**DRAFT MINUTES OF VILLAGE MEETING**

**HELD ON 23RD MAY 2022 AT 7PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

Poulton Parish Council

Rev. John Swanton

23 members of the public also attended the meeting

**PROPOSED CEMETERY**

Rev. Swanton gave an overview of the situation regarding the current churchyard at St. Michael & All Angels church. The churchyard currently has 20 burial plots left and the average over the passed few years, in terms of burials, has been 2/3 per year. Interment of ashes does not pose any issues. Once the burials plots are occupied (of which, three are reserved), the churchyard will be closed and will become the responsibility of the Parish Council for upkeep as is the case of the old churchyard at The Priory.

The Parochial Church Council has stated that only those eligible will now be permitted to be buried in the churchyard. Residents of the village and those who die whilst travelling through Poulton.

The church has excellent records of where the burial plots are in the churchyard although, not all have a headstone, as not everyone could afford one. It is church policy that there should be a permanency of burial.

Poulton Parish Council has the power to become a burial authority for a civil cemetery but, has no obligation to exercise these powers. Rev. Swanton noted that in Down Ampney, it took 7 years before a parcel of land was available as an extension of the churchyard.

Cllr. Davies outlined the work of the Parish Council to date regarding this issue which has been under discussion since 2015. The current preference appears to be for cremation rather than burial nationally.

The Parish Council has the power to compulsory purchase a parcel of land only from major landowners in the village. The Priory Estate were approached with a view to swapping a parcel of land so that a new cemetery could located within walking distance of the church and without the need of further car parking being installed. The land swap was rejected by Priory Estates although, two parcels of land were offered as an alternative. Unfortunately, neither of the parcels offered were suitable due to car parking issues and watercourses. Due to the pandemic, the issue ground to a halt and the planned village meeting could not take place.

It is estimated that 200 burial plots could be created in one acre of land at a cost of £40,000 plus the site purchase. The Parish Council would be able to administer charges for burial plots.

Public Questions & Views

Robin Spillar asked if it would be possible to extend the churchyard wall to accommodate more burial plots.

Cllr. Davies said that Englands is a playing field for the village and not just for church use. There were also practicalities such as levelling the land and archeological considerations, and this made it not possible on a practical level.

Hilary Antingham asked if the Parish Council had decided what they wanted to do.

Cllr. Collyer-Bristow said that if no other cemetery is made available in the village, then people would need to use either Cheltenham or Swindon for burials. He also stated that the Council would base their decision on the views of the villagers.

Rev. Swanton said that it may not be an issue as people move towards cremation rather than burial and the present churchyard has a 7–10-year lifespan currently.

Cllr. Davies said that the Parish Council has had no way of gauging feeling on the issue until the village meeting today.

Cllr. Collyer-Bristow noted that this was a sensitive subject and a difficult decision for people and would welcome villagers expressing their preference via alternative methods i.e., email/letter or a form which the Parish Council could prepare.

Mike Burbage is the church had statistics on preference for cremation over burials.

Rev. Swanton said fewer people were buried now than cremated but he did not have numbers to hand.

Mike Burbage said that 200 plots seemed over the top for a village cemetery.

Cllr. Davies said that it was possible to buy half an acre of land plus car parking space.

Cllr. Collyer-Bristow asked if those present would prefer an extension to the churchyard over a civil cemetery located elsewhere in the village. If that was of primary importance or a secondary issue.

Judy Harmsworth asked if people can reserve plots for the future.

Rev. Swanton said that three people had reserved and paid for plots already in the churchyard.

Cllr. Davies said that the Parish Council needed feedback on whether to pursue the idea of a cemetery.

Ian Turner asked if the Church of England has a national policy on churchyard capacity.

Rev. Swanton said that each church has a different policy. He said that for residents, the cost of a plot was £650 and non-residents £1000. Cotswold District Council also have cemeteries.

Caroline Illing said that the land should be close to the church otherwise it takes away from the importance of the burial, she also said that Englands is a huge field, and it would not impact on the sports facilities.

Caroline Illing suggested a vote to gauge interest.

Cllr. Hyslop said that an anonymous online survey may be a better option for people to state their wishes.

Caroline Illing said it was important to think of future generations who may want to be buried with family groups.

Ian Turner said there were financial implications of a decision to pursue the project and asked if the village wanted to spend a large amount of money on it.

Rev. Swanton said that in Down Ampney it had been an easy land swap with a willing landowner.

Cllr. Davies said the costs could be recouped but over an exceptionally long period of time.

Cllr. Collyer-Bristow said a whole village survey was needed to get more information on how people felt about the issue and whether to spend the money on it.

**SPEEDING & TRAFFIC**

Cllr. Hyslop said speeding and traffic calming had been the number one focus of the Parish Council. The Council were working to provide a safe environment for villagers to live. New collaborations had been made with the Police Crime Commissioner and the Councillors had attended meetings and had discussions with both the Police and Gloucestershire Highways. Cllr. Hyslop gave the statistics that at 30 mph 1 in 10 accidents were fatal whereas, at 40 mph 1 in 5 were fatal.

The Police were involved in a speeding survey in February on the London Road which showed of the 4901 cars using the road through the village each day on average, 735 cars were speeding at the Ranbury end of the village. At the Fairford end of Poulton, of the 10133 cars, 1520 were speeding.

An Action Plan had been produced for the village:

1. Police Enforcement – the Police had conducted several speed checks and handed out fines.
2. Community Speedwatch Programme – a group of volunteers had been assembled to conduct speed surveys with warning letters sent from the Gloucestershire Police to offenders. A speed gun had been purchased by the Parish Council for this purpose.
3. Greater awareness through signage. Cllr. Hyslop showed a series of possible signs which could be used. Signs were an emotional influence on behaviour if they included wildlife.
4. Static enforcement cameras.

Public Questions & Views

Sue Spillar asked what the cost would be of owning our own ANPR camera.

Cllr. Hyslop said that automatic recognition of numberplates cost around £5000 however, some support funding was available.

Ian Turner asked if there was a way of creating revenue for the village from speed cameras.

Cllr. Hyslop said that we can’t actually fine people. Lobbying for a change in legislation was the only way of doing that.

Ian Turner said that if we gave numberplates to the Police, could they not fine the culprits?

Cllr. Hyslop said that the Council were looking into the level of equipment necessary so that the Police could do that.

Vicky Cartwright asked if the village could fund the equipment necessary.

Cllr. Hyslop said that the Parish Council had already installed Vehicle Activated Speedsigns at either end of the village with data available to share with the Police.

Caroline Illing said that unless there was enforcement, hardcore speeders would carry on breaking the law.

Judy Harmsworth suggested using ‘smiley face’ signs instead of the current signs.

Robin Spillar suggested flashing up the numbers of prosecutions for speeding.

Cllr. Collyer-Bristow said that between 8pm and 7am, the data had shown excessive speeds being used through the village. He had experienced lorries thundering through at 5am.

Caroline Illing said that she had been overtaken in the 30mph and fines were the only solution.

Robin Green questioned the effectiveness of speed cameras unless they were the Home Office yellow boxes.

Pete Hutchinson said that in Rodborough, ANPR cameras pick up speeding offenders and they received letters, if they persist, they receive an enforcement ticket. He said that Anti-Social Behaviour Orders had also been used against persistent offenders. He said that evidence has shown that regular users of a road are more likely to speed rather than non-regular users who are more cautious of unfamiliar roads.

Tom Gillibrand asked if obstacles could be used on the road to slow traffic down.

Cllr. Hyslop said that parked cars on the road noticeably slowed down traffic. Legally, cars can be parked as long as they did not cause visibility issues. Obviously, not on the pavement, as this would be illegal.

Cllr. Davies said that the Council had looked into installing nibs and speed bumps, but these would not be permitted as the village has not got any streetlights.

Hillary Attingham asked if the 40-mph part of the village on London Road could be changed to 30 mph.

Cllr. Hyslop said that the Council are challenging this.

Cllr. Collyer-Bristow said that the traffic police had said that this would be possibility and the Council are pursuing it.

Pete Hutchinson said that in the late 1970’s buffer zones of a 10mph increase were introduced because it was felt unreasonable for traffic to change from 30 mph to 50 mph but now, there is no reason to have these buffer zones. He said that research has shown that people driving depending on the environment they are passing through and this had become Government National Policy.

Cllr. Hyslop said that the Council were also exploring extra painting on the road to give the illusion that the road narrows.

Cllr. Collyer-Bristow asked for a vote on whether street lighting was something the village would like to be installed.

The vote was a unanimous no.

Neil Shackell said that getting information to the Police was most valuable.

Cllr. Hyslop said that the Police had now looked at the data the Council had provided them with.

Robin Green asked how engaged wider representatives were with the Council’s project.

Cllr. Hyslop said that Cllr. Lisa Spivey was very engaged, and the Council had received a large amount of support from her. He said that National Policy and lobbying our MP was an option.

Cllr. Collyer-Bristow told the meeting that in March, the Council had sent a letter to Cllr. Spivey, the Police Commissioner and Mr Clifton-Brown MP but only Cllr. Spivey had responded. He said that the coverage by the BBC Points West and ITV had been good, but it was difficult getting a response from other organisations.

Mike Burbage said that we should be more up front with the cameras and see how we could raise money for a yellow home Office camera.

Cllr. Collyer-Bristow asked for a vote to see if the meeting would be in favour of funding a camera, there was a unanimous yes.

Andrew Harris made the point that due the increase in people walking from the Gilbertine and around the village, more people were crossing the road by The Paddocks, and this was a dangerous point as traffic is not normally doing 30 mph, at this point on the road. He suggested using nibs such as in Latton to move perception.

Cllr. Hyslop said that the nibs were only available in Latton as the village has street lighting however, the Council could lobby for road painting to achieve a similar effect.

Cllr. Davies said that rumble strips at the Ranbury end of the village caused noise pollution.

Mike Burbage said that secondary signage such as the emotive signage shown in Cllr. Hyslop’s presentation could have subliminal effect on drivers.

Andrew Harris said that if all the signage was taken away, drivers would be more hesitant, which is the other side of the argument for emotive signage.

Caroline Illing said that she agreed that the village didn’t want to be cluttered up with signage and they wouldn’t make any difference whereas fatality numbers may do.

Cllr. Collyer-Bristow said that the fatality numbers on the Fosse Way are accurate and any information of that type needed to be factual.

Pete Hutchinson said that emotive signs could only be used temporarily and that fatality signs were a fixed sign. He said that National Policy had moved towards removing signs and having shared spaces, he said 14 effective signs would be better than the 57 signs we have now.

Ian Turner said that on the London Road, the Vehicle Activated Speedsigns did show signs of the cars slowing down. He had noticed around half of cars slowing down although, they did accelerate into the 40-mph area. He said the broken white lines encourage overtaking.

Cllr. Collyer-Bristow said that working with authorities produced a lot of dead ends and the Parish Council, with its small budget and other items to pay for such as replacing playground equipment could only do so much.

Any Other Business

Vicarage Lane - Judy Harmsworth asked if the signs used either side of Church Lane could be put on Vicarage Lane too.

Andrew Harris said these signs were regularly ignored.

Cllr. Davies said there had been complaints about the signs from residents.

Suzanne Lee said that no one takes any notice of them and that more signs are not the answer.

Judy Harmsworth said that Ubico were unable to use the lane to collect the bins as the cars are in the way of the entrance.

Health & Safety Assessment – this document is now on the village website. Potholes, traffic issues and overgrown hedges were the main points. Parking on pavements was a Police issue as cars are not allowed to obstruct the pavements.

Cllr. Collyer-Bristow thanked everyone for their time and contributions. He said that the Parish Council was there to serve residents. He asked people to raise issues and the Council would do their best to help. He said that the Council was keen to work together with the villagers to achieve common goals.

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm.