

**CLIFTON UPON DUNSMORE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING**

Held on 27 March 2017
At the Townsend Memorial Hall, commencing 7.30 pm

Present: Councillor M Nash (Chair) and Councillor S A Robinson, Borough Councillor L Hunt (RBC), and 10 residents of the parish.

Clerk: Mrs Christine Lord

17/1. **WELCOME BY CLLR MARION NASH**

Cllr Marion Nash welcomed everyone to the meeting.

17/2. **TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor H Duncan and Councillor C Palmer.

17/3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD 21 MARCH 2016.**

The minutes were approved and signed by Cllr Marion Nash as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

17/4. **ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF CLIFTON UPON DUNSMORE PARISH COUNCIL, CLLR MARION NASH**

I am further encouraged by the progress that we have made this year. I would again like to thank all of the parish councillors who, despite their full-time jobs and voluntary commitments, give their time freely and work hard for the benefit of the village throughout the year. I would also like to thank our Borough Councillor Leigh Hunt and County Councillor Philip Morris-Jones for the support they continue to show for the village. The Parish Council has achieved a great deal over the past 12 months:

HIGHLIGHTS - ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

- Elections in May - 6 Members were elected unopposed - The Parish was divided into 2 Parish Wards: Clifton upon Dunsmore and Radio Station (which has 1 Member at present).

- Sale of Air Raid Shelter – the proceeds from which will contribute towards the refurbishment of the playground and enhance other assets of the village

Policies created by the parish council to further strengthen accountability

- Adoption of the General Power of Competence for the term of the council
- Development of Community Grants policy and application process for local groups

Additional savings made this year

- Significant financial savings made by the re-negotiation of a new 3 year insurance policy
- Purchase of new Laptop, external hard drive and Printer (via successful grant application £565)
- Defibrillator (via successful grant application £1700)

Increased communication – delivered to each household

- Development of a 5-year plan
- Regular Parish Council newsletters to inform residents of upcoming actions and events

Community engagement

- Litter Picks November 2016 and March 2017 (Great British Spring Clean)
- Creation of the parish Conservation Group. Activities included: flower festival / churchyard improvements/bulb planting etc.
- Christmas festivities – Tree and Community Carol singing
- Training sessions for the defibrillator was made available to all residents

Partnership

- Created formal lines of communication with Newton Parish Council

- Invitations accepted by speakers to attend meetings: Urban & Civic, RBC Local Plan Team, Traffic Calming, WCC Ground Based Solar Farm, Travellers policing team

Caring for our community

- Resolution to refurbish play equipment (grant funding application in progress)
- Commenced development of a Community Emergency Plan for the parish
- Refurbishment of the car park
- Defibrillator training day
- Traffic Calming scheme – any day now!
- Bi-annual Village walks to identify and rectify local issues
- Strengthening playing fields security
- Strengthening safeguarding of pavilion

Challenges met this year

- Travellers were negotiated off the playing field, at no cost to the parish
- Vandalism at the Pavilion over the summer – extra security installed
- Reduction in the amount of Council Tax Support Grant paid to parishes
- Old street lighting in need of updating/renewal – strategy still in planning stage

A reminder that we are currently in the process of putting together the makings of a summer fair which we plan to take place on Saturday 9 September. We are interested in collaborating with residents to help make this event as successful as possible and welcome any offers of help.

The parish council thanks those villagers who are attending parish council meetings, providing written feedback, and responding to questionnaires in increasing numbers to inform the thinking of the work that the councillors undertake. We sincerely hope that this trend continues so that we are able to address the many varied local concerns that arise.

17/5. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR CLIFTON UPON DUNSMORE PARISH COUNCIL FOR 2016-17

The Annual Parish Meeting is held just prior to the end of the financial year. It has therefore not been possible to submit the final accounts for the year 2016-17 to support the Annual Report.

I anticipate that this will have taken place by the next parish council meeting on 3 April 2017 in the meantime; I shall present an overview of the accounts as we currently understand them. I should confirm that the accounts will be subject to the Annual Return Internal and External Audit process in June 2017, and will be available to anyone who wishes to see them during the period of public inspection.

In the meantime; the parish council began the year with £21,202 in the bank; of which around £2,570 is earmarked for the replacement of play equipment.

For the financial year 2016-17 the parish council received £23,252 in precept from the Borough Council. We also received monies from the football clubs' use of the playing fields, from the allotments and grazing fields and we have received around £2,265 in grant funding. The sale of the site of the former Air Raid Shelter in Church Street in April 2016 has provided the Parish Council with £64,950. The Members agreed that 10% of the net sale will go into the Councils General Reserve to increase financial resilience and the remainder (£58,455) earmarked for the improvement of existing community facilities or purchase new facilities for the benefit of the community.

Significant outgoings this year are for the usual costs of running the parish council meetings, street lighting costs, insurance and maintenance costs associated with the pavilion, playing fields and street lighting. The cost of the refurbishment of the car park in Lilbourne Road amounted to around £8.2k.

Having started the year with funds available of £21,202 we are likely to have finished the year with a bank balance of around £81, 534.

17/6. REPORT FROM BOROUGH COUNCILLOR LEIGH HUNT

Over the past few years Rugby Borough Council has been in a strong financial position. Whilst other Local Authorities have been feeling the pinch, Rugby has built and opened both a new crematorium, and a new sports centre. However, times change.

The way in which Government funds Local Authorities has been reprofiled, with much less money coming from the exchequer to help pay for the services which the borough provides. Therefore, after an unprecedented 8 years of freezes to Council Tax, and even one decrease, the decision was taken this year to levy a 1% increase on the Rugby Borough Council element of the Council Tax bill. This still represents excellent value for money. At the same time, it has been necessary to look hard at the services we provide, and everyone will be aware that the decision has been taken this year to start charging £40 per year for green bin collections. This equates to around 76p per week over the year. Green waste collections are a discretionary service, which have previously been provided free of charge. However, as we move towards self-sufficiency by 2020, in other words no Government grants whatsoever, it is important that we are able to deliver a balanced budget whilst protecting front-line services.

Closer to home, my work as your Borough Councillor has once again focussed on solving local problems – and on planning issues. Current planning matters include the development that has been carried out at Clifton Cruisers, and another canal-related matter that has come to light near to The Locks where (once again) a redundant canal arm is being brought back into use, apparently without the required planning permission.

There have been ongoing issues with the charges that Orbit levy for grounds and tree maintenance on the Manor Estate, and I am told that a letter detailing the charges and the service level agreement will finally be going out this week. It's only taken two years so far! Whilst highways matters do not fall under the Borough Council, I have also spent a lot of time working with WCC Highways and the developers on the traffic calming scheme and vehicle weight reduction for Clifton. All necessary permissions are now in place and final touches are being put to the lighting plan. My understanding is that once this is complete the works to install the traffic calming and weight limit signs can commence.

I do have one concern on this point, however, my understanding is that Urban and Civic, who are developing the masts site have purchased Wharf House, which is the last property on the left before the canal as you travel into town. They apparently plan to use this as access for the construction vehicles that will be building the new link road. Whilst this may seem in principle to be a good idea, it will be impossible for them to swing lorries into the site from the canal bridge, so it looks as though we will be getting the traffic calming, and at virtually the same time or immediately thereafter we'll have lorries thundering through the village to access the site! I'm trying to get a resolution to this, and would like to see it linked to an improvement in parking for residents on Avon Street. This is very much a work in progress.

I have also been working to try to improve matters at the St. Thomas Cross junction. This is now being monitored and both Urban and Civic and Prologis, the developers of Houlton and DIRFT III respectively, have agreed to pay for remedial works when the traffic levels reach certain levels.

Clifton is fortunate to have an excellent parish council, with a broad range of skills and professional expertise, supported by a highly competent Clerk. I would like to thank them all for their ongoing support.

It is a privilege to serve as your Borough Councillor, and is something that I do not take lightly. If there are issues that I am able to deal with then I'll do my best to see them through to a satisfactory conclusion.

As in previous years, I will include reports from this evening in future District Diaries, together with any other Group reports that are emailed to me – even though we no longer get paid by the Advertiser!

17/7. **REPORTS FROM VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS**

Clifton Tennis Club – presented by Steve Woodford

The tennis club has had mixed fortunes this year. The work that the parish council did in removing two trees that were adjacent to court number 2 has resulted in a real reduction in the amount of moss on the court. I would like to thank the parish council again for removing these trees and particularly to Alastair who carried out the work free of charge.

Unfortunately, we are experiencing some moss on one side of court number 1 where there

are a couple of large trees alongside the court. We have been treating this small area of moss with moss killer throughout the autumn and winter and this is just about keeping the moss under control.

The Club's men's team did well in 2015 and finished top of their league and were promoted to league one, but the competition in the top league proved very demanding last year. However, the team is hoping for greater success in 2017. We have also entered a mixed doubles team in the league this year. We are always looking for new team members if anyone is interested.

We have run junior coaching again and had about 20 youngsters involved each week. Sue Robinson will be running this again in 2017; £30 for seven one hour sessions.

We hold open club sessions for social tennis on Tuesday and Thursday evenings during the season and have been running a popular frostbite club session on Saturday mornings during the winter months.

Our biggest problem is low membership despite running a large promotion campaign over the last couple of years. This year we have reduced membership fees significantly for new members. With just £35 for adult membership, £10 for junior membership, up to 21 years of age, and only £60 for family membership we are hoping this will appeal to local people. If you are interested in knowing more please contact me, Steve Woodford on 01788 561996 or by email stevepenny.woodford@btopenworld.com

Rugby Evreux Twinning Association – presented by Steve Woodford.

Although not limited to families living in Clifton, Rugby Evreux Twinning Association has five families in Clifton that twin with French families in Evreux, Rugby's twin town. The Twinning Association has been running for almost 50 years and promotes social family twinning between local families and families in Evreux. We meet with our French families for a long weekend together, either here or in France. We stay in the home of our French family and enjoy a mix of activities either alone with our family or as a group.

In 2016 we hosted our French families in our homes. We had a welcome reception at Bilton Grange School when our French families arrived on the Friday evening. On Saturday, we visited Waddesdon Manor for a tour of the property and a group meal. On Sunday evening, we were entertained by the internationally renowned group Stringfever who were amazing.

We hold social and fundraising events throughout the year, many of which are held here in the TMH. We held our AGM here in October, a few weeks ago, we had a very successful film night organised by Lesley, and on Saturday we held a quiz here which Penny and I organised. Our next social is a Ramble on 14th May and then a Hog Roast which Alastair and Sue will be arranging.

We do have a new French family that would like to twin with a local family, so if you are interested please contact, Steve Woodford (01788 561996), Lesley Edwards or Sue Robinson. stevepenny.woodford@btopenworld.com

Clifton Gardening Club by Doug Hall – presented by Daphne Allen

Clifton Garden Club continues to be very active in the village and had a very successful year in 2016.

The year included seven meetings with speakers, an evening visit in June to 3 attractive and immaculate gardens in South Road followed by a fish and chip supper, visits to Kelmars Hall and Lamport Hall with guide Andrew Mikolajaski and a long weekend visit to gardens in London. Gardens visited in South Road Clifton were those belonging to Anthony and Susan Addams, David and Jane Addison and Alan and Janice Duffin. The year ended with an enjoyable Christmas dinner in The Bull in late November.

This year the garden club will host seven speakers with a quiz in January. Last year we had a very successful plant and produce show for members only, which incorporated an identification quiz. A similar show is scheduled for this year. Visits and events planned for 2017 include a possible trip to Ireland and visits to the garden belonging to club members Peter and Rosemary Shaw at Long Lawford and Kathy Brown's garden in Bedfordshire.

The Clifton Garden Club annual plant sale took place in late May 2016. This is an important event for the club as the proceeds from the sale are used to fund club speakers. A record amount was made and a big thanks must go to all those who helped to organise this event and to members of the public for their support. The 2017 plant sale is scheduled to take place on Saturday morning May 20th.

Clifton Garden Club is also involved in: -

- the planting of winter and summer flowers in the large tubs outside the Clifton shops. Flowers are donated by garden club members.
 - the maintenance of the Millennium Garden on the corner of Main Street and South Road.
- Clifton Garden Club meets on the third Thursday of each month upstairs in the Townsend Memorial Hall, Clifton upon Dunsmore at 7.30 p.m. Refreshments are provided after meetings. From time to time visiting speakers bring plants for sale. Subscriptions are £10 per year for membership and £3 per meeting for visitors. Each member receives a membership card listing club activities.

I would like to pay tribute to the Clifton Garden Club committee for their hard work and to club members for their enthusiastic and constant support during 2016.

Townsend Memorial Hall by Doug Hall – presented by Christine Lord

The year 2016 was dominated by the activity centred round the application submitted to WREN for a grant towards a new ground floor kitchen. WREN is a company registered to fund projects which are eligible under the Landfill Communities Fund. Fortunately, our application was successful. The contract for the new kitchen went to Rugby Fitted Kitchens and Berkeswell Builders.

A lot of work was required to bring about not only a successful application but also the project management work necessary to achieve a new successful kitchen build. To that end I would like, in particular, to give a sincere thanks to our secretary Julia Boyd who did so much hard work behind the scenes to bring about the successful build of the kitchen. Julia was relentless in progressing the work and dealing with problems and difficulties. She spent a great deal of time and tenacious energy bringing about the successful conclusion of the task in which she was involved. I would like to thank the TMH Management Committee and the kitchen sub-committee for their work and input and I would also like to thank Pam Luck and colleagues of Warwickshire Cava for their advice and support. Last but no means least, of course, a big thank you must go to WREN for supplying the finance and in particular to Mr Joe Newby WREN Contracts Manager and his colleagues, for their help and support during the whole process associated with the application and build.

Various items of equipment have been replaced in the Hall including a new instant hot water boiler in the upstairs kitchen and a floor buffer purchased so that there is now one on both floors.

The cottage tenant looks after the property and mows the grass as the garden is now mostly shrubs which the Trustees arrange to have tidied. The large tree in the garden has grown extensively and surgery is planned any day now.

Thanks to Dorothy Bancroft the Hall participated in the Festival of Flowers in St Mary's Church to celebrate the Queens 90th Birthday.

TMH hiring charges have been in the main maintained at previous levels for the last 5 years except for an increase for the use of the kitchen. The Hall continues to be well used by regular groups, individuals, the Borough Council, for functions and for social events but there are still spaces for more activity particularly during the daytime. We know that the success of the TMH has much to do with our caretaker Sandra who is so very helpful and obliging to all who use the hall. I must put on record our thanks for her help and support and the help of husband Malcolm in making the hall the success that it is.

We have been unsuccessful in obtaining the longstanding grant from the Parish Council for the last two years. The Council now have a new procedure and application will have to be made for a specific amount for a specific purpose. The Trustees have agreed that the Parish Council position a defibrillator on the outside wall of the building.

I must record appreciation for the work done in 2017 by the secretary Julia Boyd and by the treasurer Julie Garratt. The Townsend Memorial Hall committee as a whole should also be complimented for the successful contribution it makes in accommodating such a wide variety

of user groups that have a need for village hall facilities. We are lucky to have such a dedicated committee. Thanks must go to each one of them for their valued contribution in accommodating some of the activities and interests of our local community. However, committee member numbers are decreasing and there is a desperate need for additional committee members to successfully run, what must be a very valuable community asset. Please consider joining us to keep the TMH management committee viable and successful. There is still plenty of work to be done to improve the Townsend Memorial Hall building - and plenty of work to do in the week by week running of the hall. I hope that everyone - those who use the hall, committee members and members of the public – will continue to give their full support and encouragement to our efforts to bring about the much-needed improvements to the building and to what the TMH has to offer.

Nb. Dorothy Bancroft added that the new water heater in the downstairs kitchen had proved unreliable, however an agreement had now been reached to lease a more efficient model.

Nb. Councillor Hunt informed the meeting that the grant funding programme run by WREN is now coming to an end, and advised that any further bids for funding should be submitted quickly.

Joint Burial Committee – presented by Alastair Robinson

The Joint Burial Committee have met on a regular basis and have clear actions plans to cover key aspects of ensuring the cemetery is maintained to a high standard. We welcomed Liz Harvey as the Clerk and has done a sterling job in getting the records up to date. Finances are strong and the JBC has a good reserve. The Committee have agreed a number of actions for the year, the main ones being:

- Provision of new water supply
- Repairs to a man hole cover
- Renovation of the noticeboard
- Prepare the cemetery extension for use
- Making good the morgue roof – done
- Obtain a supply of top soil for the gardener – done
- Tree works as a precautionary measure - done

St Mary's Church by Sue McKenzie – presented by Dorothy Bancroft

The past year has been busy for our church as usual, with St Mary's marking some important occasions. We have celebrated the Queen's 90th birthday; a concert featuring some local talented people was held in August; the History Group held a superb exhibition last September, which attracted many people from the surrounding areas. The school has used the Church for their special Christmas performance of a Christmas Carol; every bit of the church was used and there was such demand for tickets that an extra two performances were given. Our Christmas draw, which was held at the home of Pat and Perry Walters was a great success, and we look forward to repeating this event in 2017.

We continue to hold our regular Sunday services, with a lunchtime short service of prayer on Wednesday at 12 o'clock which is focussed on prayers for the whole community and for those who have asked for prayer, either for themselves or for someone else. All are welcome to join in with this time of prayer. Seasonal and celebratory services are a highlight in the church calendar and are reasonably well attended. We hold regular Baptism open mornings and there are some weddings booked for the next year. We are justly proud of our church and its environs, and we thank everyone in the village and the community for their support, both financially and physically. In order to maintain the standards which are enjoyed by all our visitors, we rely on the many volunteers who come and look after the church, inside and out, and the Parish Council who take care that the grounds outside are maintained. Thank you to all.

In the year ahead we shall have many fundraising opportunities for the village to take part in, including a concert in May given by David King and Andrew Rackham, and a return visit from Lesley Smith towards the end of September. We look forward to seeing you all.

Clifton History Group - presented by Dorothy Bancroft

The village history group meets on the first Thursday of every month, and hosts a wide variety of speakers which are interesting and enjoyable. Future meetings will provide presentations on The Plague and the Fire of London. The group also helps with research into local history and provides assistance to others researching family history, reporting the outcome of enquires.

The extensive exhibition of village history held in the church last year was very well attended and will be repeated in 2018.

Clifton Art Group – presented by June Deacon

The village art group meets on Mondays from 1-3pm. Unfortunately, we have lost several members this year due to house moves and health problems, so if anyone who would like to exercise their painting and drawing skills will be very welcome.

We have had several workshops given by one of our members. We have painted masks that helped to decorate the church for the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations and Christmas decorations that adorned the village hall.

Clifton WI – presented by Lynn Jones

Clifton WI meets on the second Thursday of each month, 10 times a year. This year we have hosted a variety of speakers on subjects ranging from humour to history. Around 40 members enjoy a social programme of fish and chip suppers, a walking group, a craft group and theatre visits. Membership is currently £37 per year.

17/8. OPEN FORUM

Steve Woodford expressed concern about the lack of street lighting in South Road, particularly around No.25, and asked when there was to be an improvement.

In response, Councillor Leigh Hunt explained that the Parish Council were awaiting the publication of the street lighting plan which would accompany the installation of the traffic calming scheme. The plan is expected to be published very shortly.

The Chair then explained that the County Council would be funding the scheme, and that the Parish Council would then be reviewing the lighting scheme for the rest of the village, and as this is to be a major task, would be concentrating on upgrading lighting which is in a poor condition as a priority.

Councillor Robinson reiterated that the Parish Council is acutely aware of some issues with street lighting over several months, but that the review was underway, with Newton PC providing the costs of their new scheme for reference.

A resident remarked that he hoped that the new lighting scheme would not be too bright – as in some other villages.

A resident commented that the new surfacing of the car park was a great improvement, but that the line marking could not easily be seen by vehicle drivers.

In response Councillor Robinson remarked that in time the surface will compact more, and that markers will stand out more. He also mentioned that planning permission had been granted to undertake some minor works to trees within the car park. Once completed this will provide additional space for parking.

A resident enquired whether anything could be done to improve the safety of the triangle junctions at either end of North Road; stating that the existing layout which allowed entry and exit via both sides very dangerous – particularly when cars were parked close to the junctions on Main Street and Church Street.

Another resident support the request, stating that parking on North Road near to the school limited the vision of drivers exiting on to Main Street.

In response Councillor Hunt advised that the problems are not something that the Parish Council can deal with, and should be reported to Warwickshire County Council (as the Highway Authority). She advised that the County Road Safety Team would need to examine whether any improvements would meet current regulations.

A resident informed the meeting that the road surface on South Road was breaking up in several places, particularly around junctions.

In response Councillor Hunt advised again, that this should be reported to Warwickshire County Council (as the Highway Authority), and that the on-line reporting system was very effective. She cautioned however, that due to the imminent installation of the traffic calming scheme, only minor repairs are likely to be carried out prior to the works being undertaken.

A resident remarked that the appearance of the village was being spoilt by the incomplete works to a number of development sites.

In response, the Chair reiterated that once a planning application is approved, the applicant has 3 years in which to commence the works, and that there may be a number of reasons why development is stalled. This is not something that the Parish Council can address, however concerns may be raised with the Planning Enforcement Officer at Rugby Borough Council.

17/9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

A resident commented that in her view she considered that we were lucky to live in such a vibrant community and welcomed more support and involvement from the residents in the activities of the various voluntary groups and organisations.

The Chair of the meeting thanked all who had attended for their participation.

Meeting closed 8.30pm

Minutes approved and accepted as correct

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Chair

Dated