

Annual Meeting of the Parish of Medbourne

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN MEDBOURNE VILLAGE HALL
AT 19:45 ON MONDAY 8 MAY 2017

Councillors present: Pilkington (Chair), Caffrey, Easton, Gidley-Wright, and Shaen-Carter.

Also present: four members of the public, and Graham Thomson (Clerk to the Council).

1.0 D CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The Chair presented a report as follows:-

"This year has seen a real coming together of the Parish Council. This is the end of our second year together (1 for Bernadette Caffrey) but 2 for the rest of the councillors – and I think that as a council we've gained in confidence with our gain in experience.

"As with most things, with time – and a bit of trial and error - we've increased our knowledge of the duties and requirements of being councillors. From my perspective, as Chair, I think that we are very fortunate to have a good and varied group of villagers making up the council who have worked very well together as a team.

"The past year has seen real positives for the Parish Council as we have attempted to deal with a wide range of issues which affect the community.

"Community Involvement

"Where possible we have also tried to get the community involved in issues which affect and impact on everyday life in Medbourne.

"An example of this was the village meeting held to put forward, discuss and try to come up with solutions for the issue of heavy farm traffic coming through the village. This meeting was very well attended and it was felt that some real positives came out of it... not necessary clear cut solutions but hopefully a better understanding between both sides.

"In addition to the role played by the councillors, we have been very fortunate that when there have been "tricky" or unusual situations to deal with there are lots of people within the village who have been ready to assist us with their knowledge and expertise - and also in terms of general support and encouragement. Thank you to those people.

"Neighbourhood Plan

"The past year has been a positive year for Medbourne as a community and one which sees us moving ever closer to the finalisation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

"Planning is and always will be one of those areas which has the ability to cause upset within a community – we've seen several examples of that over the past year. People naturally have different ideas about what they want to do to better their situation and this may not always have the support of their neighbours or the community at large.

"As I am sure you are aware, the Parish Council resolved last year that, with the support of the community, Medbourne should develop a Neighbourhood Plan to try to take some of the complexities, conflict and upset out of future development in Medbourne.

"The Medbourne Neighbourhood Planning Advisory Committee – chaired by Bernadette Lee, were set the task of trying to work out and draft a very complex and detailed plan for the future of development within the village - formalising what the majority of villagers want for Medbourne in terms of future development.

"At a briefing meeting held last week, the Parish Council were extremely impressed by the progress made, the amount of detailed work done and the shape of the developing plan.

"The information provided to us is to be provided to the village at a meeting on 13 May 2017 – to be held in the village Hall and I strongly encourage you all to attend, see and hear what has been done to date and make comments, provide feedback etc about the developing policies and plan.

"My sincere thanks to this committee - made up of an amazing group of villagers who have taken on the mammoth task of devising a Neighbourhood Plan for Medbourne. It is a long and difficult process, with countless hoops to jump through, but they are making good progress and we can't thank them enough for what they have done to date and what I am sure they will achieve in the future.

"Websites

"The last year has seen the implementation of our fabulous Parish Council, village and Village Hall websites – launched in June 2016. Running now for almost a year they have been a huge success and we are extremely fortunate to have them. An enormous thank you to David Tuffs who is, almost singlehandedly responsible for them. David did have some very important assistance from others within the community and it would be remiss of me not to mention them – but on the whole, the development, ongoing running and success of them are down to him. An enormous thank you from me and from the rest of the PC.

"I would also like to express the Council's ongoing thanks to David Tuffs for his efforts in terms of the village email which is a fabulous facility for dispersing news and information to the village quickly and efficiently... and to Amy Hayward-Paine for all of her efforts in being responsible for the village Twitter account.

"Scouts

"The 1st Welland Valley Scout group has been fantastic for a large number of children and adults within Medbourne and its surrounds and we have seen and felt its impact at several times throughout the year. Santa's sleigh at Christmas, going through the streets of Medbourne was lovely – and their presence at the Remembrance Day service in Great

Easton this year was good to see.

“Sports Club

“The Sports Club continues to play a significant role and again, is an amazing facility for the village. We are so fortunate to have a thriving sports club for those who play football and cricket, the Tennis Club and the Bowls Club.

“The Luncheon Club is also going from strength to strength providing not only good food but also a facility for older people within the community to get together and have a great catch up each month.

“It is great to see and hear about such community spirit.

“Volunteers

“It is that community spirit which drives people to become volunteers and I would like to express our gratitude to all those volunteers from the Parish who, over the past year have assisted both the Parish Council and the village as a whole through their efforts.

“I am unable to thank everyone, as I am sure you will appreciate that we are very fortunate to have a lot of community minded people in Medbourne.

“There are a few people, however, I would like to thank...

“In terms of the general maintenance of the village – our thanks to those who regularly mow the Tow path and provide general assistance and maintenance in the village. I will hopefully not offend by naming a few very obvious contributors – and if I have missed you out I apologise profusely. Please keep volunteering and helping out as without your help the village will suffer....

“A big thanks though to Paul and Penny Polito, David Baugh (who has now retired from his tow path mowing but did a great job last year), Ian Dunckley and Graham Doe, Patrick Christenson, Jenny Sandars and Mr Wainwright, amongst others, for the general maintenance and mowing work they do around the village.

“Thank you to those who look after and maintain the Hollow... and the many others whom I don’t know about but am fortunate enough to see the benefits of their efforts throughout the village – thank you.

“To those who mow the playground – again, a huge thank you.

“Thanks also to those people who have offered their services to the Parish Council by being wardens or advisors to the council – your assistance is vital and much appreciated.

“In particular, I would like to recognise the service provided by Roger Lee over the past few years as internal auditor for the PC. Roger has resigned from this position – so it is now vacant and if anyone knows of anyone, or would like to volunteer to take over this position, please let me or any of the other councillors know. A huge thank you to Roger though.

“My thanks

“This is my last meeting as Chairman of the PC. I will not be standing as Chairman for the next year. When I took over the position of Chair I said I would do it for 2 years before giving someone else a go! Those 2 years have flown by and I have really enjoyed them.

“I would like to very much thank all of those who have assisted me personally in my role as Chair over the past 2 years – those of you in the village who have given me advice, support and encouragement when I have needed it - and in particular the other councillors and clerk – thank you all.

“Here’s to another positive and successful year for Medbourne and the Parish Council. “

The Chair was thanked for her report.

2.0 D **TO RECEIVE REPORTS INCLUDING ON THE FOLLOWING MATTERS**

2.1 D **Medbourne Educational Foundation Trust**

Cllr. Pilkington reported that the playground had been resurfaced in the past year. She explained that the Trust relied on fundraising and goodwill, and she thanked the Autumn Club Committee for its donation of £200 towards the cost of the playground, and stated that fundraising would continue. She reported that the lease between the Trust and the Sports Club had not been completed but that she was hopeful for the future.

Cllr. Pilkington was thanked for her report.

2.2 D **Village Hall**

Cllr. Easton reported that the AGM of the Village Hall had thanked the Parish Council for its continued support. She said that the boundary had been tidied, a bench had been donated to the Village Hall, the Hall had been deep cleaned, and there was now a caretaker. She referred to the extension plans and renovation plans, and that applications for funding were being prepared. She described regular activities in the Hall and referred to the balance of funds of £13,500, and that a Heritage Lottery Fund application was in process.

Cllr. Easton was thanked for her report.

2.3 D **Information Resource Advisor**

Mr Tuffs presented a report as follows:-

“Broadband

“It is with pleasure that I have to report that superfast broadband is now fully available in the village supported by two infrastructures. BT provides “fibre to the cabinet” (FTTC) broadband whilst Gigaclear provides potentially faster “fibre to the property” (FTTP). Both infrastructures are offering a reliable service following the significant installation delays that affected Gigaclear. The BT infrastructure is open thereby enabling other vendors (e.g. Sky, TalkTalk, PlusNet) to provide

competitor services. Medbourne now enjoys broadband services that rival anything available to other rural communities.

"Village Web Site

"Village web site: <http://www.medbourne.org.uk>

"Parish Council Web Site: <http://www.medbourneparishcouncil.co.uk>

"Medbourne's new web site was launched on June 13th 2016. This site combines the Village web site, Parish Council web site and Village Hall web site into one site where there are 3 distinct sub-sites representing the aforementioned constituencies. The new site has a more modern look-and-feel compared to its predecessors and, in particular, is much easier to use from a phone or tablet.

"In the process of converting from the old sites there was a major tidy-up of online documents (e.g. PC minutes) where all files were converted to PDF format and missing files were added. This is a safer format that also allows all the documents to be viewed from a web browser. The new site is fully compliant with UK Government transparency guidelines for Councils.

"As usage of the new site has increased then its ratings in search engine rankings have improved to the point where it pops up at the top of the search page; the same applies for the Parish Council and Village Hall sub-sites when specific search terms are used. However, it has not yet been possible to add the domain "medbournevillagehall.co.uk" to the new site as originally planned.

"Usage of the new site has been very encouraging. For example, in the 30 days up to the date of this report there were 807 visitors making 2805 page impressions; this equates to 26.9 visits per day and 3.48 pages per visit. The recent Neighbourhood Planning survey also polled frequency of usage of the web site and this returned the following results:

<i>1+ times per week</i>	<i>1-3 times per month</i>	<i>1-11 times per year</i>	<i>Less than yearly</i>	<i>Never</i>
<i>9.26%</i>	<i>23.46%</i>	<i>28.4%</i>	<i>9.26%</i>	<i>29.83%</i>

"Email and Twitter

"The Medbourne Village email list and the Twitter feed (@Medbourne565) have continued to grow. The email list now contains 146 names; this is in part due to a spurt in applications to join every time there's a crime in the village. Twitter followers have increased significantly to 278; whilst some of these will be outside the village the combined total of email and Twitter users means we are now have significant coverage within the village. Thanks are again due to Amy Hayward-Paine for administering Twitter."

Mr Tuffs was thanked for his report.

2.4D **Bench Warden**

A report was presented on behalf of the Bench Warden

"This report only covers those benches which are within the village and not those on the Playing Fields.

"It is fair to say that some of the village benches are reaching the stage where they will need to be replaced. Where these have been donated in the past, in memory of a former resident, a decision will need to be taken on how best to address this situation.

"Individual Benches.

"Main Street – opposite the shop triangle. Wooden painted bench – condition fair – requires repainting this year.

"Main Street – shop garden – Eileen Walker bench – hard wood – good condition.

"Cross Roads - two soft wood benches with metal framework.

"1. Rhs bench – seat slat replaced and repainted this year – metal strainer broken – wood in poor condition.

"2. LHs bench – paintwork retouched this year – wood in reasonable condition.

"Drayton Road – Archie Inchley bench – wooden seat on concrete frame – will be repainted this year.

"Ashley Road – Leicester Mercury aluminium bench – slight damage to the metal on the left hand edge of the seat – to be repaired this year.

"Tow Path – Robert Blood bench – varnished hard wood bench – it is proposed to allow the varnish to peel off to leave the hard wood exposed. The rear strainer is very rotten and the bench is in generally poor condition.

"Paynes Lane/Slawston Road junction - solid wooden bench – replaced within the last 3 years – condition good.

"Nevill Holt Hill – opposite Nut Bush – an ancient unpainted hard wood bench, which we rescued 3 years ago from Brighthurst School – condition fair. We are indebted to Stephen Sanderson for strimming the grass around this bench on a regular basis.

"As a general principle, we are aiming to carry out the required maintenance on 2 benches per year."

2.5D **War Memorial**

A report was presented on behalf of the War Memorial Wardens

"We have attempted to replant the box hedging which had been damaged by vehicular traffic and are considering whether it is necessary to repair the kerb stones in the same area. The planting that we carried out last year was largely perennials to give colour during the year with an aim of building on the planting previously undertaken. As these plants mature we will each year, as we did last summer, add annuals to flower during the summer months and beyond. "

2.6D **Tree Warden**

A report was presented on behalf of the Tree Warden

"The small whips planted in Leviathan Wood have been sprayed around to allow them to gain more growth and stakes and guards replaced where necessary. Unfortunately Ash dieback has been seen in both the Ash originally planted and

also native Ash plants on the edge of the wood. We would ask that if children wish to grow native trees from seeds or adults wish to buy a young native tree in memory of someone we can find gaps to replant in the wood. Notice has been given to remove a diseased tree from the roadside on Ashley Road.

"The fish population in the brook of sticklebacks and minnows appears to have increased partly due to work by Anglian Water/ Severn Trent to stop pollution from broken pipes and removing the boards to allow free migration upstream. Mature fish (other than minnows) have been seen upstream so it is hoped they have spawned.

"With the help of villagers, snowdrops have been split and replanted to increase their spread at Medbourne Hollow and also more bluebells have been planted. The Hollow is alive with birdsong including summer warblers."

2.7D **Sports Club**

Cllr. Caffrey reported that the Sports Club's AGM was that evening. She added that the field was in a good condition and that the Club hoped to use the Mower Fund for the purchase of a Quadraplay mowing system.

2.8D **Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee**

Cllr. Gidley-Wright reported that the Plan was gaining momentum and a first draft would be produced in mid summer / early autumn. He stated that the project had been funded from grants from Locality / Awards for All. He added that there would be a community consultation event on the following Saturday.

2.9D **Planning**

Cllr. Shaen-Carter reported as follows:-

"When I started to compile this report, I was trying to work out how I could report positively. It seemed like a year of battling with developers, not so much in the scope of the developments but in trying to get the conditions upheld by the developers and Harborough. This ranged from garages built too high, to ignoring of buffer zones to protect wildlife on Drayton Rd, and a narrow drive onto a dangerous street junction. Harborough it seems put conditions on that they later say are impossible to uphold. Developers know how to play the game better than we do and we have been unsuccessful in our challenges.

"On Riverside House, we tried to be fair regarding Mr Wright's alleged security issue, and agreed to the highway being reduced to 4m wide. Instead of what had been agreed, Mr Wright applied for the whole of the right of way to be removed, which I did not spot until it was too late. Fortunately the 4m strip is protected by conditions, and no fences or buildings can be erected on it. It is important that we all keep an eye out on all developments and notify Harborough or the Parish Council as soon as we spot anything that does not accord with the planning permission, so that it can be tackled straight away.

"On reflection, as a Parish Council, we have looked at proposals objectively for the good of the applicants and Medbourne as a whole, and by continuing to comment and interact with Harborough planning department we are more likely to be effective."

Cllr. Shaen-Carter was thanked for her report.

3.0 D **Questions To The Chairman**

Cllr. Shaen-Carter proposed a vote of thanks to the outgoing Chair who, she said, had been an excellent Chair who had acted with clarity and fairness. Other Councillors echoed the sentiments.

4.0 D **Public Question Time**

In response to a question from a member of the public asked about the entrance to Paget's Farm, Cllr. Shaen-Carter reported that the meeting had not been as successful as had been hoped. She explained that the drive had been shown at the current width in later applications and despite the Parish Council's comments, had been approved.

The meeting closed at 20:19

Signed: _____

Date: _____