

The following are the DRAFT Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Priston Parish Council held on Monday 11 May 2009 in the Village Hall Priston, commencing at 7.00pm. These have not yet been approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

Councillor Hughes presided, Councillors Cross, Hopwood, Whybrow, Wilkinson and the Parish Clerk were present. The Chairman welcomed village residents Mr Bottle and Mrs Grimshaw.

1. **Apologies** received from Councillor Lippiatt and District Councillor Clarke.
2. **The minutes of the Annual General Meeting** held on 14 May 2008 were read, confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings and signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising.

3. **Chairman's Report –**

Councillor Hughes reminded the meeting that the practice of reading the minutes of Parish Council meetings by the Clerk had been discontinued as they are now electronically distributed to Councillors and are also published on the Priston Website. The Chairman continued by advising that the broken Farmborough arm of the signpost had been replaced also the litter bin on the village green, the pavement resurfaced, the footbridge at Priston Mill replaced and a large number of potholes repaired. The Parish Council had agreed to adopt the telephone kiosk when it is finally disconnected.

Problems are still being experienced with flooding in Priston Lane following work by British Telecom and also with telephone and internet connections.

A new computer had been purchased and thanks were extended to Mr Bottle for his assistance with this purchase.

An Automatic Traffic Survey had been set up at the lower end of High Street, which showed that cars exceed the advisory 20mph limit. Parish Councillors were unanimous that the 20mph limit should be enforced and the Area Traffic Engineer had been advised accordingly.

A Special Public meeting had been held in October to receive the report prepared within the parish on the implications of the Regional Spatial Strategy and building in the green belt with possible development in the parishes of Englishcombe and Newton St Loe. The Chairman thanked the small committee who had helped with the formation of this report, and conveyed special thanks to Councillor Clare Cross and Mrs Briony Seymour for the many hours they spent in its compilation prior to the presentation of the report to Central Government and the District Council. A decision on a Parish Plan is to be held over to await the proposed changes to the draft Regional Spatial Strategy.

The Parish Council had been advised by the editors of The Link, that it was no longer financially viable to publish the minutes of meetings. These would continue to be published on the Parish Council noticeboard and in full on the website.

It had been agreed that the Parish Council would adopt Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

The Chairman was disappointed in the poor response from the Parish Council on the proposed alterations to the Code of Conduct.

Referring to the Freedom of Information Act, the meeting was advised that the new model publication scheme had been adopted and can be viewed on the Priston Website.

At a recent meeting it had been agreed to increase the Parish Council's donation to the Village Hall and also to raise the Clerk's salary by 10%.

After much discussion it had been agreed, in principle, to take on the ownership of the impending defibrillator for the village. Thanks were expressed to Councillor Wilkinson and Mrs Grimshaw, and other residents, for their work in raising funds for this project.

The condition of the local roads had not been helped by inclement weather earlier in the year. It appeared that the recently appointed highways inspector, and new contractors, were making a better job of repairing the holes and patches than their predecessors.

Unfortunately the Millennium Committee had been unable to raise sufficient funds to construct a roof over the Well and Drinking Fountain but thanks were extended to this committee for its financial help in

providing a locked hatch in the grill so enabling rubbish to be removed from the well. It had recently been necessary to replace the tap to the drinking fountain.

The Chairman continued his report by advising that planning applications relating to the following properties had been considered during the year: The Old Byre; Pressbarrow House; The Poppies; 9 Summerlea; New Farm; Priston Church; Long Barn; Priston Mill; 1 Hill View; 2 Wilmington and Church Farm Cottage.

The Chairman commented that, in recent months, concern had been expressed to him on the future of the Ring o'Bells, bearing in mind that the public house trade around the country is in decline. It was hoped that the situation will improve at the Ring o'Bells and that the new management will be successful. The Parish Council did not wish to see the closure of this important facility. The Chairman had personally seen the closure of the Dog Inn, Village School, the Shop and Post Office and finally the Garage and felt it would be catastrophic for village life if the Ring o'Bells was lost as well.

Concluding his report the Chairman thanked Councillors for their help and support in the last year, especially those who have been involved in the various sub-committees. Their help had been much appreciated as had the support of the villagers who have been involved. Special thanks were extended to Councillor Clare Cross, the Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council, who had done much of the groundwork involved. In conclusion thanks were conveyed to District Councillor Victor Clarke for his help and guidance and, finally, to the Clerk, Mrs Christine Hunt, who has worked hard on behalf of the Parish Council.

4. **Financial Report** - The Clerk presented and reported on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2009 copies of which were distributed to Councillors and the village residents present for their retention. A precept of £3,400 had been received during the year and a refund of £66.60 VAT for the year 2007-2008. A total expenditure of £3,529.38 had been recorded leaving an end of year balance at the bank of £350.71 with no cash in hand. The Clerk advised that she would reclaim VAT in the sum of £123.05 for the year ended 31 March 2009. Mrs Hunt was again thanked for the efficient and comprehensive manner in which the accounts were presented.
5. **Election of Chairman** – At this point Councillor Hughes vacated the Chair which was taken by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Cross, who requested nominations to this Office. Councillor Hughes was formally proposed by Councillor Hopwood, seconded Councillor Cross, and agreed unanimously.
6. **Declaration of Acceptance of Office: Chairman** – Councillor Hughes signed the formal declaration which was witnessed by the Clerk.
7. **Election of Vice-Chairman** – Councillor Hughes proposed Councillor Hopwood to serve in this office for the coming year, seconded Councillor Cross and agreed unanimously. Councillor Hughes formally thanked Councillor Cross for all the work she had done on behalf of the Parish Council in the past year and for taking so much interest in the projects she has undertaken, in particular, the response to the Regional Spatial Strategy in which she had been supported by Mrs Briony Seymour.
8. **Appointment of Clerk** – Councillor Pattison proposed, seconded Councillor Hughes and agreed unanimously that Mrs Hunt be re-appointed.
9. **Appointment of Footpath Representative** – Proposed by Councillor Hughes, seconded Councillor Pattison that Councillor Whybrow be reappointed for the coming year.
10. **Appointment of Village Hall Representative** – Proposed by Councillor Hughes, seconded Councillor Hopwood that Councillor Cross be reappointed for the coming year.
11. **Appointment of Representative to Priston LED Project** – Proposed by Councillor Hughes, seconded Councillor Pattison that Councillor Wilkinson be appointed as representative of the Parish

Council to this new project for the coming year.

- 12. Signing of Cheques** – Councillor Hughes reminded the Council that it is customary for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to be the two signatories for cheques raised by the Parish Council and it was agreed that this practice should continue. A new bank mandate would be signed to remove Councillor Cross and include Councillor Hopwood.

There being no further business for discussion at the Annual General Meeting Councillor Hughes thanked Councillors for their support in the previous year, declared the meeting closed at 7.25pm and proceeded with the first meeting of the new financial year.