

Hill & Moor Parish Council

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Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting for Hill & Moor, held on Thursday, May 20th 2010 at the Parish Room, Lower Moor.

In attendance: Cllr Nick Butler (chairman), Cllr Maurice Hayes, Cllr Ed Cohen. Parish Clerk Carolyn Morris. Also PC Stuart Toms. *Ten parishioners attended the meeting. The meeting was opened at 7.30pm.*

1. To hear apologies for absence.

Apologies were noted from Cllr Buckley and Cllr Oldfield, also Cllr Liz Tucker.

2. To consider: a) Declarations of Interest (Personal & Prejudicial) and b) Any changes to be notified to the Register of Interest and Gifts & Hospitality.

There were none.

3. To approve the minutes of the last parish meeting on May 7th 2009.

The minutes were signed by the chairman as a true record of proceedings.

4. Chairman's Annual Report – Report of the parish council's activities during the past year. Attached. Cllr Butler also wished parish lengthsman Nick Winter a speedy recovery from a serious health problem and paid tribute to his hard work in the parish.

5. To receive the report of the County and District Councillor. Cllr Tucker was on holiday.

6. To receive reports from parish organisations.

Mrs Carol Martin attended on behalf of the village hall committee and made a report for the parish. She spoke about the hall's commitment to green technology which was saving money as well as electricity: solar panels were being used and were already saving electricity, as well as high reflective paint,

and new loft insulation. A new cooker and new kettles had also been bought. For the year ahead, the committee was also looking into the costs of double-glazing and an air-to-air heating system. New steps outside the hall will also be a priority for the committee in the coming year. Mrs Martin reported that bookings had increased with the temporary closure of Crophorne hall and now there were regular bookings from two dog groups, a bridge club, a keep fit club and two art clubs, (including a fun session for all comers from 10-noon on a Friday). She added the hiring rates were staying the same, at a very reasonable level, and it was encouraging more birthday party bookings. She also said that the church was now licensed for weddings which would bring benefits to the village hall – one had already been booked – as well as the pub. PC Stuart Toms spoke about the year's crime figures. He reported that over the year, ending March 31 2010, there had been 17 crimes (15 last year) – one attempted house burglary, three non-dwelling burglaries, four vehicle crimes, four violent offences (3 domestic) and five other minor crimes. He did raise concern, however, about an increase in crime in recent weeks, which seemed to be linked with increases in Wyre Piddle and which had spread to thefts on the allotments – and he urged people to be careful with their property. He spoke about Smart Water and it was agreed that Cllr Hayes would ask the Neighbourhood Watch association if it could give a demonstration in the village.

7. To hear about local issues: Street Lights Scheme; Planning Issues; Drainage Improvements.

Cllr Butler told people about the street light plan and outlined some proposals but said there would be a wider consultation once quotes were in and a full plan had been consolidated. There was a suggestion that a tour of the first phase of lamps in the dark would be a good idea in order to assess their importance. This was noted by the council.

It was noted that no-one from the tomato glasshouse business had taken up the parish council's offer to speak at the parish meeting. It was also noted that the gypsy site application for Upper Moor was to come before the planning committee in a week.

It was also noted that the scheme to create parking spaces in Maytree Road

had not been taken further into a planning application as yet.

8. To hear any views from parishioners or ideas for the council to take on board for the year to come.

There were no further issues raised.

The chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was closed at 8.30pm.

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Chairman

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Date

Hill & Moor Parish Council
Annual Parish Meeting on 20th May 2010
Chairman's Report

I cannot believe that another year has gone already, and I am here again reflecting back on the last year. First, I'd like to thank the other councillors, Ann, Ed and Maurice, and especially our Clerk, Carolyn, who have all worked hard to meet the needs of the parish. I would also like to give special thanks to Jo Bracewell who, for personal reasons, resigned her position but has continued her excellent work for the playground fund, and I would like to welcome Carol Oldfield, who recently joined the council. This means we are in same position as we were this time last year, but there remain two empty chairs, and I would love to see them filled.

I think everyone would join me in thanking Jo Bracewell and her helpers for another hugely successful, and dry, bonfire event. Let's hope that this continues. I would also like to thank Chris and Em, Norman and Vicky, from the Chestnut, for all the fundraising they have undertaken for the play area. Their arrival has certainly breathed new life into the village.

I would especially like to thank Ron Miller for his work as our parish tree warden and for his efforts in keeping the playing field looking at its best, and to Nick Winter our Lengthsman, who has made a real difference to the state of our drains and fencing. However, Nick is currently seriously ill and we all wish him a speedy recovery.

I'd also like to thank Jim Tapp, Ralph Roberts and Keith Jones for their help with the Storm Damage Working Group. Behind the scenes we have been pushing Worcester County Council for further work to help reduce the risk of flooding and I am pleased to say that this is paying off. However, as there are ongoing discussions with landowners I cannot provide any detail but I have been told we have funding for a scheme and that we have agreement from the majority of landowners. Worcester County Council are hopeful that if we get the final agreements in place then work could begin as early as July or August. As last year, the glasshouse has been one of the centres of our attention, trying to ensure that the conditions of the approval have been met, but this has been a frustrating exercise which has really raised questions about Wychavon Planning Department's ability, or will, to enforce. We have now been made aware that EVG are planning a new application to request an anaerobic digester to convert waste vegetable material into energy for heating, and this may include a request for a new access off the A44 via a roundabout. This brings some concerns and some benefits to our community, so we will be closely watching developments.

We have also seen a new application for gypsy pitches in Upper Moor. Again, we have looked closely at the planning regulations and feel that Wychavon are not taking enough consideration of the needs of the local population and have written to them clearly defining what considerations need to be addressed. I have just had notification that the application will come before the committee on Thursday 27th May and that the Planning Officer is recommending approval. I also notice that Severn Trent are raising no objections, although I feel Severn Trent need to be challenged over this.

Looking at our finances, we have unfortunately had to increase our precept this year to cover the increasing cost of electricity for our streetlights. This has placed emphasis on looking at ways we can reduce the cost of lighting our parish and we may need to take some difficult decisions. Options include, removal of some lights, switching off lights in the early hours or increasing the precept to maintain status quo and it's likely we will need a compromise of all three. After a surprising struggle, we have now received costs for the majority of the work and it will not be cheap, so we will be having to prioritise the work and phase it over a number of years.

Looking to the year ahead, we will finally look to begin work on the streetlights and to raise revenue to help balance the costs of mowing, which is other major cost. One way has been to look to attract youth teams to use the playing field and this year we have been successful in attracting a team from Peopleton, whose contribution will go straight into the Parish funds.

It has been good to see cricket back on the field, which is helping to improve the sense of community. We need to build on this and to protect the assets that we have, such as the shop, pub and village hall, so please continue to support them. Also, please join in and support our community events and help to build the belief that Hill and Moor parish is a vibrant place to live.

Kind regards

Nick Butler
Chairman
Hill & Moor Parish Council