

Northmoor Annual Parish Meeting

Wednesday 29 May 2014
Northmoor Village Hall

Parishioners Present

Dr G Shelton, Mrs V Ryan, Mr P Winder, Mr M Ryan, Mr & Mrs S Harrison, Mr & Mrs M Druce, Mrs J Shelton, Mrs L Herford, Mrs J Thorne, Mr D McHugh, Mr A Williams, Mr & Mrs S Bustany, Ms M Sears, Ms J Metcalf, Mrs A Brunner-Ellis, Mr G Ogilvie and Miss P Tettey.

Also in Attendance.

PCSO Helen Keen, County Councillor Charles Mathew and Barry Russell of the E.A.

Apologies

There were apologies from Parish Councillor Gaynor Sharp-Dent, and John Waterfield and Alison Taylor

Meeting Chairman

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Dr Graham Shelton, chaired the Meeting.

Item 2: Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2013.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2013 had been previously distributed prior to the meeting and were signed as a true record.

Item 3: Chairman's Report.

The Chairman thanked the Parish Councillors and Clerk for the work they had done over the past year, and also our County and District Councillors for their regular attendance at Parish Council meetings.

Graham welcomed the established relationship with the Environment Agency through the Northmoor Weir Project Board, was delighted to have secured sufficient funding to enable superfast broadband for the whole Parish, and was pleased that the Red Lion pub had been saved by a Community purchase. One item of concern was the frequency of HGVs illegally crossing Newbridge, and the potential damage to our community if this resulted in the closure of the Thames crossing at that point.

On Planning there had been just five Applications, the most significant being the outline planning consent for eight houses at Park Farm. The consent also included a significant sum of Section 106 monies for community projects and improvements to Moreton Lane.

Graham then asked Parish Councillors to add to the review.

Peter Winder reported that the Community Led Plan had come to fruition and the finding were continuing to be implemented, with an additional mail service, new Village Hall

Committee, table tennis club, purchase of the Red Lion, the Venturers, and road maintenance with monies being found by Councillor Mathew for additional passing places.

Valerie Ryan reported significant progress with the Playing Field, with an active Committee, refurbishments on going and with more rubber chipping surfaces thanks to another generous donation from Councillor Mathews Community Fund.

Robert Florey spoke on the problems of flooding from the Windrush and hopes for this to be reduced in the future by raising the sluice and banks downstream from Gaunt Mill. Robert also said that the Drakes had been re-established with Ducks adding to the numbers to help to maintain the church grounds.

The Clerk reported for Gaynor Sharp-Dent on the allotments which were in full and largely productive use, and her concerns, shared by the council, that whilst the plots were in the main well cared for, the perimeters were in need of a clear-up.

Item 4: Thames Valley Police Report

Community PCSO Helen Keen attended the meeting and gave a report on the year. The Report which is attached to these Minutes, showed a further drop in recorded crimes, from 8 to 3, in the year, which adds to the drop reported last year.

The Chairman thanked Helen and the Community Police Team for their work within the community.

Item 5: County Councillor's Report

Councillor Charles Mathew said that he was working to minimise the effect of the forthcoming road closure between Northmoor and Standlake at Gaunt Mill Bridge. On Moreton Lane he had agreed on four new passing places and had approached Hansons to pay for this work in view of their proposed road works on the Standlake Road in bringing the Stonehenge Site into operation. Charles also believed that cost of the work to the Sluice referred to by Robert should also receive financial support from the Company, as they would also benefit from better flood control.

Councillor Mathew reported that the landfill at Dix Pit would be closing as Ardley came into operation, that he had been critical of the County's Core Policy for Waste and Gravel, and on the subject of the HGVs and Newbridge was repeatedly asking questions on why the camera was not working to record these offences.

Item 6 An Update from Mr Russell of the EA on Northmoor Lock and Flood Prevention.

Mr Russell is the Environment Agency's Operational Manager for the Thames Valley Area. He reported that discussions with the local community through the Project Board on whether to automate the weir started in 2012, and they have now decided not to change the existing paddle and rymer manual control, but to change the design of the paddles so as to address health and safety issues relating to its operation. The Project Board has met regularly and has been a strong influence on the decision. As this is the only weir of this type that covers the whole width of the Thames it is proposed to have a display alongside the weir to explain the how it is operated. The road to the weir has been upgraded.

In respect of flood prevention the EA has during the past twelve months cleared many fallen trees that were lying across the Windrush, and were looking at the suggestion that raising the height of the lasher and riverbank would reduce the flood risk.

Items 7 & 9: Report from the PCC and Summaries of the Past Year from Village Associations.

Northmoor Village Hall. Dion McHugh said it had been a good year, with outside lighting being upgraded, fresh gravel for the car park generously donated by Smiths of Bletchington with the assistance of Grenville Reeves, and the disabled access extended, and led by Matt Ellett. Estimates were now being sought for painting the interior. The Committee was looking to fund raising ventures in association with groups who regularly use the hall.

The Annual Flower Show. Maureen Sears that the Annual Northmoor Flower Show would be held this year on August Bank Holiday Sunday, 31 August, and will be combined with a village fete. It was planned to widen and improve the children's section

Community Broadband Project. Simon Harrison spoke of the two years that it took to get funding through DEFRA, the only successful bid in the Country, the important part played by WODC in support and management of the funding, and the expertise of Gigaclear who are currently laying the cabling. It is anticipated that it will work within its capacity for some 20-25 years and will be available to every property in the Parish.

Northmoor Website. Andrew Williams presented a useful analysis of the increasing usage of the Parish website.

Northmoor Players. Sue Harrison said that they were looking to present another pantomime this winter, possibly Robin Hood, and would be starting casting and management around September.

Lower Windrush Valley Project. Jane Bowley manages the project, which is largely funded by the gravel quarrying industry. Jane spoke of items the project is looking at this year, including local ponds and designing walks in and around parishes of the Lower Windrush valley.

The Northmoor Quilt. An idea of Naomi Owen's, to design and sew a large quilt made up in panel form of symbols of Northmoor. Julie Thorne outlined the idea and the progress it had made, all panels had now been adopted and it was hoped that the finished article would be ready to hang perhaps by the end of the year.

The Red Lion. Graeme Ogilvie gave a brief resume of the success of being able to purchase the pub; he said that there was a committee that acted as the go between the pub and the community.

Thursday Club and the PCC. Michael Druce spoke on these two related topics, related, as the Thursday Club was a church idea to provide a weekly lunch and social interaction for elderly residents within the three communities of Northmoor, Stanton Harcourt and Standlake. The club is run entirely by volunteers and charges just £6 for a cooked meal and some entertainment. Members that require transport are brought to the village hall and returned home at the end.

With regard to the PCC Michael gave the apologies of both Henry Herford and the Revd. Andrew Tweedy, who had been unable to attend the meeting, as he had been officiating at an Ascension Day service. Michael noted the responses in the Community Led plan that residents felt the presence of the church was important within the community, but he said that for this to happen it needed more support for attendance at its services. The cost to the Parish was £15,000 p.a. and nearly half that sum was made in the way of regular personal donations by just a small number of subscribers, just fifteen in total. Michael asked members of the community who did not donate to consider making a small regular financial commitment to the running of the church, as by doing so it would lessen the need to organise events where the primary objective was to raise the shortfall in donations.

The Venturers. Andy Brunner-Ellis reported that the Venturers were very fortunate to have Caroline Wheatley come forward to take over the running of the Venturers now that Chris was leaving the village. In addition Dion had agreed to assist Caroline, which was a great help. There was a wide range of activities on offer, with only the canoeing suspended for the moment due to the lack of a trained instructor.

Northmoor Investment Club. Andy also spoke on this topic. The club meets on a monthly basis with each member contributing £25 per month. There are currently thirteen members, and ideally they would like to increase that number to twenty.

Playground Committee. Reg Berry said the committee was newly formed and their first project was on Sunday 1 June when they would be starting repairs and refurbishment of items listed in the last RoSPA report, all help would be welcome.

Item 8: Open Item for Parishioners. Maureen Sears suggested that she thought it would be nice to have daffodils planted in the verges this autumn to brighten the village in the colder months of March and April next year and hopefully for several years to follow.

There being no further business the Annual Parish Meeting was closed and those present enjoyed some cheese and wine to end the evening.

Signed.....

Date.....