

Medbourne Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL MONDAY 8th APRIL 2013

Present: Cllrs Polito (Chair), Pilkington, Oliver and Dunkley
T & A Price, R Budenberg, T Philbin, J Sandars, K Jenkins, N Philbin

1.0 APOLOGIES: Cllrs Clarke and Beaty

2.0 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2nd APRIL 2012:

Resolved: The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Proposed: Karl Jenkins Seconded: Cllr Pilkington

3.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4.0 CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR – Cllr Polito:

This year has seen the retirement of Vice Chairman Pat Tweddle in February after 16 years of service and the resignation of Stuart Palmer who has moved from the village. My sincere thanks are due to both - particularly Pat, with whom I have worked during all the years of her service. We are very grateful to Matt Oliver and Steph Dunkley, who have volunteered to become co-opted councillors in their stead.

I would also like to thank Carolyn Frostwick for her support over the last few years as Internal Auditor. Carolyn has felt that she should resign due to a conflict of interests and we are delighted that Roger Lee has agreed to take over from Carolyn.

Neighbourhood Plan.

Under new planning guidelines, councils were asked to consider producing a Neighbourhood Plan for their area. Cllr Pilkington attended a LCC Roadshow Event and I attended a HDC Planning Liaison Meeting. As a result of our reports, the PC agreed unanimously that this would not be an appropriate path to follow for such a small village.

Local Green Space.

In May HDC requested a review of all important open spaces within the village. All areas had to be re-appraised and supported by a written justification and photographs. This was completed in July and we are still awaiting confirmation from HDC that our submissions have been approved.

Policing.

Pc Andrew Cooper has continued to maintain a presence within the village and has run speed checks in the village on a regular basis.

Village Charities.

During the year Mr Roger Daulby has raised a number of concerns regarding the operation of some of the Medbourne charities. These are currently being evaluated with the help and guidance of Richard Hammond. We anticipate that many of the queries will be resolved within the coming year.

Big Society.

In November, we received a letter from Tom and Ann Price, expressing concern that many village activities were becoming reliant on too few long term volunteers and that we should seek to raise awareness and encourage participation in order to maintain the wonderful community spirit that has always existed in this village. This task is being studied by a small sub-committee, which is addressing the issues and making recommendations to the PC.

Village & PC Website.

Last month David Tuffs was appointed Information Resource Advisor to the PC. It is very important that the Village Website be seen as a shared village resource in the same way as the Sports Clubs or the Village Hall. We are extremely fortunate to have the services of such an experienced operator and many thanks are due to David for all his efforts.

PARISH MAINTENANCE.

War Memorial.

Our thanks are due to Keith Sandars for his immaculate keeping of the War Memorial, which is maturing nicely despite the occasional abuse from large articulated lorries!

Towpath Mowing.

Our thanks to the volunteers who kindly mowed the towpath – in particular to David Baugh who has needed a new hip as a result.

In addition to the above we have dealt with many and varied assignments – from the Jubilee Celebrations, Risk Assessments and blocked drains to complaints about the beer festival and noisy peacocks.

Councillors Duties.

Following the change in councillors during the year, current responsibilities are as follows -

Paul Polito	Chairman LAPLAC representative Parish Maintenance
Louise Pilkington	Vice Chairman MEFT representative Big Society representative
Ian Clarke	Sports Club representative Footway Lighting Warden Taxi Voucher representative Medbourne Charities representative
Matt Oliver	Planning representative
Steph Dunkley	Village Hall representative

During the year the PC was assisted by a number of volunteers:

Keith Sandars	War Memorial Warden
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Bryan Smith	Keeper of the Hollow Tree / Brook and Flood Warden
David Tuffs	Information Resource Advisor
Peter O'Donnell	Keeper of the Village Benches
Roger Lee	Internal Auditor
Richard Hammond	Legal Adviser

All Councillors carried out their duties without claiming any expenses.

I would like to personally thank Fiona our clerk, who has done a wonderful job during her first year in office, the councillors, assistants and the many volunteers, who help to make this village such a special place in which to live.

5.0 PARISH PROJECTS FUNDING REQUIREMENTS.

There are no projects, which require special funding at the moment.

6.0 PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS – Fiona Smith (Clerk):

A copy of the draft accounts detailing the projected position at 31st March 2013 was circulated at the meeting. The final bank statements will not however be received until after 8th April 2013. The final accounts will therefore be presented to councillors for approval at the meeting in May. The **Statement of Assets** presented this year shows a total of £10,476.50 held in the Parish Council accounts, of which £538.07 is designated to “The Hollow” and represents monies raised within the village for continued maintenance and enhancement of the area.

The sum of £342.60 is designated to the Taxi Voucher Scheme and represents the balance of monies raised from the appeal for donations by the village to help sustain the scheme. (It is anticipated that this will be used up in the forthcoming year, with no replacement funding foreseen).

This leaves a balance of £9,595.83 in the General Funds of which £3,661 is set aside for provision of contingencies the Parish Council needs to finance from time to time as shown on the Statement of Assets.

The balance in the separate Mower Fund Account held at Barclays presently stands at £5,393.11.

Projected Receipts & Payments Summary:

The amount of interest earned on our various bank accounts remains very low.

Elements to note in payments throughout the year are:

Administration Expenses: This represents the purchase of an ink cartridge and postage stamps, together with the costs of photographs for the Local Green Space submissions.

Website Support: Charged by Leicestershire County Council for administration of support service.

Insurance: Remained constant due to the Long Term Agreement in place with our insurers.

Subscriptions & Donations: There were no significant changes in subscriptions and donations: although a contribution (£219.18) was made to the Jubilee committee for the village celebration, the total spend remains similar to last year because of the speed gun contribution (£243.75) in last year's figures.

Mower Costs: The only small cost incurred this year was for fuel.

Street Lighting Repair & Maintenance: The reduction this year is only due to last year's figure including 5 quarterly charges.

Grass cutting: No costs were incurred due to volunteers taking on the task of mowing.

In total, expenditure for the year was £127 less than the previous year

Carolyn Frostwick kindly undertook the internal audit of our accounts for the year ending 31st March 2012, following which the official Statement of Accounts was submitted to the External Auditors and the certificate issued.

Roger Lee has very kindly agreed to act as Internal Auditor for this year's accounts.

7.0 PRECEPT

Including an allowance for an additional donation of £200 to the Village Hall, the increase in total precept for 2013/14 was £246 (taking it to £6,103), representing an increase to council tax of 4.4%.

8.0 PLANNING – Cllr Oliver

My report relating to the planning applications is based on my time as a councillor since December 2012.

Over the last year there have been a number of planning applications submitted within the Medbourne Parish. A vast majority of them were for minor changes to existing buildings and the felling of/ works to trees etc. The only notable applications and decisions are as follows.

- Erection of a dwelling (access and siting to be considered) (extension of time of 10/00074/OUT)., Land Adj Dale Farm, Manor Road Medbourne- Pending consideration.
- Demolition of two existing buildings and erection of a detached dwelling and garage (revised scheme of 11/00464/ETF)The Old Slaughterhouse Springbank Medbourne Leicestershire - Approved
- Pagets Farm 36 Main Street Medbourne Leicestershire LE16 8DT, Conversion of barns to create two dwellings; demolition of outbuildings and erection of detached garage block (revised scheme of 10/00848/FUL)- This site went to appeal and was dismissed on 4 Feb 2013

9.0 PARISH LIGHTING Cllr Clarke:

Only issue of note is the problems with Street Light 19 on Ashley Rd which have now been resolved. Other than that a year of standard charges with only normal street lighting repairs and maintenance required. No major issues or expenses to report.

10.0 LOCAL CHARITIES – Cllr Clarke

The Medbourne Charities exist to apply the income of the Charity in relieving, either generally or individually, persons resident in the Parish of Medbourne or Nevill Holt, who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress.

During the year the charity has made a donation to allay the theft of funds from the village hall, a contribution towards works to trees and travel costs to hospital and doctor plus the customary relief of need payments in December.

If anyone knows of any parishioner who requires help with food, cooking or heating facilities, transport, medical costs, or other services such as wheelchair or disabled aids, please contact a Trustee. Our remit is fairly wide and we also assist young people with the costs of tools for their chosen trade or book requirements when taking further education. We have to ensure that all other avenues have been explored but we do wish the funds to be used for the purpose intended.

11.0 MEFT – Cllr Pilkington:

The MEFT has had a positive 2012/2013.

There are 2 entities owned by the MEFT, the playground and half of the Medbourne playing field.

With regard to the playing field, there still remains no formal lease with the Medbourne Sports Club for the use of the land but a lease is being drawn up by Richard Hammond and it is hoped that we will be able to formalise this arrangement in the near future. Any lease agreement will have to satisfy the MEFT's constitution.

In terms of the village playground, through fundraising and donations the playground has been able to support itself financially this year, but it is only as a result of fundraising and donations that this is possible. In particular, this year the Church kindly donated £140.00 from the Christmas collection, which will assist with the payment of the insurance for the next 12 months. This year's Easter Raffle was again well supported by the village – thank you all – with £337.10 being raised, which will be used to pay the rest of the insurance and the annual safety inspection.

As a result of a grant obtained in 2012, maintenance work was undertaken on the playground including the painting of the frames, replacement of wooden flooring with metal plates. It is anticipated that there will be a busy bee clean up of the playground, including scrubbing the black safety surface to make it less slippery, and general tidying up, in the next couple of weeks. It would usually have been done by now but you will appreciate that the weather has been a factor in the lateness of it this year! If anyone is able to provide support and assistance with this it would be greatly appreciated. The date will be put on the village website.

2013 sees the continuation of the fundraising for ongoing costs and maintenance, with a goal to raise money for the replacement of the safety surface in the next few years.

In terms of the charity itself, it is proposed that a new constitution and governing document for the MEFT will be drafted, to better reflect its current purpose and activities.

12.0 VILLAGE HALL – Cllr Clarke:

The one change from last year in the committee is the loss of Keith Sanders as secretary, a great asset greatly missed.

The previous year, while trying to progress development of the building envelope, more information was received that put doubt on the planned actions. The plan therefore changed and grants were applied for and won, to enforce via independent recognition the action plan.

Grants have been won for a building survey, an energy survey, a new village hall website and a village hall consultation to the village via Running Hare consultants.

Plans are in the process of being submitted to HDC for a disabled ramp which will offer easier access for wheelchairs, prams, buggies etc. It is hoped that this can be built later this year.

As reported last year a crack appeared in the building structure above the Kitchen and a surveyors report identified the cause to be the Beech tree adjacent. Planning permission was given to take this tree down. The tree was removed and the building repaired. Most of the building costs were recovered from the Hall insurance but there were significant other costs including the tree felling which were met by the Hall funds. Consequently, the Accounts for the year show only a very small surplus.

I am confident that all the projects being undertaken this year will ensure that the Hall will continue to be an extremely important part of our village life. The Village Hall AGM is to be held on 22nd MAY 2013 at 7.30pm and everyone is invited to attend.

13.0 HERITAGE WARDEN'S REPORT

Since Harborough District Council has now disbanded the Heritage Warden department, this is no longer an active role.

14.0 INFORMATION RESOURCE ADVISOR'S REPORT

Village Web Site

This has been a year of consolidation for the Village web site. In terms of pages the site is fairly complete whereas, in terms of data, there are still gaps to be filled. Of the various community and social activities there are a couple of omissions and, in particular, the Sports Club is still only covered in brief. For the Businesses page all the well-known businesses are represented but there are many sole traders and service providers in the village who have still to benefit from advertising their presence online.

One special addition for 2012 was the Diamond Jubilee picture gallery with many photographs contributed by Sue Hunt. Keith Sandars has now taken responsibility for the Village History pages, starting with a history of Medbourne School. More histories are in the pipeline.

For the coming year there will be a push to get more businesses online and a new online form has been provided to simplify this; this has not been promoted yet. Another initiative will be to make the Local Events page the definitive calendar of "what's on in Medbourne". As part of this a Village email list and Twitter feed will be set up; there will be a new web page enabling subscribers to sign up. All Events listed on the Local Events page will be emailed and "tweeted" to subscribers, mostly via monthly reminders, making the web site a very effective tool for maximising attendance at village activities.

The annual hit rate for the site currently exceeds 41,000. The number of individual page views in a typical week exceeds 1200.

<http://www.leicestershirevillages.com/medbourne>

Parish Council Web Site

The Parish Council web site was audited by Leicestershire County Council in January 2013 and achieved a rating of "Standard", confirming that all statutory and recommended data is available online. The rating of Standard is the highest Medbourne would aspire to, given the scope and size of the Council.

It's worth reminding everyone that, in addition to Medbourne Parish Council matters, this web site and the Village web site both provide access to all planning applications currently under consideration by Harborough District Council, including all their supporting documentation.

<http://medbourne.leicestershireparishcouncils.org>

15.0 TREE WARDEN'S REPORT – Incorporating 'The Hollow'

Following the laying of the sports field hedge in April last year, the hedge next to the tennis courts has been trimmed and works to the small leaf limes at the road side have been carried out. With the advice of Bernard Hanraads, the dog roses around the Hollow have been pruned plus the gorse. Broom has been planted on the top bank but has been savagely nibbled by rabbit and muntjac.

After receipt of a grant from Groundworks Leicester, further trees are to be planted at Leviathan Wood, Blaston field road. With the help of Michael Garfield, three dead trees were taken out of the brookside hedge in Medbourne Village Hall grounds and the hedge made good; two other trees will require further attention in the grounds.

There is now a marked deterioration in the fish population of the brook of sticklebacks and minnows which has been brought to the attention of the Environment Agency. There is a thriving otter family on the brook which has been seen playing near the waterfall.

16.0 TAXI VOUCHER SCHEME – Cllr Clarke

The balance of the Taxi Voucher Scheme funds stands at £342.60, as at 8th April 2013.

If any parishioners would like to use the scheme, who do not have access to a car, please contact Ian Clarke for details.

17.0 SPORTS CLUB – Cllr Clarke:

The Club is prosperous at the moment across all sports and socially. A very difficult year with the Weather considerably reducing Bar Takings. There is a good chance that the Club will only break even in this financial year. Extension fund is being spent wisely and the shell of the extension is now built. Further funding has been obtained from WREN and this should enable the internal fit out to be done.

Fund-raising events will continue even after the extension is built. Works are likely to carry on for another year.

Cricket Club: Thriving Adult and Junior sections. A very difficult season with the Weather being very poor. U15 managed to achieve a TOP 10 in the Country, which was a fantastic achievement for a small Village Club. U11 were County Champions at Hardball and Incrediball. Junior Cricket is very well supported, and most teams achieving a good standard. The club has once again set new standards with getting more County and District players than ever before. The Men's first team struggled on a Sunday in Division 2 of the Rutland League but have a very young team, which is developing well. Second season in the Northants League and we managed to get promotion again. There are plans to have double practice nets which will aid practice and coaching.

Coaching is available for all ages and standards.

Football Club: We now have 6 Junior Teams and 2 Senior Teams. Junior football and coaching of juniors is available for most age groups and is very well supported.

A frustrating season weather wise with loads of games being cancelled. All junior teams are playing to a reasonable standard. Home games are very well supported by local residents and parents. Most areas of the field now have football pitches on and a huge amount of time and effort is being put into maintaining and improving the standard of the playing surfaces.

Tennis Club: Another year of changes to the structure. Major changes made to the coaching set up as well with a new coach introduced. It's very likely that more Junior Teams will be introduced. The Tennis club continues to thrive.

Skittles Team: This is well supported and gives vital income and is a good addition to the social side of the club.

Bowls Team: Uses the facilities on a regular basis and are a very welcome addition to the social side of the club.

The Sports Committee still have plans to open more often when Building works are completed. Other regular users have been the Whist Team, Holiday Club and the British Legion although this is likely to be the last year for Whist and the British Legion, which is a great shame.

No major expenses were incurred on the gang mowers this year but they were taken to Brooksby College for a full service. The report back from this Service was that after a couple more seasons 2 of the cylinders will not be able to be re sharpened and will need replacing. This might be the time to have a re-think on how we mow the sports field. Sponsorship of diesel for the mowing is greatly appreciated.

Special thanks to quite a few individuals, but in particular Colin Lawson, John Burrows and Ian Stevens who do a huge amount of un-paid work keeping the whole sports ground looking immaculate and a credit to Medbourne as a village.

18.0 QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN:

There were no questions raised.

19.0 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:

Tom Philbin asked whether there was a possibility of co-opting Tom Burrows on to the council; the council currently has its full quota of councillors.

Tom Price asked whether there was any money in the precept to pay for the speeding control equipment. The answer was no, although possibly further funding could be secured from an alternative source.

Rebekah Budenberg thanked all councillors for their hard work and dedication over the past year.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.00pm.