

NEWBOLD PACEY AND ASHORNE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 11th May 2016

PRESENT: Councillors: A Marshall(Chair), J Cooper,
S Bolton, W Caroll, F Kishor
District Councillors: A Parry
County Councillor: D Kendall
Clerk: P Routly
and 2 members of the public

1. Apologies for absences

None.

2. Approval of minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 13th May 2015 were proposed for acceptance by Cllr Bolton, seconded by Cllr Cooper and unanimously accepted as a true record of proceedings.

3. Chairman's report

The Chairman made the following report:-

Firstly I would like to express the thanks of his fellow Councilors' to Stephen Bolton who stepped down from the Chairman's role after more than seven years of energetic and conscientious service to the local community. We are all glad that he continues as a Councillor.

It is sad to report the death of Chris Pate who was a conscientious active member of the Parish Council. He will be missed by his fellow councilors and the local community.

A satisfactory and hopefully ongoing solution to the significant flooding problems at the Crab Tree Allotments has been achieved after considerable effort on the part of the Parish council.

Ashorne's Defibrillator has found a permanent home in the lobby of the Village Hut which provides excellent access day and night for this invaluable lifesaving equipment.

At the request of local families the building and equipping of a children's playground is being actively investigated with two possible sites being considered. The village garden or an unused section of the allotments have both been inspected by a specialist local contractor and are potential both practical options. This project is ongoing.

Repairs to the footpath bridge adjacent to the cricket pitch have been agreed and funded, work will commence shortly.

Efforts to move the bus stop (X15 buses travelling towards Leamington Spa) from the current dangerous site on the bends of the B4087 in Newbold Pacey have been ongoing for some time. Agreement was reached with Warwickshire C.C Highways to move the stop to a location on a straight section of the road before the bends but Stagecoach the Operator of the service, after much procrastination, have advised the Parish Council that because of financial considerations resulting from poor numbers of passengers the service is to be discontinued in the near future.

The Parish Council Have written to the chief Executive of Stagecoach and Warwickshire C.C expressing their dismay at the loss of this vital and only “public” means of transport for local people.

There have been ten planning applications during the year two of which required a special meeting to hear the views of local residents. Support was also given to a local resident who successfully appealed a planning refusal. The Parish Council also supported adjacent Parish Councils and participated in public meetings in relation to the proposed GLH development and the Wellesbourne Airfield proposals. Support was also given to the proposals for a new Medical Centre in Wellesbourne.

Newbold Pacey and Ashorne PC are participating in “Lengthsman Scheme” led by Wellesbourne P.C. This scheme, funded by Warwickshire C.C, provides/finances 10 hours a month of maintenance and repair work to local facilities by an independent contractor. The work is specified and monitored by the Parish Council but can be proposed by local residents as long as the job falls within the scope of the scheme. The scheme starts in May.

Our Parish Church, St Georges, is under severe financial pressure and the Parish Council is looking at ways of assisting the PCC in their fund raising activities. Councilor Fiona Kishor is liaising with the PCC.

4. Finance

i. Presentation of the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016

The Clerk made the following report:

I am presenting the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016.

The balance carried forward from last year was £49259

Total receipts for the year amounted to £22166

Total payments for the year amounted to £14833 resulting in an excess of receipts over payments of £7333

The end of year reserves amount to a total of £56592 with £15392 allocated to the general fund, £30000 to the project fund , £10000 to the planning fund and £1200 to the election fund.

The accounts will be subject to internal and external audit in the coming weeks.

I will request the accounts are approved and the Statement of Accounts is signed in the main Parish Council meeting.

5. Village Hall Committee Report

A member of the Hut Committee could not attend and sent apologies, the following report was, however, received.

This year has been a successful year, both socially and financially, for the village hall. The toilets have just been painted, completing the repainting of the entire interior of the building. Outside, the bushes which had encroached on the windows have been cut down and the area gravelled, whilst, at the other side of the hall, the area outside the kitchen fire door has been cleared of weeds and gravelled and a new light installed to make it easier to find the bins.

The village defibrillator has been fitted outside the main door with a light which makes going to the hall in the dark much easier and Severn Trent have again provided gravel for the car park. A key safe has been fitted outside the main door to allow access to regular users. For the future, our plans include lockable roller shutters in the hatch to the committee room to match that already fitted in the kitchen and the renovation of the floor in the main hall, as soon as funds allow.

The Hut Committee has met 11 times, held 2 walks plus food. The monthly coffee morning has continued and there has been a monthly lunch club this year on the third Monday of the month. The craft group meets in the committee room every Tuesday morning. The Halloween ghost hunt was again a popular event as was the summer village show and the barn dance. But we have had some different events including a talk on Operation Nimrod, a murder mystery evening, apple pressing with vintage steam engine, a revival of Allo Allo, a musical evening with the trio Whalebone and this year it was our turn for the village New Year breakfast.

Something has taken place in the hall on an incredible 310 occasions between January 2015 and January 2016. This compares with 257 the previous year, 152 in the January 2014 report, and 130 in that for January 2013. Not all these were activities which bring in revenue but it does show the hall is central to life in the village and an asset both to our local community and others.

We have regular bookings from the WI, The Parish Council, to whom, as always, we are very grateful for the annual grant they give us from their funds, the table tennis clubs, both from Ashorne which now runs 3 teams and from Wellesbourne, and the pilates class which currently runs on 3 occasions per week. Our other lettings have included the usual children's parties, funeral lunches and teas, walkers using the car park and toilets, and interest groups. For the first time this year we were booked for an off-site training day by a team from Jaguar Land Rover. There have also been private parties for residents and non-residents and the cricket club car washes and social events. The numbers at the fortnightly whist drives have increased dramatically.

Over the years we have been working towards a refurbished, successful village hall. Thanks to fundraising, lettings, donations, people both on the committee and others who have given their time to make events successful and enjoyable, in 2016 we can look around and see this dream taking shape.

6. PCC report

A member of the PCC could not attend and sent apologies, the following report was however received .

Report for Parish Council on St George's financial position.

St George's ended 2015 with a degree of financial security thanks to a legacy and three very generous one-off donations. For the first time in many years we have an adequate reserve (deemed to be one year's running costs – in 2016 about £15000). While this has eased the immediate pressure the church is still vulnerable financially. Taking the one-off income out of the figures, we generated 77% of the running costs, leaving a shortfall of approximately £3300. Clearly, if we continue to show a shortfall of this size, our reserves will be wiped out in five years.

The loss of several long term supporters and members of the congregation has seen the average monthly collection drop from £240 in 2014 to £206 in 2015.

An illustration of how expenditure in 2015 was allocated is shown in the separate pie chart.

The largest amount of money goes to our parish share. The Mid Fosse benefice does not pay its way and is subsidised by wealthier parishes in the deanery. This will put the churches at risk when the current incumbent moves on. It is likely that St George's would be absorbed by Wellesbourne and only have occasional services. All four parishes have been paying above the basic annual increase to try to reduce this risk. This has been noted and acknowledged.

We are monitoring our budget carefully and looking at ways of reducing expenditure. We will continue to run fundraising events, but as with every small community, the pool of organisers and givers is often largely the same across all the village organisations.

We will be running a stewardship campaign this summer, and we're grateful for the offer of practical support from parish councillors. The parish magazine is delivered to about 105 homes across the parish. If just 40 of those households were willing to pledge £2.50 a week the projected shortfall would be covered.

At present we are waiting for quotes for the repair of the roof, a significant number of tiles were dislodged during the winter on both the main building and the bell tower. We are also considering the future of the organ and have to decide if we can justify spending several thousand pounds to keep it playable or if it should be decommissioned.

It is important to note that while grant funding is available for repairs to the fabric of the church (and where we are eligible we will always apply for such funds), but NO such grants are available for the day to day running of the church.

The PCC will do its best to keep an active church in the parish. Any support, ideas for fundraising etc are very welcome.

The PCC appreciates the interest and support it receives from the parish council.

7. County Councillor's report

Cllr Kendall reported

That funding had been secured for a bus stop at Newbold Pacey but unfortunately Stagecoach had announced it was withdrawing the service.

County Council passed a budget with slight increase, also there will be cuts, but some increase in budget for social care.

The County Council was running a 'Living in Warwickshire Survey' and all should be encouraged to complete as it will shape future services.

8. District Councillor's report

Cllr Parry made the following report:-

The last 12 months have predominantly been preoccupied with matters concerning the Core Strategy, Medical Centre and Planning/Housing related issues which impact on villagers throughout the Parish of Newbold Pacey and Ashorne.

An update on activities are highlighted below:

Core Strategy

The consultation of the updated Core Strategy with its modifications concludes on 12th May and it is anticipated it will be declared sound and adopted by SDC in July subject to no further issues being raised during the consultation period.

Medical Centre

Delighted to report positive news has been received from Hastings House Medical Centre in respect of Warwickshire NHS Clinical Commissioning Group agreeing to funding. The practice will now be focusing on finalising the architectural plans and building specification for Full Planning Permission so that construction can begin 2016/2017. I have been extensively involved in this project throughout 2015/2016.

SD311 Footpaths

Attending the next meeting later this month to progress matters regarding the two footpaths to Moreton Morrell via Newbold Road and Kineton Road. I am continuing to work closely with Stephen Bolton and the working party in this respect as both the ward member and representative for Moreton Morrell to ensure these routes are incorporated onto the WCC Definitive Map. Evidence of usage from Ashorne and Newbold Pacey villagers is required to support this case.

GLH Planning

Attending a meeting next Wednesday 11th May regarding traffic related issues impacting from GLH with WCC Highways prior to the NPAPC AGM. It is anticipated that the planning application for GLH is coming forward to committee at the end of this month.

Stagecoach

A reply from Steve Burd, MD of Stagecoach requesting clarification on the X15 bus route, which appears under threat, is still awaited but has been chased.

Wellesbourne & Kineton Community Forum

The date of the next WKCF is scheduled to take place on Thursday 2nd June, when the medical centre will be at the forefront of the agenda. Venue is Wellesbourne Fire Station.

9. Matters of interest

None.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.05pm.

The Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council immediately followed this meeting.