

**MINUTES of WEEK ST MARY ANNUAL PARISH OPEN MEETING  
held on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm in the Methodist School Room**

The Chair, Mr J Ward, opened the meeting at 7.30pm and welcomed 4 Parish Councillors, 14 parishioners and Mrs N Chopak, Cornwall Council Ward member. Beth Sachs – Clerk.

**1. Apologies:**

Cllr Steven Cluney – personal  
Cllr Ron Harris – personal  
Cllr Micheline Smith – personal  
Cllr Bill Pearce – personal

**2. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting 2018**

A precis of the Minutes was given and they were then accepted as read and agreed.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave his report.

**3. Chair's report**

The work of the Parish Council ranges from issues with fundamental, long term implications for the parish to small, day to day things that nonetheless contribute to the Parish's wellbeing.

This being the 10<sup>th</sup> time I have presented the Chairman's report, I do not propose to summarise the full extent of the Parish Council activities in this report. The activities of the Parish Council are reported comprehensively in the Parish Magazine, available on the Parish Notice Board and on the village website. Rather I will pick out some key highlights

As is the case every year, Parish Council work has included activities such as lobbying about the state of the roads, the management of the playing field, the maintenance of the public toilets, dog mess, parking, grass cutting, transport and petty vandalism.

The Parish Council often gets thought of as important in the consideration of planning applications. We take that role seriously and offer our views responsibly but in practice we have no decision-making role. I always feel that our direct responsibilities are the most important aspect of what we do. For example, the management and upkeep of the Public Toilets. The toilets are kept in a good condition and this is due mainly however to the work of Jamie Sachs who cleans and maintains it for the Council. Jamie also looks after another community resource we are responsible for, the village greens.

Whilst we are not ultimately responsible the footpaths, Cornwall Highways are the responsible body, we do undertake the maintenance contract and we are extremely grateful to Phil Dorren who voluntarily reports on and manages the parish footpath network on behalf of the Parish Council. We have been grateful over many years for the work of Linda Mason, a solicitor from Holsworthy, who has acted on a voluntary basis as our Internal Auditor. We have been unable to contact Linda lately and have therefore appointed Barry Jordan to be our Internal Auditor. In addition to internal auditing, the Parish Council accounts are sent to an external auditor for review and verification.

We value highly the continuing and close support of our County Councillor Nicky Chopak. Nicky attends virtually every Week St Mary Parish Council Meeting despite an incredibly busy schedule. She is a swift and effective communicator of our concerns to Cornwall Council, very effective at sorting stuff out and doesn't duck when thorny problems need addressing. She also keeps us advised of what's happening in Cornwall Council and its issues, mainly of late about managing an ever shrinking budget.

At last year's Parish open meeting I reported that I had attended the High Court Hearing on Good Energy's Judicial Review of the Secretary of State's refusal of planning permission for 11 x 420ft wind turbines in the Parish. Shortly after, the Judge handed down a decision statement that was scathing about the developer's approach to the appeal process and upheld the refusal. The developer decided not to pursue the appeal process further. The end of a five-year process of relentless activity and fundraising in the community.

Parish Clerk is a vital role for the effective running of a Parish Council. Our previous clerk Kate Denton resigned in September. Kate did a good job against the background of difficult personal circumstances which

she could not have foreseen. We are delighted to have appointed Beth Sachs as clerk from November 2019 who is doing a great job for the Parish.

We should have ten Parish Councillors, we have had nine for the last session. We are keen to coopt another Councillor. It is a really interesting and important role and we have some doing it. Please talk to a Councillor if you would be interested.

As we can see from the various reports presented to this meeting from organisations in the parish, we are fortunate to have such a breadth of people who volunteer and make a contribution to parish life across a wide spectrum of activities.

And represented here tonight in the community groups offering reports, we have the volunteering core of the parish. I would like to record thanks to all the people who contribute to the running of groups and activities. Without the many hours of dedication and service they put in, the community would be much less vibrant and diverse. But virtually all organisations need more volunteers so please do encourage anyone you meet to step forward

We believe we have managed our budget prudently. The accounts are available for inspection at any time. We set a precept this year that was the same as the previous year, although your council tax demands showed a 1.3% reduction.

I believe we are effective as a Parish Council and deliver valuable services to the community. Our objective continues to be to maintain our services to a high standard, to develop new facilities and invest in the future.

Once again, thank you to all the people who work to make Week St Mary a better place to live and work.

#### **4. Reports from Village Clubs and Organisations including:**

##### **Community Shop – attached**

Stephen Peters, the Chair of the Community Shop gave some further updates. The key aims of the management committee are to improve the profit of the shop, renegotiate prices with suppliers and increase footfall.

The shop questionnaire had a fantastic response with over 100 handed in to date. One of the key things people requested were more local products. 85% of products currently sold in the shop are local (within 25 miles of Week St Mary).

The food bank has been a great success and about 20 kilo's of food have been taken to Bude food bank to date, equating to about £100 worth of food a month.

Between December 2018 and February 2019 there was a 11% increase on revenues, a fruition of the marketing plan and food bank.

Additional volunteers have been trained up for the post office.

The committee are currently in the process of confirming with Jeff Roberts the long term future of the shop. Once that has been agreed, improvements are needed, including additional racking, changing the lighting and putting in a new counter which will equate to about £5,500 worth of improvements.

##### **Village Website – attached**

Linda wanted to thank the Parish Council for supporting the website financially. Since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 there have been 202,000 hits from as far as South Korea and China. Linda requested that people let David or Linda know about events being held in the village so they can be publicised.

##### **St Mary's Church – attached**

Linda added further updates. Rev David Barnes is being sworn in next week at Marhamchurch and will be moving into Week St Mary Rectory soon.

### **Bright Sparks – attached**

Jeremy added further updates. It's been a busy year for Bright Sparks, with several performances and productions including Rats the Musical. A new stage has been purchased for the group. There is currently a core of 6 helpers, led by Hilary Daniel with many more helping behind the scenes.

The Autumn production will be The Wizard of Oz.

### **Methodist Church – attached**

Jeremy added that it's been a busy year and the Methodist Church has a website which has up to date information about events.

### **Football Club – attached**

### **Jacobstow School – attached**

### **Womens Institute – attached**

Sue Dickenson added they are currently collecting Bra's for the 'smalls for all campaign'

### **Magazine – attached**

The magazine has been running for 32 years and continues to provide a vital resource for the community.

### **Skittles**

Stuart May gave a brief update about the Skittles team. There will be a need to replace the skittles next season. Thanks to Peter Bromell for donating pasties and Linda Willis for catering for the Skittles team.

### **Parish Hall**

Trish Cozen's gave a brief update and introduced herself as the new Chair of the Parish Hall Committee. Lots to do in the coming months and they are currently trying to get an events programme together. The next events will be Bingo on the 14<sup>th</sup> June, a Wine and a Wisdom night on the 12<sup>th</sup> July.

Jeremy gave thanks to Ron Jewell for refurbishing the village seats.

## **5. Report from County Councillor Nicky Chopak**

It's Nicky's 7<sup>th</sup> year as a Cornwall Councillor which takes up a huge amount of her time. She currently looks after 7 parishes. However after the 2021 the boundary changes she will be taking on a further 2 parishes (an additional 2000 people).

Nicky also sits on the Health and Adult Social Care Committee and the Neighbourhood Committee. In 2020 the waste and recycling will change – black bags (1 black bag a week allowed) will be collected fortnightly and recycling weekly. Everyone will get a wheelie bin to put their black bags in.

Nicky dealt with Good Energy to get the Anemometer removed at Creddicott but it was frustrating that it took so long to come down. There is still concern about the concrete left behind.

Cornwall Council have reintroduced local planning teams, with 3 planning officers looking after this area.

Stratton MIU is currently closed overnight until at least October due to staffing issues (not financial issues). Cornwall Council is working closely with the NHS to plan its future. Stratton MIU is the furthest MIU from a main hospital in the whole of the UK so it won't be closing in the day. There is also no threat to Stratton Hospital.

On average Nicky gets between 20 and 30 emails a day and she tries to respond as soon as she can.

CCllr Chopak thanked the Parish Council for their help and support over the past year.

## **6. Community Benefit – Grants etc.**

There is a formal application process and policy against which applications are judged. The forms and policy are available on the website.

## **7. Questions & Observations from the Public**

Concern was raised about the closure of Stratton MIU and also the ambulance wait times in rural areas.

First Aid was raised as an issue and it was suggested that basic first aid should be taught at primary school, particularly in rural areas like Week St Mary. The Parish Council will look at organising a basic first aid course.

Jeremy thanked the Cllrs for their hard work and thanked the members of the public for attending.

Sue Dickenson thanked the Parish Council on behalf of the community for their hard work.

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:45 pm.**

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....