

MARHAMCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Tuesday 21 May 2024

The above meeting was held in Marhamchurch Methodist Sunday School at 7:30pm.

Councillors present: Chair Cllr Perry, Vice Chair Cllr Edwards, Cllr Biddick-Bray, Cllr Grigg, Cllr Kerr, Cllr O'Sullivan, Cllr Waterhouse.

Apologies – Cllr Proudfoot and Cllr Hunter.

Also in attendance: The Clerk, Mrs Hawkins, Cornwall Cllr N Chopak.

6 members of the public were present.

Cllr Perry opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Minutes

Copies of the previous year's minutes held on Tuesday 16th May 2023 have been circulated, and were noted by Councillors.

Matters Arising.

There were no matters arising.

Guest Speaker County Councillor's Report.

Another year has passed and I could suggest not much has changed in the world of Cornwall Council.

Examples of this are your Council Tax has risen by the same amount as last year of 4.99% , of which 2% goes to Adult Social Care, the increased budgetary pressure on the Council has continued with the need for cuts to statutory services such as highways, school transport, maintenance of schools and public buildings, the lack of affordable housing and the difficulties with access to GP and dental services and NHS appointments and care within A&E.

We now are in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis, with residents struggling with their energy, rent and food bills, with an increased reliance on benefits and voluntary groups such as the Foodbank – none of which we expected to be in in the 21st Century and more particularly having just survived a global pandemic.

Sadly, however, homelessness is now more common in our area, a symptom of the cost-of-living crisis and the lack of affordable and social housing. Developers are not rushing to help that situation, with open market housing being their priority, particularly in this area. Percentages that developers should be offering is ideally 40% plus, but they always seem to argue against this, which is disappointing. Other legislation is slowly being bought in with 100% loading on unoccupied properties and commercial waste and recycling bills being sent to holiday lets.

The new waste and recycling contract is slowly rolling out across the county, and it won't be long before you will be the proud owner of a wheelie bin and food waste bin and then having to get used to fortnightly collections.

We will also be looking forward to a 20mph speed limit in some of our towns and villages. Following a successful practice run in Camelford, this will be rolled out over the next 18months once towns and villages are consulted. This is better than being assumed that 20mph was suitable for every location, so watch out for further information in your village.

Signed _____ Chairman. Date: _____

Community Networks have been transformed into Community Area Partnerships, which in our case now includes Camelford. 26 parishes now have a joined up stronger voice and I have the privilege of being the Vice Chair. We have very focused meetings and so far, we have discussed Health and Housing which have been very informative and well attended. Our next meeting is 10th June and all are welcome. Look out for the agenda. As part of the CAP, we have set up a specific Working Group to ensure the Health and Wellbeing of our residents is fully considered. As you know we have serious issues around access to medical care and we are keen to make sure the NHS providers have North Cornwall on their radar. I was voted as Chair and am looking forward to working with those NHS partners, and fellow councillors. I will keep you posted.

My Community Chest of £3k has been well spent this year, from goalposts and memorial benches, to flags, planters and defibrillator signage. Hopefully I will be able to offer a similar budget this year and I will let you know.

My casework is as varied as ever, from potholes and drainage, to public toilets, highways, planning and issues around Adult Social Care, healthcare, schools, and transport. Please do not hesitate to contact me and I will try my best to assist you.

I also want to give a shout out to all Parish Councillors and clerks who do a sterling job, sometimes in difficult circumstances.

I am always available via email on cllr.nicky.chopak@cornwall.gov.uk or leave me a message on 07810302061.

Chairman's Report

Looking back over the minutes for the last year, there are a few projects we have not heard much about for a while, the multi-use trail from Bude to Holsworthy being one. May saw a delay in the Allotment transfer due to boundary issues, and I feel we may need to rethink the use of the land. The 50mph limit is working well on the A39 and we now have a collision sign at Thorn Cross which is hopefully effective. The 20mph speed limit due to come into force in the village in the Autumn.

June saw Councillor Biddick-Bray join us and she has become an extremely valued Councillor. Thank you.

An application for a 2-storey dwelling, Hobbacott Lane took up a lot of Council time. This contentious issue finally went to Committee, and the application was approved, but only by 1 vote.

There have been a few other contentious applications, another in Hobbacott Lane, which the Council flagged concerns about flooding issues, and one in Helebridge Road which, at the moment, has been temporarily withdrawn.

There seems to be plenty going on at Whalesborough with eco-friendly holiday units being erected, as well as an upgrade of the multi-use trail planned. I hope this will be well used.

Planning application came before the Parish Council in July from the Bullers Arms, which the PC supported, and its nice to see the place getting a face-lift along with a new roof and the business popular and prospering.

Thank you to all the Councillors for their hard work and commitment in reviewing all the planning applications that come through our PC.

The Parish Council purchased 3 new planters for the village, thanks to a grant from the Community Chest.

We welcomed another new face to the Council in November, Cllr Joe Grigg has found his feet and is a valued member of the Council.

Signed _____ Chairman. Date: _____

December saw an Expression of Interest submitted to the Community Ownership Fund, to secure funds to purchase the Hele Valley Trail. This is still pending.

Thank you to all those who worked hard on the Neighbourhood Plan, this is now nearing completion with a few more steps to go.

Thanks to all the Councillors for volunteering their time to sit on Marhamchurch Parish Council and for all the hard work they do to support the village.

Questions from Marhamchurch Primary School Representatives.

Q.1. Do you have any big plans for Marhamchurch?

The Parish Council are currently working on a bid to raise funds to purchase Plot 1 of The Hele Valley Trail. This will take a lot of hard work and time, but if successful the Parish Council will be able to ensure that free access remains to anyone who wants to access the beautiful Woodland area, to walk their dogs, go running or walking. This has been available to the community, for the last 20 years due to the generosity of a local family who own the land.

Q.2. Are there any plans to increase parking in the village?

There are no plans at the moment to increase parking in the village. We are lucky to have free, unrestricted parking in the village.

Q.3. Are there plans for new equipment in the village park? (some are rotten, screws loose)

There are regular safety inspections conducted at the Playpark. The Parish Council are working on a few areas which need attention. If you do notice safety concerns, please do let the Parish Clerk know.

Clerk.marhamchurchpc@gmail.com.

If you have any suggestions for new equipment – please let the Clerk know.

Q.4 Can we have lots more greenery/ plants around the village?

We have got planters at each of the entry signs into the Village, which are kindly maintained by volunteers in the area. Perhaps you have an idea of where there could be more plants?

Q.5 Some trees were cut down in the park area - is this necessary and will it happen again?

Some trees were cut down due to safety concerns. We would only remove trees if they were deemed unsafe.

Informal Questions and Answers.

An update was provided by a local resident regarding The Bray. They are currently trying to raise funds of £40,000 in order to repair damage to the listed building. Various grants have been submitted and it is hoped that a new website can be set up to circulate updates to the wider community.

Reports from many local groups will be displayed on the parish council website, and available via email should anyone wish. Please contact the Clerk for more information.

The meeting ended at 8:00pm and was followed by the Annual General Parish Council Meeting.

Signed _____ Chairman. Date: _____