

NORTH LEIGH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**Wednesday 11th May 2022
at 7.00pm in the Memorial Hall**

1 Apologies for Absence: Parish and District Councillor Harry St John and Parish Councillor Andy Clements

2 Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 30th May 2019: The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of the 30th May 2019 were approved and signed.

3 Matters Arising: None

4 Report by Chairman of Parish Council – Greg Matthews, Chairman, Parish Council:

Greg Matthews reported the following:

It has been 3 years since the last Annual Parish Meeting. Four councillors have stood down – Ian Hogg, David Fettes, Carol Frost and James Nicholson. Four councillors have been appointed: Kevin Swann, Robert Gunn, Sarah Veasey and Carol Frost.

There have been some projects since the last Annual Parish meeting.

- The council created a website which was then re-developed for continued improvement.
 - New street lamps have also been put in the village.
 - Bus stop improvements
 - A new defibrillator in East End
 - New bike racks
 - The undertaking of a Village Questionnaire. There was a 15% response to the and some of the areas of interest to residents were:
 - communication
 - dog mess
 - footpaths
 - speeding
- Based on this questionnaire, the council has begun a Parish Council newsletter to improve communication from the Council to residents.
- Refurbishment of the children's playground

The general business of the council has been:

- inspecting planning applications
- responding to donation requests

- managing the open spaces and other areas
- managing the cemetery
- speedwatch
- recruiting new councillors
- managing salt bins
- assisting with the library
- attending training events

Some of the future plans of the Council include:

- Formally beginning a Neighbourhood Plan
- Refurbishment of the Adventure Playground
- Looking at the edges of Cuckamus Green
- Full scan and mapping of the cemetery
- Planters for village entrances
- Improve maintenance contracts

5 Parish Council Accounts for 2021/2022 – Allison Leigh, Clerk

The clerk reported that the accounts for 2021/2022 have been completed and reviewed by the internal auditor who has deemed them in order. The council chose a new Internal Auditor for 21/22 to review processes per the Joint Practitioner's Accountability Guide. The Internal Auditor has given a report with suggestions which the council will review at its meeting on the 12th May 2022. The council will review the Annual Governance and Accountability Report at the June meeting. From there, the clerk will be posting the Notice of Public Rights. This will have the clerk's contact details should anyone wish to review the accounts within the period designated on the form.

The council opened with a balance of £ 78,705.78 and ended with a balance to carry over of £ 156,656.32. The council received Section 106 funds from West Oxfordshire District Council to be used for the refurbishment of the Children' Playground. The council also has monies in its reserves for future project.

The council agreed a total budget of £155,103.94 at its meeting on the 13th January 2022 with S106 monies of approximately £80,000 to be used to fund the Children's Playground refurbishment and reserves of £26,200. The council agreed on a precept of £50,000.

For the 2022 /2023 financial year there are several projects the council will be undertaking based on your feedback from the Village Questionnaire.

These projects include:

- A new website that is focused on increasing communication between the council and the village. The Parish Council website will continue to have a sign-up area on the site where people may subscribe to the mailing list from which many news updates are sent.
- Speed equipment: The Parish Council has a vibrant and evolving speedwatch programme and is intending to purchase equipment to enhance this activity.

- A detailed map of the cemetery linking to a database all the graves for the running and maintenance of the cemetery and the Parish Council's record keeping.
- Flower containers at the entrances to North Leigh at Park Road and Common Road
- The exciting refurbishment of the Children's Playground Based on the increased expenditure of the coming financial year, residents will notice an increase in their precept. The Parish Council works hard to deliver value to residents based on your feedback. The council appreciates any feedback and comments that will assist us in continuing to evolve and deliver services and facilities that are important to our residents.

Details of the budget against spend for 21/22 and the budget for 22/23 can be found on the website: www.northleigh.org.

6 Report by County Councillor – Liam Walker

Liam reported that he was re-elected in 2021. He reported on the following projects:

- LW has put in an application for 20mph in East End and New Yatt. This would most likely go to a consultation at the end of 2022/early 2023. He thanked Andy Clements for all of his work on the North Leigh Speedwatch initiative.
- The A4095 cycle path is in the works with Eynsham Hall having contributed some funding towards it.
- The 233 bus has had some improvements to its service such as running half hourly. This service will be reviewed in the Summer 2022.
- Potholes have been an ongoing issue. People can report potholes on Fix My Street and they will be dealt with within 28 days.

7 Report by District Councillor – Harry St. John

Harry St John was not in attendance, but sent the following report:

As most will know the WODC is no longer controlled by the Conservatives and next week's first Council meeting will see the outcome of how the parties will resolve matters and who will serve on what committees whether the Cabinet system continues etc. I will report back to next PC meeting.

People may be aware that I resigned the Tory whip back in February until such time as Boris Johnson stands down as PM as he confirmed my worst fears on his basic lack of ability/fitness to run the country over the last year. I am part of a small group of independent members so we get some representation on Committees although it remains to be seen how many after next week's Council meeting.

I continue to do my best for residents in North Leigh - one of the recurring issues this last year is the number of sewer bursts/ blockages and consequential flooding that have occurred in the Parish.

The Bellway development is almost completed and they have planted a lot more trees as part of the landscaping - some of which now have memorial plaques naming individual men who died for the Country in the First and Second World Wars. I am

concerned that given the recent lack of rain that these trees are watered so am chasing Bellway to ensure they are watered or if they die are replaced next winter.

Bellway have almost completed the new play area on the southern site off Gough Close - not sure when they plan to open it as there seems to be no rubber protective matting round the various stations. We need to check that is acceptable to relevant officers.

I proposed a motion at the last WODC Council meeting that suggested that WODC request the relevant Govt minister to change the law to enable LPAs to seek appropriate contributions from landowners/developers towards sewage drainage and water infrastructure via S106 or CIL (or whatever replaces these two methods in the new Bill likely to be in the Queen's speech today)... the Motion was passed and I am checking if the appropriate letter has gone off to the relevant Minister! we will see what happens.

Following a presentation by Thames Water reps to Council members a lot of questions were raised by members including myself and I am awaiting answers to mine from TW.

In addition I am asking the senior planning officer whether WODC planning committees can refuse planning applications if member feel the drainage infrastructure is unable to cope with x new houses on a given sewage system - as it and I is now general knowledge that many systems simply are not coping and STWs releasing excessive amounts of untreated sewage into our rivers and streams, that does seem a reasonable reason to refuse consent without absolute guarantee that the system will be upgraded before the new homes are connected. I will report his answer.

We have another NP group meeting planned for 1st June and hopefully Astrid Harvey, the NP officer, will attend to tell us about what she does and how to move forward. The NP boundary has been accepted as the PC boundary. I hope we can recruit more volunteers to join the initial Group Members already on board.

8 Report by the Memorial Hall Trustees – Paul Burgum:

TRUSTEES

Trustees on 31 March 2022 were:

1. Paul Burgum - Chairman
2. Annette Duffell - Treasurer
3. Peter Van Cauwelaert - Secretary
4. Wendy Goddard
5. Harry St John
6. Peter Walker

7. Jeremy Taylor
8. Dawn Burt*
9. Sara Dickinson*
10. Stephen Huggett*
11. Elliot Gaspar*

- New trustees

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Investments

There have been no capital investments in the year.

Incoming Funds

As a result of the pandemic the income stream for the year has again been unusual. We have continued to receive rental income from the library, Youth Club and Post Office, and a Feed in Tariff for electricity. The first hirers returned to the hall in May 2021, but it was September before everyone had returned. The hiring generated £11,129 in income during the year.

We received business support grants from WODC which totalled £11,953 in the year and we also received an extremely generous donation which is available for the hall use without restrictions.

TRUSTEES REPORT

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Despite the difficulties which the pandemic has created in terms of the operating and running of the hall, it has continued to thrive. Throughout the pandemic the village post office remained open, and the hall caretaker worked each day sanitising all the accessible areas. Once restrictions were lifted our users began to return, tentatively at first but by September we were operating normally. In fact the size of our hall has proved to be an advantage because some users are booking more sessions in our hall, as the space provided allows for a much better degree of social distancing than some smaller premises.

Our normal income streams of rent and hall hire would have generated enough

income for us to break even in the year, before deduction of depreciation, but because we had been in receipt of a support grant in the previous financial year, we were offered similar grants in this year which totalled £11,953. This enabled us to undertake some much-needed maintenance which had been put on hold at the onset of the pandemic. This included redecorating the hall and installing a new hot water system.

We were also in receipt of an extremely generous donation, given for general purposes by the Nor Lye News which has sadly ceased production. This leaves us in a comfortable cash position at the end of the financial year. It is the intention of the committee to invest a portion of this in a charity savings fund.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

The Trustees aim to continue to run and maintain the Hall for the benefit of the village.

There are no major plans for the coming year other than to ensure that the hall is in a good state of repair for the users.

9 Report by Village Charities – Susie Cusick

Susie reported that Christmas gift vouchers had been given and that these were able to be used in the shop which was very useful during the lockdown periods. The vouchers will be reviewed again in 2022.

The Village Charities have tried to implement grants to teens for university (books), but there haven't been any applications. The Charities will try again this summer.

The Charities will be in touch with the school to see if anyone at the school might be in need of assistance with school uniform and/or a day out.

10 Report from PSCO: There was no report.

11 Update from Eynsham Hall: In attendance were:

Kiernan Moriarity, Ennismore
Keith Chichester for C2J Planners
Jessica Stewart from Comm Comm UK
Camilla Brown from Comm Comm UK

Kiernan Moriarity gave an update on progress. He said that there would be a soft opening in late 2022/early 2023 and that they will be working on recruitment in the area.

A question was asked about whether the pool would be open to residents and this was not confirmed.

12 **Open session:** Paul Burgum reported that the beer festival had to be cancelled because Eynsham Hall would not allow passage through the site due to building works. Paul noted his disappointment that Eynsham Hall would not enter into a discussion on this in order to find a possible solution.

The representatives from Eynsham Hall apologised for the lack of discussion and will follow up with their team on this.

The meeting closed at 8pm.