

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING FOR CATSHILL AND NORTH MARLBROOK
THURSDAY 21st APRIL 2016, 7.30PM
CATSHILL VILLAGE HALL, GOLDEN CROSS LANE, CATSHILL**

Chairman's welcome The Parish Council Chairman, Cllr Owen Sweeting, welcomed all to the meeting.

Present As per attendance register inc. Parish Councillors Jill Bate, Glenys Blackmoor, Patrick Callaway, Tessa Gillespie, Martin Knight, Paul Masters, B McEldowney, Malcolm Shephard and Owen Sweeting
Worcestershire County Councillor(Woodvale) Sheila Blagg
Members of the public including Andrew Bate (CVH), Alan Kelly (RBL and M&C Friendship Club), Ian Prust (NWWA), Nicki Hitchcock (Catshill Library), Mary Davies (WI), Ian Jones (6th Bromsgrove Scouts Group Leader), Michael Dunphy (Strategic Planning Manager, Bromsgrove and Redditch)

In attendance Rebekah Powell, Clerk to the Parish Council

Apologies Apologies had been received from Parish Councillors' Phil Baker, Mike Ball, Simon Boxall-Southall, District Councillor Brian Cooper, Mr Essenhigh and Mr Fletcher (Catshill First and Middle School)

Minutes of previous Parish Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held 23rd April 2015 were approved and signed.

Chairman's Annual Report

- Cllr O Sweeting spoke of the learning curve in the role with events including being voted in as Chair at the election, the loss of an excellent Clerk to Barnt Green and heavy winds blowing the Christmas Tree down.
- The Council had been fortunate to employ a new Clerk whom the Chairman praised as hardworking, conscientious, articulate and someone who loves the job and the village of Catshill.
- There are now 12 out of the compliment of 13 Councillors with two potential candidates awaiting selection
- It is the Council's intention to employ an Assistant Clerk to help with Planning and the Neighbourhood Plan which was to be discussed later in the evening.
- Cllr Sweeting reported on the professionalism of Councils and the fact that training was being accessed where required to provide the necessary qualifications for both Councillors and Clerks. The Council had a view to also achieving the Foundation Award in the Local Council Award Scheme with the ambition to then progress through to the Gold award over time.
- Items of note from throughout the year included:
 - Funding awarded and allocated to the replacement of the bus shelter on A38 at the top of Golden Cross Lane, with an intention of progressing further with shelters whilst keeping current ones maintained.
 - Planting of a number of trees around the balancing pools near Sedgefield Close with a view to planting a further 105 in the very near future giving nature a chance and providing Autumn colour
 - A new website for the Parish Council about to be launched that will allow the full use of Social Media and will be mobile and tablet friendly
 - The development of a new garden next to the Baptist Church to compliment those on the A38 at the top of Barley Mow Lane and the Ivy Cottage Garden

- Working with County and District Council's to ensure the footpaths and dropped kerbs were left as safe as is practicably possible around the new Co-op store, to prevent the need to enter the road
 - Holding the Annual Bonfire Night which turned out to be the most successful ever
 - Assisting with parking issues from the schools by contributing funding to the Catshill Club car park and helping to resolve other parking issues in the village
 - Involvement in the organisation of the Remembrance Day Event
 - Providing funding for improvement at our Local Scout Group and for the Canopy installation at the Village Hall
 - Working with the Schools to propose a 20mph speed limit zone in the village
 - Assisting with the organisation of a Christmas Party for the over 60's who otherwise would not celebrate the event – Cllr Sweeting reported difficulty in obtaining names for the event and requested assistance from those present through contact with the Clerk
 - Providing a newsletter to Parishioners which is being extremely well received
- Cllr Sweeting reminded those present of the provision of the Lengthsman and Litter Picker by the Parish Council, managed by the Clerk. If there were areas of concern, Cllr Sweeting requested residents contact the Clerk.
 - The Council are encouraging the development of the Neighbourhood Plan allowing residents to contribute to the future of the Village and Cllr Sweeting emphasised the importance of people getting involved in this.

Reports from elected community representatives

- **County Councillor Sheila Blagg** (Woodvale division) reported that the Council were working hard to keep services running and of good quality whilst managing a reduced budget. £10,000 had been allocated to Woodvale for Cllr Blagg to allocate. Some had been provided to assist with the erection of the Canopy on the Village Hall. Other donations had been made to the Blue Cross Animal Sanctuary who are working with those who are suffering from Bereavement due to the loss of a pet and especially with the elderly. This then allowed the funding to stretch out across the whole of the Woodvale area. Cllr Blagg spoke of parking and nuisance parking being a huge problem. Unfortunately, County Council often can't help and it is down to individuals being responsible. The Council can get traffic regulations put in place for repeat offenders but it is then down to the District Council to enforce these.

Reports from Community Groups

- **Royal British Legion** (Alan Kelly) – Mr Kelly reported that the Poppy appeal was up by 40% from the previous year which was mainly due to street sales. Membership remains fairly static but the group really needs new members and volunteers, especially to help with the Poppy collection which amounts to a couple of hours once a year. The branch is looking for venues to carry out PR work in this area and Barnt Green. They have their own stand so can be inside or out and are looking for any events where they can have a stand and meet the public. There is a big annual fundraising event on Friday 10th June in Catshill Club, with invites being circulated closer to the day.
- **M&C Friendship Club** (Alan Kelly) – This group was formed 7 years ago by a Parish Council initiative with funding being provided by the Council for the first 6 months. It did go through a phase when it seemed the group would need to close but they now regularly get over 50 members to the meetings that are held twice a month. It is a £1 to attend and the group try to get a varied range of

guest speakers and hold musical afternoons as well as providing 6-8 coach trips a year to places such as Bourton on the Water, Severn Valley and Llandudno. This Saturday night (23rd April) there will be Blackwell Concert Band performing at the Village Hall. It is a free evening that starts at 7:30pm and all are welcome.

- **North West Ward Association/Catshill Meadow** (Ian Prust – Chairman) Catshill Meadow is owned by the residents of Catshill and the North West Ward Association was put together to manage it, which they have done for the past 40 years. Unfortunately, the Association lost the treasurer, Doug Walker and the previous year, the Chairman, which was an upsetting time. The Chairman is now Ian and Alan Kelly has taken on the role of treasurer.

Successful fundraisers have been held with the football team, race night and the Street Theatre with BDC. Income is generated from the football team and from Car Boot Sales and additional funding has been obtained. There is a Car Boot Sale next Bank Holiday Monday and the one at the end of May.

The Association have been working with Worcestershire Wildlife Trust to work on the banks of the brook and they are looking at the whole of the watercourse that is accessible from the Meadow. They are making a wetland to encourage water voles and will try to take away the harshness of the bank.

Funding has been obtained from BDC for furniture, cooking facilities, baby change area, racking and Health and Safety issues. The new building now has a lot of facilities.

Issues include attracting volunteers for the Association – it would be nice to get new people and new ideas. Also, the security of the site is an issue and the Association would like to obtain a robust top bar for the entrance to allow the gate to be left open.

The Parish Council do provide a Lengthsman and the Association appreciate the work completed on the Meadow.

The NWWA AGM is next Wednesday (27th April) at 7:30pm

- **Catshill Village Hall** (Andrew Bate) – The Village Hall has had a good trading year with a small surplus being generated. Funding is being sought for repairs to the roof but has failed to date due to funding streams being unavailable for maintenance of buildings. The Committee will persevere. A new powered projector screen has been installed which was funded by the WI and County Councillor S Blagg. In order to get the most out of the screen a new projector and stand has been purchased with connection cables for different digital devices. There is a laptop available if users do not have their own.

The flooding in the driveway has finally been resolved by installing drain pots in the most problem areas. The emergency lighting units in the building have been renewed and the strip lighting is being replaced with LED devices; as they wear out rather than in bulk due to cost implications. A flag pole has been purchased and erected thanks to Mr G Davies. The Committee is looking for volunteers.

An Open Day is being held on 11th June and all are invited to drop in for tea and cake. The screen and projector will be used to illustrate significant moments in Her Majesty's life.

Finally, the Management Committee would like to thank all regular users of the Hall for their support over the last 12 months.

- **W.I.** (Mary Davies) – The ideals of the Women's Institute of truth, justice, tolerance and fellowship are as strong and important now in 21st Century as they were at the birth of the WI in 1915. The WI is the largest voluntary women's organisation in the UK. It exists to educate women to enable them to provide an effective role in the community, to expand their horizons and to develop and pass on important skills. Catshill W.I. was formed in 1968 and meets at the Village Hall on the second

Monday of the month. There is a small, but very dedicated membership. At each meeting the aim is to have speakers on topics as varied as bread making, to a visit to a Leprosy Hospital in Nepal. Every year the group complete a certain amount of fundraising through their craft efforts and learning new skills. They took a stall on Bromsgrove Market on Carnival Day and participated in the Craft Sale at the Village Hall in November. They enjoy outings and joining County and Group events. They have an Annual Dinner locally and an ongoing collection of postage stamps and used and broken candles for recycling. This year they enabled the Village Hall to acquire the new screen. The group are kept interested and busy and would welcome any ladies who would care to join them in the future.

- **Library** (Nicki Hitchcock) – Nicki introduced herself as the Manager of Bromsgrove, Rubery and Catshill Library. She reported that different staff have been coming and going but that visitor figures and issue figures are holding. The opening times of Catshill Library have changed and they are now open Friday morning not afternoon. They have had visits from Catshill First School and Middle School who are now using the library more often. They have worked on a project called ‘Lending an ear’ with a young poet laureate, particularly with young boys, that has been funded by BDC. The library has lost a couple of volunteers but recruited more. They are always glad to see people at the library and would like to be more involved with community events. There is a provision that takes books to people that can’t get out the house and Nicki offered the opportunity to send information out in the bags. On Thursday 7th July at 7pm there will be a talk about the Nailmakers of Bromsgrove and tickets are available from the library.
- **Scouts** (Ian Jones) Mr Jones is the Chair and Group Executive with a role that involves supporting the Scout Groups and being responsible for Finance, Health and Safety and the support of the leaders. They are continuing to build the group with a new section of Beavers for ages 6-8 years. The Cubs have taken part in camps, astronomy, bell ringing, visits to the fire station and the Scouts have enjoyed lots of camps including a survival skills camp and archery, climbing and abseiling. As a group they have visited the National Memorial Arboretum in Cosford, supported Catshill Food Bank and helped to plant 400 trees opposite the Scout Hut. They were delighted to be part of the Remembrance Day Parade.
The Scouts would not be possible without Voluntary leaders and it is pleasing to see so many young leaders. It also wouldn’t be possible without funding, as monthly subscriptions only cover the basic running costs. Thanks were given to the Parish Council for the £1000 donation last year which was added to funding from BDC for a new floor. Mr Jones showed photos of the completed flooring. Major fundraising comes from the Bonfire on the Meadow and the Scouts continue to seek grants/funding to develop activities.
Scouting is a great way to encourage children to grow, develop and widen their horizons.

Presentation from Parish Council

Cllr B McEldowney carried out a presentation promoting the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, with an emphasis on the need for community involvement. (Presentation available on request and via the Neighbourhood Plan page of the Parish Council website)

Presentation and Question and Answer Session with Mr Michael Dunphy (Strategic Planning Manager, Bromsgrove and Redditch)

Mr Dunphy praised the Parish Council on their presentation and gave a short overview of the Neighbourhood Plan including emphasis that it is ‘YOUR’ plan and BDC will assist, help with funding, run the referendum, come to the Steering Group and guide the community through the plan, which can include items not related to Planning but to the community also. Consultation is key and the plan should

run in tandem with National Guidance and the Local Plan. Mr Dunphy wished to make the session open for questions and answered a number including:

How big can the area be? – It has to be a designated area, which is suggested as the Parish Boundary, but can include more

What guarantee do we have that after the hard work the plan will be kept? – This is a statutory development plan that goes through examination, scrutiny and referendum. It will become a formal plan and have a lifetime. It is suggested that it runs to 2030 in line with BDC but this will depend what the plan focusses on.

Will the process be fairly quick? – It depends. If fewer issues are encountered it can be shorter but more issues can take years. It won't happen at the speed BDC can work due to the lack of resources but the work will not be wasted.

Is there anyone overseeing local Parishes and looking at how the plans fit together? – Mr Dunphy looks at them all. During the formal consultation local Parishes will have to consult Catshill and North Marlbrook and Vice versa. Towards the end of the process conformity is checked and if it doesn't meet National Guidance the Plan will be stopped. It cannot change Green Belt but the work completed can inform the District Council. The plan should not restrict development and cannot therefore promote less development than the District Plan.

What happens if the NP is in direct conflict with the District Plan? – The District Plan deals with different bigger issues. For instance, how many houses are needed across the district. As yet it hasn't been suggested where these will go. If the NP suggested that the Parish did not want any of the District growth it wouldn't go through. If it is suggested the Parish want 'this much' of the growth that would be fine. The District Plan does not go into the level of detail that the Neighbourhood Plan does.

Explain the difference between a Neighbourhood Plan and a Parish Plan – The Neighbourhood Plan is a Statutory Development Plan which will carry weight and will be looked at by Planning Officers with the Local Plan and National Guidance. It will go through referendum. The Parish Plan is lower tier.

Will the work the W.I. completed previously be lost? – Consultation is the first stage and the plan should be written around the issues identified so it is likely the same issues will still be there. It might need evidence now but the previous work is not lost, it can be resurrected in another form.

If we were to ask for more businesses would we have to wait the 15 years of the Plan to get them? – No, 15 years is the end of the plan. You would be identifying what needs to happen within 15 years.

How can Youth Provision be written into the Neighbourhood Plan? – It depends how you wish to look at it i.e.: if you want more places to play it can be done. If it is how the provision is funded this is harder but if the plan identifies Youth Provision as an issue and it passes examination, then the plan could be used as a basis of a grant bidding tool.

Is there a facility to look at plans that have been made already? – The government will never show which are good practice but BDC can help with links to good ideas for policies and consultation documents. Using Google will identify plans in different stages of the process.

Open session

Those present were invited to circulate the room, read the information on the boards and network with those in attendance.

There being no other business the Chairman thanked all present for attending and closed the meeting. The meeting closed at 20:50 hours.

Signed

Date.....

Chairman, Parish Meeting
Catshill and North Marlbrook