

# PARISH OF RADNAGE

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16<sup>th</sup> MAY 2018 IN RADNAGE VILLAGE HALL AT 8 PM

### **Present:**

Chairman: Mr Robert Nikiel, Vice-Chairman Mrs Alex Ryan, Councillor Mrs Morag Wagstaff and 13 members of the public were in attendance and the minutes were taken by the Parish Clerk: Mrs Linda Freeth.

The meeting began informally with refreshments being available, giving residents the opportunity to meet members of their council.

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies had been received from County Councillor Mr Carl Etholen, District Councillors Shade Adoh and Saeed Saddique and Parish Councillors Mrs Tamsin Addison, Mr Everton Merchant and Mr Peter Turner.

### **2. Welcome and Chairman's report.**

The Parish Council Chairman opened the formal part of the meeting by welcoming everyone present and introducing members of the council. He thanked members of the council for their hard work and welcomed our two new councillors, Mrs Morag Wagstaff and Mr Darren Ungless. Special mention was made of our school, our Church and all the various groups, clubs and associations that all contribute so much to our village. Thank you.

It was explained to all present that the Parish Council is the first tier of Government, here to represent Radnage, is apolitical, and that being a Parish Councillor is a voluntary and unpaid position that can be very rewarding in trying to make a difference to our community. The Parish Council interfaces with all other departments to guide, manage and make decisions, assisted by volunteers and residents.

Councillor Nikiel went on to say:

"We have had a very busy year and have completed many projects with others still being planned and ongoing – such as improvements to the playground, speeding control and safety and we are always challenged on budgets. We are pleased to have two new councillors joining us this month. It has sometimes been a challenge to find enough council members to keep us going. If this happens, there is the possibility that the Parish Council could be placed under the District Council which would not represent our community as well as a Parish Council can.

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Sue Jones and Graham Wass who have resigned as councillors during this year but whose contributions have been so much appreciated.

Elizabeth and Phil have offered to keep the bus shelters and notice boards in good condition and to continue the unenviable job of emptying the dog poo bins amongst many other contributions of their time and labour. We thank them sincerely as well as all other members of the community who help to keep the village clean and in good repair – your efforts are very much appreciated!

A big thank you to Carol Eden for running the bookings and ensuring the hall is in a welcoming condition for each hirer. She also does the weekly fire alarm checks and controls the waste bins collections to ensure the best for our hirers.

The hall is enjoyed by a variety of hirers, clubs and associations and hosts many events. The playing fields are now used by Radnage Raiders FC with the focus on individual and team development, encouraging the young players to be the very best they can be."

### **3. Acceptance of the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

The minutes of the APM meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2017 were approved as proposed by Cllr Ryan, seconded by Cllr Wagstaff and agreed by all as a true and accurate record. The Chairman signed and dated the minutes.

#### **4. Reports from Councillors**

**Cllr Alex Ryan** – Vice chairman and is responsible for the open space / playground area and RoSPA safety reports, dealing with all matters between our school and the Parish Council and acting as the School & Parish Interface.

Monthly inspections are carried out to ensure safety of equipment for all children and public liability insurance validity and planning is ongoing to install new RoSPA compliant playground equipment whilst making the best use of the funds available. There has been a delay in the progress of this due to a lengthy funding plan falling through. It is however great to be able to announce that an order has now been placed for a Basket Swing and a Spinner! Which will hopefully be well received by the children and well used by the community and visitors and go some way towards the aim of linking the two, somewhat separate, areas of the playground.

Additional funding will be sought via application to the Big Lottery initiative with a 'Friends of Radnage Village Hall' project. This would be to purchase new equipment with some older children / teenage focused activities.

**Cllr Tamsin Addison** – oversees any landscaping and improvement projects around the outside of the village hall to make the most of the budget available with continued improvements. Planters have now been successfully installed by the front door, making a lovely impression for visitors.

The provision of a defibrillator is also planned with some funds already secured and further grants and financial support being finalised, which is much appreciated in contributing towards our projects to improve community facilities. A course will be provided for those who wish to learn emergency life saving skills and how to use a defibrillator.

**Cllr Peter Turner** – continues the responsibility for the maintenance of the Village Hall and War Memorial.

Cllr Turner provided this report:

"Our village hall has continued this last year to provide a super venue for regular and one-off hirers. Whether it be Circuit Training, Pilates, and Karate or Lunch Club, WI, and Toddlers Group, our regular hirers make great use of our hall. We are also pleased to be a venue for parties, celebrations and charity fund raising events such as Rugged Radnage and Garden Sunday. We were very pleased to be approached by Teacups and Tandems who have been making regular use of a previously underutilised professional kitchen area. Routine maintenance such as boiler service and fire alarm service as well as non routine fixes such as replacing leaky urinal waste pipes, all happen to ensure our hall remains fit for purpose.

Our village war memorial has been maintained through the regular mowing of the grass and also through the rebuilding of the brick pillar and removal of the unsightly tree stumps."

My main task for this year is to coordinate the establishment of an improved internet presence for the Parish Council and village hall."

**Cllr Everton Merchant** – oversees our tree maintenance programme and any repair to the bus shelters.

"The Parish Council has responsibility for the Bus shelters around the village which have become overgrown with ivy which threaten the integrity of the brickwork and roofing. Works to rectify this have now been completed.

There are also ongoing plans to establish an improved web presence for the Parish Council and village hall and communications within the village which is being undertaken by a group headed up by a resident and ex-parish councillor."

**Cllr Robert Nikiel** – has been looking after our Green Spaces, Common Land and Allotments, as well as the Village Hall.

"Radnage has a number of areas of common land and green spaces which need to be kept tidy, which includes the Playing fields surrounding the Village Hall and the Children's Playground. The Parish Council is responsible for the upkeep of these areas and we have a contract with a local supplier for regular grass cutting and hedge trimming. Periodically, larger maintenance works are

needed and these are dealt with as individual jobs as required - examples would be tree maintenance or pond clearance.

We also have 4 allotment sites dotted around the village, these being at Spriggs Alley, Bennett End, Chapel (Common Road) and City (Green Lane) which will be open as part of Garden Sunday on June 10th. We still have spare allotments and if anyone is interested in taking up a plot, or even a half or quarter plot, please contact me.

We also have a number of areas rented out for grazing purposes, in particular fields behind our allotment sites at Chapel and City. It is the responsibility of the renters to keep these in good repair and I am happy to report that our tenants are keeping these fields in excellent condition.

We have once again entered the Buckinghamshire Best Kept Village competition in which we received a Certificate of Merit in 2017 with some very encouraging comments."

Cllr Robert Nikiel continues:

"Besides the activities already mentioned, an important element of the Parish Council is to review and comment on planning applications in the Parish and have done so on over 30 applications received. There have been challenges in the year and areas that need our attention. One such thing is to consider reconciling the electric at the village hall which has been 'added to' as the building has evolved over the years. There have been incidences of power outages and this situation is currently being addressed.

Other areas under our care:

- War Memorial – now Grade II Listed
- Parish Burial Ground

We would like to thank our County Councillor, Carl Etholen and District Councillors Shade and Saeed for their helpful support and enthusiasm during the year."

## **5. Financial Report**

The Chairman asked the Clerk to give a financial report:

As the Responsible Financial Officer the Clerk gave a financial overview from the previous year.

For the last financial year Radnage Parish Council had a budgeted income of approximately £47K - a little higher than the previous year due to a small increase in Precept (5%) and anticipated increase in Village Hall bookings.

The actual income was very slightly higher than anticipated (by £600) not actually due to additional Village Hall hire (which was actually less than expected), but from donations (playground) / grants and unbudgeted income from burial ground fees.

The accounts have undergone the annual Internal Audit and the paperwork is currently being prepared for the External Audit.

All of the accounts documentation will be available via Radnage.net once approved.

Expenditure was below the budgeted target of £43,255 at £34,020.

- Finalising the landscaping project: patio, posts, access slope and handrail, planters;
- Works to the playing field boundary;
- Repairs and remedial works to the bus shelters;
- Essential tree work – Limes, Silver Birch and Walnut tree in Radnage Common Road;
- Larger planned projects have carried forward into 2018-19 and include the provision of an MVAS, defibrillators and new playground equipment.
- Administration, repair and maintenance costs were less than expected across all areas.

At year end the bank balances held were:

Treasurers Account    £24,417.82  
Business Account        £31,057.40 representing £15.52 received in interest.

Account budgeting needs to reflect the future changes and devolving of power from central government and the increase in financial burden that it will place upon us.

The Plan is to modernise local government with replacement of the five existing councils across Buckinghamshire by one of two proposals - a single unitary council (as proposed by Bucks CC) and for two unitary councils (as proposed by the District Councils). Council assets and services (powers and spending) are likely to be devolved to town and parish councils where appropriate and where it makes sense to do so. The full implications of this is not yet known but we must be prepared for whatever is coming.

## **6. Reports from our local Groups, Associations and Friends.**

There are various clubs and associations within the village such as the WI, St. Mary's Church PCC, GLRA, the Radnage Charity, Radnage Raiders and the British Legion to name but a few, as well as pub restaurants, farms and businesses large & small.

The Chairman opened the meeting to those present.

**The GLRA** was represented and it was explained that the lane was once a farm track and when the road was created the association was formed. It is an 'unadopted' road that the GLRA is responsible for. An amount is set each year as a subscription which is payable by each household or frontage annually. The GLRA looks after the welfare of the residents in many ways – in winter if shopping is required, gritting of the lane, etc.

The humps recently needed re-painting which was carried out by volunteer residents. It is noted that there are no drains on the lane and so residents all need to look after their front boundary / verges. In association with the Parish Council a disaster emergency plan is created in line with that prepared by RPC. A safety mirror has been installed opposite the commercial yard site at the junction with City Road allowing for the safe entry / exit of vehicles. The fire hydrants are brightly marked. A welcome letter will be sent to any new resident with the St. Mary's Church PCC Welcome booklet, and finally all residents will be asked to 'stay in touch' as part of the new GDPR data protection law. Thank you.

**David Salisbury of Radnage Raiders FC** explained that the club began in March 2016 with 4 children to provide training sessions with qualified coaches in the best possible environment whilst having fun. The club now has 40 children in 2 Teams covering the U6s, U7s, U10s and U11s. The club currently receives no funding, which is an issue for them, and yet manages to keep the cost per child for the season at £80. Any child that would be prevented from joining the club due to the family having any financial difficulty would be encouraged to attend without charge – the club simply wants kids to play football! The club soon intend to mark out football pitches on the village hall grounds. The 5 year ambition is for the club to become a Community Trust Club, have an adult team and a BOBi (Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Inclusive) League Team to provide regular footballing opportunities for children and adults, across Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire who have physical and learning difficulties.

An offer is made to re-stain the village Noticeboards as a contribution to the village and also to donate the defibrillator device that they have, to be installed within a wall-mounted case, for the benefit of the village residents and visitors, and used by the club when at training sessions. Many thanks are extended to David.

## **7. Any other business.**

**Dog Fouling** - There is an ongoing problem with dog owners not picking up after their dogs, especially within the village hall grounds which has an impact on other users, especially the Radnage Raiders FC. This matter will be further discussed at the next meeting of the Parish Council and a notice will be included in the next edition of Contact. It is suggested that a supply of bags be provided on the bins and additional signage be displayed.

**Thank You's** – There are many individuals, associations and businesses that offer their time, assistance and support to the Parish Council for which we are extremely grateful. There are those who regularly pick up litter, empty the dog poo bins, tend the village hall planters, assist with insurance advice and offer consultancy, tend to the noticeboards and bus shelters keeping them clear and tidy, and many more unsung helpers. We thank all of those people who do so much.

**Radnage Charity** – This has been in existence in Radnage for more than 500 years and is a landowner of 25 acres in the village which is tenanted. The Charity gives £8-10k annually to 3 main areas of our community – the Church, School and the ‘Poors’ branch, for the benefit of villagers who are in need, hardship or distress, and perhaps donating to other causes within the village. The educational branch may also support such endeavours as participants in the Duke of Edinburgh Awards for example.

## **8. Discussion and Questions.**

The Chairman opened the meeting to all present, inviting comments and discussion.

### **a. Village Hall rental.**

The way in which local residents are charged for village hall bookings was mentioned. It was explained that all residents with a local address enjoy the benefit of a reduced rate and that any school event is now charged directly to the school office to avoid any confusion with the appointed organiser.

### **b. Recreation Ground.**

It was suggested that perhaps the recreation ground could be used by the children of Radnage School for their Sports Day and as an athletics track. This is thought to be a great idea and Cllr Ryan will discuss this with school, and with Radnage Raiders FC to see if the white ground markings required could be done at the same time as the football pitches.

### **c. Not the Parish Council.**

It was clarified that Bucks County Council deal with the roads (potholes etc) footpaths, rights of way and fly tipping. Planning decisions, noise/nuisance, and the dog warden are all dealt with by Wycombe District Council. Details, including a ‘cut out and keep’ section of contact details has recently been included in Contact. The Parish Clerk will always be pleased to assist in finding the correct department if any difficulties are experienced.

### **d. Anti-social behaviour.**

There have been some reported incidences of crime locally in recent weeks. A caravan was stolen from the front garden of a local property by removing the front fence.

Speeding vehicles and quad bikes are becoming a problem on Radnage Common Road and Green Lane and creating a danger for other road users, especially children. Complaints have been made and challenges made. Redesignation of the speed restriction will also be investigated. Please stay vigilant and report any concerns to the relevant authority.

Speeding vehicles in and around our village is a major concern and an MVAS device has now been secured in an attempt to tackle this increasing problem. It will be positioned across 4 primary sites in the coming weeks.

It is suggested that the school children might create posters to display around the village to slow drivers down.

### **e. New signage at Mudds Bank.**

The newly erected post with spikes was queried. It is thought to be environmental and related to air pollution. It is noted that the works carried out at the junction with the A40 and the large new signs were funded by Highways England to improve the road from Stokenchurch to West Wycombe due to the number of collisions, especially at this junction.

A vote of thanks was proposed from the public gallery and echoed by all those present, with a round of applause!, for the work of the Chairman, members of the Parish Council and all of the eager volunteers, during the past year.

Minutes of this meeting will be considered for approval at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

The meeting concluded at 21:45 hours and was followed by more informal discussions while refreshments continued to be offered.

**Chairman's Signature:**

R. Nikiel

**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> June 2018