

PAULTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Paulton Annual Parish Assembly held on Tuesday 1st May 2018 starting at 7.00pm in the Village Hall

The committee reports are on the Parish Councils website or a hard copy is available on request.

1. Introduction and welcome by the Chairman of the Parish Council

Councillor A Lyons, Chairman of Paulton Parish Council, welcomed parishioners and chaired the meeting. There were 21 members of the public present and 14 Councillors

2. Apologies for absence – there were none.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 25th April 2017 – the minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

4. Guest Speakers –

Martin Roberts, local TV presenter and property expert gave a presentation and talk on his time on the TV show 'I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here'.

Martin Roberts has lived in the village for 30 years and his children attend the local school. Martin is on the BBC TV show 'Homes Under The Hammer' which has been on TV every week day for the last 15 years.

Following the presentation about Martin's time in the jungle he spoke about how much it had changed him from a health prospective – overall felt healthier, weight loss and remarkably his asthma completely disappeared.

Martin spoke about a children's book that he has written, 'Sadsville' which has the support of Childline and the NSPCC. The project began in Bath and was supported by local businesses and B&NES Council, the result being that all children aged 9 & 10 years old in the B&NES area were able to receive a free copy of the book. The book carries important links to NSPCC and Childline.

Martin has set up a Charity – 'The Martin Roberts Foundation' is a vehicle to raise money through donations and sponsorship to support carefully selected educational and well-being initiatives for children and young people. As a Father himself and a long time supporter and campaigner for the NSPCC, Martin set up the charity to help address the need for ongoing awareness of charities like Childline amongst children and young people. Where childhood mental health issues are making the headlines regularly, Martin and The Foundation want to show children that there can be a better way and that help is out there, no matter how big or small the problem is.

The Charities website link <http://www.martinrobertsfoundation.org/>

Martins own website is www.martinroberts.co.uk
@TVMartinroberts

John Reynolds, 'The Marathon Man' – John spoke about his journey to becoming a long distance runner despite his health issues.

John has been running now for 14 years, previously to then he had no interest in running at all. His journey started following a serious health issue which had to be treated immediately with radio therapy. When in hospital John was touched by seeing very young children who were there with a serious illness.

4/5 months after John had his treatment, the side effects caused his body to shut down to such an extent that he couldn't dress himself and he became reliant on drugs. John did not want to rely on drugs for the rest of his life so with family support he decided to come off the drugs and he set himself a challenge to walk to the end of the garden which was approximately 50 metres, it took 2 hours. Undeterred he kept pushing on until about a month later when, with the support of his family, he walked a mile.

Every time John gave up on his running and cut back on the distance his body would give up again, it appeared that to keep his condition at bay, running was the only activity that worked.

John spoke about the family members that he had lost and how they had inspired him to take on more challenges, one being his first marathon, Snowdon, which was the only marathon he could find in the country that was being held on 29th October his cousin's birthday. In 2012 he ran 440 miles in 6 days and 8 hours.

John also supports runners who are complete beginners in learning to run. John set up Westfield TT that has 60 members. On Thursday 3rd May John is doing his latest challenge – running 400 miles in 4 days.

Kathleen Still – volunteer at Paulton Library. Kathleen gave a humorous account of being a volunteer at the library.

Kathleen spoke about how she became a volunteer at the library and spoke highly of the library and what it provides, it's not just a library but a Hub where newcomers to the village make new friends, new mums meet other mums. Kathleen read out all the different queries that people come to the library for but that aren't for taking out a book, the Library/Hub is much more than just a library.

5. Presentation on the new proposed website for the Parish Council

The present website is now 5 years old; it is the Parish Councils main source of providing communications; however it is in need of an update. The new website enables visual impaired persons easier use. All the new pages were shown and explained.

6. Library/Hub consultation

A member of the Library/Hub working party spoke about the consultation and the reason why Paulton Parish Council is considering taking it on.

The reason is because B&NES Council is strapped for cash. It is cutting £800,000 from its library budget. This means smaller branch libraries like Paulton will have to change how they are run as B&NES will no longer fund them. Instead B&NES resources will be concentrated on the three main libraries: 1) Bath Central Library, 2) Midsomer Norton and 3) Keynsham. This will fulfil their statutory duty to provide a library service.

However, if Paulton Parish Council does take over the running of the Library/Hub, there will be a cost, which is why residents are being consulted. It is therefore important that residents tell the Parish Council whether they want the library to stay open or not. The Parish Council have been aware of this, so:

- The working party has been negotiating with B&NES over many months to try to find a way forward to keep Paulton Library at The Hub open. We have now worked out the details of what this will mean to keep the Library open.
- Based on the figures the Parish Council has been given by B&NES, it works out at approximately £41,544 per year to keep Paulton Library at the Hub open. This would mean an increase of approximately 41p per household per week based on a Band D property, or £21.30 per year.
- A business plan has been produced by the Parish Councils working party, showing the costs of running the library at the Hub. This is available on the website.

So if residents vote to keep the library open, what will happen?

- The library will be run by the current team of trained library volunteers who staff it at present, led by the co-ordinator, Kathleen Still.
- There will be no professional librarians staffing the library, although there will be professional help and advice available.
- B&NES will still supply books and will have a planned rotation of stock.
- Borrowing and returning books will still take place but under a new system as the kiosk system will be replaced by a scanner.
- If Paulton Library stays open, it is planned that the café will too. There are no plans to close the café. The café will not be run by Paulton Parish Council, but will remain as an independent business.
- A member of Paulton Parish Councils admin staff will manage the administration of Paulton Library.

What will happen if residents vote not to raise the precept to support the running of the library hub?

- Paulton Parish Council will not be able to afford to run Paulton Library.
- What happens to the library will then be referred back to B&NES - B&NES will investigate if there is a community group in the area who would be prepared to take over the running of Paulton Library. If none is found, Paulton Library will be closed.
- If the library closes, it would be difficult for the café to stay open as they would incur the full cost of running the premises.

What is the consultation about?

- The consultation is to find out if Paulton residents will pay more for their precept to keep Paulton Library at the Hub open.
- The Consultation questionnaire will be in the June edition of the Paulton Magazine which goes to every household in Paulton. The questionnaire survey is also available on Survey Monkey.
- There are 2 other occasions where you can see more detailed information about the library in the Hub and speak to Parish Councillors who are on the library working party. These are: Saturday June 9th 10-12pm, in the Hub Library and all day from 10-8pm in the Village Hall Meeting room, Wednesday 20th June.
- As in local and general elections the majority voting FOR or AGAINST will decide the fate of Paulton Library & Café at the Hub.

Please make sure your voice is heard, whether you wish to keep the library open or not. Register your opinion on how Paulton Parish Council should proceed. 1st July 2018 is the closing date for the questionnaire survey to be completed and returned to Paulton Parish Council's office

7. Public Forum

Q: Paulton Library/Hub serves more than just the residents of Paulton; regulars come from neighbouring communities such as Farrington Gurney, Clutton etc. Can they be approached to ask them for a contribution towards the costs of running the Library/Hub?

A: Precept that is raised by Parish Councils can only be spent in their own areas, however visitors coming to Paulton to use the facilities and also to contribute to Paulton's economy.

It was then reported that the B&NES Cabinet Member responsible for Libraries and is a member of Clutton Parish Council as well and has said they would be prepared to spend some money on Paulton Library.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm.