

## **Northmoor Parish Council**

**Parish Council Meeting**  
**Wednesday 13 November 2019**  
**Northmoor Village Hall**

### **Parish Council Members Present**

Dr G Shelton - Chairman  
 Dr M Sears  
 Mrs S Woolford  
 Mr P Winder  
 Mr M Ryan (Clerk)

**Apologies.** Parish Councillor Bella Adams and District Councillors Hilary Fenton and Steve Good.

### **Public Present**

County Councillor Charles Mathew and parishioners Mr Pat Hall, Michael Druce, Soraya Wooller and Valerie Ryan.

**Declarations of Interest.** There were no declarations of interest.

### **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on the 9 October 2019 had been previously circulated to Parish Councillors. The Minutes were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### **Matters Arising.**

There were no matters arising not covered in the Agenda.

### **Item 4/5 Reports from Councillors and Matters Parishioners wish to raise.**

Parishioner Soraya Wooller came to speak about Northmoor Environment Support Team (NEST) and the recent problems of sewage disposal and its contaminating effects on the Windrush and associated waterways.

**NEST**, the group was started in the summer. Their early initiative was to get Scoop Zero Waste to have a stall at the monthly village market. They have not been able to come for a few months but hope to restart in January.

They wish to promote residents changing to renewable energy suppliers. The initial uptake has been slow but they will continue to promote this idea.

They wish to have a tree-planting day in March, and are concerned about Ash dieback

A summary of her talk is as follows: -

#### **The Windrush is dying.**

Taking part in local citizen science projects over the last few years has led Soraya to be very concerned about the health of Northmoor Brook and the Windrush. She has seen rapid visual changes such as increasing amounts of silt, fewer and fewer sightings of fish and even a recent drop in the number of invasive crayfish, as well as

high phosphate and nitrate levels. This has led her to join WASP - Windrush Against Sewage Pollution.

#### **What are WASP's objectives?**

- To stop raw sewage being released into the River Windrush and shut down the combined sewage overflows (CSOs)
- To press for change of sewage management practices and regulation - the authorities must improve the standards of effluent entering UK waterways
- To bring the river back to health and achieve blue flag status for bathing

#### **Who are WASP?**

WASP are engaging with water companies, OFWAT and all levels of government, as well as local organisations such as LWVP and BBOWT, communities and schools. They have local volunteers with eyes and ears on the River and are conducting a range of activities to get a true picture of what is unfolding along the 35 mile span of the Windrush with a dedicated network of citizen and professional scientists.

WASP wants to work with the head of Thames Water to close down the CSOs on the Windrush and stop the pollution. The infrastructure is outdated, not fit for purpose, expensive to maintain and not ready to deal with the immediate pressures of population growth, development and climate change.

#### **What can the local community do?**

They can write to Thames Water and local political representatives. They can get involved in WASP's campaign - please see

<https://www.windrushwasp.org> for more details. WASP are also collecting memories and observations of the River and local waterways so please do share any stories and pictures of the river and Northmoor Brook in healthier times.

#### **Questions for discussion.**

- Is anyone monitoring how often the tankers come to the Northmoor Pumping Stations?
- Thoughts on the creaking infrastructure. A Thames Water customer service agent recently said that the 'sewers are not designed for heavy rain'. Is Thames Water ready for the combined pressures of increased local development and climate change? What are we witnessing in our own community?
- Can we make a coordinated response to Thames Water when issues arise and pumping is needed and also to lobby for improvements to the sewage network?

Soraya would be very happy to work with the Northmoor Parish Council on these issues and to arrange regular updates from WASP.

Parish Councillor Peter Winder asked whether the Parish Council asked for the development at Bints Yard to have their sewage processed through septic tank. *Clerk to report at next meeting.* Peter also was a little sceptical about energy supplier Bulb, were they truly providing energy from renewable sources.

Michael Druce recounted his experiences with Thames Water and the installation they placed in his garden. Michael believed NEST would need some financial help and suggested the Northmoor Village trust.

Parish Councillor Sharon Woolford expressed her concern over flooding at Thameside Court and would be calling a meeting in the near future. Peter said he was keeping a watch on the Thames.

County Councillor Charles Mathew suggested that a TV programme on illegal drugs and “County Line” distribution that was centred on Oxfordshire would be worthwhile viewing.

Council Chair Graham Shelton reported that he had arranged a meeting with Phil Shaw of WODC to discuss the Parish Council’s concerns over the development at Bints Yard.

**Item 6. Finance**

The Clerk reported that his questioning of the invoice received from the External Auditors for £300 had been upheld in favour of the Auditors by the Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments. The body responsible for these audits.

**Item 7. Planning.** There were no planning applications to consider

**Correspondence.** There was no correspondence specifically for the parish Council to consider

There were a number of journals and advertising literature sent to the Council since the last meeting.

**Any Other Business.**

There being no other business the Meeting ended at 9.15 pm.

The next meeting of the Parish Council is due to take place on Wednesday 11 December 2019

Signed.....Date...11/12/2019