

SYRESHAM PARISH ANNUAL MEETING
Chapel Sunday School Rooms at 7.30pm on Wednesday 8th May 2019

MINUTES

1. Welcome and introduction by Mrs Dorothy Dunkley Chair of Syresham Parish Council.

6 Members of the Public were present

2. Apologies: Revd. Will Adams, Chair George Timms Trust

Order of business was changed due to speaker commitments.

- 3. Presentation from Nisha Mejer, HS2 Community Engagement Manager and Chris James, Community Engagement Manager Eiffage Kier (HS2 Construction Team) - update on construction plans in this area.**

The Community engagement team has been busy up and down the planned line of HS2, especially working with schools on green spaces projects, safety, archaeology, careers. If any residents have queries at any time, the contact details for the community engagement team and this presentation have been left with the Parish Clerk.

Since the Annual Parish Meeting last year, the development and design phase has been well under way, carrying out ground investigations to gain as much information as possible about geology and hydrology in the area. A heave trial has been carried out to see how the ground will behave during works. Fusion have also been working on archaeology trenches, habitat creation and any necessary road improvements, prior to works commencing.

There have been two significant changes to plans in this area: the B4525 will no longer be used as an HGV route for the works site, instead a site access route will be created alongside the line of HS2 to carry HGVs directly from the A43 towards Greatworth.

There will be a change to the original layout of the A43 between the BP garage and the Whitfield turn. It has now been agreed to locally rebuild on the existing line of the A43 by changing the level of the rail route (which will be lowered). The A43 will be maintained as a dual carriageway throughout construction.

There have been a couple of local examples of ecology projects in the area: Turweston Manor grassland site, additional habitat has been created early on so has time to develop. Radstone Church, HS2 helping to resolve some of the problems with bats. There will be a wide viaduct over the River Ouse.

Syresham should not be affected by noise from the construction of HS2.

As details about logistics, accommodation compounds, worker park and ride schemes are developed, this information will be shared with communities.

QUESTIONS FROM RESIDENTS:

How will the new section of A43 be built?

A two-lane road will be built to the side of the current road, and traffic switched to that to maintain four lanes. There will be no restriction to flow of traffic during construction. Any road closures will be overnight so there is minimal impact.

When will the A43 works start?

The project is expected to start in December 2019, with works starting on compounds and temporary accesses etc. It is likely to be Spring 2020 before road construction will start. The works will last for 2 years.

Will the temporary road be to highway standards?

The quality of the road will be to highway standard. However, there is likely to be a reduced speed limit of 50mph. Highways England will make that decision based on traffic flows/peaks/roundabouts etc.

How will this impact Silverstone events?

Nisha Mejer is in regular contact with Silverstone Management team, there is good dialogue to ensure construction does not impact on Silverstone events and vice versa.

Is HS2 really going to happen - there have been rumours it might not?

There are some groups still petitioning to stop the project, however the Prime Minister confirmed two weeks ago that the project is going ahead. For HS2 it is business as usual and the contracts are being fulfilled.

4. Presentation from Elaine O’Leary (standing in for Rebecca Breakwell), Northants ACRE - information on NACRE Good Neighbour Schemes.

Good Neighbour schemes are run by local volunteers in a village or street, providing day-to-day support for neighbours with low-level needs. The scheme particularly helps neighbours who are elderly or have a mobility impairment to remain independent and helps reduce isolation and loneliness. The scheme can also be useful for young families. The scheme does not take the place of social care, personal care or tradespeople. The type of help neighbours might ask for; household tasks such as changing a lightbulb or smoke alarm batteries, assistance with shopping, collection of prescription or medication, befriending, looking after a pet, accompaniment to doctors or hospital appointments and much more. If professional help is required, volunteers would have the information and be able to contact the correct person for their neighbour. Every scheme is different and tailored to each village. It is not just socially beneficial for those requiring help but also for those volunteering.

NACRE would be there to offer help and advice and some grants are also available from SNC to support these schemes. NACRE can provide £400 to set up a launch event. Volunteers would need to form a steering group, set up a constitution, bank account, insurance, purchase a mobile phone/laptop, create publicity materials.

The scheme would have a co-ordinator volunteer with the mobile phone to take calls from neighbours in need of help (on average 5 calls per week). The co-ordinator would then identify an available volunteer and contact them and arrange a visit to the neighbour or signpost them to an organisation or tradesperson. Only charge might be if a volunteer’s car is used.

Please consider helping. If you need any further information or advice about the scheme, please contact **Jess Gooding - Rural Wellbeing Fieldworker 01604 825883** or contact the **NACRE Office 01604 765888**

5. Presentation from District Councillor, Paul Wiltshire - the benefits of neighbouring parishes working together and the effects of Northamptonshire Local Government Re-organisation on Syresham.

Following the finance and governance problems at Northamptonshire County Council, recommendations were made that Northamptonshire should be reorganised into two unitary authorities. West Northamptonshire would include South Northants District, Daventry District and Northampton Borough Councils. North Northamptonshire would consist of the remaining councils.

The Districts had 120 days to respond to the Secretary of State’s proposals and this was achieved. Elections have been planned for May 2020 and this is when the shadow council

members will be elected. However, there has been a slide in timing, and it is my feeling that this may be put back to 2021.

The new councils will divide Northamptonshire's responsibilities in two and properties will be divided out, the transition is planned to be smooth and there should not be any disruption to services and it should not affect Parish Councils.

Nothing much is concrete at the moment, everything is currently speculation. The new unitary council will have a lot of responsibilities; a melding of district and county skills. Also, many services may be dissolved to Parish and Town Councils; grass cutting, streetlighting, public transport etc.

There are opportunities for parishes and towns to work together, but parishes will have to work out which services are no longer being provided, and which they want/have to take on and be funded by parishes.

Brackley Parishes Together meetings have already been taking place and parishes are already working together in looking into the provision of bus services.

The idea though is not to have a big step change when unitary comes into being- the aim is that there will be no noticeable change to provision of services.

QUESTIONS FROM RESIDENTS:

How will devolved services be resourced?

No idea at the moment. We still don't know what the budgets are likely to be and we don't know how precepts will change. Many Councillors may not be re-elected so everything is up in the air. However, it is an incentive for Parishes to work together and cooperate to solve problems.

Change to agenda. As County Councillor Ian Morris was unexpectedly able to attend the meeting, the Chair of the meeting invited Cllr Morris to offer his views on Local Government Re-organisation.

It is likely that the move to Unitary Authority will be delayed until 2021, however it is believed that councillors will be elected to a shadow council in 2020 and they will then transition to the new council when it is operational in 2021.

There are a lot of opportunities for synergy in the new unitary, but we don't want to lose local democracy.

In West Northamptonshire there will be 2 Councillors per ward.

Bus services have already been removed. There will be money available for services in West Northants, although children's and adult's services are extremely expensive, unless we reform them the new council will still struggle with these services.

The County's finances are back in order and they are gaining traction on overspending.

Children's and adult's services are now within budget, the Children's Commissioner has been a good resource for the County. The control was achieved through the ban on overspending and all new expenditure.

There are opportunities for more efficient services under new Unitary, e.g. waste services will be unified, less HQ offices. The new Unitary will also use good practice as demonstrated by SNC.

County Council tax was up by 5% this year, the county received a dispensation from central government not to hold a referendum. In reality the council tax was not put up enough in the past, 3% per annum was never enough.

The County have been allowed to spend capital receipts (usually cannot do this to pay for debts in services). Now have a rates retention system in county. A trust for Children's Services has been set up. New Chief Executive, all new directors, new cabinet, new leader of council.

Councillors are optimistic about the future Unitary Council.

6. Parish Council Report from Mrs Dunkley - see attached report.

7. Working Committees Reports - on display boards

Flooding – D Dunkley	Emergency Planning – A Jeskins
Swingfield – D Green	Streetlights – S Hosking
Roads & Pavements – S Hosking	Pocket Park – D Green
Environmental Enhancement – C Munsey	Speeding & Parking – J Haycock
Silverstone Liaison – I Draper	Finance report – S Hosking
Footpath Warden – G and S Brackpool	GDPR - A Jeskins

8. Village Organisations reports - on display boards

Bowls Club	Brownies
Syresham School	Chapel
St James Church	Friends of St James
Parish Council	Friendship Club
Sports and Social Club	History Society
Gardening Club	Take Your Seat
Village Hall Management Committee	Gems
Syresham Times (Editors comments)	

CHARITIES: George Timms Charity Accounts - Revd W Adams
 Village Hall Accounts – C Munsey
 Church Charity Accounts – Church Warden

9. Community Police Team report - on display boards.

10. No other business.

Meeting closed at 8.45pm