

TURWESTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 18 MAY 2017

Present: Cllrs D Richards (Chairman), A Kirkland, J Tilley, A Green, H Sime (Parish Clerk), Cllr P Fealey (AVDC), Cllr C Clare (BCC) and 13 members of the community.

1. Welcome:

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies:

Cllr Morrison, Antony & Susan Tighe, Bryan & Alice Smith.

3. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 19 May 2016 and Matters Arising:

The minutes were approved as being a true record of what took place. Proposed Cllr Kirkland, seconded Cllr Green. Matters arising were as follows:

- Cllr Fealey would be asked how AVDC were going to achieve the zero Council Tax portion.
- Cllr Richards explained the process for the proposed unitary authority.
- Dead branches in the trees on The Green had been mostly removed by the wind. Cllr Morrison had hand trimmed the shoots sprouting from below and these were disposed of by members of the Parish Council.
- The question of trees at Northfield House becoming entangled in overhead wires had been resolved by residents.

4. Reports from District Councillor and County Councillor:

Councillor Fealey recapped on various local issues and made the following points:

- The year has been dominated by planning with major changes taking place in the Planning Department. All staff are being re-assessed and the aim is to become more business focussed.
- Cllr Fealey reported that he has been appointed as Chairman of the Planning and Development Management Committee for a further year.
- Plans for a unitary authority were progressing, but had been put on hold until after the General Election on 8 June. AVDC plans for 2 unitary units (North and South) were progressing well. A consultation would begin on 2 August and would run for 8 weeks.
- It would be worth looking at the wish-list for S106.
- Police are concerned about rural crime and were advising residents to mark any expensive equipment.

Cllr Fealey ended by congratulating the Parish Council on all their hard work on behalf of the village.

Cllr Fealey was asked how planning proposals for new housing affect Turweston. There is currently a requirement for 5 new houses and 3 are being built at present. Land in the Parish that had been offered to AVDC for potential housing development had been rejected as part of the Development Plan process e.g. Turweston airfield and land at Northfield House.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Fealey for his support throughout the year, especially with advice on planning issues.

Councillor Clare introduced himself as the new Bucks County Councillor and made the following points:

- He is very concerned about the effects of HS2 and offered help and support if required.
- Roads/potholes are a real problem and are being made worse by running water. TfB are under scrutiny as there is a need to change how potholes are dealt with.

Cllr Clare was asked about the unitary authority proposals by Bucks County Council. He explained that the County Council want 1 unitary authority and AVDC want 2. The Secretary of State will decide which option to go with.

Cllr Richards expressed concern that the Parish Council will be expected to take on a lot more work as there will be fewer councillors after the unitary authority is introduced. It is not easy to ask volunteers to take on more work, especially with the impact of HS2 on the village, with an increasing proportion of houses now owned by the DfT and let out to tenants. The Parish Council has not taken up the offer of devolved services for this reason. Cllr Clare agreed with the impact of HS2 and that devolution will cause pressure for everyone.

A question was raised about HS2 traffic through the village. This has not been totally agreed and the routes not designed yet.

A discussion took place about empty houses owned by HS2, as it is their responsibility to keep properties weathertight. The Old Post Office is of particular concern and Cllr Kirkland said that the Parish Council is very aware of, and monitoring, the situation.

Cllr Clare was asked to give a bit more information about his background and qualifications, which he was happy to do.

Cllr Fealey then left the meeting at 8.45 pm.

5. **Chairman's Report:**

The Chairman's report, financial statement and village organisation reports had been previously circulated.

Cllr Richards welcomed Cllr Green, who was co-opted in September to replace Cllr Cooke.

Cllr Tilley is organising a website so that the Parish Council can meet its legal requirement regarding publication of information. This should be available shortly.

The Parish Council is meeting with HS2 on 30 May to get an update on progress on the assurance that was given previously regarding the undergrounding of cables. With regard to traffic through the village, a main contractor is expected to be appointed in the summer and then has 18 months within which to develop detailed plans, including a local traffic management plan.

The main construction work of the traffic calming project is finished. Cllr Tilley to give more details later in the meeting.

The Rally School application for retrospective planning permission, and to move the footpath to run alongside the Solar Park fence, is still outstanding. The Parish Council is still concerned about safety and the Ramblers Association are now involved. Bucks County Council Footpaths Officer is looking at re-directing the route.

The playground and field have had a number of problems over the past year, with large groups of young people causing problems with late night parties, drinking, litter, and broken glass. The Police have been involved on a number of occasions and any disturbance should be reported on 999 or 101.

6. **Treasurer's Report:**

The accounts are in good shape. It has been a busy year, but the bank balance remains similar to this time last year. A large payment was made for traffic calming, but this was refunded through a New Homes Bonus grant. Another large expense was refurbishment of the play equipment and jet washing the surface, but this was offset by income from the Solar Park. The Parish Council contribution to the traffic calming project was not paid as expected, as the final work had been delayed. This will roll over to next year, along with costs for landscaping. David Miles was thanked for carrying out the internal audit. The accounts have been sent to the external auditor and will be displayed on the noticeboard and website in due course. There were no questions and the accounts were approved.

7. **Village Organisation Reports:**

These were circulated prior to the meeting, along with the Chairman's report.

8. **Open Forum:**

There were no questions about HS2, although there was a suggestion that HS2 be invited to attend next year's APM.

Cllr Clare said that money was available for community projects through an HS2 Community and Environment Fund. The application process is quite difficult, but he would send a link to Cllr Richards.

Cllr Tilley gave some background information about the traffic calming project, which started 4-5 years ago. A New Homes Bonus grant of £60,000 was initially given and this was extended to £70,000 after another application from the Parish Council. The main reasons for the scheme are to reduce the volume and speed of traffic through the village, as there are few pavements and a lot of pedestrians, horse riders and vulnerable road users. The 3 main options were kerbstones, gates at each end of the village and a virtual road strip and these have all now been installed.

A couple of accidents had occurred to start with, but cars are gradually beginning to slow down. It was generally felt that the best had been achieved for the money spent.

The Parish Council is having talks with a local horticultural expert for advice on a planting scheme and maintenance costs over the next few years. The Parish Council will need to apply for a planting license.

A number of queries were raised, including the colour of the gates and whether a '30' could be painted on the road. The virtual road strip was thought to be 'pleasing but boring', but it is more of a psychological deterrent, as the Police would not support a 20mph limit. Rubble on The Green is an issue and Cllr Tilley explained that the Parish Council is aware and that it is the contractor's responsibility. Transport for Bucks is making a plan to resolve it.

Cllr Richards said that there is an S106 agreement of up to £50,000 on the 350 house development south of Turweston Road, Brackley. At some point another traffic survey would be required to assess the increase in traffic short-cutting through the village from this new development, after it is completed. Further measures could then be considered.

Cllr Kirkland expressed thanks to Cllr Tilley for the work he has done on the traffic calming project.

9. **Any Other Business:**

Cllr Richards thanked the Parish Council and the Clerk for all their hard work throughout the year. Cllr Tilley thanked Cllr Morrison, in her absence, for all the work she does on behalf of the village.

The meeting was declared closed at 9.30 pm.