

NEEN SAVAGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 10th May 2018 at Neen Savage Parish Hall commencing at 7.30pm.

Chairman: Cllr Arthur Ratcliff.

Clerk: Mrs D McBride.

There were 32 people present.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Cllr A Ratcliff welcomed everybody to the Annual Parish Meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr J Del Mar, Cllr M Tomkinson, Mr C Whitworth and Mrs J Vanderhook.

3. Approve Minutes of last Annual Parish Meeting held on 31st May 2017

It was confirmed that Mrs C Ratcliff gave the Parish Hall report, not Cllr A Vanderhook. Subject to this amendment the Minutes were proposed by Cllr A Vanderhook and seconded by Cllr S Del Mar and approved as being a true record.

4. Police Update and introduction to We Don't Buy Crime and SmartWater

Mr M Simpson gave a brief introduction to the We Don't Buy Crime (WDBC) project and the success of using SmartWater to protect property. 38 villages have signed up to the project and seen an 85% reduction in theft. SmartWater has successfully tendered for We Don't Buy Crime again although there are other products on the market. WDBC is sponsored by the Police and Crime Commissioner. SmartWater was originally £68 per household pack but can now be purchased by parish councils for £8.90 per pack. It is expected that a minimum of 70% of households will take up SmartWater in order for the project to be effective and the police will provide free signage in support of our efforts. Mr Simpson explained how to apply SmartWater. The registration forms are logged with SmartWater who actively work with the police. If any items of property are lost or stolen and subsequently found they are scanned for SmartWater and can be returned to their rightful owner. SmartWater cannot be removed and using the signage across the whole parish can be a major deterrent to prospective thieves. Cllr Ratcliff thanked Mr Simpson and summed up by confirming that the Parish Council is in favour of going ahead with SmartWater.

5. Parish Council Report

Cllr A Ratcliff reported on a busy 12 months. The first few months had not been easy with all new Councillors, no Clerk and paperwork issues. The temporary Clerk, Mr Roberts, had helped get Council through. A new Clerk, Mrs McBride, was appointed in July and Council has held regular meetings on the 4th Wednesday of each month, except August. The last Council were unwilling to hand over the website so we have had a new one built and went on-line in October. We received a grant through the Transparency Code for this and for new computer equipment. The website is still a work in progress as we upload Agendas, Minutes and other information. Please see www.neensavageparishcouncil.org.uk Thanks to Cllr Sales for also running the Council's Facebook page. Please ask if you would like anything on the website or Facebook page going forward. There were issues with the Annual Return, which was eventually found and submitted to the External Auditor. Everything was fine apart from the reserves were too high, hence we are able to finance SmartWater if the community is keen. The Parish Council is hoping to start this project soon with an open event at the Parish Hall.

The Parish Council intend moving the BT Phone Box at Barbrook due to poor accessibility. Its condition needs to be assessed and then review its future use. It is an important historical item and could perhaps be relocated at Six Ashes or the Parish Hall grounds for a tourist information/book swap facility. Mrs Ratcliff asked for a show of hands in support of these proposals – there was majority support.

NEEN SAVAGE PARISH COUNCIL

Cllr Ratcliff confirmed that the Parish Council is trying to get broadband installed into the Parish Hall and provide a fixed projector and screen to aid meetings – all these facilities would be available for other hirers to use. Thanks to Mr & Mrs Hannaford for donating a digital projector to the Parish Council.

Council is keen to get involved with the Lengthsman Scheme again which is currently under review by Shropshire Council. New proposals are that each parish has to match-fund all highway maintenance carried out. This would include litter-picking which we already successfully undertake. Two litter picks were carried out during the year with 35 bags of rubbish picked. Council has purchased our own equipment which is kept at the Parish Hall for this work. Mr Butterworth had found 19 tyres and bale wrap amongst other items on the road verges. This is bad for the environment and can get in the river so we need to clean up regularly. Thanks to all who help keep the parish tidy and the Parish Council for leading this work. There was a discussion regarding the litter bins at Six Ashes and the Ford which do not seem to be emptied on a regular basis. Some opinion was expressed on whether taking all bins away would encourage people to take their litter home or just provide larger bins which must be emptied regularly. The bench at Six Ashes is broken and Council will look into repairing or replacing it.

The state of the Highways is of great concern. The Clerk reports issues but everyone is urged to report pot holes directly to Shropshire Council as well.

The new Data Protection regulations are coming into force later this month. A lot of work has been done by Cllr Vanderhook and the Clerk auditing all documents, clearing out old paperwork and some will be sent to County Archives. Councillors will be using Council specific email addresses going forward and will be implementing new policies in line with the regulations.

Cllr Ratcliff thanked both Clerks, all the Councillors especially Cllr Hinton and Mr Butterworth for organizing the Parish Walk which raised £64 towards Rupert's Revenge, Cllr Sales for her work with the website and Facebook and Cllr Vanderhook for everything he has helped with during this transition period. There was a round of applause from the public.

6. History Society Report

Mr R Hodge, Chair of the History Society spoke about the work of the group who meet twice a month in Neen Savage. The Society receive enquiries from all over the world and have produces journals – the Cleobury Chronicles.

History is a wide area, not just the biographies of men but covers local, financial, social and family information. It is important to check for facts to build up a picture of what life was like in previous years. Study has found that the locality where you grow up shapes you and future generations.

There are few famous people from this area ie Bessie Blount and William Langland. There are lots of records in the UK many dating back to 1100AD. For example, from Census records, in Victorian times, people lived longer than average, younger people moved away and many came back when older yet the population numbers stayed the same. The History Society has also looked at rates of re-marriage, high illegitimacy rates and how people spread out from this area. Whilst we are close to Ironbridge and Birmingham, questions have been raised why there is little evidence of industry in this area, yet Cleobury used to be famed for iron and wooden bowls (iron bowl found in St Laurence's, Ludlow). After 1820 there was huge change in the area, farming struggled but Trades had quadrupled by the 1851 Census.

7. Neen Savage Parochial Church Council Report

Cllr Mrs S Del Mar provided a report on the activities of the Parochial Church Council over the year since the last Annual Meeting. There had been five funerals, three baptisms, one wedding, one blessing and one renewal of vows. Revds. Justin Parker and Richard Mutter have moved on and we welcome Sue Barrett to our parish. There are three services each month plus special services including a Pet Service. It is hoped to hold more including Epiphany and on 20th May an Ecumenical Service with other churches. Thanks to Mr J Haywood and everyone on the PCC for all their work; Mr D Pead for cutting the grass; the Parish Council for their grant towards churchyard maintenance; Mr J Del Mar for keeping the lock in order; Mr C Kippan and Mr P Engleheart for playing the organ, everyone for keeping the church clean and helping with the flower rota.

NEEN SAVAGE PARISH COUNCIL

8. Neen Savage Parish Hall Committee Report

Mrs C Ratcliff reported on a good year; the highlight being the annual fete and scarecrow convention where there was also a collection of old vehicles on display. The recent bingo evening was a 'full house' and will be repeated. The monthly whist drives are well supported and make a bit of money.

Increased roof installation has made a big difference and the hall is more comfortable. There are problems with the outside back wall and grants are being sought to remedy this. The Hall Committee are pleased to welcome the Parish Council back and support the proposals for broadband.

Thanks to all committee members. Mrs J Hannaford and Mrs A Flowers have left the Committee and Mrs S Dodd, Mr M Hurley and Mrs R Haines have joined. Thanks to Mr Ratcliff for cutting the grass.

The Committee will shortly have new recycling bins available so people are encouraged to separate their waste. This year's Fete is on 30th June and the theme for Scarecrows will be recycling. A big project next year will be to hold a Culture Event to celebrate Neen Savage. Ideas are being sought from the community for their thoughts on what they would like to see ie displays of music, art, photography, walks, farming history.

9. Neen Savage Women's Institute Report

Mrs C Evans gave apologies for Mrs S Dodd and read the following report:

The past 12 months have been very successful for our WI and we now have 21 members. Everyone has appreciated the new heating system and members are not in a rush to get home to warm up at the end of a meeting!

Memorable moments, excellent speakers and visits out made our meetings really entertaining, informative and enjoyable, with talks covering running a smallholding, crime solving and needle felting on the agenda.

We took part in the scarecrow day for the first time, Betty becoming an honorary member for several meetings and hope to participate again this year.

One new initiative this year was to change how we use our bursary account. Instead of using it to subsidize one member's trip to Denman House - the WI college, we chose to benefit all our members by subsidizing a day for us all at Westhope college on an enameling course. As fundraising allows, we hope to repeat this in the future. It was a very enjoyable occasion.

Our main fundraiser this year will be a cheese and wine evening at the home of one of our members, Jayne Leach, raising money for WI funds and the newly formed Stroke Support Group in Cleobury. Look out for posters and please come along and support us. Last year, after an inspiring talk from Ailie Hill we chose Pricklebums Hedgehog Rescue in Ludlow as our charity for 2018 and we fundraise for them at our meetings throughout the year.

Every year Shropshire Federation of WIs have 4 seasonal rambles. We applied to host one and have been given the Spring Ramble which is being held this Saturday. With the help of CMFA we have organized two walks and will be providing lunch/tea for approximately 75 WI members from throughout Shropshire. This is a great opportunity to showcase our beautiful parish and help to put Neen Savage WI on the WI map, as we can feel a little left out in our corner of the county. It will also be a boost to our funds and Pricklebums.

It is wonderful that 2 out of the most recent 3 new members have come from the parish, hopefully we can encourage some more to join, or at least visit us as guests at our meetings. £4 for a speaker, a raffle ticket and a light supper is nowadays great value for money. Read all about our activities in the Vital Link!

10. Edwards & Hinckesman Foundation Charity Report

Mr Whitworth being unable to be present had sent a written report. The Trustees met in August 2017 to interview applicants for awards and review the business of the Charity. Grants totaling £2,000 were made to four young people of the Parish, all being in tertiary education. Investment income up to the year end March 2018 was £2,890 and non-recurrent donations had amounted to £192. The Trustees would like to thank the Parish Hall Committee and all those who supported the Annual Scarecrow Fete for helping to raise funds for the Foundation, and to one former beneficiary who kindly made an unsolicited donation. The Trustees are always keen to hear news from any previous beneficiary of the Foundation. Parishioners are encouraged to put them in touch. The deadline for the receipt of applications this year is Wednesday 1st August 2018 with interviews of applicants being held on Thursday 30th August 2018.

NEEN SAVAGE PARISH COUNCIL

11. Unitary Councillors' Annual Reports

Cllr Madge Shingleton reported on another busy changeable year following Elections in May and gave an update on the Economy, Highways, Schools, Public Transport, Health, Housing and the Cleobury Youth Partnership – full written report attached with these Minutes.

Cllr Gwilym Butler informed the meeting he was happy to be back after five years and also congratulated the Parish Council and asked that people contact him at any time with any issues. Cllr Butler gave an update on Economic Development, Planning and Finance - full written report attached with these Minutes.

Mr Butterworth raised serious concerns regarding the cut in services by Shropshire Council, especially with regard to the state of the highways and felt that people will become disengaged with the Council as they feel really let down. Cllr Butler agreed with the concerns but pointed out that Shropshire Council is only obliged to provide statutory services. They have had a difficult winter of weather to deal with and end-of-contract issues with Ringway. Cllr Shingleton confirmed she has never known the roads to be so bad. Ringway were poor but the new contractor has 40 gangs and new equipment so should provide a better service. Please let Shropshire Council know of any highway issues.

Mr Butterworth raised the issue of the lack of broadband in rural areas; improvement have been promised for years.

Mr & Mrs Butterworth also asked what was happening with the Cleobury sewage treatment plant which was being proposed to be relocated in Neen Savage. Cllr Butler stated Severn Trent have at least two proposals and Cleobury Mortimer Town Council is in discussions over this. There will be public meetings to air concerns when proposals are developed further.

Cllr Shingleton urged people to get involved in the Future Fit consultation for the future of the county hospitals. The consultation is based on proposals put forward by clinicians to provide the best service for people in Shropshire now and for future generations. People have many choices with hospitals but many are actually going to the county hospitals but they are desperately short of consultants and highly skilled roles.

There being no other business, Cllr Ratcliff thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting closed at 9.20pm.

It was agreed at the Parish Meeting (Minute Ref 2019/03) that these minutes are a true record of the meeting, subject to the following corrections:-

Signed.....**Arthur Ratcliff**.....**Chairman** **Date**.....**29th May 2019**.....