

PARISH OF NORTHILL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN CALDECOTE CHURCH ROOMS ON MONDAY 29TH MARCH 2010 COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM

PRESENT: Councillor J Franklin (Chairman), 32 local electors, Central Bedfordshire Councillor P Turner and the Parish Clerk Mrs L Trevena

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor S Mandley and Central Bedfordshire Councillor C Maudlin.

2. MINUTES OF NORTHILL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 30TH MARCH 2009

The Minutes of Northill Annual Parish Meeting held on 30th March 2009 were circulated, having been initialled as correct at the Northill Parish Council Meeting held on 20th April 2009. The minutes were then signed by the Chairman.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 30TH MARCH 2009

None.

4. PRESENTATION FROM KAREN KENNY – NATIONAL SOCIETY OF ALLOTMENT AND LEISURE GARDENERS LIMITED

Karen Kenny from the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Limited commenced her presentation giving background information to the Allotment and Smallholding Act. She reported that the eastern region is the fastest growth area in the country for allotment and allotment holders. She spoke of the benefits of allotments, use of leisure time, stress release and reduction in the carbon footprint and then went on to give an extremely interesting and informative talk on the advantages of forming an allotment association that could work in partnership with the parish council and the management of sites in general. A short question and answer time then took place with the Clerk updating those present on the investigation into possible allotment land within the parish. Councillor Franklin thanked Karen Kenny for her most informative presentation. It was agreed by interested parties to form an allotment association at the end of this meeting.

5. ANNUAL REPORT FROM CHAIRMAN

The report presented by the Chairman outlined the key events, activities and achievements of the Council during the year. This report is appended to these minutes.

9. ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

The report presented by the Clerk outlined the probable expenditure for 2009/2010, for which a precept of £40,000 had been raised. The Council had set a precept of £42,000 for 2010/2011. This report was available at the meeting and is appended to these minutes.

10. ANNUAL REPORT OF HIGHWAYS AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

The Clerk, on behalf of the Highways and Open Spaces Committee Chairman, presented the report which outlined the work of the committee during the year. This report is appended to these minutes.

11. ANNUAL REPORT OF CHURCHYARD AND CEMETERY COMMITTEE

The Clerk, on behalf of the Churchyard and Cemetery Committee Chairman, presented the report which outlined the work of the committee during the year. This report is appended to these minutes.

12. OPEN FORUM FOR ELECTORS OF NORTHILL PARISH

Mrs Hopton expressed concern over the continued overnight parking on Caldecote Green. She was advised to give details of vehicle owners or registration numbers to the Clerk to enable the Council to follow up this matter which would be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting in April.

Mr Hopton expressed concern at the number of times the Police helicopter had flown over Magpie Farm, Upper Caldecote and said he was opposed to the site in general. He was advised that the local beat officer PC Paterson had explained, at the February Council meeting, that the recent problems on the site had been caused mainly by visitors to the site. Councillor P Maudlin gave information on the recent problems at the site. Central Bedfordshire Council Local Development Framework Plan proposal for Gypsy and Traveller Sites will be open for public consultation in the near future and residents were encouraged to respond with their objections or support during this period.

Pat Allen asked if a litter/dog bin could be provided at the entrance to Footpath 10 in Biggleswade Road, Upper Caldecote. Mrs Cullen expressed concern at the amount of litter in Vinegar Hill, Upper Caldecote and also asked for a litter bin in this area. Councillor P Maudlin expressed concern at the amount of fly tipping that had occurred recently as some tyres and a toilet cistern had been dumped in the ditches of Vinegar Hill, Upper Caldecote. Those present were informed that fly tipping is a matter which should be reported to the Highways Helpdesk at Central Bedfordshire Council.

RECOMMENDED that the following items be included on the next Northill Parish Council agenda on 12th April 2010:

- a) overnight parking on Caldecote Green; and
- b) installation of litter/dog bins within the parish.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.45 pm

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2010

We have had a busy and productive year. Many issues are discussed and considered at the parish council meetings. A large amount of some of the councillor's time is taken up on the planning committee. They meet regularly with the Clerk to discuss planning applications in the parish. Councillor Hall has been terrific in putting the parish point of view over to Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to some difficult planning issues, so a big thank you to her.

Issues such as speeding dominate local surveys and the council works on your behalf to get better signage and road calming measures and also to notify local police of speeding hotspots. Allotments, as you have already heard are currently an ongoing topic. Ickwell Green is a great amenity used by the parish for football, cricket, May Day and Pancake Race to name just a few. We did, last year, maintain the perimeter track and are talking with local residents to hopefully maintain it on a regular basis.

Local villagers and volunteers with the support of the parish council, have this year got together to form a group to maintain Northill pond. Hopefully, they will create a better pond for the locals to enjoy and add to this beauty spot.

We still support lots of local charities each year, to the tune of £4000 and any groups looking for funding from the parish council should get an application into the Clerk in good time so that the councillors can have the time to consider each one on its merits.

I would like to thank all the councillors for their time and commitment during the year and also the Clerk who is able to keep us all well informed and keeps us on the straight and narrow.

I would also like to thank the parishioners who have attended tonight and also those that came to the meetings during the year. It makes it a lot easier for us, as councillors, if we get feedback and comment from parishioners about local issues good or bad, then we can act accordingly to solve problems. Many thanks to you all.

NORTHILL PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCIAL ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2010

	Estimated Expenditure	Probable Expenditure	Surplus/ (Deficit)
	£	£	£
Highways & Open Spaces*	6100	16,213	(10,113)
Churchyards & Cemeteries	8,000	6,138	1862
Administration	22500	17,390	5,110
Street Lighting	100	76	24
Grants	5,500	4,125	1,375
Miscellaneous	0	0	0
TOTAL:	42,200	43,942	(1,742)
Less surplus from previous years	2,200		
PRECEPT FOR 2009/2010	£40,000		

* *The Highways & Open Spaces Committee has overspent against budget in this financial year mainly due to unplanned costs in connection with repair work to Ickwell Green tracks.*

The Council has set a precept requirement of £42,000.00 for the financial year 2010/2011.

In addition to this the Council has the following **estimated** monies in reserves:

General reserves - £41,212

Capital reserves - £52,248: This money can only be used towards capital projects

Other reserves - £20,677: Commuted sum for Pound Close car park and amenity area upkeep

THINC monies - £114

NORTHILL PARISH COUNCIL

HIGHWAYS & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2010

The Committee has met on three occasions during the year with general routine matters having been dealt with as necessary throughout the year.

CALDECOTE GREEN & HATCH GREEN

Members have been extremely pleased with the work undertaken by D G Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd for the removal of wild bushes and growth along the northern edge of the green and general work on the trees at the entrance to Water Lane. No problems have been identified on Hatch Green.

ICKWELL GREEN

Following on from extensive repair work to Ickwell Green tracks further work has been undertaken to investigate drainage problems and reinstate the grass area in front of Colemoreham Farmhouse to help alleviate flooding problems. The Cricket Club have been notified of this work and requested to advise their members not to park on this area. The drainage ditches along the edge of Ickwell Green require clearance, Harpur Trust have been contacted with a request to clear out the section of ditch within their property. An order has been placed by this Council for ditch clearance under their jurisdiction which is planned to take place during April 2010. A working party group has been set up to deal with Ickwell Green tracks matters with Councillor Margaret Morgan representing the Council.

NORTHILL GREEN

Repair work was undertaken to the sluice in Northill Pond. The large willow was trimmed and two self-set willow were removed. A local working party group is now undertaking general maintenance of Northill Pond, subject to submission and acceptance of proposals and risk assessments before any work is carried out. The pond retaining wall in Ickwell Road is showing signs of cracking. Central Bedfordshire Council Arboricultural Officer visited the site and agreed that the adjacent willow should be removed.

POUND CLOSE AMENITY AREA

Members were asked, by a local resident, to consider the installation of play equipment in this area. After due consideration members felt the area was unsuitable for the erection of play equipment.

HIGHWAY MATTERS

A number of faults including replacement junction signs, re-fixing litter bin, amenity grass cutting, blocked drains, overgrown hedging and trees on the highway and many, many potholes and highway issues have been reported to Central Bedfordshire Council during the year.

Potholes and highway problems can be reported direct to the Highways Helpdesk www.Highways@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or by phoning 0300 300 8049.

NORTHILL PARISH COUNCIL

CHURCHYARD & CEMETERY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2010

The Committee has met on three occasions throughout the year.

Council has been pleased with the work over the past two years in the cemeteries and churchyards by contractors D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Limited. All the cemeteries and churchyards are generally in very good condition after the severe weather conditions over the past year.

CALDECOTE CEMETERY

Once again we have dealt with mole invasion in Caldecote Cemetery. The cemetery shed was repaired and repainted. Due to severe weather conditions several graves had sunk and were topped up. These will be re-seeded, if they have not already been done, weather permitting.

CALDECOTE CHURCHYARD

The churchyard gate and fencing has been repaired. Ongoing work continues to remove ivy and self seeded saplings on graves.

NORTHILL CEMETERY

Estimates were obtained for digging out part the old section of the cemetery to continue a pathway from the existing to join with the pathway in the new section. However, after due consideration by members, it was agreed that the cost for this work was prohibitive. The cemetery shed was repaired and repainted. Ongoing work is continuing to remove ivy from the older graves. Due to severe weather conditions several graves had sunk and were topped up. These will be re-seeded, if not already done, weather permitting.

NORTHILL CHURCHYARD

The small gate opposite Northill Village Hall has been run-hung on three occasions. The double gates fronting Bedford Road have been repaired once again. A letter has been forwarded to the Parochial Church Council drawing its attention to the poor condition of the church noticeboard.

WAR MEMORIAL

Extensive repairs and repainting was carried out to the fencing around the war memorial due to damage caused to all the posts by the grass cutter mowing too close to the posts. The Council is looking into the possibility of grant aid from the War Memorial Trust towards repairs of the war memorial base and general cleaning of the war memorial itself.