

Minutes of the proceedings of Annual Pittington Parish Meeting held in Pittington Village Hall, 7pm, High Pittington on Tuesday 16th May 2024

Present: Councillors: V Bell (Chair), C Hicks (Vice Chair), D Hall J Glasgow, D Tate, G Patton, G Laverick

Also in attendance: M Toal (Parish Clerk), 2 Members of the public

01/24 Introduction and Welcome

Chair, Councillor Victoria Bell welcomed everyone to the meeting.

02/24 Apologies for absence

Councillors: J Everett

Apologies accepted and approved

03/24 Annual Chair report of the Parish Council 2023/24

Reflecting on the past year I would like to begin with offering thanks to people in the Parish who are the always committed to offering their service to the community.

- Fellow Councillors – thanks are given to my fellow Councillors who voluntary offer their services to the Parish Council to ensure it remains a beautiful place to live and assist in supporting the 3 villages for us all to enjoy all of the benefits of living in a caring, safe community.
- Clerk- Melanie has continued to be our parish clerk and finance officer for nearly 10 years now and is always as ever committed in her role to giving her community all she can.
- Handyman – Kevin continues to work as our handyman throughout the 3 villages and keep up the physical appearances of the assets in the community. He always produces excellent work with heaps of praise from the community.
- PCA – Pittington Community Association continues to be a key part of the community offering a wide range of services, groups, events and room hire to the parish and local residents.
- DAY – Durham Area Youth provides a fantastic key role in the interaction with our children in the community. It gives them an opportunity to develop and earn within a safe and rewarding environment.

A quick summary of the past year includes

Allotments and Cemetery The allotments at Church Vale and Coalford Lane as usual have offer valuable leisure time to some our green fingered parishioners. Another new section of new exterior fencing has been built to try to make them as secure as possible. The cemetery as always has been well maintained and further several burial plots have been purchased along with funerals making our cemetery a popular place for burials.

Gardening Group The gardening group has continued to tend to planters and bedded areas with a vast supply of summer bedding last year. Grants were supplied by DCC Its Your Neighbourhood Campaign and Pittington Parish Council. Several residents are now as keen as ever to commit their time to planting regularly.

Christmas Tree Another fantastic Christmas Tree lighting at St Johns Chapel was organized with the event being well attended with a visit from Santa, carol singing, Pittington Brass Band playing carols and a distribution of presents to local children. An extra special feel this year with the snowfall on the ground a cold nip in the air, a lovely experience for all.

Donations Donations of a whopping £6,914, were given to the community including Pittington Community Association for the VE Day event and the Festive Pantomime, , Durham Area Youth, the Gardening Group, defibrillator costs, Pittington Brass Band and St Johns Chapel.

Website We launched a new website very recently and will continue to build on it to give residents more information regarding the parish and events.

Going Forward Going forward into 2024 and beyond we will continue to work for the community and strive to improve our parish. We currently have 1 vacancies for Parish Councillors so if anyone would like to come and join us please get in touch.

04/24 Pittington Village Hall Over the last year we have had a range of events that have seen more people come to our hall. We have had our annual Christmas market, a panto for the first time, Bric –a- brac sale, an easter extravaganza and a great quiz night. Over the next year we are hoping to be able to host a lot more events such as more quiz nights, 80s/tribute nights, family fun days etc. It's a great way to help the hall raise money and have something for the people in Pittington to do. Hopefully it will be a great turn out as we feel we could be better supported, especially all the hard work that gets put in behind the scenes. Jodie Lisgo

05/24 Litter Picking A small group of locals take part in a litter pick on the 3rd Thursday of every month, we try to cover the roads leading into the village to make them cleaner as people drive through our area. However we are aware that others do litter pick at other times and dates, especially those who walk their dogs. It is surprising how much litter one person can collect in just 1 hour. Volunteers are always welcome, we can provide pickers/hoops/bags and hi-vis jackets for any one wanting to join us. Kath Fall

06/24 St Laurence Church Despite still being in a vacancy, i.e. no vicar in place, the church continues to flourish with the aid of several retired clergy, especially Rev. Canon Leslie Morley who's help is invaluable. It is now hoped that having extended the due date for applicants to the post, interviews can be held in July, with an incumbent in position in September/October. A Communion Service is held every Sunday morning at 9.30am, except for the first Sunday of every alternate month when we make a visit to our sister church St Mary Magdalene, Belmont. After a break over the winter, due to the cold weather, the Thursday morning "Private Prayer " sessions resumed at the beginning of March and have been supported by a regular group of people who enjoy the peace and quiet of the church. Fund raising continues, with the popular "Cream Teas" taking place on various dates throughout the year, these are always well supported by the villagers and people from farther afield. 61 Durham have once again invited the church to have a table at their wedding fairs and St Laurence remains a popular venue to get married. St Laurence Church is grateful for all the support it receives from the village, for those who attend regularly, those who support the numbers draw every month and to all who support our fund raising events. Kath Fall

07/24 Camera Club The camera club continues with a small regular number of amateur photographers, with 2 new people joining us in the last year. The programme has a different project for each month, hopefully to allow different genres for everyone to try. We are a friendly non-competitive group who just enjoy taking photos, but we would still welcome new members. Our thanks go to the village hall committee for their support. Kath Fall

08/24 Gardening Club Last year the Gardening Group received funding from Its Your Neighbourhood campaign from DCC where it was awarded £350, with £400 being allocated

from PPC. It offered us the opportunity to buy bedding plants, trees, compost and tools to tend to bedded areas and planters through the parish. We have many volunteers who tend to their own nearby a planter, which has continued from the Adopt a Pot scheme.

09/24 **Pittington Brass Band** No report given.

10/24 **Youth Club DAY** Over the last year we have been delivering busy successful youth sessions within the village of Pittington, working with young people ages 6-16 years and engaging them in range of different fun activities such as sports, arts, and crafts in which they can develop holistically, developing their social skills and building confidence. We have seen a growth within the sessions with more young people attending our weekly Pittington sessions every Tuesday evening.

DAY have had a Redhill's Art Project which has took place at Pittington for our senior group. This project which was inspired by the printed archives of Redhill's Durham Miner's Association allowed young people get creative, use their voice, and make zines (small DIY pamphlets), posters and badges about topics they are passionate about. They also reflected on some of their history, learning about the mining heritage.

We hosted our talent show at Pittington Village Hall, where we brought together families and members of the community to witness the amazing talents of our young people from across all of our villages. Young people performed on stage, singing, dancing, and performing gymnastics and it was great them building confidence in front of so many people. We have also been able to offer opportunities such as bringing in an Animal Handler, so young people can have the experience of handling and learning about a range of different animals. This has allowed you people to face their fears and build confidence.

DAY loves to get involved within the community, supporting and volunteering at community events. Every year, DAY supports at Pittington's Christmas Events, helping out running some stalls and bringing along Santa and Elf to give out gifts and to spread Christmas cheer within the community. As well as this, a group of young people took lead on planning and delivering a community event in Pittington called the Mad Hatter's Tea Party, which brought together

the community with a range of different stalls and activities which helped

11/24 **Allotment Report** Our 2 allotment areas, Coalford Lane and Church Vale continue to be very popular with residents. Plots are always tended to with a waiting list also. Coalford Lane allotments continue to have the perimeter fencing repaired with another section recently replaced. There has been a couple of breakins this year with gates been broken and livestock taken. Church Vale continues to be a community allotment with open plots. Both areas see our green fingered residents grow plants, flowers, vegetables and Coalford Lane hosting hens and ducks for some plot holders. Melanie Toal

12/24 **Public Forum**

No comments.