



OLD PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Colin Smart Clerk: To be appointed

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting, held on Tuesday 30th April, 7:00pm in the Community Centre, Townson Close, Old, Northamptonshire

Councillors Present: R Bury, S Gohil, C Smart, S Haughney

County Councillor : Judy Shephard

Old Parish Charities: Chair of Trustees: Joan Barratt

Members of the public, village groups or village organisation representatives: 11

1. To note any Councillor apologies given. Parish Councillor C Beckett, (Councillor N Moore was absent)

2. To approve the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting of 24th April 2018.

Approved

3. To receive report from the Parish Council Chairman covering the activities of the Parish Council for the year to 31 March 2019 and to take any questions following the report and agree any actions.

This year there have been significant change in the Council, with Councillors Richard & Pauline Baldwin leaving us in May after many years valuable service. In September we welcomed Sanjay Gohil to the Council, and in October, with great regret we accepted the resignation of Councillor Barrie Grant, who provided sterling service for many years. Just recently we welcomed Julie Robson to the Council, however, her Tenure was very short as she and Paul are due to leave the village soon ..

As if that wasn't enough trauma, in January we lost our Clerk Rosie Warne, and so we have been somewhat over stretched as a team.

We currently have two Councillor Vacancies and vacancy for a Clerk.

If any of you are interested or know of someone who would make a good councillor or Clerk, please let us know.

We have been fortunate to be able to get a Defibrillator for Cherry Hill, and despite a few teething problems relating to locks and differences in operating ethos between the Ambulance Service and BHF the unit is available and working.

The Butterfly garden at Mill Lane was abandoned because of issues with access and advice that this was not necessarily best area. (we are relocating the Planter on Harrington Rd to the Mill Lane Triangle and hopefully this will ensure it is maintained). An area Near the village hall was used as an alternate (with higher population of the flowers required) and was deemed to be a success. We are looking to use the verges between the village and Cherry Hill for encouraging Butterflies and hopefully we can get some volunteers to help with that. We have had volunteers cut back some of the nettles etc to give some of the other flowers a chance, but I am reliably informed that Nettles are Butterfly Friendly.

Also at Cherry Hill, we have recently installed two bins. After the loss of the last one that was fixed to the pavement, these are attached to the bus shelter and hopefully will remain there! We are currently trying to get Daventry to empty the bins, but in the Meantime the Cherry Hill Residents are keeping it under control.

After the loss of some of the Bus Service last year, we looked into alternative services and in the short term, we have managed to get the Walgrave Wellbeing Group to offer up seats to Old Residents on their weekly bus service, but I am not aware that this has been taken up to any great extent.

You will remember that last year we reported that, thanks to a very generous donation from a charitable trust, we were able to purchase a speed monitoring device without the need to find any additional funds. Unfortunately, the installation of the device has been held up whilst we wait for the County Council to sort itself out and to put in the poles, but the poles went in this week (we opted to use a lamppost in one case to keep it simple) and Sanjay and I will install in the next few days, so we will hopefully start to see an effect on speeding drivers.

On a similar note we will again be running the Speedwatch campaign this year, but this is dependant on getting enough volunteers to help man the cameras so if you are interested please let us know.

This years "Village Tidy" was not a huge success, in the village we had a poor turnout, but better in Cherry Hill. The council will have a rethink about why that was and look at how we can do this better.

Comments: Rebecca Moore pointed out that the Walgrave Bus service was expanding, and was available to Old Residents, but cautioned that it was popular and so should be booked well in advance. Rebecca has the contact details at the Community Centre.

4. To receive reports from the County Councillor and the District Councillor and to take any questions following the reports and agree any actions

No Report Received from District Councillor Lesley Woolnough

Report from County Councillor Judy Shephard

As I have reported before these are extraordinary times that the County Council are experiencing. It has been quite a roller-coaster ride! Our new refreshed Cabinet under the Leadership of Cllr Matt Golby have strived to meet the huge financial challenges which have faced our Authority. We were faced with a £64 m deficit which resulted in an Inspector (Max Caller) and two Commissioners (Tony McArdle & Brian Roberts) being brought in to oversee our performance.

The stark recommendation on the back of this was to embark down the route on becoming two Unitary councils (North and West) within Northamptonshire by the year 2020. A task force is now in place focussing on local government reform and Leaders and Chief Executives meet regularly on both N & W Steering Groups to progress this.

Our focus has been on continuing and strengthening our financial recovery

within the organisation and dealing with the challenges of delivering our key Services that we have statutorily to provide including Adult and Children's services.

In reflection, over the past year it has been quite a turbulent journey! The Caller Report from the Inspector highlighted that it was about "doing the boring well" which indeed was a salutary lesson which we all took to heart. We are now very close to achieving a balanced budget position this year which is in part due to being able to raise Council Tax to 4.99% and the special Government dispensation of being able to use Capital Receipts, and the sheer determined effort by the Chief Executive (Theresa Grant), Officers, staff and our Section 151 Officer (Susan Zeiss). We still have the second lowest Council Tax in the Country! We must maintain this focus in the forthcoming years as it is key to be able to proceed down the unitary route in a balanced outrun position. I believe we have set a good and achievable budget for 2019/20 in part due to our Transformation programme which has been determined not to disrupt the statutory services we provide but it will also not be without challenge.

Due to the dedication and exceptional work by Officers and their teams we have now been informed that the S114 Notice which restricted council spending, imposed last year has just now been lifted. This is a clear indication that progress had been made in the right direction and is a significant milestone. Careful and strict financial controls will remain in place.

The County Council now operates only one Overview and Scrutiny Committee as directed by the Local Government Association and I still remain Chairman of the Development Control Committee – a position I love. I have indicated that I will not be standing at the next council elections as by then I will have completed 25 years as your County Councillor.

5. To receive reports from the Trustees of Old Parish Charities and to take any questions and to agree any actions.

Presented by the Chairman to the Trustees, Joan Barratt.

This year has seen the re-election of the Chair and Vice Chair. David Parton continues to provide a solid Rock as support for Trustees. There has been change in the Trustees, with Colin Smart giving up his place as Council Appointee to Annette Bardin who will be able to provide additional pastoral support. Andy Hutchison resigned after 5 yrs of excellent service and has been replaced by Claire Glover, again increasing our pastoral support. In addition we are happy to welcome Rev David Bent as the new Ex- Officio Trustee.

At the community centre we have continued to maintain the facilities with New Tables and a New Notice Board. The Garden furniture should be replaced very soon.

The Centre continues to be used regularly, with Coffee Mornings, Lunches etc.

The Youth Club continues to flourish at its new Monday timeslot.

The Centre has also hosted Macmillan Coffee Mornings, Bible Study and other events.

The Cottage Concerts are also taking place at the Centre and continue to be well supported.

The Tennis courts are Available for Village use, please see Rebecca for Key.

The Allotments are Fully assigned, so if you would like one, please add your name to the waiting list.

The Christmas Dinner was over subscribed again this year and we had over 50 attendees, so if you would like to attend, please let Rebecca know as soon as possible!

This year, the Charities along with the Council, were proud to take up the challenge set by Tony Yeoman who asked what the village was doing for the centenary of the end of WW1. The Cleaning and painting of the memorial and its fencing was funded by the Charities, but thanks go to Peter and Colin for the excellent work in making the memorial look so good. Thanks too to David Parton and Tony Yeoman who with XXXX Led a lovely Service at the memorial.

In terms of Improvements around the village, we have agreed to replace the Swings on the Playing field, which should be complete in May, and we have had work done to the Tractor Shed to improve security and add a toilet.

On a more Administrative Note to finish, the Coffee Morning on the 23rd May has been cancelled because of the EU elections, and the Clerk has a New email address as we have been having issues with it. The New address is XXXXXXXXXXXX

6. To receive reports from any parish group, organisation, community representative and village resident and to take any questions following the reports and agree any actions.

Village Hall – Katie Lindenbaun

This has been another good year with an excellent committee, though we continue to welcome more members, like Graham xxx

Currently there is a regular booking for most days of the week and include activities such as yoga, badminton Table Tennis, as well as Bridge 3 times per month. Weekends see the hall being used for parties especially children's parties. The incomes from these cover the regular outgoings to run the village hall. Any profit from extra bookings like parties and fundraising is used to fund repairs, and things like the annual clean, prior to the cricket season.

Events like the Rhythm and Blues night are very popular and raise funds to cover costs of maintenance and repairs. Obviously, Bonfire Night continues to be one of our best events, and we are grateful for the use of the land and for the volunteers who make it happen each year.

The Film Nights continue, and we would like to see more people from the village attending, the details are on the website and in the village magazine.

St Andrews Church – Rev David Bent

The village has been around 12 months without a Vicar, and the Lay organisation has covered during this time.

We currently have no Church Wardens, and we are looking to address this.

The Churchyard has been checked for H&S (presumably to check integrity of headstones etc) and we have allocated an area for butterfly conservation.

The GDPR & Safeguarding requirements have been addressed.

The church now benefits from new heating and lighting and we are open for all.

We intend to increase the number of services held at the church and going forward we plan to have a service at 6pm on 3 out of 4 Sundays in the Church at Old, with the 4th Sunday being split across the 4 parishes.

My wife and I are settling into the village and are feeling welcomed.

I would ask that if you know of anyone in the village who might welcome some support from the church, to let me know, you know the village better than me.

Cricket Club – Frank Keightley

- OCC run 7 teams : 3 x NCL League sides; 2x Friendly XI's (1 x Sunday XI + 1 x Mid-Week Friendly XI); and 2 x Junior sides (Under 13's and Under 11's).
- The close season has had two disastrous events :-
 - Not one but two break-in's at the Faxton End PF Tractor Shed where many hundreds of pounds' worth of non-insured items were taken; and
 - The loss of the relatively new playing mat at Walgrave caused by irresponsible persons having a BBQ on it this Spring. This item too was uninsured and the club has had to put out an emergency appeal for funds to buy a new mat for the 2019 season which is due to start in 2 weeks time.
- On the playing front, the 1st XI enjoyed their best ever finish last season : 5th in Division 2 of the NCL. The new season has already started and in their first game they drew away at Rushden, and their first home game is this coming Saturday (4th May).
- On Sunday last, in a friendly match, our returning overseas player, Frank Huang, knocked 101 not out here at Old, so we have high hopes of another good season. (We are also much indebted for another year to Mr and Mrs Yeoman for their continued support to the club in offering our overseas player such excellent accommodation at such a bargain basement price for the club.)
- Our 2nd XI suffered a demotion at the end of last season (the first demotion for OCC for over 20 years) and will play this season in Div. 8. Their first home game will be on May 11th, and we are confidently expecting a swift return to Div. 7.
- The 3rd XI finished 5th in Div. 12 last season, but, courtesy of some Byzantine calculations by the NCL Committee in the close season, have been elevated to Div. 11 for this year. They too open their home season on May 11th at Walgrave.
- Our Sunday Friendly XI has already started (see Frank's century above) and their next game is at Old at 2pm this Sunday.
- The Mid-Week Friendly side play their home games on the mat at Walgrave on Tuesday evenings and the first home fixture is on June 4th.

The Meeting Closed at 8:45 pm