

Marhamchurch Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting – Tuesday 18th April 2017

The above meeting was held in Marhamchurch Methodist Sunday School on at 7.00pm

Councillors present were: Chairman Mr R Hockin, Messrs T Edwards, Mr T Perry R Blewett, S Colwill, J Petherick, & Mrs J Walter.

Apologies – Mr M Grills, Mrs F Hunt, Mrs I Waterhouse and Mrs B Whattler.

Also in attendance The Clerk, Mrs B Heathcote, Cornwall Cllr N Chopak and PCSO Stuart Baxter Devon & Cornwall Police

Approximately 14 members of the public were present.

Minutes

Copies of the previous year's minutes held on Tuesday May 17th had been circulated, were on display, were approved by the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising.

No matters arising.

Guest Speaker: PCSO Stuart Baxter

PCSO S Baxter introduced himself, advising that he had been with Thames Valley for 9 years and has 19 years' police experience. He gave an interesting talk providing statistics of various types of crime, in Devon & Cornwall; broken down more locally for the Bude area and for Marhamchurch. There is a very low reported crime record for Marhamchurch which he considers one of the safest places to live. He confirmed that there is no public desk at Bude Police Station but there is a wall 'phone. Numbers of police have fallen, there used to be 6 sergeants, 2 constables and 2 community police officers and this has reduced to 2 officers covering the same area. This has impacted on the way they 'police' and one of the things that has suffered is 'Speedwatch. There is 24/7 CCTV coverage in Bude with 6 cameras and these are substantially manned by volunteers. There has been a spate of graffiti vandalism which is being investigated and the police appreciate all the support they are receiving from the public. There were some questions, one of which was about Neighbourhood Watch and the lack of liaison between the Police and the Neighbourhood Watch volunteers. PCSO Baxter commented that unfortunately this liaison is something which, due to lack of manpower, they are unable to fulfil. He commented that regular Police Alerts are sent to a contact list via email. The Clerk confirmed that she receives the list and confirmed that she will add Neighbourhood Volunteer, Mr D Fensom to her circulation list. The Chairman thanked PCSO Baxter for attending and due to work commitment, PCSO Baxter left the meeting.

Guest Speaker: Cornwall Cllr N Chopak

Cllr Chopak commented that due to 'purdah' she is limited to things she is permitted to speak about at this stage. However, she praised the Parish Council for all they did and for their hard work and diligence in dealing with so many matters. She also thanked them for the support they had given her during her time as their representative County Councillor and she hopes to be elected to continue the work and urged everyone to vote on May 4th. She commented on the excellent Food Fayre event adding it was a good example of the community getting together. Some CC matter she commented on included reporting pothole problems, her involvement with the state of Foundry Bridge which is currently closed, speeding through the village and the lack of funding for the NHS. CC has come under huge budgetary pressure, which is currently leading to review of all types of services from libraries, one stop shops and school transport services, along with cuts to public transport budgets; as a consequence life in rural communities has become more challenging. Cllr Chopak has distributed her community chest budget this year with £115 for a new noticeboard in North Tamerton, £350 to Marhamchurch Pre-school, £250 for Week St Mary Playground, £100 for Marhamchurch Christmas Tree Appeal, £400 for Jacobstow Pensioners' Lunch, £350 for Week St Mary Community Shop and £435 for Whitstone Whistler Magazine.

Chairman's Report

The last year has proved just as challenging as the previous few years and unfortunately our monthly agendas do not appear to be getting any shorter.

I would like to thank all the councillors for their support over the last twelve months, and particular to my Vice Chairman Jason Petherick. I have decided to leave the council after approximately 12 years, but I know that it will be in good hands with the remaining team to look after the future of the village. We will shortly have two new councillors (Tom O'Sullivan & Sue Butler) joining the team, and I wish them both all the best in serving our community.

I cannot leave without saying a big thank you to our clerk, Bobbie Heathcote, who works beyond the call of duty, to ensure that our meetings are run in a correct and efficient manner. Some of the things which she has had to take on board over the last year are as follows:-

- Introduction of paperless planning for dealing with planning applications from Cornwall Council.
- Changes in financial regulations concerning the annual audit.
- Updating policies and protocols introduced by the government.
- Setting up a system for the storing of parish cemetery records.
- Arranging broadband installation for the benefit of the council and organisations using the Methodist schoolroom.
- Introduction of government pension regulations.
- Corresponding with organisations in administering grants from the parish Community Fund.
- Researching cemetery fees around Cornwall and preparing a plan for the council to review our own costs.

Michael Grills has also decided to step down from the council, and on behalf of all of us, I would like to record our thanks for his role both as a councillor and Chairman over the last 37 years. His knowledge of village history has been invaluable on many occasions. He will be greatly missed.

Someone else to thank is Nicky Chopak, our representative on Cornwall Council. She attends most of our meetings and listens to our concerns. She has been instrumental in getting Cornwall Council to monitor speed in the area around the primary school, and has also reported various highway concerns on our behalf. She supported our opposition to the planning application in The Bullers Arms carpark, but after a long battle, this was granted on appeal recently. She is standing again as councillor for our parish and we wish her well. She also joins Parish Council representatives at the Bude Network meetings.

Both the playpark and the parish cemetery are regular agenda items, and are both kept in good condition due to the support of the Playpark committee, and the work undertaken by Roger Blewett on the cemetery; we thank them for their continued services. During the last year new equipment has been purchased for the Playpark, and a new entrance to the bottom of the cemetery has been made to clear any spoil etc. Thanks to Chris Trewin, and AJ Heywood & Son for their help in this respect.

Our Vice Chairman has registered our interest with Cornwall Council to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan, and this should move forward in the next year. We will be seeking help from the parish to have representatives put forward their views to formalise a structured plan regarding the future of Marhamchurch, particularly in respect of planning policy.

In view of all the additional regulations being passed down through the system it has been necessary to look even more closely at our future budgets. It has not proved necessary to have a contested parish election next month as only two new candidates applied to fill the two vacancies detailed above. This has saved us over £2000. We have reduced the annual grants made to some organisations, but even taking these steps it was necessary to increase the parish precept for 2017/18.

Turning finally to planning matters.

Since our last Annual Parish Meeting in May 2016 there have been 16 full or outline planning applications. Of these, 10 were approved, 1 was refused, 2 were withdrawn and there are 3 currently pending. The Parish Council recommendations were generally in line with Cornwall Council decisions. Of the 3 now pending, one will probably go to the Planning committee in June as the Parish Council recommended refusal, which is contrary to the planning officer's recommendation. There were 2 non material applications; one was approved and one refused. The Parish Council can now respond to pre applications, and of the two submitted, the council had concerns about both. As previously mentioned, the Bullers carpark application has caused much debate and time in trying to convince the planners of our concerns, but this has now been decided in favour of the applicant by the government Inspector.

We do also thank the members of public who attend our meetings, their input during the open public session is appreciated.

Groups/Activities in the Parish

Reports from the following were on display and will be placed in the Village Hall for one Coffee Morning session on 19th and 26th April 2017 and on the website.

St Marwenne's Parochial Church Council	Report from Peter Jones
St Marwenne's Church Handbell Ringers	Report from Eileen Burnard
Marhamchurch Village Hall Committee	Report from Peter Jones
St Marwenne Bell Ringers	Report from Robert Corney
Marhamchurch Playpark	Report from Fran Hunt
Marhamchurch Christmas Tree Group	Report from Cathy Bowley
Rector	Report from Father David Barnes
Stratton Deanery Annual Report	Report from Sandra Huffer
Marhamchurch WI	Report from Yvonne Haining
Marhamchurch PFSA	Report from Emma Horrell
Marhamchurch Brownies	Report from Bridgette Whattler
Marhamchurch Revel Field Trust	Report from Peter Jones & Robert Corney
Haven Art Group	Report from Yvonne Goodwin
Marhamchurch Community Village Shop	Report from Peter Hillenbrand
Marhamchurch Branch, Royal British Legion	Report Hilary Foster
Marhamchurch Neighbourhood Watch	Report from David Fensom.
Poundstock Ward	Report from Cllr Nicky Chopak
Marhamchurch Revel Committee	Report from Val Landricombe

Copies of Marhamchurch Parish Council and Marhamchurch Playpark Balance Sheets were on display

Reports were invited from Wednesday Coffee Morning Team, Marhamchurch Conservation Group, Marhamchurch Pre-School, Marhamchurch Methodist Church, Marhamchurch Snooker Club, Marhamchurch Primary School, Marhamchurch Parish Newsletter and Marhamchurch Baby & Toddler Groups.

Vice Chairman J Petherick spoke to give thanks to the Chair, Ray Hockin for all his hard work and dedication during his time as a Parish Councillor especially for leading the Council so well and efficiently for the many years he has been the Parish Council Chair – adding that he and his expertise will be very much missed.

The meeting ended at 7.45pm and was followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

Signed.....Chairman