

Minutes of the
Annual Parish Meeting for Casterton,
held at Casterton Village Hall on Thursday 25th May 2023 at 7.30pm.

There was an attendance of 10, including all of the Parish Councillors, Westmorland and Furness Councillor Hazel Hodgson and Parish Clerk Kevin Price. Apologies for absence were received from May Mackie and Richard and Marjorie Murray.

The Chairman (Councillor Chris Benson) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes:

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 26th May 2022 were taken as read. There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report:

The Chairman gave a full report on the year's activities and this will be appended to these minutes in the file. The Clerk will supply a copy to anyone who requests it.

Westmorland and Furness Councillor:

Councillor Hodgson said there was not a lot to report at this stage. The new Unitary Authority came into being on 1st April, thereby replacing the former South Lakeland District Council and Cumbria County Council. She looks forward to working with Parish Councils in her new area, together with Councillor Ian Mitchell.

Reports:

The following reports were received from groups operating within the parish:

- a. **Holy Trinity Church.** Councillor Evans said the church is secure financially and the recent quinquennial inspection has not raised any concerns regarding the building. Numbers attending worship, at the monthly service, are low.
- b. **Village Hall.** Jill Humphris reported as follows:
 1. The Village Hall has financially just broken even this year, thanks to all the hard work by the committee. Since Covid the number of bookings, especially regular bookings has not recovered this makes it more difficult to raise funds for the upkeep of the hall. Massive increases in energy costs are proving a challenge.
 2. The maintenance of the hall is ongoing, it is an old building, but it is in good condition at the moment and under the watchful eye of the committee members in charge we will hope to keep it this way.
 3. We were very fortunate to be gifted a new set of chairs which are a vast improvement on the old ones which were getting worn out. They

certainly provide a colourful addition to the decor. Thanks to a member of Casterton community for facilitating this gift, we are very grateful.

4. The new AV system installed and funded by the Parish Council should make our Hall more attractive venue for potential hirers, the Parish Council and for our own events.
 5. The Parish Council made good use of the hall during the recent jubilee and the Coronation and also the regular quizzes which have proved very popular, we hope these will continue in some form.
 6. Thanks to grants from the Parish Council and Christopher Robins Trust we were able to erect a weather vane to commemorate Queen Elizabeth's long reign, this was formally inaugurated at a coffee morning. The CCT awarded us a grant to purchase a slate plaque with information about the weather vane.
 7. The village hall committee organised some memorable events in the hall, 2 Highlights productions were very well attended, Ladies that Dig was a sell out and the musical gypsy jazz evening last week was inspiring. Our thanks to Highlights Rural Touring Scheme for facilitating these productions. The traditional Burns Supper in January, also a sell out, was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Our programme for this coming year is under discussion but no doubt there will be events for everyone.
 8. We would emphasise that we do need regular bookings in the hall giving a regular income, the fixed costs of the Hall are substantial and we would encourage all members of our community to use the hall, come to events and think of innovative ways we can utilise this wonderful community asset.
- c. **WI.** Gill Sykes reported that Casterton WI continues to meet on the first Wednesday of each month in the Village Hall. It has had a varied programme including cookery and sugar flower demonstrations, a Beetle Drive, a 'fun with paper' session and a Christmas Candlelight Evening. Talks have included 'Wings over Windermere', 'Historical Landscape of North Craven', Bay Search and Rescue and 'Going Plastic-free'.

The WI marked the Platinum Jubilee with the planting of a crab apple tree on the Village Green. Visitors and new members are always welcome.

- d. **Casterton Community Trust.** Gill Sykes reported that the trust met in May and October 2022 and in January and April 2023. There has been a full complement of trustees this year. There will be an election in 2024 when some trustees' terms of office come to an end. Four grant applications have been considered in this time. Money was given to the Parish Council towards the Platinum Jubilee celebrations and to the Village Hall for the explanatory plaque about the weathervane.

The village of Casterton has benefited considerably from the grants made since the inception of the trust and the trustees continue to be keen to attract grant applications and to raise awareness of the trust. To this end, the webpage has been updated and an article will be in the June edition of AKL and on Facebook. No project is too small to be considered, providing it meets the eligibility criteria and has community benefit. The trustees urge individuals to consider improvements that might enhance the village and to make a grant application to the Community Trust.

- e. **Casterton Neighbours.** Enid Hastings reported that this facility is still operating, although not as much used as formerly.

Any other business:

- a. Bill Hastings reported on the poor state of the War Memorial and asked if this could be a future agenda item for the Parish Council to consider.
- b. Enid Hastings pointed out that there had been little maintenance of the Village Green over the past four years and asked if the Parish Council could make this a future agenda item for discussion.

The meeting closed at 8pm.

Signed:

Dated: