



MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 23RD MAY 2019 AT 7:30PM IN THE WATLINGTON CLUB

Present:

Councillors:

Matt Reid (Chairman), Ian Hill (Vice-Chairman), Roger Beattie, Terry Jackson, Keith Woolfson, Steph van de Pette, Nick Hancock, Tim Horton,

Co-opted Members

Jenny Wilkinson (Operations), Gill Bindoff (Planning and NPAB), Peter Richardson (NPAB), Keith Jackson (NPAB).

Members of the Public:

40

Officers:

Kristina Tynan, Rachel Gill

Watlington Caretaker:

Bob Thomas

District Councillor:

Anna Badcock

Press:

David White

1. Welcome by the Chairman – Matt Reid

Matt Reid welcomed the attendees and said it was fantastic to see so many people at the meeting.

2. Apologies

Andrew McAuley, Nicky Smallbone, Caelia Pereira, Steve Harrod (County Councillor).

3. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 17th May 2018 to be agreed and signed as a correct record.

Resolved: That these are a correct record of the meeting and to be signed by the Chair.

4. Presentation and Acceptance of the Annual Parish 2019 report.

The report was accepted. The Chairman's report and Reports from Chairs of Committee are in the pack. There are also reports from organisations in the town.

5. Chairman's report

MR summarised the key points of this year for the Parish Council.

- The Neighbourhood Plan was accepted with 81% in favour and a 40% turnout. MR thanked Gill Bindoff and Peter Richardson for their efforts on the Neighbourhood Plan.

- The Public Toilets have been refurbished. MR thanked Jenny Wilkinson for doing a great job keeping them clean.
- A planning application for a Performance Space in the Paddock has been submitted to SODC. This would be for a limited number of amplified performances a year and could have a great diversity of performances.
- An application has also been submitted for a MUGA (Multi-use games area) at the Recreation Area. This has been led by Roger Beattie and Nicky Smallbone.
- The transfer of the Charlotte Cox Trust is nearly completed – the last legal impediment has now been resolved. MR gave thanks to Tony Williamson, who passed away last year, for his 30 years of service to the Parish Council and who was very committed that the transfer should happen and said that the group would like to complete this transfer in his memory.

6. Climate change

a) Introduction by Stephanie Van de Pette

Steph said that the Watlington Parish Council declared a Climate Emergency in March of this year, a month before SODC. The latest IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) report says we have around 12 years to reduce carbon emissions to 1/5 of the current levels. We do need to panic and do something today and she thanked Watlington for being such an engaged community. Kate Brown has set up a Climate Action Group on Facebook and there are lots of tips for everyday things that people can help with climate change. Watlington needs to be ready for action. SvP said that we are the first generation to be able to do something to avert catastrophic problems.

b) Young People's Views on Climate Change

Presentation by Amber Chainey, Lizzie Wasmuth and Rhiannon Amery

Amber, Lizzie and Rhiannon gave some background information on why they are passionate about Climate Change. They felt that some people switch off as it is so overwhelming but urged residents to try to help with climate change and help to improve things for the next generation of children.

7. 'Let's work together towards a greener planet' Workshop Activity led by Amber Chainey.

Attendees were given time to write down their ideas on a 'Blueprint for an Eco-friendly Watlington'. Ideas will be collated. [attached as an addendum to these minutes]

8. Report from District Councillor – Cllr Anna Badcock

Anna gave an update on SODC. In summary.

Housing - It's easy to think that it's all about planning. However, when the SODC building burnt down, the priority department to get up and running first was housing. SODC have 3 rough sleepers in the area and they recently decided to make sure these people had somewhere to stay from Oct-March.

Re-cycling – SODC is still number one in the rankings in the South of England for this.

New SODC Council - there is a rainbow of different people, we will wait and see how this goes. Anna said she can simply act on what this ward wants.

Car parks – AB has requested electric charging points in the car park.

Broadband – There are 2 organisations available to do FTTP (fibre to the premises) broadband schemes. There are still issues with speeds in wet weather as the copper wire is degraded.

Funding – every council will struggle because of delivery from Central Government, a new spending review is expecting but is not yet ready so there is no information on available funding. The current average council tax (band D) is £121/year to cover all SODC services.

Grants – All district councillors are given £5k to allocate to local projects. She requested that people use the councillor Facebook page to ask for project funding. Last year she gave a grant towards CCTV and extra lighting at the Pavilion.

Sports – AB has helped to start a running club at Primary School. Go-active Gold has been successful in Watlington.

Planning – Everyone in Watlington and most people in the surrounding villages want improvements to air quality. There are still conflicting views on the Edge Road, some villages feel it will adversely affect them, for example Pyrton is concerned over staying separate and cycle /footpaths links to Watlington. Britwell Salome and Shirburn have concerns over increases in traffic. The new SODC council came in on a mandate that they want to reduce the number of houses in the local plan and not to build on the green belt. Advice from the officers is that 10k houses is a minimum. The first version of the Local Plan included Culham and Chalgrove plus some greenbelt sites. The second version re-looked at Chalgrove. It is now likely to use some greenbelt land near the John Radcliffe hospital. There is a meeting on the 3rd June which is likely to withdraw the local plan which may mean NPs don't stand. If the 5-year land supply is not maintained it may be open season for developers. The Growth Board deal offers £215m for infrastructure – this may all be lost if the Local Plan is withdrawn. The next SOC Council meeting will be held on the 20th June.

9. Report from County Councillor – Cllr Steve Harrod

Steve Harrod had sent his apologies, but his annual report is in the pack circulated.

10. Residents Questions to Parish Councillors, District Councillor and Local Organisations

Chris Bidgood – Britwell Salome

Chris asked to share the views of the Britwell Salome residents and stated that he had written to the Parish Council on this matter.

He firstly said what a fantastic event Art Weeks had been.

He then stated that with increased traffic volumes as new houses are built in Benson and Watlington there will be a big impact on Britwell. He asked that Britwell be considered for CIL/S106 funding for traffic calming measures.

Tim Horton said that all the Neighbouring PC were invited to join Watlington's NP but nobody took up this offer. CB agreed this was a fair point but said we should move forward from where we are now.

Matt Reid felt this was a great time to start talking.

Local Plan/Neighbourhood Plan Questions

Nick Hancock asked for clarification on what happens if the Local Plan gets pulled.

AB said that there is a briefing on the 3rd June and a Growth Board meeting on the 5th June. If the plan is withdrawn, we could be back at square one.

Keith Jackson said that if the Local Plan is pulled does not that leave Neighbourhood Plans as the most up to date plans and what would happen about CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) payments?

AB said that as far as she had been told if the Local Plan goes then the Neighbourhood plans go too.

Gill Bindoff said that the district has a plan in place currently and a core strategy and the NP is part of that. The information she has is that there is no threat to the NP at all. AB said that the officers were unsure whether the 2011 Local plan would stand up to appeal. GB said that the 2011 plan was being used currently. AB added that the 2011 plan may be too out of date.

Keith Woolfson said that surely people in Watlington wanted what was in the Neighbourhood Plan as 81% of people voted for it.

Paul Sayers asked about the formula used to calculate the housing numbers. There was some discussion on this.

Tim Horton felt that the biggest failure was accepting the high numbers in the Growth Deal and that it was time to go back to Whitehall and renegotiate them.

Anna Badcock said that no councillor living in a rural area would willingly make it urban, however we do need more housing and there are not enough affordable homes. If a lower number could have been agreed it would have. We are at 0% unemployment and homes are needed where the jobs are. Reducing numbers would jeopardise the Local Plan and may lead to a less than 5-year land supply.

Terry Jackson said that one of the problems was that 'affordable' housing was not affordable.

Robert Barber asked if we want to dump Chalgrove do we have to keep the Local Plan?

Anna Badcock said that there are two strategic areas, Culham and Chalgrove but Chalgrove does not have any infrastructure in place.

Keith Jackson stated that the Local Plan is there to satisfy the need for a 5-year land supply.

Matt Reid said that Watlington is a special place and it was good to hear the young people speak so passionately on Climate Change and what it means to them.

Matt Reid then thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 10PM