

NASH PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 16th May 2019 at Nash Village Hall.

Present: Bob Young (Chair), Peter Stubbs (Vice-Chair), Cllr Richard Huffer, Clare Morris, Charlie Pinckney, Louise Roberts, Sue Jones (Clerk)

Members of the public: 25

Minutes:

1. Apologies :

Apologies were received from Jane and Nick Harris, Badgers End, Lower Nash and John Brookes of Nash Court, Nash, who had also provided a note of concerns that he wished to be brought to the attention of the meeting.

2. Attendance:

25 members of the public were in attendance

3. Chair's Introduction and Annual Report:

The Chair welcomed members of the public and he, the Clerk and Parish Councillors introduced themselves to the meeting.

The Chair summarised the Annual Report which had been circulated to members of the public and continued by reading the communication from John Brookes of Nash Court, and then outlined the structure of the evening's business which would conclude with the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council.

The Chair thanked Unitary Councillor Gwilym Butler, his predecessor as Chair; Unitary Councillors Richard Huffer and Madge Shingleton; and the former Clerk, Clive Leworthy; for re-establishing the Parish Council in June 2018.

4. Unitary Councillor's Report

Richard Huffer, Shropshire Councillor and Nash Parish Councillor gave an outline of his role as local councillor and shared his thoughts on the current state of local government in general and the challenges facing Shropshire Council in particular. The need for better bus services, road maintenance and affordable housing for local people were amongst the key concerns he was pressing Shropshire Council to address and was extremely pleased that the Parish Council had been re-established and hoped that renewed interest would enable the remaining vacancy to be filled. He also indicated that he was prepared to stand down from the Parish Council to create a further opportunity for local representation but would continue to attend Parish Council meetings as the local Shropshire Councillor in any event.

Richard was keen to support the development of a Nash Parish Plan which he felt needed to be augmented with a local housing needs survey but expressed doubts about its impact on the Shropshire's current Local Plan Review and the Cleobury Mortimer Place Plan process in particular unless it commanded significant local support.

He explained how Shropshire had created 18 Place Planning Areas with Market Towns like Ludlow and Cleobury, Community Hubs like Burford and Clee Hill, and Community Clusters in villages including Kinlet and Stottesdon; but that the framework was now inadequately resourced. Indeed he reported that earlier that day at the Shropshire Council Meeting he had attended it had been resolved to cut the number of Area planning Committees from three to two because of resource constraints which in his view would move decisions further away from local people. He felt the present exclusion of Nash from the Ludlow Place Plan area which included Burford and Clee Hill, Nash residents' closest hubs, was unhelpful and would support the participation of Nash Parish Council representatives in the Ludlow Place Plan review process. In this connection he also regretted the slippage in progressing the development of the Tenbury Wells/Burford Neighbourhood Plan and hoped that both Shropshire Council and Malvern Hills District Council would rescue the project and drive it forward. He concluded by wishing the new Parish Council well and encouraging local people to engage in the proposed Parish Plan process.

5. Parish Hall Report

Val Smith explained that Nash Parish Hall is a registered charity run by a small group of volunteers on behalf of the residents of Nash, Boraston and surrounding villages drawing in those residents to help achieve its aims. The past year had been eventful, commencing with the "Beast from the East" which did considerable damage to the Hall requiring a big clean up and substantial insurance claim. The subsequently smartened up Hall then further benefited from a Lottery Grant giving the toilets a much needed upgrade delivering baby changing and disabled facilities, becoming more modern with three unisex toilets.

Val explained that it cost roughly £1300 annually to run the hall and though there are no regular bookings apart from the Parish Council, it has been hired over the last year by local people for funeral wakes, a Church jumble sale, Tenbury Ramblers and charity fund raisers. In addition to cover costs, basic maintenance and make improvements, three or four events are held each year including a photographic exhibition in May; in June a Skittles and Supper evening plus Quiz; in September The Annual Nash Dash for "Classic Folk on Classic motorbikes" followed by lunch; and at Christmas a "Santa's Grotto" for younger residents was added to the Annual Christmas Coffee morning. The most recent venture was the hugely successful Bank Holiday Breakfast.

Going forward, disabled access is a key priority given the dangerous situation occasioned by people alighting on the Clee Hill Road adjacent to the fire exit and Val is working with a surveyor to explore different options including the possibility of moving the main entrance to the opposite side of the building or improving the existing entrance. In addition the car park is in need of repair, the rough area made user friendly, the roof repaired and the main doors renewed or painted as well all the regular maintenance of gutters, drains and windows. In conclusion Val invited the residents of Nash, Boraston and surrounding villages to enjoy using this very quaint community building, to get together with their neighbours and have a good time.

6. Parish Plan Discussion

The Chair gave an introduction to the main business of the evening and whilst regretting the absence of a guest speaker on Parish Plans, he felt Richard Huffer's earlier outline of the Shropshire Local Plan review process and the discussions around the Cleobury Mortimer Place Plan had adequately set the scene. He indicated that neighbouring Parish Councils had either already produced a Parish

Plan or were in the process of developing one and these underpinned their submissions to Shropshire's Place Plan process. He further reported that he and Peter Stubbs had attended the recent Cleobury Mortimer Area Place Planning review meeting which had impressed on them just how much catching up Nash Parish Council had to do.

The experience of neighbouring parish councils suggested that the process, whilst being led and supported by the Parish Council, should actually be driven by a steering committee of interested local people to extend the outreach of the process and command the widest ownership of the document which might subsequently emerge.

Charlie Pinckney, the Parish Council's lead on planning matters, then rehearsed the *raison d'être* for parish plans and enumerated the four key reasons for developing one as follows:"

- Parish Plans can be used to make sure local concerns and characteristics are taken into account before any planning decisions are made.
- The Plans may also Influence how local services are delivered.
- Parish Plans are an important tool that can be fed into other plans and strategies such as Local Plans, where the needs of individual villages and their surrounding countryside might not normally be adequately considered.
- In certain circumstances the Parish Council can press the local planning authority to adopt the plan as a *Supplementary Planning Document* that would carry significant weight as a material consideration in the planning decision-making process."

Notwithstanding Charlie Pinckney's contribution some residents questioned the value of a Parish Plan and particularly whether Shropshire Council would take any notice of it. The Chair said he was unable to speak for Shropshire Council and Richard Huffer said his experiences suggested some doubt about the weight Shropshire might attach to such a plan.

One resident then proposed from the floor that the Parish Council approach to the Chief Executive of Shropshire Council seeking an assurance that Shropshire Council valued the development of a Parish Plan for Nash and that it would take account of the content of such a plan when produced. This proposal was widely supported and the Chair undertook to instruct the Clerk to write accordingly.

A further question from the floor concerned whether a Parish Plan, once drafted, could be amended. The Chair stated that all plans were subject to review, from national planning policy through Local Plans and Place Plans to Parish Plans. Shropshire is now reviewing a Local Plan it put in place almost a decade ago and its Place Plans were intended to be reviewed on an annual cycle though that had slipped somewhat and the current Place Plan review is of plans drafted in 2015/16.

Mike Walters, the former Chairman of the previous Parish Council, reflected that 10 years ago the then parish Council had considered a Parish Plan but that apart from the issue of potholes local people wanted no change and therefore there was no need for a Parish Plan, especially when he had been advised it would cost £2,000. As he believed nothing had changed he wished the Chair to put the question as to whether there was any support for a Parish Plan to the meeting.

The Chair then put the question to the meeting and called for a show of hands and 20 out of 25 persons present indicated their support for a Parish Plan.

Mike Walters then asked how much it was estimated the Parish plan would cost and the Chair replied that a provisional budget of £300 had been agreed at the Parish Council meeting on 25th April and Charlie Pinckney added that he believed the printing costs would be in the region of £150.

Mike Walters then asked why the Parish Council had increased the precept by over 100% given that the previous Council had accumulated over £7,000 in reserves. The clerk indicated that as at 31st March 2018 the reserves actually stood at £4,141.00 and the Chair responded to Mike Walter's question on the precept by inviting him to raise the question again at the Parish Council AGM later in the evening when any queries would be dealt with in full under "Financial Matters". However Mike Walters declined to attend the Parish Council AGM.

A number of further issues were raised from the floor including the frequency and availability of local buses; the poor state of the roads generally with pot holes and poor drainage being the primary concerns together with pedestrian safety on the Clee Hill Road. Children's' issues especially availability of preschool provision and affordable nursery facilities and proximity, availability and transport to schools and further education colleges were of particular concern as was the availability of affordable housing for local people and planning and development issues more generally. Louise Roberts (the Parish Council's "Pothole Tsar") gave an update on her efforts to chase Shropshire officers on highways issues and her commitment to continue to pursue this matter energetically in the future.

The Chair then invited residents to indicate their interest in supporting the Parish Plan process both in terms of being active consultees but also as possible members of a Parish Plan Steering Group and out of some 16 prospective consultees, 5 indicated their interest in serving on a Steering Group.

The Chair thanked residents for their support and in response to a resident's question, outlined the next steps in taking forward the Parish Plan process. He indicated that the process would commence with requesting Shropshire Council to initiate a local housing needs survey and calling the Steering Group together to consider a questionnaire to be delivered to all households and plan the timetable for questionnaire and housing needs analysis and summary; and residents' workshops to consider the questionnaire findings and results of the local housing need survey.

This would be followed by further Steering Group meetings to draw together the output from the workshops and to produce the first draft of the Parish Plan. Following this the first draft would be reviewed at a further residents' workshop session, then refined for publication, printed and distributed by mail, formally submitted to Shropshire Council and put onto the Parish Council website.

The Steering Group would be expected to invite Shropshire Council officers and representatives of relevant agencies to assist in their deliberations and to consult with neighbouring Parish Councils where appropriate. As issues were considered and priorities emerged during the process, the parish Council would consider them and where appropriate refer them for inclusion in the ongoing Place Plan review process.

In response to a further question from the floor regarding the likely timetable for undertaking the Parish plan process, the Chair indicated that in his view a realistic timetable would see the consultation phase running over the summer months with the production of a draft plan by October with a submission document hopefully available before the New Year. It was essential that we got off to a flying start however and he believed that the Steering Group should meet in a couple of week's

time to consider and sign off on a questionnaire and he was hoping to use a modified version of the Coreley Parish Council questionnaire for this purpose to save time.

7. Any Other Business

The Chair advised that the Minutes of this Annual Parish Meeting and the Minutes of the following Parish Council AGM would be posted on the Parish Council's website within a week.

He invited further volunteers to join the Parish Council and Parish Plan Steering Group and advised that the dates of future meetings of the Parish Council would be included in the Minutes of this meeting.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance, advised that the Parish Council AGM would commence after a short comfort break and declared the Annual Parish Meeting closed at 845pm

Addendum

Dates of Future Parish Council Meetings:

27th June; 12th Sept; 21st Nov: 2020:16th Jan; 19th March; 14th May; 25th June; 17th Sept.

Litter: John Brookes local litter action group is cansetcetera on <https://www.litteraction.org.uk>