

MINUTES OF THE NORTHCHAPEL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING Held on Monday 15th April 2019 At Northchapel Village Hall at 7.30pm

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

Also present: 12 members of the public

Mrs Helen Cruikshank (Clerk)

Mr Chris Cook, Sussex Clubs for Young People (SCYP)

County Councillor Janet Duncton

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

Chris Cook from Sussex Clubs for Young People (SCYP) who have taken over responsibility for the Purple Bus following the decision by WSCC to stop funding spoke. The Purple Bus is a mobile youth club that provides quality youth work for young people in the rural communities of Chichester and Horsham Districts SCYP took over the assets and money from West Sussex Rural Youth Bus in December 2018 and secured the service from January. The bus needed new tyres and much work so it was decided to sell it and buy two smaller welfare vans which whilst still fully supportive with conference table, sink and toilet, also double up as mini buses. They are now fully badged up as the Purple Bus and offer more flexibility and are easier to drive than the large bus plus easier to maintain and manage. It is hoped the service will be extended to younger ages too, offering 10-12 week termly sessions. They will offer 1:1 support, smaller group sessions plus outdoor activities. Happy to adjust to individual village's needs and requirements. SCYP also help establish youth clubs, can train up volunteers or supply leaders to run projects. Chris Cook agreed that it seems sensible to continue visiting Northchapel and it is a case of identifying the need by talking to the Parish Council and local groups. Maybe a collaboration with neighbouring parishes of Petworth or Fernhurst? Lynda Bell said the Purple Bus had been a real benefit for Northchapel with the team working very hard in the village with the attendees. Behaviour had improved and it had been a very useful addition especially given the isolated nature of the village and the lack of public transport available. Northchapel needs to think about what it wants and then encourage the youngsters of Northchapel to take advantage of the service.

The Chairman thanked Chris Cook for his informative talk and said the Parish Council would be in contact once its needs had been identified.

1. Apologies for absence: District Councillor Nick Thomas
Mrs Jane Dadswell – Northchapel Village Hall Management Committee
Mrs Helen Coleman – Head Teacher of Northchapel Primary School

2. Minutes of the 2018 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 were no changes to the membership of the council this year until April when Janice Glover stepped down. All parish councillors with the exception of Jan put themselves forward for re-election this month as it is election year. All have been returned in an uncontested election with no additional candidates putting themselves forward. There therefore remains one vacancy on the council. If anyone is interested in joining please contact myself or Helen our clerk.

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 20 planning applications for comment slightly up on last year. My thanks to Stephen Wordsworth who has continued in 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 precept this year has remained the same at £30,000 and the Parish Council has continued to support local organisations and projects over the past year. In 2018/19 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, West Sussex Rural Mobile Youth Trust (the Purple Bus scheme), Northchapel Sports Club, and Kent Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance,

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. The Parish Council also looks after the play area, with regular inspections and repairs when necessary. We continue to spend money repairing and maintaining equipment in the playground and upgrading some of the safety surfaces. to ensure the playground meets the necessary safety standards. Laura Green also organised a deep clean of some of the equipment with good effect. We are keen to maintain this important asset for the children of the village and the next task will be the replacement of the railings and gates. Please alert us if you see equipment being misused, as it is very expensive to replace or repair. The Parish Council is also supportive of the plans by the Sports club to build a Multi-Use Games Area in the Village. This if successful will provide opportunities for sports activities for all ages and be a great asset for the village

Unfortunately dog fouling is still a problem in the village with fouling on the Green and some footpaths a particular problem. This is concerning as the Green is in regular use for sporting activities by the school and the Sports Club. There are 2 bins in the village one on the Green and one sited on the footpath from the main road to Valentines Lea. 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. There was also a Village Tidy up and Litter pick on Saturday. Numbers were disappointing but thanks to Laura and the running club for coming along and help tidy up the Village Green and Village Hall area. Together with the Councillors who also tidied various areas in the parish, the village is looking better. Hopefully it will encourage people not to throw out their rubbish.

This year there has been more interest in renting allotments and currently there are three vacant plot. If anyone is interested in having this plot then please do contact myself, Helen our clerk or talk to Willie Poste The Purple Bus returned to Northchapel providing quality youth work for young people in the village covering diverse subjects such as sport, sexual health, using the Internet for research and practical help supporting young people with CV writing, interview skills and cooking sessions. West Sussex has now withdrawn funding from this service and Youth Provision is being led by Sussex Clubs for Young People who we heard from earlier this evening.

The parish maintains a winter plan and equipment includes 8 salt bins, and a snow plough attachment and this year we purchased a small salt spreader which was used with good effect on the one day we had snow this year .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. We are also currently

looking at ways we can improve safety around the pick-up and drop off points by the school buses and are currently in discussion with the coach companies to try and improve this.

The Parish Council has been concerned for some time about the state of the telephone box at Fisher Street, as have residents. Estimates for renovation are high and are not considered to be best use of the precept. We have therefore made the decision to have the box removed .If anyone is interested in purchasing it please contact Helen.

The Parish Council now has its own designated website which is compliant with new legislation it is providing an opportunity to provide more information to residents. There is also a contact form for residents to contact us directly with questions or concerns. The site is maintained and updated by our clerk Helen and I would recommend you take a look if haven't already done so.

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 continues to be an enormous help to me in my role as chairman.

4. Churchyard report: Clifford Bell (Church Warden)

Churchyard

Churchyard maintenance has been a successful mix of volunteer work parties and the work of the contractor engaged by the parish council, who has cut the grass throughout the churchyard to a good standard throughout the year. The work parties meet on Saturday mornings and number between ten and twenty persons. Overgrown areas notably in the small area of the Glebe near the school have been cut back and the dilapidated iron railings have been shored up with chestnut posts. This has maintained the footpath route to a good standard. Additionally the school occasionally use part of the glebe wood for forest school activities. The glebe was also used for a small community bonfire and fireworks on Guy Fawkes Night attended by around seventy people.

On the 22 July the 300th anniversary of St Michael and All Angels as a parish in its own right was marked by a special service followed by reception at the Rectory. It was attended by previous priests of this a parish and also Lord Egremont. A visual display of the church history was commissioned, with funding from the parish council, which remains on display.

Musical concerts

During the course of the year two popular musical events were held in the church for the general public, part of an initiative to both widen use of the church and to generate funds for its repair and maintenance.

Centenary of ending of the First World War

A significant event was the centenary of the ending of the First World War. This was marked by a special service in the church with an up dated service prepared by the Rev Peter Hayes. Members of the community and in some cases the descendants of those lost laid poppies at the memorial in memory of the fallen. The Petworth town band provided a bugler to sound the last post and reveille. There was general agreement that this was a dignified and memorable occasion.

Church maintenance – the spire inspection, electrical works

We need to keep the church in good condition, as it is a public building of considerable architectural merit, being listed grade 2*. It is kept open every day and we receive a steady trickle of visitors. A regular electrical inspection and checks on the lightning conductor have to be carried out. Following architectural inspection a number of repairs are now needed for example to masonry and plasterwork damaged by damp, repair of corroded window bars and a contractor has been engaged. However an inspection of the tower and spire by specialist workers revealed that the roof shingles to the tower are perished and in need of

replacement. Additionally a window is dilapidated and some work is needed to masonry. Accordingly an appeal has been launched to address and seek funding for that work.

Departure of Rev Peter Hayes

I need to add that our priest of the last five years, the Rev Peter Hayes has moved on and will be shortly returning to his native Australia. His time with us has been devoted and fruitful. We look forward to the current vacancy being filled promptly.

Support from parish council

In conclusion the church is very appreciative of the support of the parish council in helping with maintenance of the churchyard. It's made a great difference with good feedback from visitors. The support for the 300th anniversary celebration was also generous and gives us an enduring display to remind people of their local heritage. I can also add that the PCC is pleased that the parish council chooses to use the church as a meeting point for its planning committee.

5. School report: In Helen Coleman's absence, the Clerk read the following report:

- This time last year I was reporting on the need to improve the data and progress within the school and we successfully achieved that in the last year. The progress of children who attend Northchapel is in line with the National average and our Maths progress is above average compared to other schools. This has been achieved through targeted work with children in developing their fluency and understanding of basic maths and developing speed in calculations. We have continued this year to work alongside a Specialist lead in Maths to further improve the maths teaching across the school and have established a new online challenge for children to learn their times tables.
- We continue to develop a strong ethos of enjoyment for reading and our achievement in reading outcomes meets National standards. Our Book Week focus this year was based on the classic children's novel Alice in Wonderland and allowed children the chance to investigate this fantasy dream world and create their own works of fiction as well as comparing the story to other books based on dreams and fantasy. We had a fabulous dress up day for characters from Alice in Wonderland and enjoyed a Mad Hatter's Tea Party on the last day of term in February.
- We continue the focus on high quality presentation of English work through handwriting and spelling alongside creativity inspired by lovely books. During Book Week we welcomed the author David Fuller, who shared in workshops with the children about how he gets started with writing and what inspires him to write.
- We have worked hard in supporting all children in developing positive behaviour and learning attitudes, as well as focusing on kindness and respect. Our school ethos is now based on three words – Kind Safe Ready. These words sum up how the whole school community, both adults and children, wish to behave and be treated, how we keep each other and ourselves safe and how we are ready and prepared for learning.
- At school, we value a wide and varied range of opportunities for our children alongside the core subjects and so this year the children learned and sang the cantata Jonahman Jazz for the Easter service, our dance group took part in the Rother Valley Arts Festival, we hosted our annual music concert and we have continued to offer a wide range of high quality clubs and sporting opportunities for children. We work with a fantastic gymnastics coach who has over 20 children a week taking part in high level gymnastics in school. Several children in Year 6 are now working towards their gold standard after completing 8 levels as well as bronze and silver.
- We have continued to improve the school grounds and buildings this year, completing work to the floor in one of the classrooms, removal of asbestos from the school site and upgrading the cloakroom. We were also successful in a bid for funding from the Healthy Child Capital Fund and were able to install some fantastic new playground equipment and markings in February half term.

This has had a huge impact on the physical and collaborative play at lunchtimes, with children creating new team games and challenging themselves on the roll over bars. We have appointed a new Premises officer through a company called Trust in Blue. Neil Banks is an ex police officer who has retrained as a carpenter and works for us on a weekly basis to manage and improve our school site.

- Two of the staff team from our preschool are leading a project to build a wildlife garden in the school grounds, working with teams of children on a Friday afternoon. They have put in a wildlife pond, built insect and amphibian homes and planted up areas to encourage a range of wildlife.

Despite all these successes, we have continued to face financial pressures as a school, with diminishing budgets and increasing staff costs. West Sussex County Council are encouraging all schools to look at ways to collaborate and form into federations to maximise opportunities for schools to work together, share resources and reduce costs. Therefore we are looking at a range of options for the future. We aim to futureproof the school to maintain its presence in the village, whilst facing a falling roll due to lack of new housing and families in the area and increasing costs and workload for staff. This will be a year of change for the school which is always hard but through adapting and changing to meet new challenges, we hope to bring strength and new opportunities with it.

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

The Hall has had an average year with the lottery and lunch club continuing to provide an excellent source of revenue and the Quiz evening was as usual, a great success. General hire is up on last year but bookings/functions were a bit disappointing and we are exploring other options to improve revenue in this area – any suggestions would be most welcome.

We continue to keep on top of repairs and maintenance, which are a considerable chunk of our expenditure. The cost of utilities has also increased and where possible our Treasurer has fixed the tariff for 4 years to control costs. Other major costs have been the 5 yearly electrical testing to meet statutory requirements and the replacement of a number of fire extinguishers and I would like to thank the Parish Council for their donation which we have used to cover some of these costs. In summary, when our accounts for the year have been finalised and audited, it is anticipated that we will be slightly in profit.

7. Sports Club: Laura Green (Secretary)

Laura said there was a full football team and more have signed on with a new manager. The football pitch has been moved slightly down the green and new goals on wheels have been purchased. Stoolball starts next week with training on Wednesday. Trying to encourage more youngsters to have a go. Two multi-sports days have been held during the Easter holidays, 6 hr sessions using the village hall and green which have been fully-booked and successful. Having a MUGA would improve the ability to be able to offer further sessions and be a huge benefit for the entire village. Pre-planning advice has been sought for the MUGA, with support from the Parish Council, School and nearest neighbours. Philip Lloyd-Jones has kindly done the plans for the project. The pre-app advice from CDC had been very favourable. A full planning application will be submitted next month, once the various surveys and assessments have been carried out. These will cost @ £3,000. The Sports Club have £1-1.5K of this and it is hoped the remaining can be found through crowdfunding and fundraising (village barn dance, in the autumn to kick-start this). It is hoped that planning permission will be achieved by the end of the summer. It is envisaged that the whole project will cost £100,000, 75% funded through grants. Laura stated it was a big priority of hers to see this project work, it will be a huge benefit to the school, sports club and great for the village. For all ages, football training, tennis, fitness training and will open up so many opportunities. Thanks were given to the Parish Council for their help.

8. County Councillors report: Mrs Janet Duncton

County Councillor Janet Duncton said that Children's Services at County had recently been OFSTED inspected and they were waiting on the report. Any improvements will be made if required. Financially things are tight at WSCC but everything goes forward as normal. They are sharing ideas with other councils, learning from each other and making changes in small areas to improve efficiency and save money

where possible. As of last week, Janet Duncton was made chairman of the County Council so she has a busy time ahead but will be

10. Public Questions

There were no public questions.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm. The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and welcomed all to stay for refreshments.

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