

# IDRIDGEHAY ALTON AND ASHLEYHAY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 13 May 2015 at 7pm St James' Church Idridgehay**

Chair: Councillor Robert Tatler

Clerk: Mrs Ros Hallam (Responsible Financial Officer)

Present: 12 members of the public

## 1. Chair's Overview of the Year

Cllr Tatler welcomed those present to the Annual Parish Meeting and presented his annual report as summarised below:

The composition of the council has remained unchanged with two members representing Ashleyhay and five for Idridgehay and Alton all re-elected unopposed on May 7th. The council has followed its traditional pattern of meeting bi-monthly on the second Wednesday of each month, normally at the village Corn Store with some members of the public in attendance. Cllr David Taylor regularly attends meetings as elected representative for both Derbyshire County Council and Amber Valley Borough Council and is very active on our behalf - our congratulations on his re-election to AVBC. Community Police Officer Paula Bennett also attends in person when she can.

The council's three principal concerns during the year have been planning matters, the Neighbourhood Plan and the Black Swan.

All planning applications are carefully examined and the council exercises its right to comment on applications notified by Amber Valley other than those of a minor, technical nature. The primary concern is to uphold and protect the integrity of the Special Landscape Area, which covers most of the parish, and the Conservation Area in Idridgehay.

The Neighbourhood Plan is slowly progressing with AVBC recently appointing an independent examiner. If passed by the Examiner, the plan will be put to a parish referendum and, if passed by a simple majority, will be formally adopted as part of the Local Plan. It has taken a long time and I must pay tribute to VIA who have worked extremely hard on this on your behalf. The Council hopes that the end result will be a more sensitive, sustainable and intelligent application of planning policy which will enhance the parish and provide ongoing protection for our very fine landscape in the future.

The Black Swan Inn has lain empty since its closure three years ago. Following the support for its re-opening shown in the VIA Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire, the Parish Council wrote to the owners, Crostone Ltd, to find out their intentions. With no response the council asked AVBC to register it as an Asset of Community Value which happened in December 2013. The owners appealed against the listing but this was dismissed at a Tribunal hearing and the registration confirmed.

In March AVBC notified IAA PC that Crostone Ltd had registered its intention to sell the pub in February. Because the council nominated the Black Swan for ACV listing, it was then able to register as a potential bidder. IAA PC's public meeting on 22 April was attended by over 80 people and addressed by Dale Ingram, a planning consultant who specialises in saving pubs. Buoyed by the interest shown, a further meeting on 28 April resulted in the formation of a steering group to explore the methods and viability of saving the Black Swan.

During the year the Parish Newsletter has been produced and distributed around the parish and the parish website has been updated – thanks to Cllr Ibbett for his work on both the newsletter and website. The council participated in the DCC Snow Warden Scheme with Hazel Haslam as the new warden and as a result received a supply of free grit. Councillors have also been involved in the creation of the new parking area in William Deaville's field opposite the Church which will soon be in operation for major events.

I must again thank our excellent Parish Clerk, Ros Hallam, for the highly efficient and enthusiastic way she does her job. I also want to mention the continuing growth in community spirit. The VIA group have worked incredibly hard on the Neighbourhood Plan. The village Fete was the most successful yet, the Christmas Party at the Cross Keys, the Christmas and Spring Fayres in the church were all highly successful. There has been a

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lot of interest in trying to resurrect the Black Swan. A group of volunteers maintain the churchyard and others the millennium garden. It is very encouraging to see so many of the newer residents coming forward to help with village events, and the council looks forward to continuing to work with the PCC and VIA to further enhance the life of the parish. Who knows, in a year or two, we might even have a pub to retire to after the Parish Meeting!

CLlr Tatler's report is available in full on the IAA PC website at [www.iaa-pc.org.uk](http://www.iaa-pc.org.uk)

## 2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held 14 May 2014

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 14 May 2014, having been duly posted and published, were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

## 3. Finance Report for the year ended 31 March 2015

Mrs Hallam, as Responsible Financial Officer, reported that income increased as a result of a 4% increase in the Parish Precept, receipt of the outstanding DCLG grant for the Neighbourhood Plan, the VAT repayment and a bursary towards the Clerk's CiLCA training. However, the council remains dependent on the Parish Precept for its main source of income having no rental income that other parishes have from say a village hall or allotments.

Expenditure for the year also increased - the main expense being the Clerk's increased hours of work and rate of pay to bring these in line with the nationally agreed rates. Increased training costs included Chair training for CLlr Tatler, new councillor training for CLlrs Matkin and Matthews and the clerk's ongoing CiLCA training. Other fees and overheads are kept on a tight rein but continue to increase on a regular basis.

As a result, expenditure exceeded income for the year by £267 and was once again met from reserves. In view of this continued reliance on reserves to meet annual running costs, the PC approved a further 5% increase in the Precept for 2015/16 at its January meeting earlier this year.

The year ended with a balance of £5,743. After deducting set aside accounts for election costs and other contingencies, this left a surplus of £1,700 which for a small Parish Council, is still a healthy balance.

The Internal Audit has been completed and the Statutory Notice is on display. The External Audit to be completed by Grant Thornton on behalf of the Audit Commission is underway and the Annual Return here for signature at the Parish Council meeting that follows. This will be posted to GT according to the timetable set by them. The PC accounts are available for public inspection at the Clerk's office by appointment.

## 4. Belper & District Road Safety Committee Report

Mr Peter Matthews, IAA PC representative on the B & DRSC which meets on the same dates as IAA PC, sent his report which CLlr Jill Matthews read as follows:

Hulland Ward Parish Council held a meeting on 17 March to discuss the issue of speeding traffic through the village to which other PC's and Safety partnerships were invited. HW are keen to improve the effectiveness of their existing flashing speed sign system and invited Unipart Dorman to install their flashing signs in the village for a trial period -Dorman will support any PC by conducting such a trial. The trial had come about because the Parish Council had challenged the policy of the County Council, who eventually agreed for Hulland Ward to be a pilot project. It should be noted that DCC appear to be negatively inclined toward supporting such projects. However HW has the support of their local councillor who is pressurising the DCC officer responsible. Leicestershire CC and Leicestershire Police give strong support to flashing speed signs, their local officer has offered to attend PC's in support of their proposals.

- The speed sign results for Hulland Ward showed:
- Total Vehicles Counted During Trial : 24,562
- 14,319 were counted above the 30mph speed limit with the Trigger speed set at 30mph
- 85 Percentile Speed : 37.1 mph
- Maximum Speed : 65mph on 25/02/2015 @ 14:30 (Time)

Signs cost approximately £2000, need to be recharged every 10 days, the cameras have a life of 5-10 years, yearly maintenance contract and/or 5 year warranty is available. The maintenance contract is usually around

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£800 and the signs need to be covered by the Parish Council insurance. A fixing kit is supplied and the price of the signs can be more competitive if more than one is purchased. Future developments include Automatic Number Plate Recognition which is thought to be able to significantly influence driver behaviour. The Dorman presentation can be seen on the IAA PC website at [www.iaa-pc.org.uk](http://www.iaa-pc.org.uk)

Ms Bev Webster added that, incensed by speeding traffic endangering her whilst walking along the village pavement, she had made enquiries about speed signs for the village which she passed on to the council. Cllr Taylor agreed that DCC does not consider the provision of signs as a priority and would enquire whether the free trial offered would need Highways permission.

Ms Webster also told the council about continual problems with her phone line and slow broadband speed. In attempting to improve these, she discovered that the Cowers Lane Exchange that supplies Idridgehay has no spare lines and is not part of the current refurbishment programme. Cllr Taylor acknowledged that BT, the provider awarded the DCC Digital Derbyshire contract, was failing to improve broadband provision in rural areas and he is seeking ways to ensure that DCC honours its pledge to improve this.

## 5. Black Swan Update

Mr John Stamp, Chair of the Steering Group sent his report which Cllr Mike Westbrooke read as follows:

The first Steering Group meeting for the future of the Black Swan Public House in Idridgehay was held at Hillcliffe Forge Farm on Tuesday 5 May 2015. Present were John Stamp (Chair), Amanda Stamp, Pat Ibbotson, Diane Kerry, Peter Hurt, Philip Hurt, Michael Westbrooke, Katy Radbourne, Elvin Ibbotson, John Baldock and Nick Bristow. Apologies for absence were given by James Hool, David Brown and Mary Hurt.

As Chair of the group my aim is to facilitate an environment where the group can find a workable solution to the reopening of the Black Swan. We have started from the question - what do we know so far?

- the pub is owned by Crostone Ltd, a Development company.
- the purchase was at circa £355,000
- Amber Valley Borough Council have awarded it the status of 'an asset of community value'.
- this gives time until August 2015 to prepare and look at a possible offer to acquire.
- there are 2/3 interested parties that may wish to acquire and operate the pub, they have expressed a desire to work with the community
- it was decided that a good starting place is to engage in dialogue with Crostone - John Stamp is still trying to establish contact.

The group has decided to use the SOS title 'Save our Swan' with Elvin Ibbotson sketching out a logo of a Black Swan with a lifebelt around its neck - with SOS. Three worksheets produced by Michael Westbrooke steered our thoughts around the structure of the task ahead.

The group will be meeting Sally Soady on Wednesday 20 May at 7pm in Idridgehay - possibly at South Sitch. Sally is being funded by the Plunket Foundation. She is part of the team that acquired the Anglers Rest in Bamford High Peak through similar circumstances to the Black Swan and will be giving us four days consultancy to explore all options.

## 6. Questions from the Public

Muff Wiltshire stated that the 6.30pm start was a barrier for working members of the public attending the meeting. She also reminded the council of the benefit of a community forum suggested during the VIA Neighbourhood Plan that could be set up to discuss local matters in an informal way.

Councillor Tatler thanked those members of the public for their attendance and contributions closing the meeting at 7.25pm.

**Minutes subject to approval at the next IAA PC meeting on 8 July 2015**