

Annual Meeting of Parish Council
22nd May 2019
The Priors Hall, Shuckburgh Road, Priors Marston

In attendance: Cllr. Nick Fulford, Cllr Laura Lucas, Cllr Pete Dunkley, Cllr David Evans, Cllr. John Franklin, District Cllr Nigel Rock and Emma Hooker (Clerk)
Meeting was opened at 7.30pm

1. Election of Chairperson

Cllr Laura Lucas proposed Cllr Fulford to remain the Chair and this was seconded by Cllr John Franklin. Therefore Cllr Fulford is duly elected as Chairperson of Priors Marston Parish Council for the forthcoming 12 months.

2. Apologies: Cllr Bob Stevens

3. Welcome from the Chair

Cllr Nick Fulford welcomed everyone to the meeting and the council warmly welcomed the newly elected District Councillor Nigel Rock to the meeting.

4. Declaration of Interests

No declarations declared. Clerk took receipt of all the Acceptance of Office and Register of Interests from the Councillors to be returned to Stratford DC.

5. Approval of the minutes of the last Annual meeting, held on Thursday 24th May 2018

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair

6. Annual Report of the year 2019

The Clerk presented the village annual report for 2019. This report is available on the website and will be published in the Parish News.

Priors Marston Parish Council consists of the following councilors: -Nick Fulford (Chair), John Franklin, Laura Lucas, David Evans and Pete Dunkley who were elected unopposed in the May 2019 election. There are no vacancies at this time. We thank outgoing Councillors Viv Nind and John Appleton for their commitment to the Village over the years. We also thank Councillor Chris Williams who was our Ward member for many years.

Emma Hooker is the Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.

In the last year the Parish Council has: -

- ✓ Maintained and repaired the playground, including monthly safety checks and an annual independent ROSPA safety inspection.
- ✓ Successfully produced a fit for purpose Parish Plan which has been handed out to all Villagers and is available to view on the village website. A Parish Plan Steering Group of 9 villagers have worked extremely hard over the year supported by the Clerk to develop this Parish Plan. Feedback from villagers has

been excellent. The Plan, which was adopted by SDC in February 2019 is now a material planning consideration and the results help us to develop the village in line with residents wishes.

- ✓ Replaced 5 additional streetlights with new LED technology (9 last year and 7 in the previous year) to comply with current environmental standards bringing the total to 21 new streetlights. The village has 22 streetlights in total and we will continue to replace the old technology.
- ✓ Reviewed and commented on 40 (33 last year) planning applications and attended a number of Stratford District Council (SDC) planning committee meetings. Applications comprised of:-
 - * Tree works – 14 applications
 - * New dwellings – 8 applications
 - * Extensions – 5 applications
 - * Others – 13 (Changes of use, listed building works etc.)
- ✓ Upheld the high standard of maintenance and cleanliness of the village
- ✓ Updated and cleaned various village road signs.
- ✓ Damaged verges repaired by Highways and keep in continual contact with Highways on ways of improving verges and green areas within village
- ✓ Continue to develop a new website which is now fit for purpose and holds all legal documents, agendas and minutes to comply with the Transparency Code.
- ✓ Email distribution list as an effective communication tool
- ✓ Developed an asset register and Maintenance plan
- ✓ Maintained Village Defibrillator

In the coming 12 months we aim to: -

- ✓ Review the condition of village footpaths and rights of way
- ✓ With other village organisations, ensure that the actions set out in the new Parish Plan are suitably actioned
- ✓ Work through the Action list for the Parish Council in the Parish Plan
- ✓ Ensure that the maintenance plan for all village assets is adhered to
- ✓ Continually update the village website and Facebook page
- ✓ Provide regular updates on the village notice board and in The Parish News as well as the new email list

If you have any matters you wish to raise please contact Emma Hooker the Parish Clerk
emma@priorsmarston.org or telephone: 01327 263788

Priors Marston Parish Council

Cllr John Franklin spoke on behalf of Richard Saddler, the Chair of the Village Plan steering group.

Richard wished to thank the Steering Group for their hard work in getting the plan off the ground. Special thanks to Cllr Fulford and Natalie Wallis for all their hard work ensuring the quality of the design and printing of the Plan

The finished plan is only the start of the work and can only be used as a fit for purpose tool if everyone remains focused on the actions.

The Clerk will initiate a meeting with the other groups in the village to discuss ways forward of working together to fulfil the actions.

The Council thanked Richard for his leadership of the steering group

7. Accounts for Year Ending 31st March 2019

The Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer presented the accounts for the Parish Council and are attached to the file set of minutes and forms part of them. They are also available on the Parish Council website for inspection.

Cllr Rock stated that Priors Marston were on the Council in the District who do their own litter picking and do not use Stratford to provide this service. The Council said they are happy with the current system and amenity contract held with Mr Brown.

8. Report from District Councillor Nigel Rock

Cllr Rock reported he had attended a Council meeting today and on changes to the Planning Departments. Planning applications are being trialed in a new way, whereby instead of being dealt with on geographic basis they will be allocated on a time basis and be divided into an A and B system. This is a trial and more details will follow in due course.

Cllr Rock had recently attended a HS2 meeting – Mainly road works, which would involve a lot of road closures, which he reported would be a significant amount for the local area.

The Community Forum is being held on the 12th June

Finally, he reported a low carbon hub is being set up for South Warwickshire and a meeting is being held in Napton on 29th June.

Question from public: Regarding the HS2 infrastructure and works, were the recent tree removal near Dallas Burston in Southam to do with HS2 works?

Cllr Rock didn't think this was to do with HS2 and recognized the concerns regarding the wildlife and anti nesting measures being used in particular on land near Wormleighton.

Cllr Rock has been asked by the Council to query with the local wildlife protection officer on the above and report back.

9. Report from County Councillor Bob Stevens (Presented in his absence)

Coventry and Warwickshire are rated as one of the best economic performers in the country. Our economic output has increased from £17.2bn in 2009 to £26bn in 2017

The productivity has also increased by 25% in the same period and employment by 16.5%. No wonder then that people want to live in the county and that developers are having a field day.

Unfortunately as well as having a beneficial effect on our standard of living there is also the spin off of more housing, insufficient number of health facilities and utility provision as well as transport. It is these problems that the County Council has been wrestling with over the past year at the same time as having to find savings as a result of government austerity policies.

The whole of last year has also been overshadowed by Brexit, HS2, and financial restraints. People ask me “What effect does Brexit have on Local government?” Firstly many major projects are funded by European money which will have to be found from other sources this is particularly true of major highway and transport related projects. There is likely to be a shortage of workers to fill jobs in the construction industry, seasonal agricultural employment, Staffing in Care homes and hospitals. Many bills reforming the way councils operate are being held up in Parliament in particular the Adult care provision; the bill for local Government funding and devolving of powers to local authorities including parishes. All this interferes with decision making and long term planning. If relevant I will comment on the euro elections and their implications at the meeting

You may have noticed that there have been a large number of new houses built in and around this part of the District and possibly more to come. These have had a major disruptive effect on our roads and infrastructure and I hope that all presently approved building will be nearing completion by the end of the summer but I cannot foretell any future housing that may be approved by Stratford District in their move to meet their housing target and available land supply.

However I cannot allow a resume of the year to pass without a mention of HS2. The early works contractors are reaching the end of their initial surveys although work is still on going in and around Wormlieghton where trial pits are being dug. They are preparing to carry out further works along the route from Bishop bowls lakes and Ufton in anticipation of the main contract being confirmed. These works will continue into the autumn and, locally, closures are to be expected. WCC highways are trying to link in closures with Water, electricity and other requirements of the housing developers. Final approval and costing of the contract is not expected until the end of this year at the earliest. Their official start date for trains is now early 2027 –a year later than originally planned

As schools vote to become academies so the County councils responsibility for education diminishes. Indeed the council is now only responsible for ensuring that there are sufficient “Good” school places within the county for all children and that there is adequate provision of education for those with Special Educational needs. Southam College also became an academy, (there are only 2 secondary schools in Warwickshire that aren’t) and is part of Stowe Valley MAT They are hoping to have completed a new sports hall by this time next year. Southam College is again

oversubscribed and except for siblings of existing students they are not taking any pupils from out of County.

The County Council is also the Fire Authority and a recent fire service inspection at a revised set of standards found that the fire cover and prevention services were good but that the back office provision should improve. Recently there have been discussions with the West Midlands fire service to combine these services. This includes training and the recent proposals to build a training ground in Southam have been shelved. The police station in Southam has now been sold to a sheltered housing provider and the police are located next to the library in Tithe Lodge. There is now a new, but permanent, police Officer for the area.

Unfortunately the Council tax was increased again this year by 4.9% of which 2% was specifically ring-fenced to looking after the elderly. We are living longer and the cost of care continues to increase. The cost of children in care continues to rise as safeguarding standards are tightened. I am reliably informed that the council finances are in good health and we have sufficient unallocated reserves able to meet any envisaged contingencies. Capital spending is mainly on School expansion to meet the growing number of children and transport related projects, mainly road and more parkway type railway stations.

So, what of the year ahead in the village. I will continue to support measures that improve traffic speeds around the village; and ensure that the village gets its entitlement to developer money where applicable. The s106 system and its successor CILs are not conducive to fulfilling all the needs. This is a great village to live in and I congratulate your parish council on the way they have supported the village over the past 4 years and I wish the new Council every success over the next 4 years.

10. Parish Council Meetings 2019/2020 – 7.30pm – Village Hall

Tuesday 9th July 2019
Tuesday 10th September 2019
Tuesday 12th November 2019
Tuesday 14th January 2020
Tuesday 10th March 2020
Tuesday 12th May 2020
Tuesday 14th July 2020
Tuesday 8th September 2020
Tuesday 10th November 2020

The meeting was closed at 8.10pm