

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting for Northleach with Eastington Parish

Wednesday 24th April 2019

Present: Cllr Alan Wellman (Chair), Cllr Rigby (Vice Chair), Cllr Hewer, Cllr Morley Blackwell, Cllr Hulcup, Cllr Sanders, Clerk Mrs Cat Crompton and 8 members of the public

1.	Cllr Alan Wellman, Chairman of the Town Council welcomed Councillors and members of the public
2. Resolution	Cllr Hewer proposed, Cllr Morley Blackwell seconded and it was unanimously RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting on 23 rd May 2018 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting and these were duly signed
3.	Cllr Alan Wellman gave a report from the Town Council.
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a shame that this May's election is uncontested. Only the 9 existing councillors stood for election and although this gives us continuity of projects in hand, we will need to fill the 2 vacancies remaining.
3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As always there is a lot going on around the Town and this year in particular lots has been happening at the Playing Field. The working groups will expand on this later.
3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council would like to thank Cllr Paul Hodgkinson for his work with the Council. Cllr Alan Wellman on behalf of the Town Council expressed thanks to Cllr Chris Hancock at this his last meeting as the District Councillor for the Ward. Chris was on the Town Council for 13 years, some as Chairman and has now been on the District Council for 8 years. In addition, Chris oversaw the Neighbourhood Development Plan which recently went to Referendum.
3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We also appreciate the work of our team, Brian who runs the Westwoods Centre, Mary who is our Assistant and Cat the Town Clerk.
4.	District Councillor Chris Hancock gave a report on the Neighbourhood Development Plan, Town Trustees and Sly Trust
4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cotswold District Council set their budget for the year a few months ago and the Waterloo car park project is progressing
4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the Northleach Neighbourhood Development Plan, the Steering Group were delighted that over 30% of residents turned out to vote and of these 91% voted in favour of the Plan.
4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan will help to protect our environment for the future. A lot of the Plan is about delivering infrastructure and the Town Council will now need to develop a strategy on how to move this forward to include budget setting to deliver this.
4.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Hancock gave a report on the Town Trustees. This Trust has been in existence since 1540 and it is recognised that they do a lot of good work across Town but this is not well known.
4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust runs the two sets of Alms Houses, two of which have recently been re-let
4.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They also own land at Northleach Downs which is now let to a local farmer and some land around the Old Prison,
4.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This year the Town Trustees donated £11,000 towards the Play Area. For several years they have helped to finance trips for those schoolchildren for whom the cost would have been out of reach.
4.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sly Trust owns a number of properties across Town including some recently built award-winning homes. The Sly Trust donates to local charities and are now developing a barn at Sly's Close and redeveloping a new house at Mill End which will be available for local families.
4.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about the work of the Sly Trust and Town Trustees to be uploaded to the website in order to advertise their work more widely.
5.	Gloucestershire County Councillor Paul Hodgkinson gave a report
5.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been a big focus on the A roads this year with a lot of resurfacing being done and there is more of this to come. The A40 at Hampnett will be done soon along with the junctions at Dowdeswell and the A429 at Fossebridge
5.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Old A40 has now been reopened which is good news for the Town after fears that it may remain closed.

<p>5.3</p> <p>5.4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He has a small pot of money called Highways Local to spend in his area. In Northleach some was spend on a speed survey at East End and a second survey will be undertaken shortly. Money from the pot was also spent on the new pedestrian crossing in the Market Place. • The Growing our Communities fund which is aimed to reduce social isolation and build community ties has been used in Northleach for the Stay Strong fitness class, the zip wire project and reopening the Old A40. Some funds are also going towards the Men in Sheds project to be based at the Westwoods Centre.
<p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p>	<p>Annual report from the Westwoods Centre Committee, Chair Cllr Alan Wellman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Westwoods Centre is usually full to capacity and is used for a variety of functions and purposes. We have carried out several projects recently to update the building as some items had been here since it was built. • We have purchased some new chairs and looking to replace the much-used foyer carpets. The lower floor windows and doors were done last year and we have recently updated the Wi Fi which has made a big difference to customers and staff. • The pricing structure is very competitive and we have a range of groups using the facilities
<p>7.</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p>	<p>Annual Report from The Finance, Funds and Grants Committee, Chair Cllr Rigby</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We try to make sure that we spend tax payers money wisely and we have supplemented our income with applying for grants and donations where possible to help complete projects. • The Precept has gone up by 4.3% this year. The Clerk explained that we had a list of £80k worth of projects to consider. We held Strategy Meetings to debate these and they were prioritised into different bands of things we have to do, projects we would like to complete and ideas for the future.
<p>8.</p> <p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p> <p>8.3</p> <p>8.4</p> <p>8.5</p> <p>8.6</p> <p>8.7</p> <p>8.8</p> <p>8.9</p> <p>8.10</p>	<p>Annual Report from the Property and Premises Maintenance Committee, Chair Cllr Hewer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have had the pleasure of Chairing this Committee again for another year and would like to thank all the Councillors who have worked hard throughout the year and Catriona Crompton and Mary Cassidy for their tireless support without whom this Committee would not run smoothly. • The usual grass work around the Town was undertaken by McCracken and generally work was satisfactory, particularly in the Sports Field. They also assisted with repairs in the playing field and will be installing a new path around the tennis courts quite soon. We have appointed McCrackens for another year and will go out to tender this coming Autumn. • The Christmas tree was supplied by Bibury Landscaping again and was admired by residents. Some of the lights must be replaced this year as several strands are coming to the end of their lives. • Although the PPMC does have responsibility for the new play area and zip wire I must mention here that other groups have achieved great things which will be reported on shortly. They are both substantial assets to the Town. • Much work was done towards the re-opening of the old A40. It has been a long haul to get this partially opened and Paul Hodgkinson put the final piece into the financing, enabling the work to be done during March this year. • We have had success mapping the boundaries of houses alongside the River Leach which has been as issue for many years and now we have a good idea where the responsibilities lie. The water meadow was cut twice with a view to keeping it accessible and perhaps in the future a flower meadow could be created though the fertility there would have to be reduced a lot. • Once again, the allotments are fully utilised and the waiting list minimal. There were no fee increases this year. • There was a floral competition which was won by the Clifford family in Crail View with an amazing display outside their home. It was particularly impressive in view of the very dry period of weather preceding the competition. We may hold another competition this year. • Grit bins have been kept full during the cold weather and have been in use when needed. So far we haven't had any very severe weather but will keep our fingers crossed that we do not have any surprises.

<p>8.11</p> <p>8.12</p> <p>8.13</p> <p>8.14</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between the end of Doctors Lane and the Market Place, Highways have installed a pavement projection to make the road crossing easier. We are still hoping to get a dropped curb onto the Market Place as buggies and wheelchairs still have difficulty. Two dropped curbs were done in Midwinter Road and after our annual tour with Highways it is hoped that more can be installed. • As the canopy over the bus stop on the main road through the Market Place was not well received and there has not been much appetite for a replacement, we have decided not to replace this for the time being. This was destroyed a couple of years ago by a passing vehicle we believe. • Tree work continues through the Town but sadly we lost one of the noble trees along the north side of the Church Yard. It was found to be badly diseased and had to be felled to approximately 30ft in the hope that some regeneration might occur. Ash Die Back continues to be a concern and we need to be vigilant on this account. • Shortly we intend to plant the beginnings of a Town Orchard to the south of the new zip wire. We are starting with an eating apple, cooking apple, pear of some sort, a Victoria plum and a mulberry tree. • Almost inevitably there are things that we have done which are not recorded here but I think I will end here in the hope that I have not yet bored my readers!
<p>9.</p> <p>9.1</p> <p>9.2</p> <p>9.3</p> <p>9.4</p> <p>9.5</p> <p>9.6</p>	<p>Annual report from the Town Council office by Mrs Cat Crompton, Town Clerk and RFO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Council has a lot of different responsibilities which we share across the Council's three committees and various working groups. The Council staff who try to co-ordinate this consist of 3 part time employees, myself, our Administration Assistant Mary and Brian who runs the Westwoods Centre. • The Town Council operate on a very local level. Our responsibility covers the parish of Northleach so the town itself, the hamlet of Eastington and some outlying homes. We work alongside the councillors who are all volunteers plus we have a small number of other residents who assist us in our workload with their specialist knowledge. • Across Northleach we have a lot of facilities for the community like the Playing Fields, Westwoods Centre, play areas, allotments and the Cemetery. In addition, we are also responsible for the maintenance of most of the grass verges, a number of trees, grit supplies, the bus stops, bins, war memorial, notice boards, some signage, fences, town website and a number of benches. Therefore, the council's workload is very varied and we are usually working on a number of issues and projects at any one time. • We deal with a range of issues each week that are fed in from residents, Town councillors or the District or County Councillors. Some of these can be dealt with immediately and others will be fed into the next relevant meetings. • The Council has a lot of meetings and this is because Councillors need to make well-judged decisions on how it spends money as most of this comes direct from you, the taxpayer. Last year we had 28 planned meetings of the full council and its committees plus several Extraordinary meetings for urgent matters mainly planning. In addition, there was number of other working groups such as Winter Planning, Play Area project, Neighbourhood Development Plan, Staffing and Litter Pick Group. At this point I would like to thank the Cotswold Fosseway Lions Club and the Pavilion for their help with the organisation and the refreshments again this year. I am responsible for drawing up the Agendas along with the Chairs and ensuring that the meetings have as much material as possible including quotes, advice and budget information in order to make informed decisions. • In addition to community issues I have a number of weekly and monthly administrative jobs to complete as the Responsible Financial Officer. Last year I processed over 380 payments and 330 receipts for the Council. This is an increase on the previous year but indicates the spread of work and activities we are undertaking as a council. I am responsible for drawing up the budget for the Council to consider and to facilitate this, ran a Strategy meeting where the Councillors discussed and considered all the requests and ideas raised. These were lively sessions and resulted in a strong budgeting process with priorities agreed for this year. The Internal and External audits are imminent and these involve a lot of preparation and statutory paperwork.

9.7	<p>In addition, we are often applying for grants to assist with projects or to deliver more activities, as well as comparing utility prices and processing VAT returns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We continue to communicate to the community via the Town website, Facebook pages, Parish magazine, Standard newspaper and the community email list.
10.	<p>Working Group Updates</p> <p>10.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr Rigby from the Play Area Group explained that it has been a long project of almost 4 years Lots of people have been involved over the years and once we acquired the land we were able to start fundraising. The new play area seems very popular. We need to thank The Town Trustees, The Cotswold Fosseway Lions and Cotswold District Council for their contributions along with other fundraising that was undertaken. <p>10.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr Hulcup spoke about the new Zip Wire. This is also proving very popular and has taken 3 years to complete. Funding has come from Cllr Hodginson, The Youth Club Trustees and the KGV Trust. <p>10.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr Hulcup spoke about the Winter Planning Group. We worked with the Snow Plough Operator and the Snow Warden to get a better understanding of what was needed. Four new grit bins have been installed, better communication has been prepared and a new salt spreader order. In the end the weather was mild but we will prepare again for this coming Winter. <p>10.4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clerk gave an update on the 2019 Litter Pick. We have been working with the Pavilion and The Cotswold Fosseway Lions to plan the event this Saturday.
11.	<p>Sheryl Murray from Cotswold Friends about Men in Sheds</p> <p>11.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> She is the Community Activities Manager of this voluntary charity who work across communities in the North Cotswolds to reduce loneliness and isolation. They offer befriending community activities like Lunch clubs and Men in Sheds. <p>11.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Sheds is specifically for men but can expand to include women if there is a demand . Men in Sheds currently exist in Moreton and Bourton and have been really popular. Sheryl has funding to support a project in Northleach which will be based at the Westwoods. They don't just set it up and leave, they help with Health and Safety, training, money and safe use of tools. <p>11.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The people who attend have found it really useful, have been making things for local people and are feeling empowered and able to share skills and make good friends. <p>11.4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many say it has given them a focus and a purpose in life. They have made notice boards and raised benches and she is certain that it would benefit people in Northleach too. <p>11.5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training records are done by trained people, all tools are tested and Sheryl visits once a week and checks that records are being held and updated. Shedders pay £1 a week and items are covered by Cotswold Friends insurance. <p>11.6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Town Council have allocated land to the project and a mobile classroom where they can rest and socialise has been donated along with a portacabin for the work. <p>11.7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two volunteers are needed to start the project and need to understand that there is a certain amount of commitment to the project needed. The Cotswold Friends are responsible for the project from start to finish.
12.	<p>Keith Messenger spoke about the Cotswold Fosseway Lions Club</p> <p>12.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently been renamed to enable them to reach out to other communities and not just people in Northleach, they have a good mix of men and women which works well and new members are joining soon. Keith is the President Elect and their purpose is to serve the local community. They support worldwide projects and recently the focus has been on very local needs. They are always looking for local projects that they can support financially. The Lions donated the first defibrillator, helped fundraise for the second and are running a defib awareness session on 20th June. <p>12.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Lions, they donated bulbs to be planted in public places across the Cotswolds. They donated to the new Play Area, run the Message in a Bottle service and support other groups and clubs including Hope for Tomorrow which enables people to visit local cancer support vans instead of travelling long distances.

<p>13.</p> <p>13.1</p> <p>13.2</p> <p>13.3</p> <p>13.4</p> <p>13.5</p> <p>13.6</p> <p>13.7</p> <p>13.8</p> <p>13.9</p>	<p>Steve Patrick on Community Speed Watch Programme (CSW)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is CSW? It's a scheme to allow volunteers to monitor the speed of passing vehicles using a hand held speed detection device. We set up in Northleach last year, and are now one of over 200 similar groups that have been set up in Gloucestershire in the last 5 years. • Why have a CSW? Inappropriate speed is a real concern in rural communities, and thankfully here in Northleach we currently have a pretty good road safety record, and would very much like to keep it that way. Respectful driving not only helps to avoid road traffic accidents, but also reduces noise pollution, vibration and harmful emissions. • When and where do we carry out CSW? We are governed by when, where and how we carry out speed monitoring. Rain, ice, poor visibility and at night are ruled out for obvious reasons, and volunteers don't like standing out in the cold for too long. So we try and conduct speed monitoring in Northleach for one week every month, weather permitting, between spring and autumn, and subject to the availability of the speed monitoring devices. • Monitoring is carried out at 2 locations in Northleach, one at West End by the Fire Station and the other at East End between the Nostle Road and Bassett Road junctions. Both locations deemed suitable by Gloucestershire Police in advance. • All volunteers must be trained, and wear Hi Viz jackets and be clearly visible to motorists when conducting monitoring. • What happens to offending drivers? Vehicles exceeding a pre- determined threshold are reported to the Police and the owners of persistent offending vehicles are contacted by the Police and targeted if necessary. As a CSW Group, we are not privilege to what action the Police take, but I do know some owners of offending vehicles have been contacted about their driving. • In essence, it's about standing by the side of the road in a Hi Viz jacket with a hairdryer reminding drivers that Northleach is subject to a 30mph speed limit. • As for the future? Personally would support an extension of the speed limit at East End by at least 100 metres, due to the recent development at this end of town, and the installation of a table top junction, or similar, at the Nostle Rd turn. • If anybody would like to be a Speed Watch volunteer, please contact Cat at the Northleach Council who can forward your details on to me.
<p>14.</p> <p>14.1</p> <p>Resolution</p> <p>14.2</p> <p>Action</p>	<p>The Meeting considered if the new defibrillator should be located at the Pavilion or The Market Place. Both locations have been assessed and approved. All residents present are allowed to vote as it is the Annual Town Meeting rather than a Council one.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a discussion about where the defibrillator should go with contrasting opinions on what would be best. Cllr Hewer proposed that it is sited in the Market Place on the Toilet block, Cllr Hulcup seconded and it was agreed by a majority and we will position it there. • It was then proposed that we look at fundraising for a fourth one to go on the Pavilion and ask the Cotswold Fosseway Lions to support on this. • Clerk to organise the installation and publicise the training
<p>15.</p> <p>15.1</p> <p>Action</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of those present had not heard all the speakers and asked if the meeting could be in a different room. A Hearing loop was discussed. • Clerk to add a Hearing Loop installation to next Westwoods Agenda

There being no further business, Cllr Alan Wellman thanked everyone for their time. The meeting closed at 8.50 pm