

Alwington Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting held at Alwington Village Hall on 14 May 2024, commencing at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllrs Gordon Lester (Chair), Brian Adams, Elaine Beresford, Alison Browning, Christine Moore and Neil Rothney (from 7.20pm).

In attendance: Michael Olley (Parish Clerk) and six members of the public.

1. APM.1:24/25 Apologies

There were no apologies from councillors. Apologies were received from Cathy Lester-Walker.

2. APM.2:24/25 Declarations of Interests

No declarations were received in respect of personal or prejudicial interests

3. APM.3:24/25 Chairman's Report

The Chair thanked Cllrs and the Clerk for their work and assistance throughout the year. In particular he thanked Cllr Adams for his support as Vice Chair and for his work together with Cllr Rothney on the roadways throughout the Parish. The Chair thanked Cllr Browning for her leadership throughout the community, Cllr Moore for creating important networks in Fairy Cross and Ford, Cllr Beresford for her IT assistance and financial oversight and to the Clerk for his attention to detail and support. He also thanked Cathy Lester-Walker for her administration of the Parish website. Congratulations were also recorded for Torridge District Council on their strong performance and achievements throughout the year.

The Chair remarked that the issues of potholes, speed on the A39 and ensuring planning oversight were all areas of focus for the Parish Council throughout the coming year.

4. APM:4:24/25 District and County Council Reports

There were no reports given.

5. APM: 5:24/25 Other Reports

Village Hall Committee

Cllr Browning gave a report on behalf of the Village Hall Committee. Two Hearty Breakfast events had been held generating over £1000 for the hall. To mark the coronation a bring and share lunch was held and a crab apple tree planted. Funding from the Parish Council had enabled Coronation Mugs to be distributed to children within the parish. A successful Horticultural Show, coffee mornings and Musical Teas were held. Thanks was given to Fred Noyce for providing the musical entertainment. Community Information events had been held, as had a First Aid Awareness session, which had been supported by a grant from the Parish Council.

Solar panels and a battery were being installed, supported by a grant from South West Water, and it was hoped this would reduce future costs for electricity and oil which currently took a large part of the income received.

A grant had also been secured from Devon County Council which had allowed local community groups to use the hall at minimal cost.

Lastly, Cllr Browning thanked those who had provided support and help to the Village Hall.

The Parish Church of St. Andrew in Alwington

Julie Harper reported that as a Grade 1 listed building there was always a need to raise money for repairs and maintenance. The Old School Room, used for many meetings including the craft group, had been redecorated. Extensive work had been undertaken within the churchyard following a survey undertaken by a qualified arboriculturist. A wilding area would be created below the Old School Room, with advice being provided by the Devon Wildlife Trust.

Various fundraising events had been held throughout the year, including a pancake party, cream teas, an Autumn Fair and carol services.

Julie also gave details of a library created in the Old School Room following the cancellation of the Mobile Library Service.

The Alwington Residents Association (ARA)

Viv Harries gave an update on the work undertaken by the ARA, which included Curry Nights, Fish and Chip Suppers and Quiz Night. The ARA had also provided assistance to the Community Information Event held in the Village Hall. Work would be undertaken around the Parish by the ARA, including the planting of wildflowers. A grant received from the Parish Council would greatly assist this work.

Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Gardens (QEIMG)

Hilary Dodge reported that the QEIMG Committee was formed in April 2023 with a view to creating a wildlife garden in Fairy Cross for local residents and visitors. Cllrs Browning and Moore represented the Parish Council on the committee. Fundraising events, including Jumble Sales and Cream Teas had been held throughout the year. In total funds of £1799 had been raised to date.

6. APM 6:24/25 Matters raised by Parish Residents

Concerns over the speed of traffic on the A39 were reiterated. Thanks were given to Cllrs Adams and Rothney for the work they had undertaken to clear the sides of roads within the Parish. Thanks were also given to Cllr Browning for organising the first aid training. A request was made for consideration of the installation of a defibrillator within the Alwington area of the Parish.

No other matters were raised.

7. APM:7:24/25 Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

Cllr Adams nominated Cllr Lester as Chair. This was seconded by Cllr Browning. No other nominations were received. Cllr Lester agreed to continue to act as chair. Cllr Browning nominated Cllr Adams as Vice Chair. This was seconded by Cllr Lester. No other nominations were received. Cllr Adams agreed to act as Vice Chair. It was resolved that Cllr Lester be appointed as Chair and Cllr Adams be appointed as Vice Chair for 2024/25.

8. APM: 8:24/25 To agree and approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 10 May 2023.

It was resolved to approve and sign the minutes as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Browning, seconded by Cllr Adams.

9. APM: 9:24/25 To receive and approve the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2024.

It was resolved to approve the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2024. Proposed Cllr Beresford, seconded Cllr Adams.

10. APM: 10:24/25 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24

It was resolved to approve and sign the Certificate of Exemption, the Annual Governance Statement at section 1 of the AGAR and the Accounting Statements at Section 2 of the AGAR. Proposed Cllr Lester, seconded Cllr Adams.

11. APM: 11:24/25. Appoint the Internal Auditor for 2024/25

It was resolved to appoint Julie Snooks as Internal Auditor for the Parish Council for 2023/24. Proposed Cllr Adams, seconded Cllr Lester.

12. APM:12:24/25 Agree meeting dates for 2024/25.

The meeting dates for 2024/25 were agreed as:

9 July, 10 September, 12 November, 14 January, 11 March (all at 7.30 pm in the Committee Room in Alwington Village Hall), and 13 May (at 7.00 pm in The Old School Room, Alwington).

Signature _____ (Chair) Date _____