

Nettlebed Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held at Nettlebed Village Club on Wednesday 1st July 2015

Present: Cllrs B Lewis (BL) Chair, N Gibson (NG), J Simon (JS), J Sedwell (JSed), D Butler (DB) , B Collier (BC), the Clerk J McEwen (JMCE)

Also present: M Lewis (ML) Village Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator. Mr G Cupitt-Jones past council member prepared to stand as co-opted.

1. Apologies for absence were received from: SODC Cllr D Nimmo-Smith, OCC Cllr S Harrod has been in contact will try to attend.

2. Declaration of interests: None declared. Register of interest and acceptance of Office forms received BL, NG, BC, JS, DB, JSED.

3. Minutes of the Annual Meeting on 13 May 2015 were approved and signed.

4. Matters relating to OCC & SODC: No report as yet Cllr Harrod had hoped to attend but unfortunately was unable to make the meeting.

5. Police report and Neighbourhood watch report

Mr M Lewis: Reported generally quiet.

ML also reported speed checking in Highmoor, Peppard, Park Corner and Stonor so the issue of speeding is being taken seriously by the authorities.

6. Commons Matters; Request by Chalgrove & Watlington Children's Centre (CWCC) to use Priest Hill Common on Wednesday August 19th from 10 -12 noon granted unanimously. JS Asked that the Commons Conservators be contacted directly in future since technically they are responsible for such matters. BL to notify CWCC. NG asked to contact Philip Day about cutting grass prior to visit on common in August.

7. Grass Cutting and Hedge Management: Recent reports on previously missed areas are that these are now being cut following recent reminders. AJM to ask Mears to follow up request for a quote to replace bedding plants on Old School Green with grass and include this in the cutting schedule. The Hedge at Elms way is reported as being overgrown again. Approach to Green Square required again. AJM to action. BL reported that OCC is working on a 'Parish Offer' to present to PCs in the autumn which will include passing on to PCs the responsibility for areas traditionally managed by OCC.

BC reported that the restored banks of Catslip Common have soft verge signs to stop parking and allow the verges to recover.

8. Recreation and Amenities:

a) The Post Office proposal to move the service to the Spar. Our sub-Postmistress Mel Bulloch will attend the next PC meeting in September when the situation is clearer. If there is any sudden development Council agreed a special meeting

could be held prior to the normal September meeting. Traffic calming to increase the safety of pedestrians on the footway to the Spar Shop was raised. The concept of a community buyout was also raised by JSed; JS reported that really the time for that action had passed and we had to see what the PO was prepared to offer.

- b) NSCC. Recent new access proposals for deliveries to the School via the Sue Ryder track have met with a problem regarding preservation of four trees deemed in need of protection. Access for the OCC mower to cut the grass in the Walled Garden would not be affected.
 - c) The Playground is now finished and open. Thanks were recorded to Nettlebed Estate for trimming adjacent trees.
BL recommended that, having spent £11,346.00 (plus reclaimable VAT £1,965.20) to refurbish the Playground, NPC should factor into the budget the cost of an annual power-wash. As this is a specialist job a quotation (estimated at approx £500) will be requested from Playground Services; BL to report back to NPC for approval.
 - d) Allotments: Allotments rent received in. £216. Pat Sparrowhawk is relinquishing his overseeing of the allotments. JS to ask one of the allotment holders (Alie Hagedoorn) if she is prepared to take it on. As many of the allotments are neglected and a few are vacant (5), offering ½ allotments was discussed and it was agreed to advertise via NNN and The Link. The issue of maintenance was raised but due to poor uptake after the council spent £100 last year on clearance was not considered viable. Action - NG and AJM.
9. Newsletter and website. JS reported that the next Newsletter will be scheduled for end October but contributions will be welcomed at the NPC meeting on 2 Sept. The website which is reported as well-used contains most updates.
10. Roads and paths:
- A) The matter of School signs and speed limits was discussed but no firm decisions as yet. JSed to report to the school illegal parking on the High Street footway leaving insufficient room for pedestrians, and request cooperation from parents of children at the school, especially on 'assembly days'.
 - B) Self help maintenance of the verges may be allowed if there is no insurance issue.
The OCC 'Parish Offer' (see item 7) will include details for road and paths maintenance.
 - C) Salt storage still no resolution reported. The broken bin in the Ridgeway, as the property of OCC will be replaced and refilled as a highways responsibility. AJM to check the cost of refill of 14cuft bin. The practicalities of moving the salt have yet to be resolved. The issue of self help gritting and liability was raised and it is now confirmed that no extra liability can fall on a householder or non professional who undertakes this. JS reported it is possible to get/ hire machinery for spreading/snow clearing possibly as part of our emergency plan

D) Cat Lane: BC reported work is due is imminent.

E) Footpath problems: NE5 no new reports but need to check and possibly ask the Chiltern Soc if help is needed for a new stile. For September agenda.

11. Transport; NG reports that a review of all subsidised bus services is underway this may affect the well used dial-a-ride. There have also been complaints about the loss of the Saturday bus service to Reading.
12. BL reported concerns that the onsite parking at Sue Ryder (SRC) has not been fully utilised and that dangerous and nuisance parking has occurred again. The provision of double yellow lines (DYL) in Watlington Street would alleviate dangerous Sue Ryder sale day parking and the suggested creation of clearways at the Bus stops. However, the cost estimated at £4,000-5,000 would be prohibitive at this time, although OCC has advised that the cost could be spread over two years. Continuous DYL were thought to be intrusive to the rural nature of the village, especially with the uncertainty of SRC in Nettlebed. BL to investigate the cost of DYL limited to within 10 metres of the A4130 and B481 junction and at the Mill Road junction. Bus shelter replacement polycarbonate is reported as completed.
13. Planning: the fish and chip van planning SODC Wednesday slot refused due to objections. Mr Rodgers has been invited to reapply for Saturday at a later 6pm start time to see if this would overcome the problems. BL reported objection to Priest Hill application for previously documented problems particularly the presence of four cars on the blind brow of a hill.

Clerks Correspondence:

The finalised annual accounts were circulated and passed.

The Annual Governance Statement was read out and signed by the Chairman and Clerk. Thanks were recorded to our internal auditor Mr Jonathan Tate for his help.

JS raised the matter of getting donations to Commons Conservators up to date. AJM to look into this.

Request was made if accounts could be published online as we now have these on spreadsheet and it would be more easily accessible than just the legally required notice. Council agreed to publish accounts.

Public Question time: Six parishioners attended

The meeting ended at 10.12pm

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 2nd September 2015 at 7.30pm in Nettlebed Village Club.