

North Marston Parish Council

Clerk to the council: Ms Jan Roffe - Email: clerk@northmarston.org or telephone 07933 624147

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING Tuesday 10th October 2023

Present: Councillors I Mordue (Chairman), A Boyt (Vice Chairman), K Du-Plessis, B Newman, C Hutson and C Smythe, Jan Roffe (Clerk)

114/23 Apologies: Apologies were received from Councillor Hogbin-Mills and Councillor Phil Gomm (Buckinghamshire Council).

115/23 Members Interests: There were no declarations of interest

Open forum for Parishioners: (under adjournment) to include 100 Club Draws for October 2023.

The Reverend Petra Elsmore had been invited to talk about the Poors Piece and Clocklands Charity's updated grant making policy and to answer any questions from the Parish Council and residents. Reverend Elsmore shared a new and very helpful information leaflet about the charity, and how residents experiencing financial hardship may apply for a grant. The Clerk will shortly publish this on the Parish Council website and on the Facebook North Marston and Granborough Community Facebook page, although funds are, unless in exceptional circumstances where there is a strong link to the community, only available to those who reside in North Marston.

100 Club Prize Draw: 1st Prize: £30.00 No. 67 Rob Worner; 2nd Prize £20.00 No.86 Sarah Howes; 3rd Prize, £10.00 No. 90 Robin Cartwright

116/23 Minutes: The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 12th September 2023 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

117/23 Poors Piece and Clocklands Charity:

RESOLVED: The Parish Council verified Mr N P Tuckett and Mr P York as trustees of the Poor Piece and Clocklands Charity. Mr York was verified in his own right, having previously stood in for the late Mrs Alison Finnemore.

118/23 Planning Application:

23/02706/VRC - NORTH MARSTON

Hillview Paddocks, Carters Lane North Marston, Buckinghamshire MK18 3GY

Variation of condition 2 (materials) relating to application 20/02469/APP

RESOLVED: The Parish Council had no objections to the use of black metal cladding.

119/23 Rosefield Solar Farm: The Chairman invited those present to contribute to a discussion about the proposed Rosefield Solar Farm with battery storage, which will see at least 1000 acres of agricultural land between Buckingham and Aylesbury covered by solar panels. Informative insights were given by residents who had attended one of the recent open exhibition and consultation meetings. Consultation with communities, local authorities and other organisations runs until 10th November. Please visit: [Rosefield Solar Farm – Rosefield Solar Farm is a proposed new solar farm with battery storage in Buckinghamshire](#) for further information. There were no resolutions made by the Parish Council after the discussion.

120/23 To receive any updates and discuss actions on the following matters:

Environment

1. Highways:

(i) Fix My Street:

The following updates were received from Councillor Smythe:

- The dangerous pothole on Marston Hill has been repaired by Highways
- A few minor holes along Portway and High Street have also been filled.
- Highways have temporarily filled to the edge at the bottom of Church Street with soil and it is hoped that this will be overlayed in due course.
- Any blocked gully drains will be cleared during the annual gully cleansing programme, but there is no indication of when this might be. Councillor Smythe will attempt to clear the drain as best she can at the bottom of Church Street to help prevent flooding in heavy rain.
- The leaning and damaged street sign at the bottom of Church Street has been reported on Fix My Street and to the Area Technician. It will be replaced with a brand-new sign when responsibility for street signs has been finalised under the new unitary council.
- At the request of residents during the open forum, gravel accumulating on a portion of pavement along Portway is now being checked and swept on a weekly basis. Thank you to those concerned.
- It was agreed that the Clerk would try to find out who is responsible for the ditch along Quainton Road, which needs clearing as it causes flooding in heavy rain.

(ii) Portway footway update: The footpath along Portway has been cleared as best it can be by a group of volunteers. The need for resurfacing has been reported to the Area Technician who has inspected it. However, it is not considered dangerous and is not a priority for Highways, although it is hoped that it will be resurfaced at some point. In the meantime, the Area Technician has advised that the Parish Council should continue to have the weeds sprayed and that the grass is taken back to the original width of the path, but this relies on volunteers.

(iii) Re-surfacing of Portway, High Street and School Hill update: The Area Technician has informed the Parish Council that Portway, High Street and School Hill are scheduled to be resurfaced next year.

(iv) Reflective posts on Portway update: It is presumed that over the years the reflective posts as you come into the village have been destroyed by hedge cutting vehicles. However, the Area Technician has advised that they will not be replaced as they are not designed to be on the inside of a bend, and it is not understood why they were there in the first place.

(v) MVAS:

(i) RESOLVED: The Parish Council agreed for an additional socket and pole to be installed in each of two locations along Portway and Quainton Road so that the MVAS can be moved at 6-weekly intervals but still be at each exit/entrance to the village (or near to). The locations have been agreed with the Area Technician. The Clerk to write to the residents living at nos. 57 and 61 Quainton Road to ask if they have any objections. The new pole on Portway does not impact on any properties. The position of the additional pole on the Granborough Road has still to be finalised as it is dependent upon the location of the new streetlight by the Sportsfield.

(ii) The MVAS sign recently purchased does not conform to Buckinghamshire Council's policy. The Parish Council has pointed out to the Area Technician that the majority of MVAS in surrounding villages do not appear to conform. Highways are apparently aware of this and are discussing what to do about it.

RESOLVED: Councillor Mordue agreed to try and reprogramme the sign to meet with Buckinghamshire Council's policy and to cover the "Your Speed" wording.

RESOLVED: The clerk to write to Sarah and Nick Kettlety of Animal Antiks, to thank them for their recently received and very generous donation towards the new MVAS located in Quainton Road.

(vi) **New streetlight at Sportsfield update:** The Parish Council is awaiting further advice from the Area Technician to ensure that all regulations set by the Department of Transport are met.

2. Repair of village bench outside of The Pilgrim:

RESOLVED: Councillor Newman agreed to research costs for the repair of the current bench. It was suggested that it might be more cost effective to buy a new bench. As there would also be the cost of concreting it in to shore it up and prevent theft, it was decided to investigate the costs of a new bench only if the repair costs are considered too expensive or not value for money.

3. Parking:

RESOLVED: With one very minor alteration, the Parish Council agreed the Polite Parking Notice. This is to be put on lampposts around the village, the website and on the FB North Marston and Granborough Community page. The Parish Council appreciates that in Quainton Road tractors cannot pass in places unless vehicles are parked up on the pavement, but sufficient room must be left for pedestrians and those using mobility vehicles to pass.

4. Grass and hedges:

RESOLVED: The quotation from Paul Baker of £160.00 for the cutting of the Sportsfield hedges, to include the inside and outside of the portion of the hedge along the Granborough Road, was approved. The Clerk to ask for the hedges to be cut as soon as possible.

121/23 Parish Action Plan/Projects: To discuss and/or receive any relevant updates on the following:

1. Aylesbury Wild Vale Project

RESOLVED: Blades quotation of £1,485.00 (+£297.00 VAT) was approved for the rewilding of the agreed area along Quainton Road, and the overseeding of the area leaving the village towards Oving. The quotation of £375.00 (+£75.00 VAT) was also approved for the annual hedge cutting of the play park, Elmers Meadow hedge and the pond area.

Playground update: (i) The Clerk reported that Kompan's representative has visited the play area to assess the problem with the distance between the bottom of the toddler roundabout and the surface not meeting ROSPA requirements. A new 85mm washer will be installed by Kompan to correct this. Kompan have advised that the surface was levelled last year, and a new washer put in place. However, there is no evidence nor correspondence to suggest that the surface was levelled, only that a new washer was fitted.

RESOLVED: The Clerk to write to Kompan again to insist that Kompan finds a lasting solution and carries out the necessary remedial work.

(ii) It was suggested that football nets are required to stop the footballs going out of play and into other areas of the play park.

RESOLVED: Councillor Boyt agreed to look at the options and costs and report back at the next meeting.

2. Provision for teenagers:

Update on funding for the Teqball table through Winslow and Villages Community Board. The Clerk reported that she had provided further information requested by the funding committee and is waiting to hear whether the application has been successful, or not.

3. Village Hall car park:

Update on quotations requested for an ACO drain at the bottom of the Shop ramp:

Roadseal Resurfacing had visited the site again and do not advise an ACO drain as there is nowhere for the excess water to run without carving out a trench around the shop, which would be expensive and possibly not very effective anyway. The Parish Council is mindful that this work needs to be done before the winter.

RESOLVED: Councillor Mordue will speak to Andrew North to get his opinion, and other possible solutions.

4. Village Hall

5. Audio-Visual equipment:

(i) **RESOLVED:** Councillor Mordue reported that he has prepared a definitive list of audio-visual requirements and will send it to both audio-visual companies for final quotations.

(ii) **Update on Village Hall cleaning:** Emma Lynch gave in her notice at the beginning of September and the Parish Council expressed its thanks to her for all she has done. A new cleaner, Kate Wetherell, has already given the kitchen and hall a seasonal deep clean before starting the regular 2.5 hours weekly maintenance cleaning.

6. Village Pond and Parsnip Pond

(i) **RESOLVED:** It was agreed that Karl MacWhirter could use the village pond for the Annual Charity Duck Race on Sunday 28th October 3pm-4pm.

(ii) The Parish Council expressed its thanks to volunteers who once again cleared the pond of blanket weed ready for the duck race and especially to Cheryl Eaton.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Hutson may obtain barley straw and onion bags to place in the pond as a natural and environmentally friendly way to try to stop the excessive growth of blanket weed.

7. Hay Barn update: Councillor Boyt has not yet been able to shore up the barn with a pillar, but he will do so soon.

8. Defibrillators update: Councillor Hutson reported that all three defibrillators are in good working order and that the next pads do not have to be purchased until January of next year.

10. Sportsfield:

(i) The problem of increased dog excrement at the Sportsfield was discussed.

RESOLVED: The Clerk to put a post on Facebook encouraging dog owners to pick up after their dogs and explaining that dogs may be banned from the Sportsfield altogether if the situation does not improve. The matter will be discussed again at the next Sportsfield Committee Meeting.

122/23 Finance:

1. **RESOLVED:** The accounts for April to the end of September 2023 were approved.

2. **RESOLVED:** The Parish Council acknowledged that the second tranche of its Precept for 2023-24 of £16,537.50 (no VAT) has been received from Buckinghamshire Council

3. **RESOLVED:** Following a meeting between the Finance Committee and the Clerk, the Parish Council ratified an increase in working hours from 10 to 12 hours per week and that, following an official assessment of the role and responsibilities by BMKALC, the Clerk's pay point be increased to SCP19.

Receipts and Payments of Accounts

RESOLVED: The following payments and receipts were approved:

Parish Council

Payments made on behalf of the Parish Council

ICO (Data Protection) - £35.00 (No VAT)

Blades Turf Care – September grass cutting - £915.90, £152.65 VAT

Tesco Mobile – Parish 'phone contract September- £7.50, no VAT

HPI Instant Ink – printer ink contract - £5.49, £0.92 VAT

Defibstore – adult pads for VH defib - £61.19, £10.20 VAT

Elan City – MVAS - £2,807.99

PKF Littlejohn, external audit - £378.00, £63.00 VAT

Payments to be paid on behalf of the Parish Council

Clerks Salary – September - £***.**, no VAT

Clerk's expenses – September - office allowance - £26.00 no VAT

Payments received on behalf of the Parish Council

Animal Antiks – donation for MVAS - £2,339.99, no VAT

Buckinghamshire Council – 2nd tranche Precept - £16,537.50, no VAT

Village Hall

Payments made on behalf of the Village Hall

E-on Next – Schorne Room electricity – 4th August to 3rd September - £25.03, £1.19 VAT

Mr Ivor G Pordage – deposit refund following wedding reception - £100.00, no VAT

Mrs Emma Lynch – hall cleaning - £225.00, no VAT

Payments received on behalf of the Village Hall

Jade Sawyers – Christening hire 8th October - £82.50, no VAT

Payments to be made on behalf of the Village Hall

JR Plumbing – boiler service VH October 23 - £144.00, £24.00 VAT

Jade Sawyers – Deposit refund hire of hall for Christening on 8th October - £50.00 no VAT

Emma Lynch – Final Hall clean on 10.9.23 - £25.00 no VAT

Kate Wetherall – 6 hours deep clean and one weekly clean September - £127.50 no VAT

Christine Hutson – new mop and bucket and disinfectant for VH cleaning - £41.40, £6.90 VAT

Sports Field

Payments made on behalf of the Sportsfield

E-on Next – Electricity 1st - 31st August - £62.78, £2.99 VAT

Rebecca Parker (Marvellous Marigolds) – SF pavilion cleaning September - £67.50 no VAT

Payments to be made on behalf of the Sportsfield

000790 100 Club 1st prize October draw, £30.00, no VAT

000791 100 Club 2nd prize October draw, £20.00, no VAT

000792100 Club 3rd prize October draw, £10.00, no VAT

James Radcliffe – Fuel for SF mower - £47.52, £7.92 VAT

Payments received on behalf of the Sportsfield

Great Brickhill Cricket Club – pavilion/ground hire for matches - £220.00, no VAT

123/23 Items for the next agenda.

RESOLVED: (i) Renewable energy – to include a discussion about the possibility of a wind turbine in the village.

124/23 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 14th November 2023 at 8pm in the Village Hall

125/23 Motion Closed Session:

RESOLVED: Motion approved to move into a closed session because of the confidential nature of the following:

(i) To discuss a sensitive breach of Planning issue

RESOLVED: The Clerk to write to the resident concerned to explain that the matter has been reported to the Parish Council and that it will be logged on the appropriate Buckinghamshire Council portal. This then becomes a confidential Enforcement matter.

(ii) To discuss a sensitive land issue

RESOLVED: For the Parish Council to disclose information about this matter and any actions at this time could be prejudicial to the dispute.

Jan Roffe, Clerk to North Marston Parish Council, 16th October 2023