

## **MINUTES OF NORTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING**

Swarraton and Northington Village Hall

7.30pm on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> of May 2016

Present:        John Mitchell (JM, Chairman)  
                     Simon Walker (SW)  
                     Yvonne White (YW)  
                     Alexandra Risebury (AR, Clerk)  
  
                     17 residents

Apologies:     Fleur Boyce  
  
                     Adam Dyne (AD)  
  
                     Cllr Kim Gottlieb  
  
                     Mike Broderick  
  
                     Peter Lamb

The Chairman welcomed all present .

### **1) Minutes of the last meeting**

Minutes of last year's annual meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2015 were circulated to all present. Adoption of the minutes was proposed by Val Broderick, seconded by Matthew Pellereau and signed by the Chairman.

### **2) Matters arising**

a) The Chairman congratulated Peter Lamb on his work in establishing the war memorial. The dedication of the memorial was an important event in the life of the village. Peter was not present, so the Chairman asked Beth Lamb to convey the village's thanks. Thanks were also due to the Cochrane's for organising a tea party, which was enjoyed by those who attended the dedication ceremony. Beth Lamb noted that this year, the Remembrance Day service will be held in Northington.

b) The Chairman thanked Adam Dyne for organising the cleaning of the phone box, which is now spick and span. It had taken a lot of persistence with BT to get things sorted out.

### **3) Chairman's report**

#### **I) Village Hall Committee**

The Chairman thanked the Village Hall Committee for their fantastic work, which keeps alive the spirit of the village and provides fun.

#### **II) Changeover of NPC Clerk**

The meeting gave special thanks to Rhona Hatchley for her wonderful and hard work as NPC's Clerk over the last 3 years. The Chairman introduced Alexandra Risebury as the new Clerk and welcomed her to NPC. Alex had joined NPC in January 2016 and Rhona had been immensely supportive in making the handover a smooth transition.

#### **III) Fleur Boyce**

Fleur Boyce had sent her formal apologies for absence. The Chairman briefly explained her absence and asked the meeting to authorise him to send its best wishes on behalf of the whole village. This was agreed. He undertook to send a message.

#### **IV) B3046**

The chairman said that YW would report later under agenda item #7 about steps being taken to improve the corner at Swarraton Lodge but at this point residents should know that changing the camber of the road is not an option due to insufficient HCC funds.

#### **V) Broadband**

Using the good offices of Cllr Jackie Porter and Steve Brine M.P., the council had put pressure on BT to ensure that Northington was included in this year's work programme. This lobbying was successful and there is now light at the end of the duct. SW will tell the meeting about progress and describe current work being carried out under agenda item #5,

#### **VI) Planning**

a) Park View and Balfour: The PC had opposed an application for two houses at Park View and Balfour. Andy Fannon came up with revised proposals for a single dwelling, which the PC did not oppose.

b) New Lodge: The PC opposed Richard Turner's first application, which entailed demolishing New Lodge and building a new house in the orchard. NPC have not opposed Richard's second application, which entails the re-development of New Lodge.

## **VII) Grange Park Opera**

The village was aware of changes at Grange Park Opera.

A meeting at the Village hall had been held on 2nd March, at which Mark Baring introduced Michael Chance, the new Director of the Grange Festival. Ideas for staging a new and varied programme starting in 2017 were set out. Michael is very keen to give Grange Festival greater outreach with an emphasis on education and availability.

Meanwhile it was good to hear Mark confirm that the proceeds from the sale of dress rehearsal tickets will be given to The Friends of St. John's. Funds are sorely needed in view of their looming repair bills.

## **VIII) TAG4 - Farnborough**

PC had heard nothing recently but the PC is alert to the issues involved and, with neighbouring Parish Councils, is keeping a watching brief.

## **IX) Policing and Neighbourhood Watch**

Despite pressing very hard the Chairman had been unable to get a police officer to come to the meeting. He had made senior officers aware of concern here for the apparent ease with which burglaries are carried out and the lack information about follow-up successes.

Elaine Capp continues to look after our interests. There has been a spate of burglaries of outbuildings locally and the Police have enjoined us to be careful to secure our premises. Elaine will say a few words about Age Concern later on. Thank you Elaine for all that you do for us.

## **X) The Northington Parish Council**

The Chairman thanked his fellow councillors on behalf of the residents for their work for the village.

SW brings great expertise to the Council on matters to do with broadband and our website. He also is responsible for the footpath planning.

Before Fleur was taken ill, she harried SSE and pressed HCC for progress on the B3046. The results of her hard work are visible to all.

YW has kindly agreed to take over B3046 matters as well as dealing with any HGV problems.

A big thank-you goes to AD. As we all saw a week ago, Adam majors on the upkeep of the village. Great organisational skills are needed plus the charisma to get folks out with black sacks. In terms of community cohesion Adam contributes a great deal to life in our village.

Alex and before her, Rhona, keep us financially sound and tell us what we can and cannot do. The PC would not function properly without its Clerk's hard work.

#### **4) Broadband update**

SW provided us with a detailed and very positive update. Faster broadband is almost here. The main road leading to Alresford is partially blocked (a traffic light system is in place) due to ground digging in order to lay new fibre optic lines. The green cabinet near the east entrance to the Grange in Swarraton would be the main hub providing us with faster broadband.

According to the BT website completion should take place in approximately 4 months' time from now (by September 2016) but could be sooner.

Residents might require new modems (VDSL2) or upgraded hubs in order to use superfast broadband. Individual broadband providers will be able to provide more detailed information.

Elaine Capp asked whether broadband will be faster without replacing the existing modems or hubs in our homes. SW said that he couldn't guarantee this but thought that standard broadband service will be faster using the existing devices but can be "capped".

Broadband speed increase from 38 to 58 MB can be expected. The closer residents live to the green cabinet, the faster their broadband will be. It is expected to be 30 MB within 400m radius, 16.5MB up to 1.8km and 8.7MB up to 3km.

#### **5) Footpaths**

SW also provided an update on the quest for a footpath leading from the Village Hall to the Woolpack (inside the hedges along the road) and secondly from the church over the fields above School House to the existing path leading to Brown Candover. SW had contacted Moundsmere Estates and been told that they were not minded to give permission for a path to the Woolpack. There had been no response from Rodney Morgan-Giles. Residents felt the need to persevere with this matter. Mark Baring was surprised to hear that Morgan-Giles had not responded and offered to speak to him. It was left that Simon and Mark would get together on this matter. Sophie Grenville wondered if the emails had simply not arrived. On the path to The Woolpack, Mark wondered whether NPC should ask Langy (Alexander Langlands Pearse) for help. Langy runs The Woolpack on behalf of the owner and may have useful access to him. The Chairman observed that a safe pedestrian route to The Woolpack might engender more business and undertook to let Simon have Langy's details.

#### **6) B3046**

Yvonne White noted that Fleur Boyce had covered this issue over many years and attended many meetings. Over 20 accidents in the last 25 years have occurred but due to no fatalities in the last 5 years the matter of speeding doesn't take high priority with the Hampshire Police. Changes to speed limits require police consent.

Jackie Porter had also been active in telling HCC of the concern in Northington about road conditions on the B3046. In April 2016 NPC received a copy of a letter to JP, which outlined road marking improvements and the use of chevrons. The letter gave no timings, arguing that HCC had no influence on AMEY's (HCC's main contractor) timetables. JM said he had written a letter to HCC saying this open-ended situation was very disappointing and asking for timings.

Mr Lafontaine-Jackson raised concerns about speeding and said that a speed limit of 30mph rather than 40mph was appropriate. YW said that traffic through our villages had increased over the past 25 years. Lorries, whose numbers have increased, are still using the country roads through our villages. The use of satellite navigation systems could cause drivers to use this route. Sadly no other route is available.

Beth Lamb pointed out damage to the road due to heavy lorry use near Newhouse Farm. An increase in road traffic accidents has been reported in this area. The Chairman said he would have a look at the problem and then NPC would write to HCC Roads Department.

## **7) Village upkeep**

The Chairman said that NPC had considered whether to use the services of a local Lengthsman (perhaps joining with Brown Candover and Preston Candover). He asked the meeting whether NPC should be exploring this option further or whether the village would prefer to continue the present system of upkeep. After some discussion the meeting decided to continue with managing the upkeep, using our own resources. There was a general feeling that this self-help action was a useful contribution to community cohesion.

## **8) Clerk's report**

Alexandra Risebury introduced herself as the new NPC Clerk and thanked Rhona Hatchley for her constant support. The Clerk's contact email address remains:  
[northingtonparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:northingtonparishcouncil@gmail.com).

AR presented the final figures for financial year 2015 -2016 which had been checked this year by Paul Clarke. Paul carried out the internal audit in the place of Sarah Harris who is no longer available. Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Robert White and seconded by Andy Fannon. They will be sent for external audit within the next two weeks.

There was no increase in the Precept this year, the Clerk's salary remains unchanged from the previous year and overall the NPC showed a slight underspend compared with 2014-2015.

The Northington, Swarraton and Totford website is up to date and AR will be working together with SW to ensure that it remains a viable source of information.

## **9) Any other business**

i) Sophie Grenville updated us on the Grange Park Festival 2017. Building a mailing list of people wanting to continue to attend opera at the Grange will be crucial to future success. Marketing is required and extra hands (volunteers) are needed. Peter Lamb will create a list of volunteers. The plan is to provide to opera guests with advance information about the Grange Festival before GPO performances begin. This will be done between 15.30-17.00. More information will be available at Abbotstone Farm House on 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> of May between 7.00 and 8.00 p.m.

ii) The Chairman reported a number of complaints about the fields opposite Adam Dyne's house. There were large amounts of rubbish on these fields. NPC will consider the best course of action. Chris Dyne noted that the Dyne's had not made a complaint.

iii) The Chairman also reminded the meeting about the potential closure of Alresford's recycling centre and noted that the consultation's closing date was the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2016. All comments need to be made individually, as every comment is counted. AR undertook to ask Philippa Pellereau to resend the email with the link to all residents again and gently remind those who haven't completed the questionnaire to do so.

iv) Elaine Capp spoke about "Age Concern", an independent charity promoting and keeping an eye on people in rural locations who are over 50, perhaps living on their own or otherwise needing help. Elaine explained the "message in a bottle" scheme whereby a bottle is kept in a fridge and a sticker is put on the house door. The bottle's contents provides crucial information about medication and emergency contacts. It is kept in a fridge and emergency services are aware of this system. Elaine has supply of those bottles and can be contacted if anyone needs one.

SW agreed to put an item on the NPC website and include a link.

v) SW also mentioned an increase of Facebook user on our local Facebook group.

vi) SW thanked JM for his work as Chairman.

The meeting ended at 8.35 p.m.

*AR 18/05/2016*