

MINUTES OF THE NORTHCHAPEL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING Held on Thursday 3rd May 2018 At Northchapel Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present from the Parish Council: Mr Alex Baker, Mrs Lynda Bell, Mrs Jan Glover, Miss Laura Green, Mrs Sharon Holden, Mrs Gaye Jordan, Mr Robert Moss, Mrs Daphne Trussler and Mr Stephen Wordsworth

Also present: 17 members of the public

Mrs Helen Cruikshank (Clerk)

Mr John Rosser, Chichester District Council Dog Warden

County Councillor Janet Duncton

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

John Rosser, the dog warden from Chichester District Council spoke on the role of the dog warden and how the job has evolved over the years. These days there are a lot more welfare cases. He spoke of the powers that he has with regard to dog fouling and incessant dog barking which appears particularly pertinent to Northchapel. In order to reduce dog fouling, don't put up with it! The dog warden team covers 300 sq. miles and support is required from local residents to rid the parish of the problem. Statements from parishioners are imperative, names and addressing, detailing date, time and car registration if applicable; names of those reporting are not disclosed. Report this directly to the dog control on 01243 785166. Failure to clean up after your dog is an offence. Maximum fine is £1000 or a fixed penalty. Dog noise / barking dogs can also be reported to Dog Control. The dog warden will speak to owners and most people will then do something about it. If however they don't heed the warning and the noise impacts on the enjoyment of life, then it is an issue which will be passed to Environmental Health. Livestock worry should also be reported to the Dog Warden. Stray numbers are down although lost dogs are on the increase and sadly the 24/7 service has now ceased. Lost dogs should be kept until the owner is located or taken to the dog kennels at Hambrook (4 miles west of Chichester).

The Chairman thanked John Rosser for his informative and lively talk.

1. Apologies for absence: District Councillor Nick Thomas
Mrs Jane Dadswell – Village Hall Committee

2. Minutes of the 2017 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

There have been several changes to the membership of the council this year. You may recall Willie Poste stepped down last year leaving a vacancy for a vice chairman. Sharon Holden was elected to this post and I would like to thank Sharon for her support this year. We subsequently had 2 further resignations. I was delighted that we had 5 candidates who put themselves forward and as a result Laura Green and Alex Baker were co-opted onto the council.

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 17 planning applications for comment slightly down on last year. My thanks to Stephen Wordsworth who has taken on the role of chair of the planning committee for so ably organising and

chairing these meetings. Members of the public are always welcome to attend if they have any comments to make on applications scheduled for discussion.

The Parish Council has continued to support local organisations and projects over the past year. In 2017/18 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), Northchapel Sports Club, Haslemere Community First Responders, Kent Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance, Home-Start 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 Gaye who has taken over overseeing this and ensured the high standards are maintained and to Willie for continuing to support Gaye in this new role The Parish Council also looks after the play area, with regular inspections and repairs when necessary. We have recently spent a considerable amount of money repairing equipment in the playground this year and upgrading some of the safety surfaces. We are keen to maintain this important asset for the children of the village. Sadly some repairs were necessary due to acts of vandalism. Please alert us if you see equipment being misused, as it is very expensive to replace or repair.

The council has also funded the refurbishment of the finger post at the Lurgashall junction on the A283 a task no longer funded by WSCC.

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 was 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.

This year there has been more interest in renting an allotment and currently there is only one vacant plot. If anyone is interested in having this 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 2017 and is still visiting Northchapel on Monday evenings offering an opportunity for 13-18 year olds to meet. This term the subjects covered have included sport, sexual health, using the Internet for research and practical help supporting young people with CV writing, interview skills and cooking sessions. New people are always welcome. The parish has a winter plan and equipment includes 7 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 and to Rob Moss for coordinating and implementing the plan when required.

We are aware that traffic speed continues to be a concern for many in the village with particular concern about the speed of traffic through the village centre and the number of accidents at the Fisher Street Crossroads. We are in ongoing discussions with the County Council about this issue.

I would like to use this opportunity to let you know that the Parish Council will shortly be having its own designated website. Besides helping us to be compliant with new legislation it will be an opportunity to provide more information to residents and there will be a contact form for residents to contact us directly with questions or concerns. It will be going live shortly so watch this space

Finally 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 also like to add a personal and particular thank you to our very efficient and hardworking clerk Helen who has continued to be an enormous help to me in my role as chairman.

4. Churchyard report: Clifford Bell (Church Warden)

The church members, rector and wardens are appreciative of support for maintenance and funding of the churchyard from the Parish Council. The arrangement whereby the grass - cutting has been coordinated through the Parish Clerk has worked well. During the past year a volunteer working party has met regularly to remove overgrown areas, cut hedges and carry out grounds maintenance. New volunteers are of course

welcomed. Additionally the adjoining Glebe was used for a community bonfire on Guy Fawkes Night and around one hundred persons attended.

Local botanist Frances Abraham has identified in excess of one hundred species in a survey of flora. She comments that old grassland species such as Cowslip and Pignut are present plus woodland species such as Wood Melick and Wood Anemone. Occasional mowing is beneficial in maintaining the mix of flora however some parts are not mown until later in the year to allow flowers to bloom and seed.

Further work will be carried out in the autumn on hedgerows and attention will be needed to collapsing iron railings.

5. School report: Helen Coleman (Head Teacher)

The pace of change in education continues to move very quickly and so it has been another year of challenge but with some significant highlights.

- This time last year we were in the final stages of planning redevelopment work on our outside area. The work was carried out in the summer holidays with support from the Working Men's Club who allowed us to use their carpark as an access point. A local company from Fernhurst, Valley Landscapes, completed the work and we are absolutely delighted with the outcome. The area is now in constant use but also the opportunities for learning have also been enriched. Our Early Years and KS1 children are able to select equipment and resources and staff work hard to develop learning within play using the children's curiosity and interests.
- We have had a full cohort join the school in Reception this year with a few children joining other year groups. Numbers have remained fairly constant although in losing a handful of children to private education and others who have moved out of the area, we also lose a significant amount of the budget as funding for schools is changing this year and depends on pupil numbers much more. The pressures on small schools is immense with budgets incredibly tight but we know the importance of small village primary schools and so must fight for fairer funding and different ways of working to survive. This involves seeking funding from different sources and working collaboratively to improve our service.
- In September we began offering before and after school care through Elm Club. The Breakfast club has increased in popularity as the year has gone on, with more parents now making use of the opportunity. After school there are a number of options for parents and this has proved popular as well.
- We have had several changes in staffing and structure this year with a spring term of significant staff illness which created some challenges. However we now have a positive and full team for the summer term and for the next academic year.
- We have carried out improvement work within the school, extending a classroom space and moving the library to a new central position to reinvigorate reading enthusiasm in the school.
- We continue to offer a wide curriculum as we feel this is incredibly important alongside the core subjects. We have a quarter of the school having individual music lessons, 20 children sang at the 02 arena in January with a choir of 8000 for the Young Voices event. Our choir and dance group performed at the Rother Valley Arts Festival. We have taken part in many more sports events and competitions with other schools, including a cross country run at Petworth Park. Our swimming pool continues to offer swimming for every child in the school every week throughout the summer as well as offering swimming for two other schools locally every week. And our topics inspire learning across the curriculum with visits and visitors.

We have enjoyed celebrating these highlights and the successes of the children in our fortnightly sharing assembly. But we also recognise the challenges facing us this year. Many people visiting the school

comment on the lovely warm atmosphere and the good behaviour of the children in lessons which we are very proud of. We know that lessons are focused and the children work hard on activities. However we are also very aware that at times this is not enough and the focus on progress and learning has not been clear enough. This has meant that some children have not made as much progress as we would like and our data over the last two years has been significantly below expected. Data is always tricky in small settings where each child carries a greater percentage, but even so this is not good enough. Therefore this term we are all working hard with schools from Hampshire to recognise where we can improve and raise our expectations. This term children in Y1, Y2 and Y6 take statutory tests and we are aiming for a higher standard in both attainment and progress. We are also looking ahead at how we can improve our teaching, clarity of planning, assessment and ensure better behaviour in the school to further improve outcomes for children. We also want to encourage more support from families where children are not achieving their best to look at what the barriers to learning might be and how we can help each child to achieve their potential.

We would like to thank the Parish Council for their continued support. We must continue to work together in our community in these challenging times for education as pressures are increasingly on small schools. We are on the hunt for a co-opted Governor for the school who can bring in expertise and enthusiasm, so please have a chat with me if you are interested.

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

We have had a relatively good year, bookings are steady and the Hall is being well used. The clubs and cookery classes continue to do quite well and as ever the Lottery and Lunch Club are the major cash generators. However, the income from bookings is down on last year as a result of fewer large party bookings where the hall is occupied for longer.

We continue to keep on top of repairs and maintenance and have had the Hall partially redecorated as well as the fire safety lighting upgraded in line with statutory requirements. Expenditure is slightly down on last year and overall finances for the year show a small profit.

Finally, we are delighted that Ellie Kavanagh has agreed to join our Management Team.

7. Sports Club: Laura Green (Secretary)

The Sports Club is a small organisation supporting a Senior Football team, Stoolball team and informal junior football training which attracts 6 players from outside the village. The Stoolball season has just started which is very exciting. The Committee is very strong to improve and grow the club. We would like to construct a MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area) to provide a cost effective way to meet a range of sports requirements in one area. The proposed court would be open to everyone including the school however it still in its very early stages. The proposed site would be to the side of the Village Hall Car Park where the land was once levelled off with the intention of providing a tennis court. There was not enough support at the time so the project did not progress. The Parish Council has given its permission. The Sports Club is very conscious for everyone to have their say. It is hoped that a committee will be set up with members of the Sports Club and some keen parishioners. The fundraising target would be £50,000 but I am not fazed by this. The Sports Club has raised £20,000 in the past 15 years. There is a big opportunity for funding including fundraising, crowd funding and sponsorship. A survey will be going out to as many in the community in the next couple of weeks and then we can build on plans. If people want to get involved they can. Thank you to the Parish Council for its donation to kick start the plans. It is very early stages and any proposals would need to go through the formal SDNP planning process. It is hoped the court would fit a full sized tennis court with recesses at either end for 5-a-side football with a netball court and basketball nets too. The key is to make it cover as wide a variety of sports as possible.

Concern was raised with parking but Laura said she didn't see this as an issue as there is plenty of space in the Village Hall Car Park.

8. County Councillors report: Mrs Janet Duncton

County Councillor Janet Duncton said potholes in the County are never going away. An extra £1.5m has been provided to help tackle the awful problem. There are 12 teams with 2 extra rogue pothole teams tackling 250 potholes a day. A27 discussions are still going on although this is Highways England's

responsibility not County. The County are looking for new sites for morgues. Adult services are working well and bed blocking is fortunately not too much of a problem. Sussex Police did try and take on the Fire & Rescue service during the year but the plans were put on hold. We are lucky in Sussex to have such a wonderful Fire & Rescue service. Luckily there aren't so many fires these days due to lots of education being carried out in the community.

District news is very Chichester centric with Chichester Vision and the Southern Gateway development taking the main news. Once the schemes are up and running, the whole District will benefit.

9. District Councillors report: Mr Nick Thomas

There was no District Councillor report although Janet Duncton covered items under her report as she is both a County and District Councillor.

10. Public Questions

There were no public questions.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm. The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and welcomed all to stay for refreshments.

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