

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on THURSDAY, 26th MAY 2016 at 7.30PM in the VILLAGE HALL, SHERSTON.

Present

Sherston Parish Council Chairman – John Matthews (JM)
Sherston Parish Council Clerk – Sarah Wood
Sherston Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - Mike Johnson (MJ)
Wiltshire Council Head of Strategic Planning – Mr Nick Derbyshire

28 members of the public

1. Approval of Convening Notice

The notice was approved.

2. Apologies

Apologies were sent from John Thomson, Dr Pip Petit, Harry Stevens and Graham Morris

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 28th May 2015

The minutes were approved.

4. Report by the Chairman of the Parish Council

Mr Matthews started his report by thanking the clerk and councillors for their work on the parish council over the past year. JM particularly thanked Sean Magee and Sarah Wood for their work with the accounts and audits.

JM thanked the Cliffhanger team for all their work on the publication, it keeps the village informed of what is going on and seems to be the glue that keeps village together. Sherston has sadly lost much loved and respected senior members of the community over the last year; they will be sorely missed however the village needs to look forward.

Sherston has a busy summer ahead, In June there is the Queens 90th Birthday on the 12th June and to mark this occasion there will be a special evesong service at the church, which is a very fitting way of recognising milestone. Boules week is coming up in July and JM wanted to thank James Pyle and the committee and volunteers for making the week such a success.

There has been news this week that the pre-school Busy Hands is to close at the end of July. There is a meeting tonight arranged by the committee of pre-school for themselves and parents to vote on this decision.

The last point JM made was to remind people of the correct planning process. There have been a couple of high profile issues involving planning in the village. If anyone is considering building work on their property to firstly talk to neighbours about your plans, talk to planners and take advice from professionals on the correct procedure to follow.

5. The Vikings are coming!!

Two members of the “Viking” organisational committee attended the meeting and ran through what was to happen on Saturday 25th June. Six years ago the Sherston 1016 group had the idea of holding an event to mark the battle in 2016 and the Vikings were booked. Funding has been secured through Malmesbury Area Board, Parish Council and fund raising.

Over Pop weekend Heather Martin held a ‘make your own Viking costume workshop’ for the young Vikings of the village. On Saturday 18th June Sherston Velo are undertaking a cycle round Britain setting off at 10.16 in the morning and returning at 20.16 that evening to mark the occasion. On Saturday 25th June, events start from 11am on the recreation ground with the main battle at 3pm, the day event finishing around 5pm. There will be evening entertainment in the Rattlebone and there will be an evening lecture in the Church. On Sunday the Dean of Bristol will give a special service in Church.

Saturday is a free event and 1016 have produced commemorative coins and jigsaws that they are selling to raise funds. Children at Sherston School have been given a gift coin by 1016.

JM thanked 1016 and the committee involved with the event for all their work which is sure to be a memorable amazing event.

6. Neighbourhood Plan Update

A presentation was given by Mike Johnson of the Sherston Neighbourhood Steering Group. The presentation (appendix 1). This covered the background of the plan, past issues, progress and its current situation and proposal.

Mr Johnson explained that a viability study is to be carried out to gauge if the proposal is deliverable. If indeed it is, the plan then can start taking shape. Once draft plan is compiled it will go to public consultation, then to the Government Inspector only after it has been approved will it then go to a public referendum. The spring of 2017 is the aim for the plan to go to the public. As explained previously without a plan in place Sherston is in a vulnerable position, also Wiltshire Council would have to undertake the plan thus making decisions on the village’s behalf.

Mr Nick Derbyshire who is Head of Strategic Development at Wiltshire Council was at the meeting in place of John Thomson reiterated this view and that with a plan a community is in control, it can determine what it wants and where.

Public Questions regarding the presentation on NHP (see Appendix 1)

The following questions were asked by various members of the public:

Q - At what stage are tenderers asked to tender? And what design is considered?

A - MJ answered that once the plan has been adopted, that land/sites in the plan can then go to developers to tender. The NHP provides a framework, what is permissible and it is up to the developers to fit into the proposal that satisfies requirements. The actual design / development of a design code will be reviewed by the village and WC later in the process.

Q - Will highways be looked at, and traffic, roads, access etc.?

A – MJ explained that any developer would have to undertake traffic studies and if improvements are needed this will be in the plan. Drainage, utilities and impact on facilities in the village will also be looked at in depth.

Q - With regard to the new surgery is there any other way of doing it other than by the construction of many new houses? Could the viability study look at other ways of funding the surgery and with the minimal amount of houses?

A – Mr Darbyshire explained that there are other ways of funding the construction of new surgeries; the financial viability is very questionable. The NHS investment is currently quite low / constrictive regarding square footage of the building, which results in a lack of investors. Another problem is attracting GPs to sign up to tenure for more than ten years. The viability study will review all options and the amount of houses it will take to deliver a new surgery. Starting at lower end figures you immediately squeeze opportunities for the site. 45 homes is the ceiling figure, however the study may show only 27 houses help meet needs of the site.

Q- What happens if 45 houses are built and then after 2026 when the next core strategy is compiled, more new houses are demanded by Wiltshire Council and the government?

A – What happens with the next core strategy nobody knows at this point, however a plan is still needed as a community document to enable the village to have some amount of control. Landowners at any point now or in the future can still put forward their land for development a plan in place would go some way to protect against that.

Q - Will the elderly units and the social housing be for local people?

A - Yes, WC has a new policy that will give local people priority. Mr Darbyshire will check if there is a way that some sort of covenant can be applied to the social housing.

JM thanked Mike Johnson for all his presentation and Mr Darbyshire for attending the meeting and helping with questions.

7. Other Parish Business raised by residents

Pre – School: as mentioned previously, the pre-school Busy Hands seems unable to carry on under the current system. When the NHP was first started one of the pre-school's wishes was to have its own premises and not rely on the village hall, which is unable to meet its needs. Ollie Phipps the Malmesbury Area Community Area Engagement officer has gone to the meeting tonight which shows the Area Board are concerned. The parish council will help as much as it can.

Q- SOSCIC funds should be used for the benefit of the community. What does the parish council intend to do with the SOSCIC surplus funds and is there an assurance that it will not be used to pay back the loan.

A – JM answered that the parish council cannot say that it won't be used to pay off the loan as the aim of the parish council is to pay of the PWLB loan as soon as possible, however it will not go towards paying off the loan if there is any early payment fee. JM did give assurance that it will not be flattered away, and if spent it would go towards a significant and worthwhile project/scheme in the community. SOSCIC have no formal view or conditions on what the parish council choose to do with the funds.

JM thanked all for attending. The meeting finished at 9.10pm. Notes taken by Sarah Wood.