

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MORETON PINKNEY PARISH COUNCIL
held on Wednesday 16th October 2019 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall**

Present:	James Smith (JS)	Chairman
	Ben Vincent (BV)	Vice Chair
	Andrew Jalland (AJ)	Councillor
	Dorothy Brooke (DB)	Councillor
	Brian Collett (BC)	Councillor
	Peter Gaydon (PG)	Councillor
	Claire Poulton (CP)	Councillor
	Gary Denby (GD)	Parish Clerk

Public:	Tim & Alison Eastwood (AE)	
	Tim Aber (TA)	Steve Walker (SW)
	Jerry O'Connell (JOC)	

Welcome and any announcements from the Chair

JS welcomed Councillors and the public to the meeting.

The Parish Clerk has won a £25 prize voucher, donated to the Woodlands Trust, for completing the RTM end-of-season survey. RTM Landscapes were newly appointed for the mowing of village greens and the verges this year and have made an excellent job of them. Tanith Samuels came up from Milton Keynes to present the prize, taking a photo opportunity with the Clerk and Chair.

- 1. Apologies accepted** – None.
- 2. Receive minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 4th Sept 2019**

The meeting minutes were approved as an accurate record, proposed by AJ, seconded by CP, agreed by those present and signed by the Chairman.

3. Public time

Steve Walker introduced himself as part of the **Model Flying Club**, previously based at Thorpe Mandeville before being removed at short notice by HS/2. They now have permission to use Richard Lainchbury's top field, off the track which they have been improving for access, just past the incinerator. They intend to fly mostly electric aircraft, within the field confines, testing each aircraft to ensure it is within the noise limits (less than a petrol lawnmower). Testing noise levels from the village, none has yet registered on the noise monitor. They are presently operating the 26 days rule (weekends), but plan to go to seven days flying per week. The gate is kept locked, to deter off-road bikes from using the track. Councillors thanked Steve for his update and wished the club well.

Alison Eastwood reported upon the recent village hall fundraiser and thank-you, for those contributing towards the **second Vehicle Activated speed Sign (VAS)**. A cheque for £1,000 was presented to JS, with a likelihood of another £150 to follow.

This includes kind donations of £300 from the village coffee morning and £100 from the village film club, together with over 100 smaller donations. AE used the Village Calendar (thanks to Stephanie Fountain and the Parish Council) and word of mouth to attract contributions, an approach which might be used for other causes?

Jerry O'Connell expressed concerns that he has not seen any recent police presence in the village, despite pronouncements from the new Police Superintendent. AJ was able to relate instances of police officers calling-in and passing by the garage at his end of the village, the old Northampton Road being a part of their regular training route. The village does not have an active **Neighbourhood Watch** scheme at present, due to the lack of a village volunteer with sufficient time and interest – any takers, please?

Tim Aber raised the possibility of a memorial plaque (engraved wording on a wooden surround), in memory of a long-time villager **Robin Higham**, recently deceased. Sadly funds cannot stretch to a public bench. A couple of locations are under review, once neighbours have returned from their holidays. To be raised in November **GD**.

4. Councillor declarations of interest for the following agenda items

CP with regards 10.1

5. Matters Arising

5.1 Ref 5.3: A Parish Council **Accident Report book** has been purchased. It was agreed that AJ shall retain this at the village garage. Hopefully it will be little used, but might include incidents arising from volunteers doing tree or verge work on behalf of the village.

A recent accident was reported to the police (an over-turned vehicle approaching The Square), then by CP to Highways via FixMyStreet (ref 1772255). The wall adjacent to the stone well was damaged, with stones knocked out). It was agreed that a photo will be taken of any masonry cracks at the well (perhaps associated with the impact?), for forwarding to Highways, if the cracks are a concern **GD**:



5.2 Ref 5.6: Review of policies, procedures and practices into an encompassing Policies document - ongoing **GD**

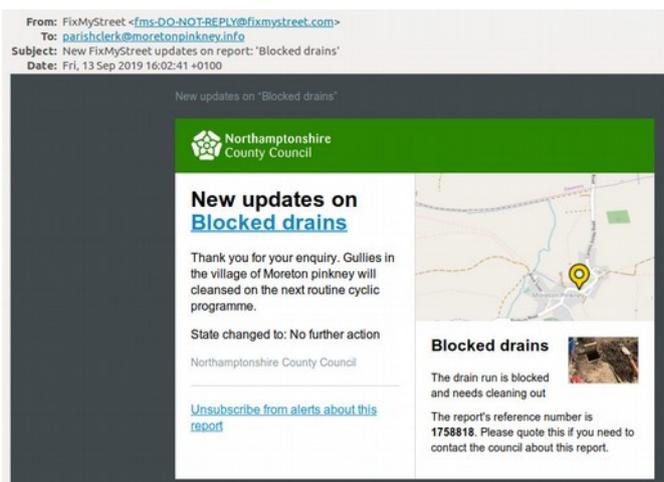
5.3 Ref 5.7: As requested, CP has drafted an initial **Communications & Engagement strategy**. This has been discussed with Councillors and the Clerk individually over the past couple of weeks, receiving general approval:-

- A quarterly Parish Council Newsletter, which might be distributed alongside the current Village Calendar. Stephanie and **CP** will determine associated costs, for next month's budgeting.
- Introduce a monthly link from FaceBook's Moreton Pinkney Matters to the current Agenda and Minutes on the Parish Council web site **CP & GD**.
- Consider revising the agenda format, to make it less formal and more accessible **CP & GD**.
- A village noticeboard for Parish Council use only (avoiding a bar across the centre, obstructing the view. BC suggested using the side of the village's wooden bus shelter. What cost **GD**?
- Revisions to the Parish Council web site (see 9 below).
- Include a regular Communications item on the Parish Council Agenda.

JS thanked CP for her efforts, taking many hours and her business experience. GD asked for a version 1.0 to be distributed and made publicly available **CP**. AJ represented concerns over the budgetary implications, appreciating that not everything has to be done immediately.

As the regular updater of our current Parish Council web site, TA recommended that a fresh, mobile-friendly system might be better than lots of small changes. Digital engagement seems to be how to attract the younger generation. DB supported this view, that we need to provide the public with more information and make it more easily accessible. The web site needs an area dedicated to HS/2 updates (from PG) and probably also for Unitary authority changes.

5.4 Ref 6.2: GD reported that the blocked pavement drain at The Square has been accepted onto Highways next routine cyclic programme: FixMyStreet update - 13 Sept ref 1758818. When it will actually happen remains unknown.



6. Correspondence

6.1 6 Sep: Blocked footpath drain – see 5.4.

6.2 1 Oct: N-CALC eUpdate Sep-Oct 2019: Internal Audit, common issues arising (p17-21)

6.3 1 Oct: Link forwarded to a succinct summary of new website accessibility requirements by Sept 20: [parish-council.website/website-accessibility-for-town-and-parish-council-websites](#)

6.4 4 Oct: Clerk forwarded a record of hours worked for the calendar year to date

7. Progress regarding village's second Vehicle Activated Speed Sign

GD reported that Steven Barber at Highways has now forwarded our license changes to their Regulations department. In addition, he has added the new post locations to a map (awaiting our confirmation), ready for his contractors to produce a quotation.

GD has emailed Swarco requesting an up-to-date price for the second VAS, to the same design as our first unit.

8. Clerk's report-back on N-CALC AGM on Sat 5 October 2019

6 Oct: GD's personal report was distributed to councillors. Of particular interest was a presentation by Sarah Mason representing CALC in Cornwall, sharing her views of the ten years since Cornwall became a unitary authority. A shocking tale, with a challenge:-

There are huge challenges ahead for Northamptonshire, with this level of change. What is key, is your mindset: either you can keep focussing of what you have lost... or you can focus on what you want to achieve... You need to prepare (with one year to go)...

9 Consideration of future Parish Council web site requirements

Tim Aber has advised the Parish Council that in its present format the site is attracting few visitors. He has given notice that he is unable to support the site as-is beyond 2019.

There is a legal requirement of 'openness' for the Parish Council to publish its materials, in essence the three areas of Agendas + Minutes; Finances & Audit; Regulations. As of September 2020, these must be 'accessible' (see 6.3), in particular through the wide range of devices now available for viewing and for those people who have impairments. It may be possible (but not easy) to update the current web site. However, it may be more cost effective to simply jump to the next generation of cloud-based web sites.

At the N-CALC AGM the Clerk came upon a local web development company in Leicestershire called 2commune.com which produces web sites fine-tuned for Parish and Town Councils. It is also presently used by N-CALC itself at northantscalc.com (a strong recommendation). As a small Parish Council, it is available to Moreton Pinkney for a one-off fee of £500 (**potentially from CIL**) then £250 pa maintenance (from Precept). They can also provide Councillors with parish council email addresses for £35 pa (£280 pa for eight) + VAT. It was agreed that this shall be considered further in November, as part of draft budget discussions for 2020-21 **GD**.

10. Planning (latest items available at snc.planning-register.co.uk)

10.1 S/2019/1752/LBC: Replacement of guttering, downpipes and barge boards. Malsbury Farm House, The Square. Approved 14 Oct.

11. Finance and Accounts

11.1 Update on VAT reclaim for 2018-19. There may be a delay / query on a missing company VAT number, accidentally omitted **GD**.

11.2 Consideration of payment to Stephanie Fountain for printing and collection of the Village Calendar, three monthly in advance (Commencing Oct-Dec 2019). Approved by all councillors present **GD**.

- 11.3 Consideration of **£121 expenditure** pa to activate Swarco extended warranty on our first VAS, received on 16 October 2018. This cost is 50% higher than first suggested a year ago. Given the unit's frequent relocation, it was considered that this is a useful cover to have (though it excludes any regular visits or planned maintenance by the company). Councillors approved that the Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk may sign-off on the paperwork as soon as it is available. This cost is expected to be invoiced in November, coming from the **budget's contingency GD.**
- 11.4 Ref 10.1 Consideration of expenditure up to £200 for the second WW2 bench's new plinth. Using pre-mixed concrete provides a better finish. Councillors agreed that this is the better approach, the **monies to be taken from CIL** as an enhancement to the village infrastructure. **AJ** will order the materials and install the same, with thanks and appreciation.

- 11.5 Ref 10.1 Consideration of expenditure up to £2,000 for a replacement public bench.

AJ reported the removal of the dilapidated public bench beneath the trees opposite Arnheim houses on Canons Ashby Road. The bench was not dedicated to anyone, as far as is known. There now remains just an unused grey litter bin, half covered in moss. This bench is to be removed from the parish council's asset register **GD.**



There is a public bench on Weston Road which does not catch much sunlight, beneath what is now a large hedge. It is becoming quite rickety and was dedicated to the memory of Betty Sterne back in 1975 (lasting 44 years?). She has no known relatives remaining in the village. Perhaps this should be removed or relocated?

There is a further public bench at the bottom of Brook Street with its wooden joints in disrepair. This was donated to the village 35 years ago by the Garden Club, at its 30 year anniversary. The Clerk was supplied with the Club's Chairman's email address, to inquire whether they may wish to celebrate another anniversary in similar fashion? **GD**

- 11.6 Review of the Parish **budget and expenditure for the first half year** to 30 September 2019. See Appendix A.

Line 2 shows an allocation of £300 towards tree maintenance, which may now be used to grind-out the deceased stump on the green outside the Baxter's? The Clerk is to obtain a quotation for this stump grinding **GD.**

Line 22 shows £591.33 temporarily allocated to CIL. We are presently short of a bank statement from September 2019 and are unsure where this income amount has come from.

11.7 Councillors' considered and approved for payment, the items listed below:-

Description / Power	Amount	VAT	Total
E.On Street Lighting maintenance to 30 Sept 2019. Street light repaired WITHOUT an additional charge.	£47.88	£9.58	£57.46
RTM Landscapes 1789 mowing September 2019	£350.00	£70.00	£420.00
S Fountain for Village Calendar quarterly in advance October – December 2019	£35.50	£4.50	£40.00
Gary Denby Clerk gross remuneration and expenses 5 Sept to 15 October 2019 (6 weeks) inc. home office and an Accident Report Book	£235.62 £36.00 4.99	£1.00	£277.61
Opus Street Lighting, electricity supply to 24 Sep (DD)	£34.95	£1.74	£36.69

12. Councillors' Comments

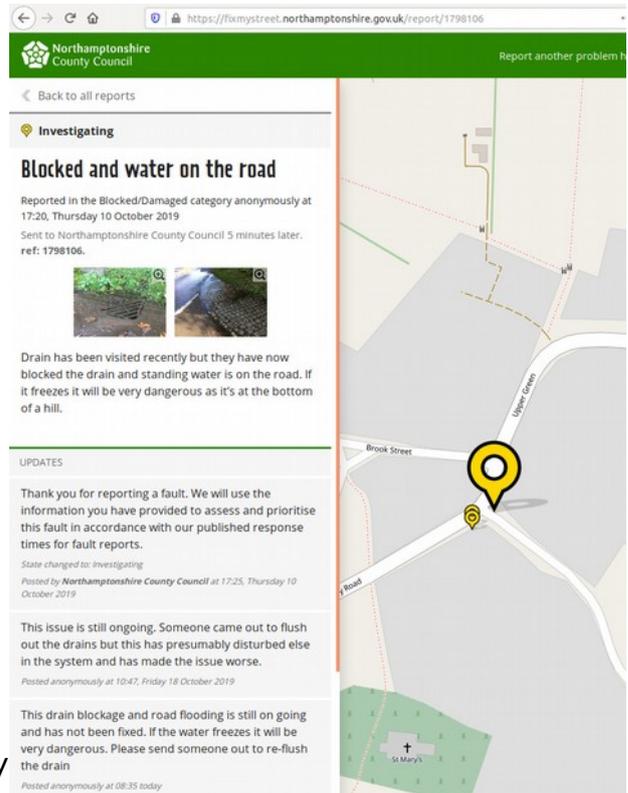
- 12.1 Alison Eastwood is attending a Unitary Planning meeting next month. Council welcomed her offer to send them a report of the same. The Clerk supplied a printed copy of his report (Unitary speaker) from the N-CALC AGM.
- 12.2 PG reported on an HS/2 meeting from about a week ago. A useful slide presentation was given, which he will forward to TA for the Parish Council web site, if permitted. The HS/2 financial review is due for completion in the late Autumn, so may be published in the next month or so. HS/2 seem to be pressing on, as if a forgone conclusion. There is a developing diary of local lane closures as a consequence, which **PG** will also look to make known on our site.
- 12.3 DB reported a broken street lamp on Brook Street (outside Brooklands). The Clerk is also aware of another lamp fault (No 13) on the Cultworth Road, opposite Chequers Orchard. **GD** will report these to the council's contractor.
- 12.4 BC reported that the Village Hall repairs to its fascias and guttering have now been completed, without any recourse to funding from the Parish Council. They may however, look favourably upon assistance with regards the internal decoration, now becoming an issue? Villagers' support of a fund-raising evening this coming Saturday (19th October) will be appreciated: a musical evening hosted by Stan Shenton and Maggie May.
- 12.5 JS has been approached by the church with regards to widening and resurfacing the path leading up from the road. Its ownership is a grey area; its frequent use by elderly villagers is not.

The path is not driven on by vehicles, so may be brought back to winter usability by use of filling, rolling and an additional gravel top. This should keep costs to about £1,400 of which the church may be able to raise a half. Might the parish council be sympathetic towards a grant request for the other half? Councillors agreed to discuss this along with the budgeting in November. It would be helpful if the church PCC can supply a quotation for the work **GD**.

12.6 Councillors reported a blocked road drain and localised flooding outside Bridge House on Weston Road. Any villager can report this to Highways (perhaps with a photo showing the flooding) using fixmystreet.northamptonshire.gov.uk

[Addendum: Local villagers have been reporting it – ref 1798106. There is a spring which is piped into the drainage system further up the hill on Weston Road. This water is now coming up and out of the drain, presumably due to a pipe blockage somewhere beyond. This will become an ice hazard on the road as winter temperatures fall.]

12.7 Looking at the budget, JS was bold to suggest a saving of £750 pa might be achieved (10% of its Precept), were the villagers to have a dark skies policy (no street lighting at all). An item for public engagement?



13. Date of next meeting: **Wednesday 27th November 2019 (draft budget)**

Meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

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Chairman

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Date

