is also a monthly prayer meeting, called 'Psalms and Prayers', and there are courses about faith in Jesus. 'Simply Sing' provides an opportunity and welcome for all to gather to sing well known hymns on the first Saturday morning of each month.

Charitable works include the 'Samaritan's Purse Christmas Shoe Box Appeal. Contributions are received and distributed to the Barnstaple Food Bank, near Tesco and door-to-door collections are made for Christian Aid in May each year. St Peter's Church has also been involved in the promotion in North Devon of the 'TryPraying' initiative, a growing national and international movement.

There is a welcome at St Peter's for anyone who would like to attend, either, as many do, our special services, but also our regular Sunday services!

We are very friendly. Do come along and see what happens!

//////////