

## Over Annual Parish Meeting Minutes

### 7.30pm

Over Annual Parish Meeting, the Main Hall, Over Community Centre, Over - Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021

#### PRESENT

Chairman: Mrs A Griffiths

Parish Clerk: Mrs M Pink

#### In attendance

Councillors: Mr M Conlon, Mrs J Davies, Mr G Twiss, Mr A Tranter, Mr S Couper, Mrs M Hyde, Mr R Robinson

County Councillor - Mrs Firouz Thompson

District Councillor - Mr Bill Handley

Over Primary School Headteacher – Mr Mike Fish

20's Plenty Campaign Representative – Diane Fitzmaurice

Parishioners: Approximately 35

- Item**
- 01 TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  
District Councillor Mrs Dawn Percival, Cllr Pippa Heylings
- 02 TO SIGN & APPROVE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING DATED 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019**  
These minutes have been reproduced in the Over News and are taken as read and signed as a true record of that meeting
- 03 PRESENTATION REGARDING CLIMATE CHANGE BY CLLR PIPPA HEYLINGS**  
Cllr Heylings had provided a report for the Clerk to present to the meeting due to her absence. The report focussed on general health and wellbeing in a world that is subject to the changing environment that is occurring due to Climate Change. The report is attached as an appendix.
- 04 PRESENTATION REGARDING "20'S PLENTY" CAMPAIGN BY DIANE FITZMAURICE**  
The presentation focussed on the need for safer speed limits in Cambridgeshire and urged the residents to ask the Parish Council to support the campaign to normalise 20mph speeds. Driving at 20mph will reduce casualties, increase physical activity, decrease pollution, and make places more attractive to live in and to visit. Physical horizontal speed reduction measures are not supported such as speed cushions, but better signage will educate drivers and make them more aware of the speed that they are travelling at and will help to normalise driving at 20mph.  
**A question-and-answer session followed the presentation.**  
Residents wanted to know which local authority are responsible for setting limits. The County Council are responsible for changing speed limits and several residents asked the County Councillor present what priorities they had for Highways. Repairing potholes is a priority for the residents in Over so can the County Council look to action more repairs. Cllr Thompson responded to say that most of the potholes that meet the criteria for repair have been repaired, white lining has been provided in the Village via a grant from the A14 Legacy Team and drains and gully's in three areas of the Village have already been jetted. Others will also be cleaned, and the stolen drain covers that have been taken will be replaced. The flooding issue in West Street has also been investigated and repairs are in the schedule to help to alleviate flooding issues experienced in this area of the Village. Cllr Thompson regularly posts on Facebook items of concern and organises quarterly meetings with the Parish Council and the Highways Team, and the next meeting will be on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October. Cllr Thompson urged all residents to use the online reporting tool available on the County Council website to make reports as the reports go directly to the Highways Team so that they can assess the problem as quickly as they can.
- 05 PRESENTATION REGARDING OVER PRIMARY SCHOOL BY MIKE FISHER, HEADTEACHER**  
The presentation focussed on the lovely children and teachers that are currently at the school. The teachers strive to give the children the best experience of school life that they can. There is a great outdoor environment and subjects such as technology and computing are providing enrichment opportunities for the children. Numbers are declining with only seven classes and 210 children as opposed to about 10 years ago when the school had eleven classes and 320 children, but birth-rate predictions have now levelled out and an intake of thirty each year going forwards is anticipated. There have been challenges to reduce costs and staffing levels, but things are stable now. Good staff are now in place alongside good Governors and a fantastic parent body. Cambridgeshire is one of the lowest funded authorities for educational needs and this is challenging as there has also been a rise in more children experiencing special needs within the school and costs to give support to these children are more than £6,000 per child. The school funds the first £6,000 of care with any buffer funding coming from the central education funding pot held by the County.

The reduction in pupil numbers has resulted in more space within the school and Happy Hens is now based on site in the morning and afternoons and one classroom has been kitted out as a special purpose music room for the children. The effects of covid have also impacted on the school.

**A question-and-answer session followed the presentation.**

A resident stated that there are some new housing developments within the Village and asked if the school would be able to cope with an increase in numbers. Mr Fish replied that the school would have enough capacity to manage the catchment children.

Other questions were asked concerning the funding for special needs children and the historically low provision of funding within Cambridgeshire, but Mr Fish said that the amount of funding needed in Over was in line with others in the County. A resident also wanted to know if the provision of a roof over the swimming pool had been worth the efforts by parents to organise the funding. Mr Fish said that it had certainly increased the length of the swimming season that could be offered to the children, and it is a lot easier to manage the PH levels as it was not now exposed to the sunlight as it was before, so the funding was certainly worthwhile for the school. The question of low provision for educational spending in the County was raised and Cllr Thompson said that Cambridgeshire is 145 out of 151 Counties in the Country and that there is a twenty-six million deficit on education spending overall.

06

**CHAIRMANS REPORT**

The report focussed on what the Council does and highlighted that details regarding land that the Council is responsible for can be found on the website. The Parish Council aims to improve the services for the whole demographic of the Village, and they provide donations and support to Village services such as the Day Centre, mobile warden scheme and the Over Community Centre. They support the Over Skate Park Association (OSKA) with start-up funding and look after the other play equipment in the Village. They are a consultee for planning and give recommendations on the developments within the Village and they also have Parish Council Representatives on other bodies such as the Church and Town Lands Charity (Estate and Town Branch) – 202613 and the Over Relief in Need Charity - 206239 and other Village initiatives. The Council is made up of volunteers and currently there are only eight so there are three vacancies that need to be filled so if anyone present would like to join the Council please contact the Clerk for more information. Undertaking projects within the Village is satisfying and rewarding and can make a difference to how people live and enjoy the Village of Over.

The Village Survey provided the Council with some areas to improve, and vast improvements have been made at Overcote and the area is currently in the second year of a three-year build scheme for extra enhancements. Much of the funding for this was grant funding. There is a great team of litter pickers that help to keep the area clean and safe who are all volunteers.

The Pavilion on the Green has also had a series of improvements made to it including insulation, heating, provision of hot water, new showers, new lighting, decorating and CCTV for security. This will mean that the Pavilion can be used by a larger number of residents who can have more events on the Green because the building has been improved.

A great Speedwatch team have also become established within the Village and the equipment for the team was provided along with two other Mobile Vehicle Activated Speed Signs (MVAS) via the A14 Legacy Fund to record speed travelled in the Village which will provide data that can be given directly to the Police who can analyse it and help to catch persistent speeding offenders who show a pattern within the data so they can pin point areas for action if needed.

The Parish Council also have a great working relationship with both the County and District Officers and thanks are to be given to them for their work within the Village.

There have also been some challenges this year with green space as the Village does not have enough green space to provide all the sporting venues that are being asked of them. The only spaces available currently are the Green and the Community Centre pitches. Maintenance has become an issue as the sports teams are becoming more successful with larger numbers of participants all wanting to play sports within the Village. Representatives of the football and cricket clubs expressed their frustration at the limitations of the available space for sports fixtures. This point was discussed at length by many of the residents present and many items for consideration were raised. All agreed that all avenues for providing additional open space for the village should be explored. The current Parish Councillors do not have any particular expertise in groundsmanship and would welcome the opportunity to work with any resident with knowledge in this area. The Parish Council will also look to work more closely with all sporting clubs in the future

The Chairman wished to thank Mr Dave Bridgman, Mr Richard Fenwick, Mr Terrence Skinner and the litter pick team who have all worked tirelessly to keep the Village looking good. The Covid Support Volunteers headed by Mrs Jeanette Fenn and the Vaccination Support Volunteers have also worked very

hard within the Village and thanks are given to them all as they have made a phenomenal effort to keep the village going during the Pandemic. The Chairman would also like to thank the Trustees of the Church and Town Lands Charity, the staff at the Community Centre and the Day Centre and all other helpers within the Village.

Finally, thanks are to be given to the Clerk and the Councillors who all work hard to ensure that the Village is looked after for the benefit of all Over residents. If you have any questions, suggestions or any other queries then please contact the Clerk who will be able to help you. Further information about the Council can also be found on our website.

**07 DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS**

County Councillor Mrs Firouz Thompson provided information through the course of the evening in response to residents' questions, but no formal report was made.

District Councillor Mr Bill Handley had provided a report to the Clerk prior to the meeting which has been added as an Appendix.

Both Councillors can be contacted via direct email or questions can be given to the Clerk who will pass them onto the relevant authority.

**08 PRESENTATION OF CHURCH AND TOWN LANDS CHARITY (ESTATE AND TOWN BRANCH) AND OVER RELIEF IN NEED CHARITY ACCOUNTS**

The presentation was given by Charity Trustee, Mrs Mary Hyde and a copy of the report is attached as an Appendix. The Clerk has a copy of the Accounts if needed.

**09 PRESENTATION OF PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS**

The Over Parish Council accounts have been open for inspection if required but the Clerk did not receive any requests for access. The Annual Return for 2020/2021 can be viewed on the Parish Council website at [www.over-pc.org.uk](http://www.over-pc.org.uk)

**10 OVER RESIDENTS' COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR OVER VILLAGE**

Many questions were raised within the meeting concerning lack of village green space, under provision of education funding in Cambridgeshire and Highways issues following the presentations. Members of OSKA made a brief update presentation regarding the provision of a new skate park in the Village in a bid to find more volunteers to help them to fund raise for this initiative. A further resident asked if a pathway could be provided between Over and Willingham to help school children get to Northstowe and Cllr Thompson asked the resident to make direct contact with her so that she could deal with this query.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 10.22PM

Signed & dated Chairman

**Appendix – Climate Change**

In 45 days, the UK government will be hosting a meeting of the leaders of most countries in the world; a global summit called COP 26 in which they will be looking at ways to protect our green spaces and our water supplies; how to plant more trees and how to improve air quality – all things that make common sense and we have taken for granted in the past, perhaps. But things which we have come to value much more during the pandemic because so many people have seen and experienced how important they are for our physical and mental health. These actions also help regulate the amount of carbon pollution in our atmosphere so they are win-win strategies. It is now an undisputed fact that climate change is caused by human activities that increase the amount of carbon pollution.

This global summit will be looking at the impacts of climate change in each of the countries, including the UK, and also the ways that countries can work collectively to reduce rising levels of carbon emissions. The UK is known throughout the world as one of the leaders in tackling change because it was the first country to adopt a Climate Change Act. Many countries have followed our lead. However, there is still much to do.

The British Medical Association has said that we are facing a public health emergency as a result of climate change. That every child born today will be affected directly by climate change, some more than others but every child will witness changes we have not seen. Last month, the UK's independent climate risk assessment report showed the increases in heatwaves and flooding that we will see in the UK. It reported on the increase in the number of respiratory, heart and lung conditions due to air pollution, as well as the impact on the brain development of young children, too, from particulates in the atmosphere. It reported on the 2,500 excess deaths in 2020 as a result of the heatwave in the UK, mainly of over 65+ but also a significant number of people of just over 45 years old. It found that over 90% of all hospital buildings are at risk of over-heating – and that, in

general, we are “woefully unprepared” for extreme events like the ones we are already suffering. This global summit will also, therefore, be looking at ways to improve our readiness and be prepared for the kinds of extreme changes in weather that we have seen over last year: extreme changes in weather that can damage jobs, livelihoods, homes and even lives through flash flooding, storms and also, the opposite: heatwaves and drought.

IN the run-up to the global summit, there are a series of national and international events. This week it is the UK's Great Big Green Week and communities and local councils across the country are organising activities to raise awareness about greening our local areas in ways that can also help reduce carbon pollution and increase the ways in which we can store carbon in trees, soil, grasslands, wetlands and peat.

In the coming weeks, South Cambs District Council will be sharing ideas with local communities and Parish Councils about the things we can each do individually, as local groups and as Parishes. We were one of the first councils in the country to recognise that we should be doing more at local level to tackle the climate emergency. We have adopted a Zero Carbon Strategy and our Doubling Nature Strategy – because Nature and Climate are so inextricably linked. There are things that we can do as a Council but there is so much more we can do together with all of our Parishes – and that is why we have created the Zero Carbon Community Network and we invite you all to be a part of this collective action in ways that help to keep our air clean, our children healthy, reduce carbon pollution, green our areas and reduce our heating bills (which are skyrocketing at the moment).

As a member of the national cross-party Climate Change Task Group, I will be attending the COP 26 Climate Summit and will be sending reports from the meetings if you are interested, let me know.

If you are interested, please do join us in our initiatives around energy efficiency, electric vehicles and electric bikes, restoring natural areas, restoring wetlands and streams, planting trees and each doing something little every day that help make us proud of the planet that we hand onto our children and grandchildren.

## **Appendix – District Council Report**

### **Annual Report from South Cambridgeshire District Councillors (SCDC) to Over Parish Meeting September 2021**

This report covers the last 12 months of activity by your District Council and local Councillors; a year dominated (of course) by the coronavirus pandemic. SCDC has been highly active in the local government response to the pandemic and has responded quickly and flexibly to the changing circumstances. Significant numbers of Council officers were redeployed from their usual duties to those dealing directly and urgently with the Covid response, such as the Business Support Team. Although this meant some disruption to normal council services, most were delivered in a timely way and hopefully local residents were not too severely affected.

#### Welcome Firouz Thompson

In May, Cambridgeshire County Council elections led to a change from a Conservative to a Lib Dem led joint administration. Four months in and we are already seeing a difference in our village. The road gullies in several of Over's roads were jetted clear last week, there are also firm plans to rectify long-standing drainage problems on West Street. Gully maintenance along the way and potholes have started to be filled in too. We welcome Over's new County Councillor, Firouz Thompson; it is great to work with someone who cares and is eager to help and we make a great team!

#### Covid related grants to businesses and discretionary/hardship grants

During the pandemic, and now in the recovery, the aforementioned Business Support Team at SCDC has been supporting all local businesses, big and small, through SCDC's website, business newsletter and direct contact with our expert business support team. We have advised over two thousand businesses in the past 18 months and paid out well over £10M in Government business grants, £35M in discretionary/hardship grants and, recently, over £1M in Growth Grants.

#### Community Volunteers

One of the most heartening things that has come out of the pandemic has been the terrific volunteer community response. It was estimated that, at the height of the Covid emergency, over 4,500 people were engaged across South Cambridgeshire in helping their fellow citizens get through the worst of the crisis. As Lead Cabinet Member for Community Resilience, Health and Wellbeing, Bill has been at the heart of the response across the district and his weekly Community Updates have been keeping the volunteer community up to date with the latest relevant information.

Now that life is slowly getting back to normal, SCDC continues to see how the community response can be continued into the recovery period and, in this, is working collaboratively with the new administration at

Cambridgeshire County Council. SCDC will continue to stay in contact and support the volunteer groups in whatever way it can.

#### Mobile/Community Wardens

In the last 12 months SCDC has increased the number of district Mobile/Community Wardens schemes by 7 and 20 are now operating across the district. By supporting people in their homes, the wardens help people to live in their own homes for longer. Over's scheme, managed by Age UK, started at the end of 2020 with warden Joanne Twinn (07812 496002). Places are available and more information can be found here:

<https://www.scams.gov.uk/community-development/mobile-warden-scheme/>

#### Flooding on Fen End

The Christmas period last year saw an unusually severe rain event that gave rise to serious flooding in many parts of the district and, in Over, the residents of Fen End were badly affected. Dockerel Brook is one of the main water-courses that carry water away from the village, running from Fen End to Willingham. Its maintenance is the responsibility of the Environment Agency (EA) and there have been concerns that a section of it, towards Willingham, has not been maintained for some years and has become very constricted by silting, fallen branches and vegetation. Residents have been warning the EA about the deteriorating state of the brook for some time (as have we) but the flooding at Christmas brought this issue to a head. Earlier this year, we wrote to all residents at the lower part of Fen End to gather evidence and photos to support a case to the EA for urgent action. We got a terrific response from residents and, with the backing of Over and Willingham's Internal Drainage Board, duly sent the letter. The result was that the Environment Agency have promised to clear the affected part of Dockerel Brook this autumn. This is a great result and one which, we all hope, will see a marked reduction in the flooding risk to Fen End residents.

#### Construction of new council housing

We have a policy of increasing the number of council properties available for people on lower incomes and, we have built sixty-six new council homes in the last 12 months (the target was 50). These are built to a high specification and some of the properties have solar panels and air-source heat-pumps.

#### SCDC 5 Year Housing Land Supply

Local planning authorities, like SCDC, must demonstrate that they are on track to deliver the minimum number of new homes (in the projected five-year period) that the national government has set. Widely known as the 5-year housing land supply (5YHLS) the failure of the previous Conservative administration to demonstrate one led to developers bombarding the council with speculative applications, many of which got approved at appeal, and Over was one of the villages that suffered because of this failure. We are delighted to be able to report that the 5YHLS figure for Greater Cambridge (South Cambs and Cambridge City) stands at 6.1 years. This means that we can apply our Local Plan policies for affordable housing, standards, sustainable locations, green belt and place-making without the fear of speculative and unsustainable development. Good news indeed!

#### Local Plan

The next stage of the Local Plan – the preferred options stage - has just been published by the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service. There is much being said about this in the local press and on social media, but much of it is scaremongering, political, mischief-making nonsense. Ignore it; we are not going to “concrete over South Cambridgeshire” and remember that there is no proposed extra development for Over. We have put something in our Over News article, next month, which will hopefully help you understand what is *really* happening and we would encourage you to engage with the next public consultation, which is due to start in November. Please take a look at the new section of the website, which includes an interactive map: ([www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/localplan](http://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/localplan)) and take the opportunity to comment during the next public consultation, which starts on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021.

#### Being 'Green to our core'

One of the priorities for the present administration at SCDC is a commitment to being 'Green to our core'. In early 2021 we released details of our 'Doubling Nature' strategy in which we seek to increase wildlife-rich habitats and the tree canopy and improving access to green spaces. Some of the other projects that we have in the pipeline have, inevitably, been delayed by the coronavirus pandemic but we have still delivered on most of our commitments, such as:

All SCDC street lighting is to be replaced by low energy LED lights. This is nearing completion and should give a reduction of 60% of energy usage and a commensurate saving in parish councils' street-lighting energy bills. We have completed an audit of the energy efficiency of existing council housing stock and will soon begin a campaign of improvement, beginning with enhanced insulation for the poorest performing properties. This will have the dual benefit of reducing carbon emissions and helping council tenants with their fuel bills. Where

possible, Council House refurbishment will include air or ground-source heat pump systems, accompanied by better glazing.

The 'greening' of South Cambs Hall has been delayed by Covid but is now moving ahead quickly and should be completed early next year. The project sees the retrofitting of renewable energy generation and energy-saving measures with the objective of reducing by up to 50% the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> used to heat and light the council's home (with commensurate cost-savings too).

We purchased an electric bin lorry – one of the first local authorities to do so – and we have options on others. These vehicles have a much higher upfront cost but running costs are considerably lower and should be cost neutral over the vehicles' lifespan. The performance of the vehicle, so far, has exceeded expectations. We shall be considering other greener vehicle options including hydrogen fuel-cell, and there are plans to install a solar generation park as a renewable source of electricity to charge the vehicles, which will add to the financial case as well as the considerable environmental one.

If you would like to speak with us, we are always available on the phone or by email and we try to respond quickly.

Let's hope that the coming year is a vast improvement on the last.

Dawn and Bill

Dawn Percival & Bill Handley, September 2021 [Cllr.handley@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.handley@scambs.gov.uk) 01954 200287

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bill.handley.54540> or <https://www.facebook.com/libdems3rdMay18/>

Twitter: @bill\_handley55

### **Appendix – Church and Town Lands (Estate and Town Branch) and Over Relief in Need Charity Report 2021 Charity report for Over Parish Meeting**

The village of Over is fortunate to have two charities whose surplus funds are used directly for the benefit of Over residents. The boards of trustees for these charities manage assets, bequeathed by former residents of the parish of Over, in strict accordance with the Schemes set up by the Charity Commission for England & Wales and briefly detailed below –

#### **Church & Town Lands Charity (Estate Branch) - 202613 – Scheme of 5<sup>th</sup> May 1970 –**

Income remaining after defraying all expenses is divided into three equal parts, with one equal third paid to the **Church Branch** and the remaining two equal thirds to the **Town Branch**.

- **Church Branch - 260065** – To apply clear yearly income in or towards the upkeep, repair and insurance of the fabric of the parish church of the ecclesiastical parish of St Mary, Over.
- **Town Branch - 260066** – To apply the clear yearly income for any charitable purposes for the general benefit of the inhabitants of the parish of Over for which provision is not made out of rates, taxes or other public funds.

#### **Over Relief In Need Charity – 206239 - Scheme of 13<sup>th</sup> November 1987 –**

Income remaining after defraying all expenses for relief of persons resident in the parish of Over who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress for which provision is not made out of rates, taxes or other public funds.

Over the last 10 years the above charities have provided in excess of £142,000 for the direct benefit of Over.

In November 2020 the Town Branch awarded grants totalling £7,850.00 to the following village organisations – Over Community Association, Over Primary School, Over Puddleducks Preschool, Over Baptist Cemetery, Over & District Royal British Legion, Over Skatepark Association & The Manderson Trust. At the same time the sum of £4,849.47 was granted to St Mary's Church through the Church Branch.

From the financial year ending 30.06.21 just over £19,000 will be available for distribution. During this period the Church & Town Lands Charity bore significant extraordinary financial costs of removing trespassers.

If interested in becoming a trustee should a vacancy arise, please contact [ctlcharity@gmail.com](mailto:ctlcharity@gmail.com)

*The Trustees of Over Church & Town Lands Charity and Over Relief In Need Charity  
September 2021*