

NORTH CRAWLEY PARISH COUNCIL



Clerk: Mrs S M Bushnell, 3 Folly Lane, North Crawley, Newport Pagnell, MK16 9LN (01234 391501)

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 7 May 2019 at 6.30 pm

Present: Parish Councillors: L Maclennan (in the Chair), J Sandall, R Hatton and D Harpur
MK Ward Councillor K Maclean
Clerk and RFO S M Bushnell
3 members of the public

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
Ward Councillors P Geary and D Hoskin
- 2. Declarations of Interests:** None
- 3. Approval of Minutes:**
The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 1 May 2018 were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.
- 4. Matters Arising:** None
- 5. Report from the Parish Council Chair:**

Cllr Maclennan read out her report as follows:

I would like to start by saying an enormous thank you to everyone who has contributed to the running of the Parish Council over the past year. Being a Councillor is not always easy, but we are incredibly lucky to have a group of volunteers who work tirelessly and do their best to ensure that we not only preserve but also develop the Parish and its community. Although in recent months we have reduced the number of vacancies on the Council, for much of the year we have operated with just three councillors and as a result it has been a stretch for us to meet our obligations, but the commitment of everyone involved has been incredible.

With that in mind, I have to say an enormous thank you to Councillors James Sandall, Gary McGee, Roz Hatton, Glenn Ridgely and Derek Harpur. Furthermore, I would like to extend my gratitude to Councillors Liz Fryer and Jake Stellitano who have also played an

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active role in the council and we are grateful for their contribution. Of course none of our work would be possible without the sheer hard work of our Clerk and Finance Officer, Sheila Bushnell and the support and guidance from our Ward Councillors, Keith McLean, David Hosking and Peter Geary.

Planning

As a Parish it can sometimes feel that North Crawley is under threat of development from all sides. This year has seen significant planning applications which North Crawley Parish Council has either consulted on or objected to in Cranfield, Newport Pagnell (Tickford Fields site), the Milton Keynes Council application for HIF funds to develop the infrastructure to develop land between M1 J14 and Newport Pagnell and also the Moat Farm application to develop land on the edge of North Crawley village. Collectively these applications highlight the need for the Parish to develop its own Neighbourhood Plan, so that clear areas are highlighted to contain any development within the Parish. The Neighbourhood Plan steering group have worked extremely hard to develop this on behalf of the Parish Council and I would formally like to thank everyone involved. After several periods of consultation, the plan is currently sitting with the external examiner and we hope to have feedback over the coming months.

After the initial application to develop the land at Moat Farm was rejected, a further application to build 15 homes along the Chicheley Road was submitted by the developers. This was also rejected but is currently in appeal and we await the result, however the progress with the Neighbourhood Plan adds some weight to our objection and we hope that this will be recognised.

Another issue that finally seems to have made some progress has been the objection to the floodlights at Ringcroft Farm. After a seemingly endless saga of investigation, official enquiry and appeal where enforcement notices were issued and then quashed and applications for certificates of lawful use were submitted and rejected, in March, Milton Keynes Council finally issued an enforcement notice because the tennis courts and resultant floodlights have been found to be contrary to planning policy.

One area with planning that is causing concern is the fact that Milton Keynes Council has seemingly ignored the Parish Council's objections to applications which we feel negatively impact the Conservation area within the village. This includes several applications that have been granted to fell trees within the conservation area despite our objection. This issue has been escalated and we are currently engaging with Milton Keynes Council with the aim to arrive at some agreement as to how the Parish Council's objections may be heard and actioned.

Landscape

This leads me on to the work that has been conducted to maintain or improve the landscape within the Parish. This work has included crown reduction, felling of an unsafe tree and stump removal on Kilpin Green, replacement of the rotten boundary fence on the recreation ground and removal of the redundant BT phonebox in the village. Also, the war memorial has been granted Grade 2 listed status after a request by Historic England for it to join the List of Buildings of Special Architectural Interest in recognition of the centenary of the end of WW1.

During the year, the Parish Council has reviewed its landscaping contracts. This was in light of the opportunity to accept the offer of devolved landscape management from MKC. However, upon investigation there was a calculated shortfall in funding of just

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over £2000 and this, as well as a lack of resource to manage contracts locally resulted in the decision by North Crawley PC to remain within the Milton Keynes Council contract. A further area of debate within the village has been the control of dogs and in particular their waste on the recreation ground. The issue of people not picking up after their dogs had resulted in a request for dogs to be banned on the rec. However, installation of additional dog poo bins and also the resulting publicity so far has improved the situation, however villagers must be aware that if the problem re-emerges then we may face this in future.

Recreation

The recreation ground has also seen a number of village activities over the course of the year including the hosting of Parish Council funded sessions run by MK Play for the younger members of our community. More than 50 children attended the session and as a result, with thanks to funding awarded by the Ward Councillors, we have three further sessions planned over this summer.

In addition, the summer saw the hosting of a village fun day, organised by the Cock Inn. At the Fun Day, the inaugural award of Village Champion was given to Laki and Prakesh from the village shop in recognition of their contribution to the village.

Highways and Community Safety

The issue of highways, speeding and community safety remains a significant one for North Crawley due to the increasing amount of traffic passing through the village. Activity taken by the PC has included

- Road and footpath improvements to North Crawley Road and the footpath to Brook End
- consultation of any housing development to ensure an appropriate traffic plan is included which stipulates avoidance of using the High St in North Crawley as a route for construction traffic
- community speedwatch and SIDs activity to monitor speeds through the village which are reported through to Thames Valley police
- consultation with MKC to review speed limits
- review of ANPR and sentinel camera systems

Before I finish my report I would like to recognise the work of our PCSO, Arlene Ormston who has had an extremely positive impact on the village and we are lucky to have her.

I would also like to thank those members of our community who attend our Parish Council meetings to offer their input, feedback and perspective on a wide range of issues, which are highly valued. I very much hope that over the coming year, now that we have more Councillors we are able to continue to progress and develop the village facilities and community and hope we can count on your ongoing support.

6. **Parish Council Financial report for 2017/18:** The accounts for the financial year 2018/19 would be shortly be audited and would then be available for public inspection.

7. **Report from North Crawley United Charities:**

The Clerk read out the annual report for the year from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, as follows:

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- The Charity ended the year with £11,392.71 (£11,827.37 in 2018) in the current and business saver accounts held locally. £65.90 has been accrued for expenses paid after the end of the year.
- The capital funds in the COIF account stand at £20,604.57 (£19,097.59 in 2018). An amount of £675.80 (£662.51 in 2018) was received from the COIF fund into the Charity bank account during the year.
- Income more or less remained the same, there being a small increase of £52.82 over the previous year.
- The expenditure was considerably higher. This was due to the Christmas Distribution increasing over the previous year (see 6. below), grant awards being higher (see 8. below) and the cost of £650 for re-siting the water pipe at Town Lands and the installation of additional taps. The water pipe was re-located to the other side of the central path and has proved much more practical for the allotment holders.
- 10 allotments at Town Lands were rented by 6 allotment holders bringing in an income of £436. All allotments are currently being worked as 2 new tenants were found for the plots that had become vacant. The figure of £436 includes Mr O'Haren's rent for Town Lands and the rent paid by the Parish Council for Broadmead.
- The Christmas distribution of 2017 saw £200 being awarded to 5 households. At Christmas 2018, £240 was awarded to 6 households and one-off payments had been made to 3 villagers who had undergone particularly difficult times during the year.
- During the year 2 villagers had been acknowledged for charity work they had carried out in the village over many years.
- Two student grants were awarded (compared to 1 in the previous year). The recipients were extremely grateful to the trustees for the support. A notice is put in SCAN at least once a year to encourage grant applications, but despite this few are forthcoming.
- The Charity has attempted to register Town Lands and Broadmead with the Land Registry. However, this is proving difficult and the application was rejected. The Charity will continue to see if there is a way round it. A cost of £47.98 has been incurred for the purchase of maps, but the registration fee of £60 has been returned.
- There is a full complement of Trustees all of whom served throughout the year. Julia Chinn, Bridget Cookham, Graham Cookham and Jo Small were all re-appointed in May 2018
- The Trustees meet 3 times a year in April, June and November. The dates of the meetings for the following year are booked at the November meeting.

8. **North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan Report:** The Neighbourhood Plan had now reached the stage of being independently assessed. If approved, it would then go to a referendum where the residents would be able to either adopt it or reject it.

9. **Ward Councillors' Report:** Cllr Maclean reported that there had been some improvements in the condition of the roads but that more work still needed to be done. The installation of ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) cameras was to be the way forward for North Crawley, Moulsoe and Lavendon and this was currently being

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organised through Thames Valley Police. The MKC budget was not what he would have liked it to be but it had been approved by the Council. The system for the distribution of recycling bags was not going well at the moment and he asked for residents to make their views known if they were having problems in acquiring bags.

10. **Report from North Crawley C of E School:**

Anna Shotton, school governor, read out the following report:

- “November 2017 saw the Village School Federation officially form to take in North Crawley, Sherington, Stoke Goldington, Newton Blossomville, St Andrews Great Linford and Emberton. A Governing Board was formed to oversee all six schools with Marie Claire Parsons as the Executive Head.
- Following a review of all of the schools during the formation, Emberton School was looked at closely and with only four children on role for the September 18 school year, the decision was taken by the Governors to recommend the school be closed. Low pupil numbers are not only financially unviable but do not provide an acceptable learning experience for the pupils attending. The process of closure is still with Milton Keynes Council and, having gone through a period of consultation, the school building remains closed with no pupils but not officially closed by MKC. September 18- July 19 sees the first school year of the remaining five schools working together in its newly formed remit. We now also have an Executive Deputy Head on board to share the management responsibilities.
- All five schools face challenges - St Andrews was in Requires Improvement by Ofsted but was re- inspected at the end of last year and is now Good. It remains the school with the lowest numbers with only 12 expected to be on role in Sept 19. It faces stiff competition from Great Linford Primary School in the same catchment.
- The other 4 schools face the same challenges with financial costs and a reducing budget share from MK Council and an uphill battle to recruit more children from out of catchment.
- North Crawley specifically are expected to have around 21 children on role in September, that’s up two from this year but still down seven on the year before. We have a max PAN of 45. The intake for September is expected to be 10 which is up on the two previous years of 6 and 6. Reception are currently taught in a separate classroom and KS1 (Y1/2) in another classroom with the support of TA’s and office staff and outside help for Sports.
- This model is repeated in Sherington and Stoke Goldington. At NB and ST A – the classes are taught as above in the mornings and all 3 classes together in the afternoons. The children join together at various points of the day for break, lunch and Morning Worship as well as some other learning opportunities and trips. The 3 Year groups take turns on a Thursday with a Forest School morning session provided by Mrs Humphries who goes round all the schools each week. The Institute is hired for gym lessons during the colder months (at a cost) and again for the rehearsals and performance of the Nativity at Christmas. Our other performances for Mother’s Day, Harvest Festival and Leavers’ performance take place in the church with the support

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of Reverend Coralie where possible (who is also on our Governing Board as SIAMS Governor).

- In September North Crawley had its Ofsted Inspection and was graded GOOD (previously Outstanding). This was a difficult inspection as the children had only been back in school for around 3 weeks and our Foundation children were still settling in. The new inspection framework was introduced on the 1st September and so this was different to previous inspections. The inspector was not a fan of small schools or had interest in Early years sadly as this department has been particularly praised in previous inspections. Attendance and Yr2 SATS results in small schools can be difficult to assess because of the small percentages involved and this can make reports seem unfairly judged. The staff and Governing board remain positive and confident in the high level of teaching and care the children receive. Comments such as ‘careful planning and high expectations mean that pupils learn well, and ‘Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well developed through the curriculum, pupils are looked after well and dedicated staff ensure that there is a nurturing and caring environment in school’. Our inspection report can be found on line if you wish to look.
- In March, North Crawley also had its SIAMS Inspection. This is the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools. This inspection happens every 5 years by The Church of England Education Office and is overseen by Ofsted. They inspect the school on its Christian Vision, Values and Teaching, as well as the welfare of the children and staff and how the school operates within the wider community. We were again awarded Good. The report is very complimentary of the children, staff and governors and the roles they all play in the school in working together to promote its Christian Vision.
- More recently all five schools met at St Peter and St Pauls Church in Olney for a Spring concert attended by families. They will again join together for Sports Day in July before we wish our leavers good luck in their new schools in September. This year will see the 8 pupil move on to a mixture of Tickford and Olney Middle School (the latter of which has recently added North Crawley School to its admissions criteria giving pupils another choice from Tickford) as well as private Bedford Schools, and other schools across MK.
- The Governing Board are working on the challenges facing North Crawley and the other village schools. We have engaged in a 12 month plan of Marketing and promotion of the schools to a wider area in magazines and Social Media. We have open days in the Autumn for the next round of school applications for Sept 20 which is clearly the next target as far as children numbers. Options are being looked at to address the issue of wrap around care which can be an issue to working parents. Our schools simply don’t have the numbers to warrant breakfast and after school club but there are options with schools working together. A childminder in this village would be most helpful! The onward provision of Y3 onwards does cause issues for some parents, Tickford Primary, the village catchment onward school is currently in ‘Requires Improvement’ with Ofsted and has been for over 18 months, currently only a handful of schools across Milton Keynes accept pupils at Y3 and so this can put parents off coming to us initially. Having to deal with ‘in year’ transfers or getting stuck when there are no spaces at onward schools is stressful for parents.

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- The VSF Governing board continue to work with MK Council to keep our schools an available option for children in our village communities.”

Sam Potts asked how many children were leaving North Crawley School at the end of this academic year. The answer was that 8 would leave in July and would be replaced by 10 in September.

11. North Crawley Ladies Report:

Sue Garner read out the following report:

“As the North Crawley WI’s attendance reached an all time low, a difficult decision was made in 2017, and after 60-plus years the North Crawley WI disbanded. However, the WI ladies didn’t give up as they hoped to see a new organisation emerge, so they spread the word and a meeting was held in the pub; a new group was born - NCL (North Crawley Ladies). NCL aims to appeal to a wider audience, it doesn’t have to conform to national rules and regs, there are no monthly fees and it wholeheartedly embraces community spirit. NCL meet the third Wednesday of each month in the Public Bar at The Cock.

I’ve lived in North Crawley for over 40 years with my husband Steve and two sons Mathew and Symon, having been Chair of Playgroup, Chair of the School’s PTA, a Parish Councillor and a great stalwart for community spirit, it was no surprise that I ended up as the NCL co-ordinator, oh and a lack of other hands going up!

To date we have a total of 39 ladies and we’ve had an amazing first year! Hazel started us off with her talk on homelessness, this was followed with a quiz by Gary, Janice and Joan enlightened us about The Samaritans, Marie spoke about releasing creativity and Anna involved us in life at the village school.

We visited Hotters MK, Chicheley Hall for afternoon tea, a canal trip from Bedford to Cardington, Heart of The Shires Shopping Village, Motown Nights at MK Theatre, Woburn’s Centre Parcs Spa and Oxford Christmas Markets.

Nearer to home we’ve walked the Bluebells at Marston Thrift, tried our hand at bowling in the village, watched the Royal Wedding in the pub, rambled our way to Astwood, knitted over 400 Poppies to decorate the War Memorial and Church for Remembrance Day and finished 2018 with 32 of us enjoying a Christmas meal at The Cock.

So far this year, we were wonderfully entertained by Steve Garner who sang and played the guitar and talked us through the history of folk music. We’ve had an amazing trip to Hotel Chocolate where 18 of us drank Prosecco (or water) and ate chocolates! April we had a fun quiz from Gary and 24 of us visited Hotter Shoes who laid on a delicious buffet and sent us home with a fantastic goodie bag!; during the remainder of the year we will enjoy afternoon tea at Castle Ashby, visit Stevington Gardens, a trip (tomorrow) on the Grand Union Canal, a talk about a Cambodian school, a visitor from MK Foodbank, a ramble, MK theatre night, Tusting’s Leather, more Poppies to knit plus the usual monthly get togethers. We’d also like to seek permission from the Parish Council to temporarily decorate the bus shelter over the Easter period 2020 with our, yet to be knitted creations, such as spring flowers, peace lilies etc.?

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As you can see we are a busy, lively bunch and it is our endeavour to help keep the community spirit well and truly alive in North Crawley; we are so privileged and proud to live in this beautiful village, we should all sing its praises loud and clear!"

12. **IMC Report:** Sam Potts presented the IMC accounts for the year to 30 September 2018. He reported that over the last 5 years there had been much progress and the accounts were now in the black. The hall was with largest in the villages and bookings were up threefold. Over the last three months there had been no weekend cancellations; bookings were organised on a first come, first served basis. The loft had been boarded to make it safe and a new boiler had been installed. There were two elections due this month when the hall would be used as a polling station. He emphasised that the bingo group was not affected and could still run on those days. Thanks were due to the Parish Council for repairing the fencing around the field. There had been an increase in dog mess on the field and a dog ban had been considered. However, additional signage was eventually decided upon in the hope that increased awareness would help to resolve the matter. The porch was to be significantly improved and would also have pictures of old buildings displayed in there.

13. **Questions from Residents:**

- Weekend bookings in the Institute - how many of these were for internal (i.e. from residents but not User Groups) and how many were from outside the village? Sam did not have this information to hand but would be able to provide it in due course.
- Bingo – Clarification was requested about bingo. Sam said that it had always been assumed that, for health and safety reasons, the Institute could not be used for other purposes at the same time as being used as a Polling Station. However, this was not really the case as Bingo took place in the Clubroom and there was a second external door that could be used. The comment was made by a resident that Bingo did not take place on election days because the organisers preferred not to do so, rather than for any other reason.
- Insurance – the insurance cost was lower this year due to insurance for a bouncy castle being needed the previous year.
- Dog mess - The comment was made that people were driving into the village and into the Institute car park, letting their dogs run around the field without supervision and then driving off again without picking up dog mess.

All were thanked for their attendance and support. The meeting closed at approximately 7.30 pm when light refreshments were served before the First Parish Council meeting.

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