

## **SWANTON MORLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

**THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** was held at the Village Hall, Manns Lane on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2006 at 7.30pm and was attended by 71 members of the public.

The meeting was chaired by Mr J Carrick, Chairman of Swanton Morley Parish Council and attended by County Councillor, Mrs I Floering-Blackman and six Parish Councillors – Mr R. Atterwill, Mrs. M.Thomas, Mr.C. Clegg, Mr. C. Perry , Mrs. Q. Wood and Mrs. R. Northall.

### **1. Apologies for Absences**

Apologies were received from Mr T. Harris (Daisy's Mite Charity), Tony Simpkins and Penny Louch (Nurse Practitioner at Swanton Morley Surgery).

### **2. Chairman's Report**

Mr Carrick opened the meeting and introduced the Councillors and Clerk and thanked members of the public for attending. The Chairman's written report had been issued to the public, however Mr Carrick outlined the positive initiatives which were ongoing to manage and generate a small income from the Common lands in the village.

The increase in precept for 2006/7 was noted as an issue of concern for parishioners and the Chairman went on to explain that projects such as the Playing Fields development and traffic calming measures were included in this years budget at considerable cost. It was anticipated that the precept would therefore reduce next year.

### **3. Minutes of Previous Parish Meeting**

There were no comments. Mrs Wood proposed they be accepted. Mr Atterwill seconded. All agreed.

### **4. Matters Arising**

None received.

### **5. Parish Council Annual Report**

The Clerk gave her report which outlined the following:

- A new maintenance contract for Streetlighting had been undertaken by T. T Jones in view of the considerable difficulties with poor service received from T Cartledge. The installation of a new lighting column at the junction of Middleton Avenue and Hoe Road East is also still being pursued as legal issues regarding the laying of supply cable have held up progress.
- Completion and distribution of the Village Appraisal report at a minimal cost to the village had taken place and working groups have been established to address the action points arising out of the document.
- Littering and dig fouling continues to be problem in the village and there has been a recent spate of vandalism of litter bins.
- Footpath improvements are hoped for Rectory Road in the coming few months and pressure is still being applied to improve those on Manns Lane. It is also hoped that the pedestrian crossing / refuge on Greengate will come to fruition during 2006/7.
- Work which has been carried out in the village during the year include the refurbishment of the village seats, tree felling and stabilisation of memorials at the churchyard, and work to renovate the village sign is in progress.
- The clerk closed by encouraging parishioners to respond to the housing questionnaire recently issued by Norfolk Rural Community Council.

## **6. Reports from Village Organisations**

### **a) Charity Reports**

#### *i. Daisy's Mite – Report by Tim Harris read by Mr John Carrick*

This was set up in 1991 with the proceeds of the book by Daisy Rayner to help with an award for the purchase of books. In 2005, the charity recognised the efforts of Stuart Johnson who received £75.00 to assist with his studies.

#### *ii Small's Charity – Report by Ted Peachment*

As set out in the will of William Small, grants are available to Swanton Morley born boys embarking on apprenticeships or similar further education courses to purchase tools, equipment or books. Two awards were made this year to assist an agricultural apprenticeship with Ben Burgess and a construction apprenticeship with R G Carter.

#### *iii. Barrett's Charity – Report from Mr. Nick Saffell read by Mr John Carrick.*

This charity was set up with the monies from the income from 52 acres of land. The monies are used for small gifts for the elderly of the village at Christmas time. In 2004 £1,270 was made available to beneficiaries in the village with £1265 received by the Church Wardens.

#### *iv Village Hall Management Committee*

It was reported that there is regular use of the hall and playing fields which includes use by Dereham Youth Football Club and the Youth Club. The loan from Breckland Council has now been paid off and the hall has cash assets of around £3,400.

Mr Carrick thanked Fred and Janet Hammond for their help and support over many years.

#### *v Under 5's Group – Report from Mr Steve Derrick*

There are a growing number of children on the register and two very good reports from OFSTED have been received this year. The group's aim to have their own premises is still being pursued despite the set back with the fire which destroyed the group's mobile premises. Options which are being considered include the church, the school and the village hall.

Mr Derrick thanked Michelle Simpson and Mandy Jackson Chambers as well as all the staff and Directors of the group, for their hard work this year.

#### *vi Friends of All Saints Church – Report from Mr O Diggle.*

Funds raised this year have amounted to over £3,970 for the restoration fund. A grant of £5,000 has also been obtained to improve disabled access from the car park to the Church. Further grants are being applied for to improve facilities within the church.

Forthcoming fundraising plans include a car boot sale, concert and quiz night. The Friends AGM will be held in the Church on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May at 7pm.

### **b) Parochial Church Council – Report by Mrs J. Leary**

Family services have been well attended this year. Christmas services and a family service at the Barracks have also proved to be a success.

Close links are maintained with the primary school with the Rev. Bridget Hill taking assemblies on a regular basis.

Some fund raising events have taken place this year and any fresh ideas for further events are welcomed.

**c) HomeWatch/Police**

There was no HomeWatch/Police report made.

**d) Swanton Morley Surgery**

There was no report from the Surgery staff, however Mr Ted Peachment gave a report on behalf of the Patient's Participation Group.

This group is a separate entity from the surgery which aims to try and provide a forum for discussion for the benefit of both patients and the practice and to suggest any improvements. Membership is open to all and the group would welcome some new members, particularly younger members of the community. The group meets every two months.

**e) Any Other reports from Village Organisations**

Jean Austin of the Women's Institute gave an overview of the village group which was founded in 1924 and has 41 members. New members were welcomed to the monthly meetings held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month.

**7. Report from the Playing Fields Sub Committee**

Mr Roger Atterwill gave his report as Chairman of the Sub Committee which outlined progress to date. It was highlighted that the Village Appraisal had identified that the play provision in Swanton Morley is poor for a village of its size, and that this had prompted the creation of the Sub Committee.

Work to date includes the removal of old and dangerous items of equipment from the Gooseberry Hill site, and improvements to the equipment left in situ. Risk assessments have been carried out and a regime of regular inspections is carried out.

The Sub Committee has devised a development scheme to introduce new equipment and make the Gooseberry Hill site secure. The total cost is £42,000. Of this £10,000 has already been allocated from Parish funds with the rest being obtained from grant sources. To date two grant applications for £5,000 and £7,500 have been successful, with further application successes anticipated.

**8. Update on Old Village Hall and De-registration of part of Village Green – Report by Mr, John Carrick**

Mr Carrick displayed a map of the Old Village Hall and Car Park and outlined the history of the Old Village Hall leading to the present situation whereby the building is owned by the Parish Council and is in a bad state of repair.

Mr Carrick outlined the current proposal to offer land at the New Village Hall as exchange land within the de-registration process. This would allow the status of 'Village Green' to be lifted from the car park area at the old village hall and passed to the land at the new hall. He also highlighted that there would be legal costs associated with this.

**9. Parishioners' Questions**

Mr Northall was concerned that the Village Green was put in the custody of the Parish Council in the 1970's when ownership by any other party could not be confirmed. Could the Council be assured that ownership of the land would remain with the Council following de-

registration. Mr Carrick responded that the Council were the registered land owners as recorded by the Land Registry.

Mr Northall also questioned the problems regarding access to the cottages next to the Old Village Hall which still needs to be resolved, and queried why access to the Bakery had never been raised as an issue. This route also crosses land registered as village green. Mr Carrick responded that details on this matter would need to be clarified.

Mrs Walden suggested that if the only stumbling block to resolving the de-registration issue was the requirement to pay Breckland Council £90,000, then it may be a step backwards to resort to an alternative land source. She agreed that access to the cottages should now be resolved.

Mr Peachment expressed concern that the majority of Councillors were co-opted and not elected to their position and that therefore they were not in a position to do anything, let alone set the highest precept to date. He suggested that the Village Appraisal was also not a mandate. Mr Carrick responded that there was a distinct lack of support for the Council with no parties coming forward for election. County Councillor Ingrid Floering-Blackman added encouragement to this stating that Swanton Morley was a lively village and needed to encourage more people to come forward.

Jean Butchers made a request for pressure to be applied to Highways to re-surface the footpath from Lincoln House to the surgery as wheelchair access was difficult.

Jane Allinson queried the budget for 2006/7 and asked if the difference between the budget and what was actually spent was lost to the Parish. Mr Carrick responded that this was not lost as the amount left over was carried forward and deducted from the Precept.

Mrs W Shutler asked if it was possible for a larger sign to be erected at the junction of Town Street and Elsing Road as cars cut across making it dangerous.

Mr J Leary and Mr Northall queried how the precept was determined when there was a significant underspend shown on the financial information given to parishioners. Mr Derrick assisted the Chairman in explaining how the precept is set with estimates of expenditure to the end of March being made and deducted from the reserves before calculating the amount required from Breckland to meet the budget. Mr Carrick went on to agree that perhaps better estimating and financial planning could have been carried out.

Mrs K Purchase asked if any improvements were planned for the Manns Lane footpaths as these were in a very poor condition. Mr Atterwill responded that the working group for traffic pedestrians would take on board her comments and try to address it. Mrs Purchase also complimented the Playing Fields Sub Committee on work to date.

Mr J Welton supported the traffic claming initiative but suggested that this should be in place before the pedestrian crossing was implemented. He suggested road humps however Mrs Wood replied that the solution was difficult in view of the road through the village being a main emergency services route.

#### **11). Any other business/comments/questions**

Mr Carrick advised that the Clerk was leaving the Council at the end of May and thanked her for her work over the past 18 months.

#### **12). Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be 9<sup>th</sup> April 2007 at 7.30pm.