

CROMHALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING/ASSEMBLY HELD TUESDAY 30th MAY 2023 at 7.30pm **IN CROMHALL VILLAGE HALL**

The 2023 Annual Parish Assembly meeting in Cromhall took place on 30th May at the Village Hall. There were 17 residents, 2 councillors and the Clerk present. The Chairman of the Parish Council welcomed everyone to the 2023 Annual Parish Meeting/Assembly meeting and introduced the vice chair and newly appointed clerk.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Director Earthworks

2. Minutes of the 2022 Meeting

Accepted.

3. Chair of Parish Council presentation on activities and achievements of Cromhall Parish Council 2022/23

The chair and vice chair of the Parish Council gave an overview of the achievements of the Parish Council for the previous year these consisted of:

- Installed Defibrillator at the Old Mushroom Farm.
- New notice board in the bus stop at Cromhall Common.
- Replaced fence at the bottom of the school field.
- Replaced a piece of play equipment in Townwell play area and planted new bushes.
- Grass cutting around the Parish along with litter picking.
- Grants provided to several organisations in Cromhall.
- King's Coronation mugs and teddy's for children.
- As a consultee involved in planning applications received and responded to South Gloucestershire Council in particular the application received for the solar farm at valley farm which involved community involvement and the 32 houses by the chapel. Monitoring and commenting on applications at Parish Council meetings not just in Cromhall but from surrounding areas which could have an impact on the Cromhall community.
- Champion Cromhall with South Gloucestershire Council to address the state of the roads, J14 improvements and footpath and stile maintenance.

Plans for the activities for the coming year were presented these include:

- Installation of a Defibrillator at Heathend Garage.
- More protection for the Bibstone Green
- Holding training for the village residents in using defibrillators.
- Parish Council involvement with CRSP Activities
- Liaison with Wickwar Quarry.

The Village Hall representative asked if they could use the Parish Council Notice Boards for communicating activities of the village hall. The Chair of the parish council stated the space on the boards is very limited and just meets the needs of the Parish Council. Although the provision of a notice board for use of the village hall may be a grant application opportunity. Communication from the audience also expressed concerns about the cars parking at Bibstone Green situation.

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4. Report from a representative of the village shop

The representative from the Village shop explained the feedback received back from the questionnaires which were sent out to the community and the suggestions received to make it a viable concern these included:

- Turn off fridges.
- The need to limit the stock of fruit and veg as waste costs of providing them last year was £1500.
- Change layout in store to ensure products can be seen one example being Pasta.
- Now Stock Noodles
- Having a presence on social media.
- Opening to 8pm Thursday and Friday.
- Over the last 25 weeks the average sales were £77 per week.
- The store made a loss of £6000 at the end of June.
- The old electricity charges were £4113 per annum the new charges from 1st July would be £9436.
- The request for Bromford to install solar panels was ignored.

There is a hope that there will be less loss this year as they are trying to provide a reasonable range of stock. In terms of staff to run the shop there is always the need for additional support. The representative from the shop raised the question concerning the grant application for an up-to-date coffee machine. The Clerk advised that he believed a decision had been made on the application and he would chase up a formal response.

5. Presentation from the Pastor of Cromhall Chapel

The Pastor from the Cromhall provided pictures of the chapel and explained that it could hold 60 people and it regularly holds 40 in the morning and 30 in the evening with the hall at the back used for midweek meetings.

The hall is also used on occasions for eating together functions such as for the Jubilee, Christmas and Men's and Women's breakfasts and social events. Speakers on different subjects have taken place on different subjects such as second world war vehicles have occurred in the past. They have also joined with St Andrews village jubilee picnic and provided face painting at the flower show for the Tots Group. A celebration event took place for the installation of the defibrillator fitted outside the church along with organising training. The Cromhall chapel also runs on a bi-weekly basis on a Thursday Townwell Tots a free stay and play session where parents and carers can relax and chat whilst children play. The church sign has also been used to advertise other village activities such as the flower show and shop. In terms of future activities, it is planned to have coffee mornings and setting up of an Alpha Course and there is a web page www.Cromwellchapel.org.

6. Report from Chair of Governors St Andrew School.

The chair of governors of St Andrews stated that the maximum number of pupils that could be accommodated was 90. Currently there are 67 with class sizes of 25/26 with the majority coming from Cromhall which means that funding is coming in for 80% staffing. There are also variations in numbers across the years from a full complement to spaces being available. The school field was seen to be a valuable resource for the school. The cost of staffing to meet the current numbers puts pressure on the budget being made available for heat light and books and infrastructure. It was explained that there is a need to encourage more pupils to attend from areas with preference given to Cromhall residence. The increased number of pupils would increase the finances of the school in order to support infrastructure projects such as remodelling and modifying part of the school and ongoing running costs. The Chair of Governors also felt that in any new housing development of approximately 100 would result in an increase in each year group class by 2.5. It was also explained that the school will be having a new head teacher who will start in September. The head teacher has had previous experience of being a head teacher and because of his experience in the role it is considered he will be an asset to the school.

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7. Report from Cromhall Road Safety Project (CRSP) Representative

The representative gave a brief overview of the initial need being identified for the organisation to be set up 18 months ago when a cat was run over and the community raised concerns at the speeding traffic including lorries and the community feel unsafe particularly the pedestrians. From November 21. A community speed watch group was set up of 11 individuals and has been successfully running over the last year with little resources and limited engagement with the police, but they have been very effective when they have been deployed. The next stage is to install an automatic ANPR Camera system and CRSP have been successful in raising funds for the installation and maintenance over a five-year period with an outstanding grant request required from the Police. At which point CRSP is requesting that Cromhall Parish Council provide a small amount of funding and become the senior responsible owner of the system. The installed system would collect data on speeding 24/7 including looking at pavements. It is hoped the system can be installed in 2023.

8. Report from the Governor of Leyhill Prison

The Governor Leyhill Prison stated that the previous year focus was on COVID recovery and the concerns of the risk of absconders. Absconders are broken down into two groups, those that abscond by walking out of the prison and those on temporary release failure to return. Eighteen months ago, proposed expansion to reduce the risk of absconders by improving the environment. In terms of numbers of absconders there was one in June last year and one on Temporary release in December last year. When this occurs WhatsApp notification scheme are sent out to members of the parish council, local schools and Tortworth to take precautions and update messages and usually they are captured within 24 to 48 hours. The absconders' figures are considered low considering 100 per day go out into the community.

Regarding expansion two additional residential units for 120 places are going forward to improve services and utilities. Setting up of the compound in November/December to replace accommodation lost 108 spaces and porta cabin 40 places used for COVID will now become a permanent fixture.

The current prison population is 461 previously 550 under a full regime. Leyhill has also carried out support projects for Tortworth estate and taken part in litter picking. A question was asked about how inmates get to college with the lack of available public transport. The response was that they have an internal fleet of vehicles they can use to provide this service.

Another question was asked about what action is being taken on the state of the Road past Tortworth. The representative explained they have been in communication with South Gloucestershire Council on the subject and it is believed repairs are to be carried out in July.

9. Report from Poor Allotment Charity

A trustee for the Poor Allotment explained that the poor Allotment had been held in trust since 1973 with the objective to relieve persons in hardship or distress in the parish of Cromhall. Funding is provided by land which is rented out. The land consists of 16 acres on five plots at Heathend. The funding is provided by two areas the rural payments agency, but this funding is being replaced by a new scheme with less money next year and the local land agent renewal each year. To qualify for gift funding the individual needs to have resided in Cromhall for 5 years and must be over 65 years old. The trustees consider who should receive the gift at its Autumn meeting. The income is distributed in the form of gift vouchers to be used in the village shop at Christmas time. (Written report at end of minutes)

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10. Report from Cromhall Village Hall Management Chair.

The Chair of the village hall explained that the first six months has been slow with hirers with several events cancelled. In the last six months there has been an increase in use coming out of COVID for private hire and regular customers these included Pilates, Yoga dance groups. There is an ongoing push to increase the usage and encourage more regular users such as craft groups, Tea at 3, Parish Council and the Cromhall Road Safety Project (CRSP). Feedback from users have focused on the heating problem which are met by plug in heaters and the lack of saucepans which are now in place. The storage area is being looked at with the possibility of utilizing a shed for the storage of chairs. A bimonthly quiz event is held for 40 people including drinks and snacks along with a summer drinks fare.

Two pieces of work are being looked at for the future one is the internal acoustics in the hall are considered poor when full of people. So, an audio-visual project loop system for hard of hearing at a cost of £4000 is being looked at. The second is the outside area for a community project in the past Eastwood Park involved in weeding. Improving the car parking and resurfacing and a subcommittee is looking at grant applications. Better use of external area is being considered along with the external rear wall needs repair.

11. Items raised by electors of Cromhall Parish

No additional items were raised as it was felt by the participants that any issues they wanted to be raised were communicated in the question-and-answer sessions of each presentation.

Chairman

27/06/23

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Poor Allotment Charity Report

CROMHALL POORS ALLOTMENT CHARITY

Registered Charity No: 204061

Secretary: Mrs.S.Wray
Tel: 01454 294387
E-mail: wraysue@googlemail.com

Bushrods
Fiddlers Bottom
Cromhall
GL12 8AW

APA Report 2023

Brief outline of the charity.

The object of the charity is for the relief of the poor in the parish of Cromhall and its income, mostly through land grass keep rent, continues to be distributed to people over 65 who have been in the village 5 years or more. This is currently in the way of vouchers to be used in the village shop.

Individuals can apply for assistance if they find themselves in need, and all requests will be considered.

The charity is run by four Parish Council appointed trustees – currently, David White, Caroline Massey, Doug Collett and Clive Young and all are in office until at least next year. (Two will need to be appointed/reappointed next year for the next four-year term.)

A land agent is employed to oversee the administration of the charity owned land.

Brief presentation of Accounts 2022....

Income was generated, as usual, by the Grass Keep, a Rural Payment Agency payment and electricity wayleave which totalled £3,124, £250 less than in 2021 (The RPA payment, of £1,334 is being reduced annually and the amount available for the purposes of the charity will inevitably fall.)

Expenditure included water rates, secretary fee, agent's fees and the Christmas Gifts

(64 at £25 each = £1,600) was £2,470

Profit over the year 2022 = £654

Individual requests for assistance continue to remain rare and none were made in 2022.

The charity is committed to fulfilling its brief and had no other matters to consider in 2022.

Sue Wray, Secretary 20.05.23