

MINUTES OF THE NORTHCHAPEL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING Held on Monday 24th April 2017 At Northchapel Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present from the Parish Council: Mrs Lynda Bell, Mrs Jan Glover, Mrs Sharon Holden, Mrs Daphne Trussler, Mr Willie Poste and Mr Stephen Wordsworth

Also present: 20 members of the public
Mrs Helen Cruikshank (Clerk)
Holly Nichol, CDC Rural Housing Officer
County Councillor Janet Duncton
District Councillor Nick Thomas

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

Holly Nichol, the rural housing officer from Chichester District Council presented an affordable housing update and explained the Community Led Housing initiative following the Housing Needs survey carried out last year. Her presentation will be available to view on the website alongside associated documents.

www.northchapel.org.uk

1. Apologies for absence: Mr Paul Markides
Mrs Jane Dadswell - Village Hall Committee
Mrs Gaye Jordan
Mr Simon Arnold
Reverend Peter Hayes

2. Minutes of the 2016 Annual Parish Meeting: The minutes of the 2016 Annual Parish Meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

3. Parish Council's Chairman's report: Lynda Bell

In May last year Willie Poste decided to step down as chairman of the council after 7 years and I was elected as chairman. Subsequently in April this year Willie formally resigned from the council (more of this later) and following the resignation of Paul Markides in March there are currently 2 vacancies on the council. I would be happy to have an informal discussion with anyone who is interested in becoming a Parish Councillor. The Council has met 7 times in the last year and councillor's attendance has generally been good, as has that of our District and County Councillors. We rarely have any members of the public at our meetings but you are always welcome to attend and comment or ask questions on items on the agenda. The Parish Council planning committee meetings are held when required on Saturday mornings at the Church, this year we have received 25 planning applications for comment. My thanks to Paul Markides for chairing and organising these meetings.

Some of you may recall that a housing needs survey was carried out in December 2015 with the help of Chichester District Council's rural housing enabling team. The survey highlighted a need for small affordable housing units in the village and it is good that Holly has been able to join us this evening to update us on options that may be available. The settlement area of the village has been redrawn in the proposed SDNPA plan and is slightly smaller than previously. Northchapel does not have a given housing quota in the proposed SDNPA Housing Strategy and any proposals for development within or outside the settlement area will go through the normal planning procedures.

The Parish Council has continued to support local organisations and projects over the past year. In 2016/17 monies were given in way of grants or donations to St Michael's Church, Northchapel Primary School, Little Oaks Pre-school, Northchapel Village Hall, The village Flower and Produce Show, Citizens Advice Bureau

Waverley, Petworth Over 60's Club, Petworth Cottage Nursing Home, Rother Valley Together, West Sussex Rural Mobile Youth Trust (the Purple Bus scheme), and the Community Mini-bus Association. We continue to try and maintain the Village and in particular, the Village green to a high standard with fortnightly grass cutting during the months of April through to October. My particular thanks to Willie who has overseen this and ensured the high standards are maintained. The Parish Council also looks after the play area, with regular inspections and repairs when necessary. I am pleased to report that following the annual inspection this year no urgent actions were highlighted. Unfortunately dog fouling is still a problem in the village with fouling on the Green being a particular problem. This is concerning as the Green is in regular use for sporting activities by the school and the Sports Club. In an attempt to discourage this the dog litterbin has recently been re sited to a more prominent position on the village green. I would urge all dog owners to use this facility and when walking elsewhere in the village to ensure that they bag their dog litter and take it home. Sadly there has been a decline in the number of tenants at the allotments and there are now 5 vacant plots. If anyone is interested in having a plot then please do contact myself, Helen our clerk or talk to Willie. The Purple Bus continues to provide quality youth work for young people in rural villages in West Sussex. We were fortunate that it returned to Northchapel in the autumn term of 2016 and we are currently waiting for a date for it to return. The service is very popular in Northchapel. The parish has a winter plan and equipment includes 5 salt bins, and a snow plough attachment we are grateful to have the help of the Moss brothers at Hortons Farm when the weather is severe. However mild weather again this winter meant we have not had to put the plan to operation! The parish defibrillator is located at the top of the Green and access is via a code given when calling 999. Haslemere First Responders came to the village in October and successfully trained over 20 people in the use of the defibrillator.

I would like to thank both our County and District Councillors for their support and attendance at meetings. The Parish Council is grateful for your help and assistance. My thanks also to ALL the Councillors for their hard work and commitment. Many attend outside meetings, workshops and forums keeping up to date with local matters and concerns. I would like to add a particular thank you to our very efficient and hard-working clerk Helen who has been enormous help to me in my first year as chairman and to Simon Arnold for maintaining the Village Web site.

Finally this evening I would like to add a special thank you to Willie who is stepping down after 48 years as a parish Councillor -the last 7 as Chairman. Willie has served the village so well as a councillor, deputy chairman and chairman and has always been ready to address issues and promote the village. I would particularly like to highlight the pride Willie has taken in maintaining the allotments and the village green to such a high standard and his longstanding membership of the planning committee. I would also like to mention the work Willie did with the late Ivan Talbot in the design and erection of our lovely village sign on the Green. Willie has always been available to hear villagers concerns and acted promptly to deal with any issue raised. He has quietly and efficiently resolved situations as diverse as Travellers setting up camp at the Village Hall to blocked drains and ditches. We will miss Willie's enormous input and his incredible knowledge of village issues Willie we know you will always be interested in and part of the village but we wish you well in your retirement. You will be a very hard act to follow. So on behalf of parish council and the village residents we would like to accept this gift as a small token of our appreciation.

4. Churchyard report: Robin Walter (Church Warden)

It seems that this is an appropriate time and occasion to explain the policy of the Parochial Church Council concerning the churchyard to the wider village, particularly in view of certain comments which have been made. The PCC wishes the churchyard to be maintained for what it is - a churchyard in the countryside and a place which is rich in wild flora (and sometimes, fauna!) - whilst at the same time enabling reasonably easy access for those who are visiting the graves of their deceased family members and friends. The profusion of cowslips beside the entrance from the car park and the carpet of violets beneath the tower cannot have escaped notice of anyone entering from either direction. With this in mind, what the PCC does not want is a sterile, closely mown bowling green which would prevent the growth of this colour and interest.

The maintenance of the churchyard has undergone a change since last year's report. Shortly after the hugely successful flower festival linked to the anniversary celebrations of the village school, the arrangement with

John Brook had to come to an end for the simple reason that he moved away from the village. With helpful advice from Willie Poste, quotations for mowing and strimming were obtained from gardening contractors. These were not far apart from each other and the one initially chosen was that from the same company which looks after the areas of the village for which the Parish Council accepts responsibility. The work that they did was satisfactory and this company has been asked to continue this year. They have already carried out one cut of the churchyard. It won't be long before they will be asked to repeat the exercise.

The Parish Council has been most generous in supporting the churchyard maintenance and the Rector, churchwardens and PCC would like to take this opportunity to express publicly their gratitude to the Parish Council for this assistance.

Finally, we must take this opportunity to say a huge "thank you" to Willie Poste for his help and advice concerning churchyard matters. We do hope that, even though he is to retire, he will still be available to act as a consultant should advice be needed which it surely will!

5. School report: Helen Coleman (Head Teacher)

After a hectic start with an Ofsted visit it has been a great year at Northchapel Primary School.

Highlights:

- We started the year with an early visit from Ofsted in September 2016. It was a very positive and encouraging experience with an inspector who understood the dynamics and challenges of small rural primary schools. He was very thorough and robust in his analysis but noted the areas where we have made significant improvements since the last inspection. The report can be found on our website and we have maintained our good standard with areas that are rapidly improving.
- We had a lower intake of children in September due to a small cohort but we have another bulge year following it for this September so numbers are good.
- The staff team is highly committed and stable and we have worked hard on our school development plan targets this year following the Ofsted inspection to further develop work in Maths.
- Little Oaks Preschool continues to go from strength to strength. Sessions are now full and we have a fantastic team of well qualified and enthusiastic staff working with our youngest children. We are looking into offering the full 30 hours care encouraged by the Government for Early Years settings. Numbers will drop significantly in September as a large cohort come up into school so we are keen to recruit new families for September.
- We have continued with the Kids Marathon project this year and all children have running sessions weekly to clock up laps towards the 26 mile target. We have noticed an improvement in concentration following running sessions.
- In other areas of sport we have linked with the Midhurst Rother College sports partnership this year to offer a wider range of competitive sporting opportunities to more children. We have also offered a greater range of before and after school sports clubs, including judo, gymnastics, multi sports, football, hockey and netball. We will be starting tennis sessions this term as well as after school swimming.
- The swimming pool is now ready to go again for this season and children start swimming this week. We continue to pay back the much appreciated loan from the Parish Council.
- We will be holding another 5k run again on June 10th. This will be the third run and they have become very popular not only with folk from Northchapel but further afield, raising all important funds for the school.
- We were able to take every child in school in to the Christmas Pantomime in Guildford in December.
- Our choir sang at the Rother Valley Arts Festival in March. We have also developed a new percussion group for boys to encourage participation in music and they also took part in the Arts Festival. The boys play Boomwhackers which are tubes of different lengths and can be played together to make music.

- Book Week this year was based on the books of Roald Dahl and the children enjoyed a week full of wonderful characters and reading adventures. We also used a picture book called Journey as the basis for a whole school guided book study, followed by a day of writing a story by the whole school to go with the pictures.
- This term there have been some brilliant trips, including Portsmouth to visit the Mary Rose exhibit and climb the Spinnaker Tower, a visit to Fishbourne Roman villa, and a visit to London to the museum of London and the Great Fire exhibition.
- Our school council has been out this year to visit other schools and to host a visit from a school council at another school. WE are also focusing in our school development plan on linking our school with other schools in this country and across the world via Skype.
- Our big project this year has been to redevelop the area behind the Scola block of classrooms. This area has fallen into disrepair and is in urgent need of improvement. We have been working with our locality surveyor to put in a realistic bid for funding to enable us to complete a fantastic project rather than just patching up the space. We have now secured £60,000 in funding from the county, The Big Lottery and from a further charitable organisation, as well as funds given by the Northchapel Parish Council, Lurgashall Parish Council and Lurgashall Fete committee. We are seeking to now get the work completed as soon as possible so that children can begin to enjoy the space.
- Our PTA has also been extremely busy this year in raising funds towards our project.
- In the run up to Easter, many children in school took part in a science and technology challenge to build a bottle rocket. These are fired using vinegar and bicarbonate of soda. Unfortunately I think we may have inflicted some damage to the village green in our enthusiastic bottle launching but hopefully this will quickly recover.
- We are looking forward to a summer term of swimming, triathlon, sports day, as well as a residential trip to Cobnor Outdoor Activity Centre just outside Chichester.

We would like to say thank you to the Parish Council for your support this year. Your donation towards our outdoor project will be used this term and we hope we can invite you to the opening of this facility in due course.

6. Village Hall report: In Jane Dadswell's absence, the Clerk read the following report:

It has been a very good year for the Hall with bookings up on last year and our regular users/clubs continuing to thrive. This together with the lottery, continue to provide a good income. However, when our accounts for the year have been finalised they will show loss for the period 2016/17. This is due to the purchase of more tables and a freezer, and a number of maintenance items including Car Park Bollards, electrical work on lighting and Freezer supply. If these one-off items were excluded, we would have made a profit. With some help from Andrew Dempsey and Simon Arnold - to whom we are very grateful, our new website is now up and running. It can be viewed independently, or as part of the Parish website.

Finally, we are delighted that Malcolm Findlay has joined the Management Team and has taken on responsibility for organising repairs and maintenance. However, we are always on the lookout for new members and in particular we would welcome parents of young children.

7. County Councillors report: Mrs Janet Duncton

County Councillor Janet Duncton said it was the purdah period leading up to the County elections in 10 days time however work goes on at County with children in care still needing to be looked after and roads maintained etc. There are currently just no new initiatives during this time. She said that the SDNP has a Parish casual vacancy following a resignation so if any Councillor was interested then to contact the national park for more details. 2016/17 was a busy year at County. The Operation Watershed initiative was once again successful and there is a further £500,000 available to parishes for the forthcoming year if they wish to apply for help with flooding issues and blocked drains. She also encouraged local groups needing funding to apply to the North

Chichester CLC committee for grants. Finally she added that the Crouchlands Biogas inquiry starts tomorrow morning and is likely to go on for 10 days at Brinsbury. The original site did get approval but it grew and grew without permission and concern is that there may be up to 60 tankers a day travelling along the rural roads and through villages. She encouraged people to register their interest and said if people wanted to turn up to the inquiry then they are welcome to.

8. District Councillors report: Mr Nick Thomas

District Councillor Nick Thomas reported that CDC is run very well under Tony Dignum with good and experienced officers. The entire 150 services at District had been retained over the past year and the Council is financially sound having just finished the second year of its 4 year period. There is due to be a by-election on May 4th to fill the seat left by Denise Knightley's resignation. Mr Thomas thanked Mrs Janet Duncton for all her support on both a County and District level and finished by praising Willie Poste for his 48 year's service and commended Northchapel as a fantastic community run parish.

9. Public Questions

A member of the public asked a planning question relating to the house that has been built down the road to the south of Northchapel. It was noted that there was a temporary notice for mobile accommodation on the site that is due to expire in June 2018. When was planning submitted and approved for the house that has been built? Who received that notification? How can it have been approved whilst the temporary approval was in place?

The Chairman stated that the Hillgrove Stud Farm application for the retention of the mobile home was accepted by the planning inspector in October 2013. Although the decision of the appeal granting permission was not delivered until 2015 this meant the 3 years residence and proof of business viability expired in October 2016. In anticipation of this a planning application for a permanent dwelling was made in February 2016 and granted in June 2016. Permission was subject to a condition that the mobile home is removed once house is complete and the dwelling is subject to an agricultural tie.

Another question was raised relating to the site where planning had been submitted and declined for a carriage business at the bottom of Hillgrove. The notice is now to remove the agricultural tie on the land. If it were that simple to do, other local people would have been able to consider the purchase of the property. When can a final decision be taken and enforced?

The Chairman responded and said the decision was expected on Diddlesfold Manor Cottages on 14th April so it was now overdue. The applicant claims the agricultural tie has been breached for 10 years as previous occupant was not classed as being in agriculture. After a ten year breach such properties can be considered for a certificate of lawfulness and be occupied by people not in agriculture. The request is for the removal of the agricultural tie on one of the two cottages (2, Diddlesfold Farm Cottage). If the agricultural tie is removed it is expected that a further planning application will be submitted in due course for further development.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm. The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and welcomed all to stay for refreshments.

Signed..... Dated.....