

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 20th MAY 2024

6 members of the public

Total payments for the year amounted to £39286 resulting in an excess of payments over receipts of £6056.

The end of year reserves amount to a total of £45500 with £30536 allocated to the general fund, £10000 to the playing field, £1000 to the local parish plan, £2000 to village appearance, street lights and footpaths, £1200 to the election fund , £514 to the Transparency Act IT fund and £250 in WCC grants

The accounts, cash book and bank records etc have already had their internal audit by Jim Thornton of Ashorne with no issues and will be subject to external audit in the coming months.

5. County Councillor's report

Cllr O'Donnell filed the following report, which was read out by Cllr Slora

I am thrilled to be Cabinet Support for Adult Social Care and Chair of Young Persons Partnership. I also sit on Children's OSC and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Annual Update.

There was a Council tax increase of 4.99% for 2024/25 and planning an assumption of a 2.99% annual increase in future years. The increase was the maximum that WCC could take but significantly below the inflationary and demand pressures that as a Council had to absorb. The increase is to support the rising cost of £26m for Adult Social Care, totaling £226m per year. There is also an increase of £18m for SEND and an extra £8.9m for home to school now totaling £28m per year, driven in part by SEND and pressure on school places.

A significant long-term milestone has been reached for Warwickshire with the news in the Chancellor's spring budget that the County Council is to be one of three councils to be awarded a Level 2 Devolution Deal. The deal will give the County increased powers to tackle two key agendas, levelling up and climate change-through devolution of its own Adult Education budget and strategic oversight of the UK Prosperity Fund. The investment Zone brings thousands of new jobs, £2bn of economic growth and £180m of Government investment with reinvestment into Advanced Manufacturing sector.

WCC launched the Sustainable Futures Strategy and its delivery plan outlining how the Council will collaborate with partners to mitigate climate change and work toward fulfilling the Counties net zero commitments. Warwickshire County Council once again, ranked 7th of 21 Council's against the sustainability West Midlands Benchmark.

There is also an emphasis on investment:

Warwickshire County Council made an investment of £1.5m in apprenticeships, benefitting both young career-seekers and employers.

A £100m investment in the Warwickshire Property and Development Group (WPDG) and £50m for the Warwickshire Investment Fund (WIF) demonstrating WCC's commitment to support the recovery and growth of Warwickshire for the benefit of residents and communities.

£20m investment in school places.

£25m investment in significant expansion of Resource Provision to support those with SEND in mainstream settings.

Warwickshire County Council opened four new SEND Resourced Provisions in Warwickshire offering enhanced specialist support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

There has also been a focus on domestic abuse by Warwickshire County Council. The report from the Director of Public Health for Warwickshire reported that over 17,000 women and over 7,000 men experienced Domestic Abuse. The report recommended that WCC Education Services promote in any training relating to violence against women and girls. Linking with Coventry and Warwickshire Suicide prevention strategy and supporting child victims of domestic abuse.

Despite the challenges, the Council remains in a relatively solid financial position. Our financial position compares favourably with other councils and benchmarking shows that we are a relatively low-cost Council in most areas with average or above average performance and strong financial resilience indicators, therefore we are not in immediate S114 territory.

The Council's approach has been dynamic, flexible and can do. We continue to focus on collaboration, partnerships and working with communities as well as committed to protecting services and the most vulnerable residents in our society.

6. District Councillor's report

Cllr Parry made the following report:-

I've not been as busy as in previous years due to the change of council I now have no cabinet roll, I am however the shadow for law and governance. I am also involved in planning and the planning committee, helping new counsellors who have little experience so still have some work to do. I've liaised with the policy team on the local plan and suggested that SDC have a supplemental energy policy. This will help WCC and SDC control the amount of solar development on valuable farmland. I've also lobbied for the new GP practise in Lighthorne, and Southam doctors (St Wulfstan) have been selected. They are looking for temporary premises, as the full new premises will probably not be built until 2027.

7. Community representative's report

i. Warwickshire College

The following report was sent and read out by Cllr Slora:-

Farm

We have finished lambing on the farm now and the ewes have produced 400 lambs all together. All of the ewes and lambs are now out in the fields enjoying the warmer weather. In the next few weeks the lambs will receive their first vaccinations to keep them healthy.

All of the arable ground is growing well. The Oil Seed Rape is fairly disappointing, however, due to the weather, this is a common theme across the UK. The winter wheat has really perked up in the last couple of weeks with the nicer weather.

The beef Approved Finishing Unit continues to maintain high husbandry and welfare standards. The number of animals on the farm has increased and we are working closer to our maximum capacity. Grass is really starting to grow well and the farm has shut up two fields for haylage production, which we hope to cut in the next 6/8 weeks.

Estates

We continue to carry out general repairs and maintenance to the site, roofs, heating systems, site drainage and grounds. The new DfE T Level funded Animal housing building project commences on 20th May, which will be located on the lower campus. The main Contractor has been reminded of agreed transport routes to avoid vehicular traffic and deliveries entering the village.

Following our last update to you we are still noting incidents of trespass by non college related people walking, jogging and cycling on our site in non designated areas. Our staff are advising people of our safeguarding arrangements and reminding them of the area they are permitted to access, but unfortunately these incidents are continuing to occur. Incidents of trespass are occurring across different areas of our site, these include the main drive to Moreton Hall, across our farm fields and generally through our site. This is compromising our safeguarding arrangements and creates an opportunity of risk to our students. Can we politely ask residents of the Parish to assist us with safeguarding our students and ensure they only enter the permitted area on site, namely Box Field, No. 19 indicated on the plan below or by sticking to public rights of way.

Events

We welcomed over 3,000 visitors to the college for our annual Lambing and Animals Weekend on 20 - 21 April which was a great success. Visitors got to experience Lambing on the farm and also enjoyed tours of our Animal Welfare Centre as well as blacksmithing demonstrations in the lower forge.

This year we expanded our farmers' market to accommodate around 20 traders who offered a variety of hot and cold food, treats and gifts. The Guide Dogs' Association also attended alongside a range of stalls from our own Carpentry, Floristry, Supported Learning and Equine departments. All profits from ticket sales go back into our Agriculture and Animal Welfare departments, whose staff and students worked tirelessly to prepare for and deliver the event.

Facilities regular hire –

Weekdays - Term Time Mondays & Fridays –

Vaulting training Tuesdays - Stoneleigh RC Jump & Flatwork Training

Wednesdays - Warwickshire Hunt Pony Club

Thursdays - North Warwickshire Hunt PC Mounted Games Training

Fridays - Warwickshire Hunt Pony Club MG Training

Staff and Students

Land-based service engineering apprentices at Moreton Morrell College are celebrating a 100 percent pass rate in their end point assessments, with over half of the learners achieving Distinction. It is the 25th year in which students at the college have been enrolled in the AGCO Academy Apprenticeship, with hundreds of agricultural engineers developing their skills with us in that time.

Moreton Morrell's residential provision has received a positive Ofsted report with praise for wrap-around services which provide support to students. This marks the third successive inspection where the college has received a "Good" rating for its residential provision, with the previous inspection being held in February 2020. The college group was judged on the experience it provides to young people, how well they are safeguarded and the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Students and staff from Moreton Morrell College will be showcasing a garden at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show from 21st to 25th May, and will be the only college to put on a display at the show. Eight students from the Level 5 Floristry course will be present across the five days. Additionally, the Gatherum Centre, which works with supported learning students at the college, will be providing seed bombs and Pershore College, which is also part of WCG, will be contributing plants from its nurseries. Our blacksmithing department has also created steel plates in the college forge to secure structures in the installation which comprises a trio of double helices made from willow. We were grateful to receive a grant from the Royal Horticultural Society to support creation of the installation, and look forward to seeing coverage of the garden next week across social media.

Carpentry students from Moreton Morrell attended lambing weekend once again in support of Molly Ollies charity for children and sold toy tractor kits that were then assembled by the children aided by carpentry staff and students. The team have raised over £1000 for the charity. The construction department continues with fantastic work with Moreton Morrell Primary School with various projects which are ongoing and have forged a great partnership. There are also three bricklaying students from Moreton going forward to represent the college in the regional Skillbuild competition being held at Moulton College at the end of May.

The Supported Learning staff and students are preparing for a Spring Show which will be hosted at Moreton Morrell College this year. The event will include student-led stalls and judged competitions and activities such as providing a video/sketch about an independent living skill, and growing a herb planter with a minimum of 5 herbs.

ii. The Villager

Jane Cleeton made the following report:-

The villager continues to be well supported. The March edition nearly didn't happen because the print room staff at WCG were not available & the Editor only found out a few days before it was due to be printed. Fortunately, Councillor Parry was able to suggest a print company locally & reasonable rates. I made a call to Salvo Design & Print Ltd who were able to help, this villager was hand delivered to me a few days later. The editor has not heard from the college since March to let us know if the situation has been resolved. It is for this reason that I ask the PC to consider increasing the grant slightly to

cover the cost of asking salvo Design to print the villager in future. The cost for March was £162.50 for 300 copies, we could reduce this amount, but need to confirm with parish clerk number of properties in mm.

Finally, my Thanks to the PC for the Grant. Huge thanks to Pete Gibbins who edits the villager around his full time work, to Emily Monks for delivering it.

iii. Village Hall

Jane Cleeton made the following report:-

2023 was a sad year for the hall with closure in July. The PC report was condemning, but a later structural report indicated the issues were more maintenance based, with the trees causing some issues. Quotes were being sought, but only one had been received so far . Matters will be progressed.

vi. Moreton Morrell Parochial Church Council

John Moverley read the following report:-

The Church is an integral part of the village and, through our activities in the building itself, or the adjacent facilities, or indeed within the community, we aim to continue to strengthen that role. Just some highlights as examples in the past year have included the Village Remembrance, a service followed by the act of remembrance itself. We were very pleased that so many attended in 2023 – an important time of village coming together to remember those who gave their lives for our freedom both in the world wars and conflict subsequently. Just before Christmas we had an extremely well-attended event of Carol Singing in the church. It was meant to be in the churchyard but the weather intervened. We also had a highly successful candle lit Carol Service. We are also delighted to host services from our school – the strength of that link is very important. Aside from these mentioned, there have been many other activities - the holding of successful craft fairs in the church and the Room, quiz nights, games days and much more. Events such as these are seen as so important. Yes, they provide a very important and needed fund raising role but above all they emphasise the importance of church and community.

I have mentioned the churchyard – a great asset to our village and it is so good to see many take advantage of it as a place to rest and take time out from our challenging world. We thank the Parish Council for their support towards its maintenance. It is so much valued and vital. Thank you. Exciting plans lie ahead in developing part of the unconsecrated land in the church yard into a community space and wildlife area. We thank the Parish Council for their wholehearted support and funding. I believe it can act as a real asset bringing church, school, college and community closer together.

We are without a vicar at present but in the meantime we are really grateful to the Venerable Brian Russell who lives in Stratford. He takes our first Sunday services and is available to help as needed. If anyone has a church related matter which he can help with, please do contact me. And yes, I have returned to the role of churchwarden after our recent annual meeting.

As I so often say, I believe the church to be a vital part of our community whatever your faith or none. Like others managing old buildings, we struggle financially but we have a

great team of volunteers. And finally just a brief plug for our regular Prime Time service held each third Sunday at 10.30. It is fairly short, informal, and participative and led by people from the community. It is open to all and we offer excellent refreshments afterwards,
Thank you again for your continued support.

v. Gardening Club

Eileen Edwards made the following report:-

The Gardening Group continues to go from strength to strength with now nearly 30 paid up members on the books and others attending on an ad hoc basis on the night.

We have increased the annual membership fees to £25 per annum in an effort to become self-sufficient but each meeting normally costs around £125 with speaker fees and the cost of hiring the room, So the £250 grant is very welcome to enable us to continue for another year.

We've had some really interesting and entertaining speakers over the last year and have gone on some excellent garden visits.

Feedback from villagers and those that attend is always very positive and it is a welcome monthly social event.

We have a treasure and a bank account and the parish council is very welcome to check this as required.

vi. Allotments

John Moverley made following report:-

The allotments at Moreton Morrell are very important and I can report that in the current year we have 100% occupation and a waiting list although we are delighted to have welcomed new tenants this year. The introduction of quarter and half plots has promoted much interest and it is good to see such a range of people now involved. As you know, they are managed by the Moreton Morrell Allotment association. The annual rent for the plots as a whole is paid half yearly to the Parish Council out of rents collected from the individual plot holders, each of which enters into contracts of occupation.

Recently sheds on the Brook Lane site were broken into and a number of items stolen. It is sad to report. As we have no CCTV and there were no witnesses, it is unlikely the culprits will be found.

If any member of the Council would like a tour of the allotments, please do get in contact. They are a vital part of our great village.

8. Matters of Interest

None.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.10 pm.