

Marlon Parish Council
Clerk: Andrew Simpson
The Spinney, School Lane
Email: marlon.clerk@gmail.com

Meeting of the Parish Council held at
7.30 Tuesday 16th March 2021 via Zoom.

Present: John Ryland (JR)(Chair), Barry Nolan (BN), Dick Schwendener (DS), David McGowan (DM), Sue Webborn (SW), Sue Platt (SP)

In Attendance: Andrew Simpson(AS)(Clerk)

Apologies: Lesley Smetham, Julia Short, Lucy Nixon.

1. Parishioners Attendance;
 - a. None
2. Minutes of previous meeting:
 - a. The minutes of the meeting held on 15th December 2020 and as modified were accepted and signed.
3. Footpaths Report:
 - a. JR has spoken to and met with Andy Simpson from CE to discuss funding opportunities for the village maintenance but no funds are currently available. JR asked for improvements to the footpaths to be undertaken in the next financial year, notably to:
 - i. Weedkill paths.
 - ii. Clear mud and debris from paths (not before mid April)
 - b. JR asked for any other issues that might be raised with CE to be notified to him.
 - c. Signs around village; see later.
4. PCSO Report:
 - a. AS summarised the PCSO incident reports highlighting some significant incidents.
 - b. Action on speed limit; JR has spoken to Robin Johnson from Cheshire Police who confirmed that despite our earlier understanding about the reduction of speed limit south bound on the A34 that there is no plan to implement this in the foreseeable future.
 - i. Robin Johnson was considering how to improve visibility round the village and commented on the pub sign on the verge and the a-boards opposite as being a distraction to traffic.
 - ii. Suggested that we might report where we felt the road surface might be improved.
 - c. There was general disappointment to the variance between the PCSO and Traffic report on the speed limit.
 - d. BN reported that he had spoken to Peaks and Plains about the possibility of security cameras being installed in Oak Close but they said they would not initiate this themselves but would consider improving security around the corner cottage garden.
 - e. Traffic mirror outside school; see later.
5. Planning Applications:

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- a. Marlon Meadows driving range application remains pending, no decision date shows but may be affected by the carparking issue. Hedgerow removal decision enforcement decision made but has yet to be notified to the Golf Club.
 - b. Richard Campey application is waiting for a decision.
 - c. Brickyard Farm (21/1233M) there are no objections to and CE planning have been notified.
 - d. Barlows Agri:
 - i. AS has notified CE planning enforcement team about the possible infringement re Caravan storage.
 - ii. AS has notified CE planning enforcement team about the possible infringement of the landscaping provision.
 - iii. AS has notified CE planning enforcement team of the possible infringement re Village Store.
6. Marlon Neighbourhood Development Plan:
- a. JR on behalf of the council congratulated the team on a job well done.
 - b. DS reported that the Examiner had accepted the new plan subject to four relatively minor changes except that the change of the word 'should' to 'shall' in a number of Policies reinforcing their protection particularly in respect of the paddock and spinney (PE3).
 - c. CE will implement the changes.
 - d. The report will now go forward without a further referendum.
 - e. JR reported that he understood that Marlon was one of the first parishes to complete the update and DM suggested a comment in the Congleton Chronicle would be appropriate.
7. Environmental Plan:
- a. JR reported that some trees and hedge whips had been planted round the village in the last few weeks. A £150 contribution to canes and spirals was approved.
 - b. The brook is being monitored for continuing improvements, with an increase in flies being a good indicator of healthy water.
 - c. David Taylor has an excellent hide which is worth visiting.
 - d. JR thanked J Percival for his continued work on these issues.
8. Marlon School Liaison:
- a. The school were enthusiastic supporter of the plan to erect a mirror to improve visibility at Oak Lane and agreed to keep it well maintained. Mathew Burton (Landowner) and Goodfellow (tenant) of the field had agreed to the insertion of a post to support the mirror.
 - b. JR will now proceed with obtaining a mirror (estimated at less than £100) and get a post inserted by a local person.
 - c. JR reported that Footprints Nursery was very successful, was thinking of expansion plans and that he had asked them to consider car parking provision off street as part of this expansion.
9. Village Maintenance:
- a. A mowing regime for the area seeded with wildflowers has been noted by CE and will be agreed over the coming weeks between Andy Simpson (CE) and JR.

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- b. Road signs; £1800 was the estimated cost last time and is still valid for the scheme proposed by DM. DS has put forward an alternative simpler scheme and DM would require some feed back, which he has asked for, on his original proposal before a decision is made. The DM scheme was put to the vote and accepted unanimously.
 - c. JR thanked those involved for organising the Xmas tree lights.
 - d. JR reported that the re-wilding should start to show in the next few weeks; the scheme is to re-flag the circle as an oval to allow extra space for seats and he will peg out the area for comment. He would also like a new sign board similar to that mounted outside the Spinney (suggest www.greenbarnes.co.uk) A quote will be required.
 - e. BN asked on behalf of a neighbour why one of the 'Best Kept Village' signs had been moved from the Spinney to the Green, memories were vague but it was thought to have been part of the Millennium works, 21 years ago.
 - f. JR proposed repainting the seats an table in the Spinney, BN suggested he would spray them first with a fungicide to minimise algae growth and then recommended Cuprinol Ducksback as the finish coat. £50.00 was set as a proposed budget.
 - g. Litter Pick; would LN organise for next month some time.
 - h. BN has approached Four Oaks for new plants using the same planting list as last year, budget as last year with some small increases (10%?).
 - i. SP updated the current status of the 'Welcome Pack'. JR suggested an allowance for printing but was urged to consider how many a year might be required (2 or 3) and that printing each one on demand was cheapest option; BM has a good laser printer that would suffice. DM suggested the welcome pack could include a reference with link to the Neighbourhood Plan.
10. Highways:
- a. JR will follow up with Andy Simpson (CE) re the grit bin, and refilling it before next winter.
 - b. Following a letter from Rick Kellet JR was pleased to report that the grid at the end of Bunce Lane had been cleared. Surface patching on Davenport Lane and Cocksmiss lane has also been completed.
11. Website:
- a. Nothing to report.
12. Finance:
- a. AS was asked to update council on the current accounts position and to offer a forecast for the year and a draft budget for 21/22.
 - b. AS will submit an application for fees as soon as possible, for approval before 5th April (tax year end and financial year end)
13. Chairman:
- a. JR raised the question of the proposed boundary changes affecting Eaton. The background to the proposal was discussed. There were three proposals on the table for discussion at District level;
 - i. Merge Eaton with N.Rode
 - ii. Merge Eaton with Marlon
 - iii. Leave Eaton as a smaller but individual parish, excluding the new housing developments.

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- b. DS questioned the merit of changing our area to incorporate Eaton. BN asked what we might gain by merging. DS and DM raised the issue of the Neighbourhood Plan, which they did not want abandoning because of boundary changes. JR felt Marlon was a distinctive parish that should not be disturbed. JR pointed out that an enlarged parish would have some benefits, including more influence in the council on issues such as Highways and that there were possible social benefits from an enlarged group.
- c. AS was asked to consult with LN after the meeting to get her view points; she has responded as follows:
 - i. LN points out that the reduced electorate in Eaton would be 192, whereas Marlon currently stands at 194, so that the question of viability does not stand up.
 - ii. LN would object to the merger with Marlon, sees few merits in it, feels it a move by Congleton to justify its own desire to include more of the new developments as its own.
- d. DM suggested we should resist any boundary changes but should have a list of key points to counter any such proposal. He asked that a letter or email be composed summarising the objections to send CE.

14. AOB:

- a. Thanks to LN for setting up the web connections
- b. Thanks to BN and his wife for opening and closing the Church.

15. Dates of next meeting:

- a. There would be no Village meeting, but we might consider a way to include the village in a discussion about activities around the time of the Wakes.
- b. Dates:
 - i. 17th May 2021
 - ii. 26th July 2021
 - iii. 27th September 2021
 - iv. 13th December 2021

Meeting closed at 21:00