

**Minutes of the Cheverell Magna Annual Parish Meeting held on
Monday 13th May 2024
at 7:30pm**

Present: Cllrs Burgess, Gray, Hayward, Stevens (Chairman).

Cllr Muns (Wiltshire Council)

12 members of the public

Officers: Jacqui Abbott

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Jones, Cllr Gray

2. Minutes

The minutes of the last Annual Parish meeting held on Monday 7th May 2023 were approved.

3. Chairman's Report

The Annual Report from the Parish Council 2024-5 including the finance report was presented to the meeting.

The Chairman, Cllr Paul Stevens said that the Parish Council had undertaken many projects of benefit to the community. He thanked his fellow parish councillors for all their hard work on the Parish Council and supporting the community.

The Parish Steward was thanked for his ongoing work which had made a difference to the tidiness of the village and including clearing blocked gulleys. Recently, the path between Weavers Mead and School Road had been cleared. Cllr Burgess regularly inspects the village to check what work is required including preventative work and liaises with the Parish Steward.

The Chairman also thanked Will Harley who has provided whips at his own expense. The whips are doing extremely well.

4. Report from Victoria Park Residents Association

The Chairman of Victoria Park Residents Association (VPRA), Des Read, presented their report to the meeting.

Several meetings had taken place with the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and Wiltshire Council. Progress seems to stop and start in terms of the pre-adoption work. VPRA believe that the delays are largely caused by the Environment Agency (EA). Danny Kruger MP will be writing to the EA to get this application prioritised. Access across the village green has been turned down by the MOJ on legal grounds even though 70% of residents were supportive of reinstating the trackway.

A current positive is that “early works” are starting on a section of road and these will fill the “pre-adoption” good standard criteria that is required by Wiltshire Council.

Des thanked the Parish Council, Cllr Muns and Danny Kruger, the VPRA committee and the residents of Victoria Park. Continued pressure will be applied whenever possible to achieve the much needed improvement and maintenance on the estate.

5. Report from the New Pavilion Trust

The meeting heard from the New Pavilion Trust Committee. Pete Cadwgan presented the report.

Pete had taken over from Pip Read who had given many years’ service and Pip was sincerely thanked for her work. It had been a busy year with lots of bookings and a similar income to the previous year. There had been 200 events, exercise, ballet, Pilates, films, training, Christmas and craft fairs, pantomime and a variety of community events.

The trust had invested in new flooring, a new fridge, vacuum cleaner and a cleaning cupboard. There is one vacancy for a trustee at the moment.

The pavilion is a vibrant focal hub of many village activities and an important community asset.

6 Report from Wiltshire Council

Cllr Dominic Muns presented the report from Wiltshire Council. Cllr Muns echoed Des Read regarding Victoria Park; some fifty households in the estate are deserving of the much needed work. They have had to live with numerous issues over many years. Following the upcoming boundary changes, the area will be part of Melksham and Devizes. Michelle Donelan is standing for this constituency and she will be visiting Victoria Park.

Cllr Muns strongly recommended to the Parish Council and the community that it would be in their interests to undertake the process of adopting a Neighbourhood Plan for the area. Wiltshire Council must by law, adhere to these plans when assessing planning applications. This would give the community more control over the style and siting of new buildings.

Cllr Muns said that as we have had more hot summers, wet winters and freezing conditions, road surfaces across the country were adversely affected. Wiltshire Council had prioritised filling pot holes and clearing gullies. However, given the rural nature of Wiltshire there was less funding available per capita for the roads than in other counties.

Cllr Muns reminded the meeting that the Local Highways and Footpaths Improvement Group (LHFIG), led by Devizes Area Board in this area, would take on infrastructure projects. The Parish Council could recommend projects to LHFIG.

Black Dog crossroads continued to be an issue and progress was slow. Co-operation for plans was required from a land-owner and there may have to be a compulsory purchase order. Wiltshire Council has to show that all the groundwork has been undertaken. The highways team were looking at all options to improve the situation.

7 Reports from local groups and organisations

Community Speedwatch

Chris Hall presented a report regarding the Community Speedwatch Scheme (CSW). This has been operating for 10 years with the 20mph limit through the village. Andy Jenkinson had recently left and Chris thanked him for all his hard work. The equipment and team operated on a cyclical basis and the device was shared with other villages. There is an online training course of one hour, high viz jackets, police approval, a risk assessment and insurance available. The scheme had eight volunteers but more were needed. The schemes aims were to act as a deterrent and education. Details of vehicles may be taken and drivers will receive a warning letter. Police could use the evidence to undertake an enforcement exercise.

Gardening Club

Helen Hall gave a report from the gardening club. This continued to be a great success. They had formed in 2006. The fee is £15 for couples and £8 single. Non-members could attend for £2 a time. They met on the second Tuesday of every month. There had been recent talks on wildlife photography, how to make gardening easier, bats, all about tomatoes and gardening injuries. There is a visiting programme over the Summer to attend local gardens in the village along with refreshments. There is a Christmas party with mulled wine, food and carols. A special outing is taking place to a garden in Newbury with a three-course lunch on a bus. All in all, it is a vibrant and active community club. The friendly club is looking for new members.

Village Hall

The Chairman of the Village Hall, Janine Fanshawe reported a good year with regular hirings including yoga, the garden club, coffee mornings, a friends club and the whist drive. Unfortunately, the AGM in May would discuss the need to close down as the committee are finding it hard to keep things going without more volunteers coming forward. The AGM is on Weds 22nd May 2024 at 7.30pm.

Skittles team

Cllr Stevens reported that there is a skittles team at the George and Dragon at Potterne with a Men's teams and Women's team. He asked people to please step forward and attend to keep the club going.

8 Forum

A community forum was held at the meeting to hear from residents.

Hazel Simons asked whether there could be a project to place a pipe the end of Back Lane. Cllr Muns suggested that the Parish Council ask the drainage team to take a look at this. It could be a potential brought by the Parish Council to the LHFIFG. The Clerk would liaise with Helen and LHFIFG.

Hazel said there is barbed wire under the path at the back of Weavers Mead. However this is not part of the footpath and people should not be walking there.

The play area is a great resource for the children. It is not in good condition with plastic and paper strewn all over.

Cllr Hayward said that there is so much undertaken for the village by so few people. It is worth campaigning for more village involvement. The village definitely needed more volunteers to come forward.

The Parish Council was in favour of a leaflet drop to everyone explaining the benefits of living in the village and all the work undertaken to make it a vibrant place to live. But there is a need for more volunteers to keep things going. The Clerk would help with this campaign.

The sign to Great Cheverell cannot be seen from the road and the hedge up to the main road is not in a good condition but it is not in our parish. Cllr Muns will mention it to those responsible.

Parishioners at the meeting thanked the Parish Council for their hard work and there was a round of applause.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm