



ANNUAL PARISH MEETINGS

Parish meetings can be called any time throughout the year by the chairman, or if he fails to do so when requested, two parish councillors or six electors can call the meeting. The same legislation applies to all parish meetings but.....

The Annual Parish Meeting must be held between the **1st March** and the **1st June**. This is the meeting where the parish council invite the public and press to hear reports from the Chairman, District & County Councillors and maybe from any organisation that the parish council gave significant funding to. There should also be an opportunity for the public and press to express their opinions on what the council are doing. No votes taken at this meeting are binding on the parish council although they should consider them at the next meeting of the parish council.

Only members on the electoral roll can vote on an issue – other members of the public can attend and express their opinions but not vote.

A great many councils hold the two meetings on the same evening during May as they feel that they will not get the few people who do attend to come out twice. It is important if they are held on the same evening that there is at least a two minute gap to demonstrate that a different meeting is now taking place. There is no rule about which should take place first.

It is recommended that in an election year the Annual Parish Meeting should be held after the elections to prevent the meeting being used as a “hustings” for potential District and County Councillors.

Points to Remember

- The Parish Meeting is NOT a meeting of the parish council – the parish meeting is a completely separate entity.
- The annual parish meeting is convened by the chairman of the parish council.
- Any parish meeting is governed by specific legislation under Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- The meeting is an opportunity to discuss 'parish affairs'; it is not an opportunity for electors to make complaints about the parish council. The parish council has a complaints procedure for that purpose.
- Separate minutes must be kept, which are then approved at the next parish meeting, which is sometimes a whole year on at the next annual meeting! The minutes of the parish meeting are NOT approved by the parish council.
- If present, the chairman of the parish council must preside.
- As this is not a meeting of the parish council, the councillors who are present are there as electors (if they are electors of the parish); the top table should house the chairman and whoever is taking the minutes (usually the parish clerk).