

**Marston St Lawrence Parish Council**  
**Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting**  
**Held on Tuesday 7th May 2019 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm**

**Councillors Present:** Richard Gale (Chairman), Stephen Goodwin, Chris Skermer and Matthew Tims

Christine Coles (Parish Clerk) and six villagers

**19/24. Elections**

*Election of Chairperson and Signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office form*

Cllr Gale was elected to be Chairperson. He signed the Acceptance of Office form.

*Election of Vice-Chairperson*

Cllr Goodwin was elected to be Vice-Chairman.

**19/25. Co-option of New Councillor**

Wayne Lindop was co-opted onto the Parish Council. He signed the Acceptance of Office form and was passed the appropriate paperwork.

**19/26. To receive apologies for absence**

Cllr Scott (holiday)

**19/27. To receive Declarations of Interest under the Council's Code of Conduct relating to business on the agenda**

Cllr Tims declared an interest as a neighbour of the Marston Inn.

**19/28. To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 26<sup>th</sup> February and 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2019**

The minutes were approved and signed as a true record of the meetings.

**19/29. To note any Matters Arising from the minutes not included on this agenda for report only**

There were no matters to discuss.

**19/30. To approve the following payments:**

The following payments were approved under statutory powers:

£223.20 to M & P Scott (repair of bus shelter) – 2017/18 payment

£444.00 to mh-p internet (website) - 2018/19 payment

£49.14 to EON (electricity) - 2018/19 payment

£226.94 to PWLB - 2018/19 payment

£16.00 to SLCC (Clerks Membership)

£171.55 to Northants CALC (membership)

£118.45 to Parish Clerk (hours)

*Action: The Chair to write to the website provider. The website to be an agenda item in August as a decision will have to be made at the November meeting if any future changes are to be made.*

*Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/19*

The internal audit has been carried out. Thanks was given to Judith Johnson for verifying the audit. The Parish Council will restrict making cheque payments in between meetings. A list of payments and cheque numbers will be listed on future agendas and minutes. It was noted the Public Works Loan matures in September 2021.

- *To approve and sign the Certificate of Exemption.* This was approved and signed by the Chair and RFO.

- *To approve and sign Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement.* This was approved and signed by the Chair and RFO.
- *To approve and sign Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2018/19.* This was approved and signed by the Chair and RFO.

**19/31. To receive the Annual Report from Cllr R Breese**

Apologies were received from Cllr Breese for missing the Annual Parish Meeting. The main points from her report included:

- It has been a challenging time being a Cllr at NCC.
- Over the course of the year the aim of the members has been to work with the Commissioners, Improvement Board and others to help place NCC's finances and its services in the best possible position ahead of the expected transition to a two unitary local government structure in Northants.
- The restoration of the Councils finances has been the primary focus over the past year, while maintaining more than just statutory services and working with the 7 District and Borough Councils.
- Pressure on demand for services is unrelenting, particularly in adult social care and children's services. These are demand led services and it is not a choice whether NCC spends money in those areas but what became apparent last year was the cost of the services that NCC provided.
- As NCC waits for the final decision of the Secretary of State on whether he is minded to accept the August proposals of the 7 authorities, work continues on the presumption and clear guidance given by senior civil servants that it is a given.
- In order to balance its budget NCC was given specific permission by central government to use the capital receipts from the sale of Angel Square to fund its revenue deficit in the last financial year. NCC's band D is still very low. In 2019-20 60% of authorities in England will have a Band D council tax that is between £1700 and £1900.
- Cllr Breese works on usual issues such as schools, special needs, concerns by individuals over the funding of care packages, lack of public transport and particularly in the last year the closure of the A422 and repair of potholes. She sits on the Adoption Panel which recommends Adoption and long term fostering matches. She is constantly amazed at the wonderful people who are taking on children from very difficult backgrounds and offering them a home and environment in which they can thrive.

**19/32. To receive an update on the Marston inn and discuss the email from Simon Warner of Fisher German**

The Chair and Cllr Tims have been liaising with Hook Norton Brewery for the last five years. The pub has not been a priority for them as there has been no internal manpower to deal with the case. Fisher German were appointed last year to handle the case. They are based in Bedford but the contact covers commercial operations in Banbury. They have come up with a different scheme this time. It would cost a lot to renovate the existing building and it has been extended a few times already. The current plan is to knock down the existing building and build at the front of the property and look down the village. Councillors have always emphasised the importance of the garden. The plan includes 8 houses, 2 x 2 bedrooms and 6 x 3 bedrooms. The plan is not perfect and Hook Norton Brewery have gone to SNC with a pre-application. The Parish Council are pleased with the mix of housing as it will give more opportunities for young people to live in the village. Six off road spaces have been allocated for parking. Councillors have suggested losing one end house to allow more parking.

The downstairs layout consists of a bar, toilets, one or two fireplaces, 20 square foot bar, small kitchen, cellar and storage space. The upstairs area is of similar size and has a meeting room and games room. No accommodation has been included.

The view of the Parish Council is that a low cost operation will survive. There is a lot of other competition with other pubs offering food. To offer simple food will keep base costs down. A new build will have modern standards and be well insulated. The most important reason to have a pub is to provide an impromptu place for meeting people. It will need an employed manager but who will own it or run it has not been discussed. It will have to be a separate body to the Parish Council and the village is not big enough to rely on volunteers. The pub has been registered with South Northants Council as an Asset of Community Value.

From the floor, there was concern that if planning permission for the pub and housing is approved, would there be a commitment from HNB to build both at the same time. There would have to be a legal agreement in place. The freehold pub was previously for sale but never followed through with interested parties. The last time the planning went to appeal, the main sticking point was the village not being sustainable. It is hoped the pub will make the village more sustainable with housing and the improvement work being planned for the village hall.

The conclusions from the pre-application are as follows:

- SNC want it proven there is the demand for a new facility within the community and a pub in the village.
- A community engagement event to discuss what facilities/events can be held at the facility.
- To demonstrate in full details of why the existing building is no longer fit for purpose and this cannot be a feasible solution.
- Within the design proposal to look at how to retain as many trees as possible.
- To work with Northants Highways over access and parking arrangements
- SNC do not like the car ports and want HNB to review the material palette.

Fisher German have suggested a community engagement evening in May. The Chair to suggest some dates in June to enable a separate flyer to go in the Glimpse and reach a wider audience.

*Action: The Chair to go back to Fisher German with new dates.*

**19/33. To discuss the street lighting upgrade and the change of energy supplier to Opus Energy including an amended direct debit**

By changing suppliers to Opus Energy will reduce the yearly bills by 20%. The Chair has signed up for one year to start with as the Parish Council have not dealt with them before. There could be further savings made if the light bulbs are changed to LED's. This is work in progress.

**19/34. To receive an update on planning**

There was no update.

**19/35. Correspondence**

The following correspondence had been received and circulated:

- Northants CALC, Director Vacancy
- Resignation of Daniella Carletti

**19/36. Councillors Reports**

Cllr Skermer noted the use of 'Fix My Street' to report highway problems and that anyone can report a fault.

**19/37. Date, time and place of next meeting**

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2019 at 7.30pm in the Cricket Pavilion

Meeting finished at 8.35pm

