

MINUTES OF THE NEWBOTTLE AND CHARLTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 15 APRIL 2024 AT THE MEMORIAL HALL, CHARLTON AT 7.30PM

PRESENT: Councillors Linda Baker, Mark Bracey, Jordan Bolton, Wayne Rule and Matthew Walsh.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Theresa Goss (Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer) and two members of the public.

APOLOGIES: Parish Councillors Michael Loggin and Kevin Ridge.

In the absence of the Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor Wayne Rule as Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council, chaired the meeting.

- 1/24 MINUTES** - The minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
- 2/24 MATTERS ARISING** - There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2023.
- 3/24 REPORTS FROM THE WEST NORTHANTS UNITARY AUTHORITY COUNCILLORS** – There were no reports from the West Northants Unitary Authority Councillors.
- 4/24 OPEN FORUM** – The Chairman invited representatives from village organisations to provide a report on the work they had been undertaking in the village.

A report from Northants Police had been received prior to the meeting.

Charlton Village Hall – Report for the Village Hall April 2024 – Lady Deborah Hayter reported that it had been a challenging year for the hall. We are focusing on delivering our strategic plan but had to change priorities.

We were expecting to apply for funding for a new boiler and included the painting of the hall, new windows and new curtains in this application. However, the boiler needed replacing more urgently and we made the decision to paint the hall during the summer holidays last year. We also used the opportunity to have a good clear out of the kitchen.

These were absolutely the right decisions and has meant that we have a far superior heating system which can be controlled remotely and the hall looks much smarter having been painted throughout. However, it significantly dented our cash reserves.

What was unexpected was finding dry rot in the corner of the hall, thankfully investigative work led to this being isolated, but was still costly and the remedial action is a further expense which is to fix the drainage system at the front of the hall (cost and timing still unknown)

But in better news – we were successful in securing funding from the Valencia Community Fund for new windows and curtains. This will be completed in August this year and will really lift the hall aesthetically but also will provide further insulation. We are delighted.

We continue to support the pre-school in exploring and extending the hall to give them a dedicated facility. This would keep the pre-school in its location, with the added benefit of releasing the 2 rooms, kitchen and toilets for use on weekdays, the planning application was submitted last month.

We have maintained the Play Area, and achieved a satisfactory ROSPA report, with low risks across all the areas. We will use the Charlton Crew WhatsApp group to do some maintenance in the area over the coming months.

For the fourth year running organised and decorated a village Christmas tree and hosted Carols in the Car Park, which is now an annual village event. All money raised went to the local foodbank. The Village Hall committee now pay for the tree out of our funds.

Trustee Update – The hall has been able to retain a committed group of trustees who are the same as last year. The pre-school has continued to be involved in the committee too which is great.

The Band back together play was organised, and those who attended were really impressed by the quality of the performance; unfortunately the support wasn't as expected so this event did not contribute to funds.

Areas of focus for 2024:

- New drainage system for front of hall
- New windows and curtains
- Its panto time again!
- Keep on top of maintenance

Parochial Church Council - Lady Deborah Hayter reported that the PCC was very grateful to Julia Rands for publishing The Link and thanked her for all her hard work. Thanks were also passed to the team of volunteers who distributed The Link in the village. The costs for The Link were covered by the PCC, plus the Parish Council's annual grant of £200 for the printing costs.

Primary School - Lady Deborah Hayter reported that the Primary School was doing well with good admission numbers. It had received more applications than there were places for September 2024.

Pre-School - Councillor Linda Baker reported that the Pre-School had been running since 1967 and there were 40 children, many of whom, then move onto the village Primary School. There were 8 or 9 members of staff and it was open from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Thursday and 8am to 4pm on a Friday. The children who attended, came from surrounding villages and also Brackley.

Cricket Club - Councillor Matthew Walsh reported that the Cricket Club had five games arranged; three in June 2024 and two in July 2024 and the games would be raising funds for the PFA. Games which had been held recently were very successful.

Playing Field Association - Victoria Beadle report that the key successes in the last year were:

- hedge laying – after a false start and the village seem to be pleased with that!
- purchase benches and picnic benches to try and improve the facilities.
- Improvements to the car park – although there is more work to do!
- two additional benches which we hope to order in the coming weeks in memory of Vincenzo and Conor Dowers.
- increase our fundraising team of volunteers to help take some of the pressure off!
- a calendar of fundraising events to 2024 which is brilliant.

Bookings - The playing field usage has increased in the last 12 months. We're grateful to Brackley Athletic Football Club who provide a regular income for use of the pitches from September to June.

Last year, the Charlton Cricket Team were reinvigorated to play a few matches and we were able to support them with a BBQ and refreshments which was great fun and we were able to raise some serious funds!! This year matches are scheduled for us to support as well as being approached by other teams to hire the pitch.

Last year also saw the kick off of Trevor's bootcamp...it's a small dedicated group and Trevor enjoys delivering the sessions!

Fundraising - We're excited to share the 2023 we raised £5,610 taking our fundraising to date to £13,474. This year we have set ourselves a target of raising £7,500 and we already have £500 in the bank! The committee remain committed and enthused and we've even roped in two new members!

Upcoming Events

- 8th May – Head in the Clouds – already raised over £300
- 13th May – Quiz Night
- 8th June – Big Bike Ride
- 14th June – Old Skool Disco in partnership with PTA
- Cricket – BBQ & Refreshments – across June & July
- 6th July Charity Car Wash provided by the Charlton Children (in aid of the pump park)
- 27th September - Charity Auction

Brackley Fireworks & Roundtable will also be explored nearer the time and there were rumours of clay pigeon shooting day and a New Year's Eve party too!

Project Updates:

Perimeter Path – having had discussions with Viridor (now Valencia) they have confirmed that they will fund the remaining installation of the path. We are now progressing the application form working with local suppliers to try and get this completed before the end of the year. We therefore have to keep an eye on our expenditure as we'll need to match fund

Pavilion – we've made great progress with the pavilion with a design and floorplan agreed. We've sought approval from the Trust who are onboard. We have some final details for the committee to agree which we hope to do in May which allow us to submit planning permission. We are also planning to include the proposal for the pump park on the planning application to allow us to start discussing this with other funders like British Cycling and the National Lottery and depending on timing, Valencia could also support this initiative. We have spoken with a professional fundraiser who is keen to work with us and we can engage with him once we have planning permission and 3 quotes. He will charge us 10% fee, which is why the continued income and fundraising is so important.

Facilities – we recognise there is a bit of work to do to complete the car park and tidy up after the hedge laying. As mentioned earlier we have the funds to be able to purchase two additional benches and once the perimeter path is in then we'd like to look at landscaping, planting wild flowers etc.

Lastly, we have a Charlton Big Help Out for a month across April and May. We hope that we might get some volunteers who can help out with jet washing, tidying up etc around the playing field area.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their reports.

5/24 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – As the Chairman of the Parish Council, Michael Loggin, was not present, the Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council, Wayne Rule reported on the work of the Parish Council during 2023/2024.

Councillor Wayne Rule thanked the Parish Councillors, West Northants Unity Authority Councillors and the Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, for their work over the last 12 months.

The Chairman's full report would be available on the Parish Council web site.

6/24 PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 2023/2024 - The Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer presented to the Annual Parish Meeting, the Parish Council accounts for 2023/2024. The figures had been subject to internal audit and gave an accurate picture of the activities of the year.

It was noted by the meeting that the Parish Council gave an annual donation to the Memorial Hall of £350 to cover the cost of the grass cutting.

The accounts were available on the Parish Council web site.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

(The meeting closed at 8.25pm)