

## Annual Parish Meeting

There can be, and often is, confusion between the Annual Parish Meeting and the Statutory Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

To comply with the [Local Government Act 1972](#), All Parish Councils throughout England are required by law to hold an Annual Parish Meeting, which must take place between 1st March and the 1st June (inclusive). Meetings should not commence before 6.00 pm. The Annual Parish Meeting **is not the Parish Council's Statutory Annual Meeting** (AGM).

### **Purpose of the Annual Parish Meeting is:**

- so that the Parish Council can explain what it has been doing over the last year and
- it enables the electors to have their say on anything they consider is important to the people of the Parish.

### **Notice of the meeting:**

At least seven *clear* days' public notice must be given (*not including Sat/Sun/Bank Holidays etc*). The notice must specify the business to be done. It must be signed by the Chairman.

It is important to frame the agenda so that everyone in the locality has an appointed time when they can take part in the meeting; ie an item where District and Parish Councillors are able to speak, there should be a report on the activities of the Parish Council and a time when the electorate can bring items for consideration.

### **General background:**

The expenses of the meeting are paid by the Parish Council.

Most resolutions can be considered by the Parish Council but these are not binding on them. Some are necessary to bring to or are binding on the Parish Council, these are:

- that a resolution, by a well attended meeting, requiring the Council to provide allotments places – is an obligation for it to make every effort for it to do so
- that sometimes a trust instrument requires a resolution of the Parish Meeting for some act of the council as trustee.

Accounts which are presented to the meeting should be topical. It is better to exhibit recent unaudited accounts than to produce audited statements which are nearly always a year old and therefore largely irrelevant.

### **Who will chair the meeting:**

The Chairman of the Parish Council will chair the meeting. If the Chairman is not able to attend, then the meeting will elect a chairman from amongst those electors present.

### **Will Parish Councillors be there:**

Usually they do attend and will speak if need be. But the purpose of the meeting is to enable the ordinary electors to have their say. Councillors will listen with interest and as electors themselves, also have the opportunity to raise questions and make comments if they wish.

### **Will notes be taken of the meeting:**

Yes, a written record of the meeting will be taken and will be presented at a future meeting of Council for their consideration.

### **Voting:**

No method of voting at the meeting is laid down. Any convenient method may be used, but a poll (ie a vote of the whole body of electors by ballot) may be claimed before the end of the meeting and must be held if demanded by ten persons present, or one-third of those present (whichever is the less), or if the Chairman consents. The poll is conducted by a Returning Officer appointed by the District Council – it will incur equivalent costs to a local election.

**Who can attend the meeting:**

The Annual Parish Meeting is a meeting of all the local government electors for the Parish. It is NOT a Meeting of the Parish Council, which the public can participate in. Anyone may attend but only registered electors of Kenn Parish may speak and vote.

The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 provides for the general public and the press to attend.

A non-elector may speak (but not vote) during the meeting with consent. Consent of the meeting should be treated as having been given if there is no objection.

**Will I be able to ask questions and make suggestions:**

Yes, any registered elector may ask questions of the Council, which will usually be answered by the Chairman, the Clerk to the Council, or a designated Councillor.

An elector may also make suggestions and comment on anything pertinent to the people of Kenn. This will be welcomed and is the whole purpose of the meeting.

**What else can happen at these meeting:**

**With preplanning** – part of the meeting can be allocated to invited local clubs, societies and other voluntary and statutory organisations to provide an exhibition and/or a representative to speak about the work of their group.

The trustees of local charities could also be given their opportunity to speak, as might representatives of bodies such as the village hall committee, the Women's Institute or local sports clubs. This is an opportunity for them to publicise their activities.

Outside speakers can be invited. These could be local government officials or experts on matters likely to be of local interest.

The Parish Council can consider including a particular local public issue on the agenda, something important or controversial, some examples elsewhere have been; a village plan; planting trees on the green; the expansion of an airport; more houses; water or sewerage schemes; the amalgamation of charities; removal of telephone kiosks and post-offices; bus and train services; local common land; clearing the churchyard.

However, it is sensible to restrict the number of controversial issues to be raised at any one meeting

**How long will the meeting last:**

As long as need be within reason. It really depends on those present and the number of questions and the discussion that is raised. Generally, the meeting will last no longer than 2 hours.