

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Section 9(1)

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting for North Mundham Parish held on Thursday 5th March 2020, which commenced at 19.00 at North Mundham Village Hall

PRESENT: Cllrs. Tim Russell (Chairman), Frances Neave, Peter Stephens, Annie Maclean, Hugo Wall and Paul Chivers

IN ATTENDANCE: Louise Chater (Parish Clerk), David Maclean (North Mundham Parish representative for Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group), John Ashley (Chairman of North Mundham Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group) and 17 members of the public.

Apologies received: Cllrs Keith Phillips, Cllr. Rob Callaway-Lewis, County Cllr. Jamie Fitzjohn, District Cllr. Chris Page, Mr and Mrs Cassidy and Ms Katie Stuart.

The chairman of the Parish Council thanked everyone for attending the meeting and introduced the members of the Parish Council and the parish clerk and invited the public to ask questions during the meeting.

A01.2020 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19th MARCH 2019

On a proposal by Mrs Frances Neave the minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting held on 19th March 2019

A01.2020 MATTERS ARISING

None.

A03.2020 ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council tries to keep you up to date through the year with the Chairman's Briefing in Connect and on the website, articles in Mundham Monthly and newsletters.

The Parish Council meets every other month and the planning committee meeting takes place every month except August; all the agendas are advertised on the Parish Council noticeboards and on the website. Please come along to any of the meetings, where you have the opportunity to speak at the beginning of the meeting.

The Parish Council currently has a vacancy and as there was no call for a by-election the Council now needs to co-opt a member. If you are interested, please take this opportunity to speak to the Clerk or any of the Councillors.

The Parish Council sets the precept which is a small part of the council tax. Setting the precept is always challenging and this year the Council has had to raise the precept which amounts to 8 pence a week for a Band D property.

The most visible projects in the parish have been the work at the disused canal and at Camic Pond, which has come about via a valuable liaison with the Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group. In addition, the Group are surveying all the ditches in the parish. This helps to further our understanding of the way the ditches should act to control flooding.

One of the Parish Council's aspirations is the building of a shared use cycleway and footpath from Marsh Lane to Runcton Farm Shop. The Parish Council has obtained a quote and has several funding streams available. However, the County Council's proposed timeframe for the project means that it is likely a significant proportion of the funding available will be withdrawn.

The Village Hall is run by the Parish Council and the Pavilion is run by the Playing Field Trust, which is a charity. Although the Parish Council maintain and run the village hall it is built on land leased from the Playing Trust. Both organisations run under completely different governing and tax regimes, and in addition the Charity has access to grant funds which is largely not available to the Parish Council. It has been suggested that the Parish Council could relinquish the village hall lease and thereby put the hall into the care of the Playing Field Trust; the Playing Field Trust would need to change its charitable objectives. Both parties need to be comfortable that the Playing Field Trust can take on the responsibility, and the Parish Council needs to understand the value of what it is potentially giving up. Therefore, on legal advice the Parish Council has arranged for the hall to be valued.

The May Day Bank Holiday has moved to Friday 8th May which is the 75th Anniversary of VE Day. The Chairman has discussed this with the British Legion and neither the Parish Council nor the British Legion are in the position to run an event. There is funding available and the Parish Council will look favourably on the use of the hall for an event organised by residents if anyone wants to come forward to do so.

Q> Is there a costing on the footpath

A. The Chairman responded that West Sussex County Council provided a ballpark figure for the works which the Parish Council considered to be excessive. The Parish Council has obtained its own quote, but this is commercially confidential. This information has been submitted to the County Council and we are in the process of arranging a meeting with our County Councillor to try and find a solution to this project.

Q. Are you planning to sell the village hall to the playing field trust?

A. The Parish Council has not made any decision yet, and any decision will be made following the report from the valuer and the advice from the solicitor.

Q. How was the building funded?

A. The original village hall stood where Church Mews are now built; this land was sold and the profit from the sale of the land funded the build, supplemented by fund raising by residents.

Q. Sometimes when you want to hire the hall it is being used by people from outside the village; will this stop when the hall is handed over?

A. The Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee responded that the situation is not likely to change; to enable the hall to cover its costs the Committee needs to make the halls available to groups and people who live outside the village. However, with negotiation the committee is sometimes able to move or cancel regular users to enable an event to take place. The Chairman noted that the Playing Field Trust have recently completed the renovation of the Pavilion which provides another meeting room.

The Secretary of the Playing Field Trust pointed out that the Charity was set up by the Parish Council and it currently works closely with the Parish Council.

A05.2020 PRESENTATION FROM THE PARISH REPRESENTATIVE FOR MANHOOD WILDLIFE AND HERITAGE GROUP

David Maclean advised that he has taken on the role of champion for the environmental work that is taking place in the parish, which is part of a wider project for the Manhood Peninsula.

The 'Fixing and Linking Our Wetlands' (FLOW) Project is a heritage lottery funded project commenced in 2017 which is due to be completed in 2021. The work in North Mundham started approximately eight months ago, surveying the ditches, culverts and ponds, with the results uploaded to a database which is then uploaded to a GIS mapping. When the survey work has been completed the FLOW project will deliver

costed management plans. This work will be input into the environmental section of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The project leaders have built up a very good relationship with various landowners, and their knowledge and expertise assist the landowners with the management of their ditches and ponds.

The work is also assisting with the repopulation of water voles, along with other flora and fauna.

The 220 metres section of the disused Portsmouth and Arundel Canal opposite the School has had a huge amount of work carried out including 70 metres of dredging, fallen trees and brambles removed, and the tree canopy opened up to let in light which assists bats, birds and the creatures that live in the water. Work has commenced on a 'dead hedge' to separate the footpath from the canal itself. There will be monthly working parties which will continue the work, starting with replanting the bank, further staking of the dead hedge, and ongoing litter removal.

Camic Pond is an important part of the drainage system in South Mundham, and there is evidence of water voles, a barn owl and kestrels living locally. A long-arm digger has recently dug out the pond to the clay base, and now further work is required on the culvert under the road and the ditch on the other side of the road to improve the flow from the pond. Future projects at the pond will involve planting, including some fruit trees on the island, which will take place this spring,

There are a further two or three ponds that require work in the parish,

To maintain these projects the working parties meet on the first Saturday of the month from 9.30am to midday, with the next meeting at the village hall carpark to work on the canal. Further work will take place on Camic Pond, the canal and other ditches in the parish. The current volunteers are very friendly and welcoming, and further support from residents in the parish would be very beneficial; to encourage you there is always lovely cake!

Q> Who is funding the planting?

A. The FLOW project, with some local nurseries growing plants for the charity.

The Manhood Wildlife Group is a Charity if you want to donate via their website

A resident pointed out that the District Council has powers under Section 25 to enforce residents to maintain their ditches and culverts. David responded that the District and County Council are beginning to use this power. The County Council has recently requested that the Parish Council write to landowners in Brookside which has been completed, and the County Council will now decide on the next steps for this area.

Cllr. Wall stated as the councillor responsible for flooding he is proposing to go to the County Council archive records to obtain information on the historic records of the ditches and ponds in the parish. However, one of the main problems is that the Parish Council struggles to keep up with who is responsible for the land as it is leased to various bodies. If any parishioner can provide him with information on land ownership this would be very much appreciated.

A06.2020 PRESENTATION FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NORTH MUNDHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Steering Group has recently produced a newsletter which has been delivered to every household in the parish. The Steering Group has had a very busy year; it took a while to get off the ground and has been a steep learning curve as the Parish Council and the majority of the volunteers have not worked on this type of project before.

The Steering Group produced a questionnaire which had a 33% return rate, which we were given to understand is a good response rate. This information has helped to build our evidence base and informed the next steps which included forming three working parties to build further evidence.

The three working parties cover Housing & Economic Development, Natural Environment, and Community Services.

There is a demand from Chichester District Council to provide a minimum of 50 properties in the parish, though this number is still subject to review by the District Council. As part of the process the Steering Group has publicised a "call for sites". In response a number of sites have been put forward by landowners, developers and land agents and these are currently being assessed by the Neighbourhood Plan's planning consultant.

Some of the surprising information obtained is that over 2300 people are employed by businesses in the parish. Most of these in the horticultural sector.

The Community Services working party is producing a report on what the parish currently has in place and the survey responses, which will inform what is required for the parish in the future.

We are all aware of the rural nature of the parish, and the Natural Environment report will be very important in providing evidence to protect this. For example, a study tracking bats in Sussex that, they follow hedgerows from as far away as Petworth on a regular basis. This emphasises the importance of maintaining green corridors

The output of the three working parties will inform the policies of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Some of these will be aspirational and others will include specific requirements. When the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted by the District Council it will attain statutory status which means its policies will have to be taken into consideration by CDC and developers for any future development in the parish.

As you will have seen in the local press Chichester District Council is very challenged on the production of their Local Plan, which will have a direct effect on the Neighbourhood Plan as it must not conflict with the Local Plan. This does mean that we have additional time to develop the plan more thoroughly. On the current timetable advised by CDC the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to be adopted until 2021.

Q. How are we going to stop developers?

A. This is exactly why we are developing the Neighbourhood Plan, however, developers do not have to wait until the plan is in place. When a developer submits an application, we now have a lot more evidence to put forward to ensure that we can give logical and substantive reasons to prevent a development or to ensure that any development is in keeping with local needs. Currently the Neighbourhood Plan is not at the stage where it can be taken into consideration as material evidence.

Q. Is the Plan highlighting the flood plains?

A. The flood plains and flood risk are categorised by the Environment Agency; this information is available online and all applications currently have to be considered against this information. There is a difference between a developer mitigating for flooding in the house design, for example building on stilts and the effect on the whole parish. One of the things that it is important to do is to look at the entire parish and determine in broad terms which sites are suitable for potential development, and this is why the environment work is so important.

A resident raised concern regarding the potential development of Lego style housing being built in the parish. The Chairman of the Steering Group responded that the Neighbourhood Plan can determine the

standard, style of development, and relationship to green space to prevent Lego design properties.

20.11 two members of the public arrived.

Q. When will we get the opportunity to comment on architecture design?

A. There will be a number of consultation events and it is highly likely there will be another survey. The sites that have been submitted for possible development are on display in the small hall. These sites have not altered since the consultation events that took place in December and these sites are currently being assessed by the planning consultant.

Q. Do all houses being built count towards the 50?

A. A small development of six houses or less does not count towards the assigned numbers. Developments of this size are classed as windfall developments by the District Council.

The Chairman pointed out that developers do not have to wait for the production of the Neighbourhood Plan before submitting their planning application. The work carried out so far on the plan will assist the Parish Council when submitting comments, and one of the things the Parish Council has learnt over the years when considering planning application is that if we formulate a well-argued comment then the District Council will take it into consideration.

The Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group stated that the team is very passionate about completing this project properly and ensuring that we get it right.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 20.25

Signed _____ Chairman North Mundham Parish Council

Dated _____