

Nettlebed Parish Council

Minutes of the

ANNUAL MEETING 2015

held at Nettlebed Village Club on Wednesday 13 May 2015

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

Also present: M Lewis (ML) Village Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Bob Collier, Mr G Cupitt-Jones, OCC Cllr S Harrod, SODC Cllr D Nimmo-Smith and SODC Cllr Charles Baily.

2. Election of Officers

Cllr B Lewis was re-elected Chair.

Cllr J Sedwell was elected Vice Chair

Cllr N Gibson was elected as Transport Representative.

The Crocker End Management Committee was re-elected en bloc.

3. Declaration of interests: None declared.

4. Minutes of meeting 4th March 2015 were approved and signed.

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

6. Police report and Neighbourhood watch report

Mr M Lewis Reported that we have a new team of local policing comprising PCSO Janice Smith and Sergeant Paul Haywood.

Recent accident at Watlington Street/High Street junction Please see detailed report / info contact ML.

7. Commons Matters; JS reported on insurance for Play Trail.

8. Grass Cutting and Hedge Management: There have been reports of missed areas.

The problem is a change of Scion to Mears estates and change of staff. AJM to contact and ensure correct schedule is being followed. Particular points: Lion Meadow and the narrow strip on the north side of The Ridgeway between the junction with Watlington Street/Priest Hill and Wanbourne Lane.

9. Recreation and Amenities:

* The Post Office is now proposing to move the service to the Spar (following approval of Spar's Business Plan and interview). A 14 week consultation will be held but in principle the plan will be approved. Our sub-Postmistress Mel Bulloch will attend the next PC meeting in July.

The Parish Council stance regarding this: NG stated the Spar is on the edge of the village and one of the main user groups are the elderly who will not be able to walk that far. The main reason for the move is the Post office has removed support funding, wish to increase the opening hours and make the shop the main business.

JS/DB were concerned about the access and congestion with increased foot traffic along a poor footpath. NG asked if there were any support schemes to help.

* NSCC cheque for the insurance (50% of premium) was received to NPC.

The Joint Use Agreement is now on the Parish Website.

* BL reported that the Playground refurbishment is imminent and the playground will be closed for about a week in which time flat swings, a new roundabout, spring rocker and seesaw will be installed. Alistair Phillips will liaise with Playground services to install new seating (similar to those he made for the Play Trail) and all ground surfaces will be redone. For painting the existing equipment (installed before current safety regulations) which is still approved by RoSPA it was agreed to ask local painter Mr Allen Brittain. The council agreed to minute the fact that there has never been a reported accident involving the existing playground equipment.

The recent tree fall has been removed by Nettlebed Estate. The nettles around the site need either weedkilling or strimming.

* Allotments: Clerk reported Thames Water now know they were overcharging compared with actual use so we have a credit note to this effect. As many of the allotments are neglected and a few are vacant, offering ½ allotments was discussed and it was agreed to advertise via NNN and The Link. Action - NG and Pat Sparrowhawk.

10. Newsletter and website. BL asked if the prominence of NPC could be made greater – to make it easier for the community to make contact as necessary. Photos of Cllrs was suggested. JS agreed to action.

11. Roads and paths: BL reported attending a meeting on 28 April with OCC Cllr Steve Harrod and Area Steward Keith Stenning plus 2 OCC colleagues. This meeting, for Chairmen of local PCs, was a preliminary session to alert local councils that funding cuts will continue and OCC will in future liaise with PCs to implement work (such as clearing footways along highways) formerly carried out by OCC. Owners of land adjacent to footways will be identified (helped by OCC's ready access to the Land Registry) and required to clear overhanging trees.

Self help maintenance of the verges may be allowed if there is no insurance issue. OCC is working on a 'Parish Offer' to present to PCs in the autumn.

* The matter of double yellow lines on Watlington Street was raised.

Reduction of traffic speed on the High Street was discussed and, as a group of concerned parents of children at Nettlebed School was present, the Chairman invited them to comment. When the Pelican Crossing was installed in 2003, our lollipop lady was no longer employed. As a consequence the school flashing sign that she operated manually was removed. Mrs Sarah Roberts (attending on behalf of the school) asked about self help and referred to speed reduction signs in Wargrave, produced in cooperation with the school children.

Other suggestions:

- a flashing solar school sign

- a 20mph speed limit at school times with flashing warning lights (as in Wargrave)

JSED commented that the timescale is unknown to achieve this.

The question of speed restriction on Port Hill was also raised and BL suggested the derestricted sign to the west of the garage could be changed to 40mph to link up to the 40mph signs entering Nuffield. This suggestion was welcomed by Port Hill residents present. Unfortunately this is unlikely to deter motor bikes.

OCC Cllr SH to be consulted .

The Pelican Crossing Traffic Light programming will be checked.

*Cat Lane: BC reported work is due and there are still problems despite recent intervention by Thames Water who have a legal obligation to correct parts of the drainage.

* Salt storage still no resolution reported. The broken bin in the Ridgeway the insurers state is below excess value therefore NPC will have to replace at a cost of approx £140. The practicalities of moving the salt have yet to be resolved. AJM to contact Heather Giles.

A hard winter is predicted therefore emergency plan etc must be prepared for.

Footpath problems. AJM has spoken to Nettlebed Estates Farm Manager Mr Phillip Day regarding these problems for resolution.

12. Transport; NG reports that following various consultation the Saturday Reading service will stop imminently but the week day service is unaffected.

13. The provision of double yellow lines in Watlington Street would alleviate Sue Ryder sale day parking. PCSO supportive.

Bus shelter replacement polycarbonate is reported as imminent.

14. Planning: the fish and chip van planning consultation notices are up and we await SODC's decision.

Clerks Correspondence: Audit reported as due for signing off by 20th June and return to BDO by 27th July.

Consideration of improving our email and electronic file backup and storage mooted to be recoverable in the event of catastrophe e.g. fire

Statement of accounts were circulated no questions were raised.

Risk Assessment. This has been completed and circulated to all Cllrs.

Public Question time: nine parishioners attended

The meeting ended at 10.08pm

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 1st July 2015 at 7.30pm in Nettlebed Village Club.