

Washingborough Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held remotely under current legislation on Wednesday 9th March 2022 at 6pm.

AP 22/1. **CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME**

Cllr Fothergill opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance. He explained that this meeting is a legal meeting and is for the benefit of our residents to raise any queries and also to make suggestions for ideas that could enhance the village.

AP22/2. **NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING held on the 15th April 2021**

These were agreed and signed as the minutes.

AP22/3. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman reported:

This year has been similar to the last with many and various lockdowns where facilities can't be used or can with strict limitations meaning that sometimes the Community Centre is open and others when it is closed. The Council has continued to support the NHS by opening the Community Centre for blood donor sessions and the warfarin clinic which has required additional cleaning.

I am pleased to say that the Community Centre is now fully open.

While the sports facilities including the football pitches have had limited use the grass and weeds still grow and our staff have worked hard at maintaining the pitches and courts which are now ready for the new season. All 9 of our football clubs have signed on for the new season as have Lincoln Archers. The Netball Club have signed on as well and have generously offered to contribute to the cost of cleaning the courts.

Ongoing village maintenance has continued with Litter and dog bins emptied and services of the environmental warden have been maintained during this period. The Council has been well supported by our staff, a big thank you to them.

Monthly Council meetings have continued via Zoom up to May 2021 with face-to-face meetings from then onwards allowing us to carry on with Council business.

Last summer we held a Scarecrow Festival which was well supported with many imaginative designs and was well received by many residents.

We launched an initiative with a request for volunteers for litter picking to help keep the village clean which attracted support from a number of residents. The Council supplied high viz jackets, litter pickers, gloves and sacks to the teams and this has been successfully operating ever since. Following a number of complaints regarding traffic speed, our other initiative, asking for volunteers for a traffic watch scheme unfortunately failed to get sufficient support to allow it to go ahead. However, the Council has purchased an interactive speed sign which you will see at various locations around the village.

Last year I mentioned that there has been an increase in antisocial behaviour with damage to the pavilion resulting in destruction of some walls and the bricks have been thrown onto the roof damaging the solar panels which we had to pay to be removed for safety reasons, doors to the

outside toilets have been smashed, guttering has been torn down and fencing destroyed. One of the nastiest incidences is broken glass trod into the grass where anybody not just children could be badly hurt, the police are aware and have increased patrolling the area. This behaviour has continued with fires being started to try and set fire to trees as well as evidence of drug dealing and use but more worryingly is threatening behaviour to residents who tried to douse the flames by young children. If the culprits are apprehended the council will prosecute and ask for damages as it is our duty to exercise proper financial control of the council tax precept we are allocated.

We would ask everybody to be vigilant and report any incidents witnessed to the police or the Parish Clerk. Costs for repairs or preventative measures will be paid for by your council tax which will have to rise as a result of this wanton damage.

On a happier note, plans are underway for a festival to celebrate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's platinum jubilee which will take place on Saturday 4th June, look out for details under "WashFest" The Parish Council has vacancies for new councillors to bring us up to our full quota of 13 if you would like to be part of the way forward, please contact the Parish Clerk for details.

AP22/4. **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Finance Chairman reported:

Although as the Chairman has said, this year has been a little better than last year we have still suffered from a reduced income due to the community centre being closed for part of the year. We have stayed within our budget, but our reserves have taken a bit of a hit and we have had to sacrifice some of our plans, for example we have not been able to replace the curtains in the community centre yet. We have also had a lot of expenditure because of vandalism. We had already installed metal railings across the outside toilet entrances at the Pavilion, but were very disappointed to find that they had been vandalized within 24 hours of installation, which then cost a further £500 to repair. Due to this and other incidents, we are going to have to spend quite a bit of money on upgrading our CCTV and alarm systems in the coming year.

We are also in the process of appointing a new Assistant Clerk as our previous one left us just as lockdown was starting. Also, national insurance has increased for the next year and so have pension contributions. So, our wage bill will be going up.

We have been able to give some money through our grant scheme this year to help support the Church, and the Penfold Players.

Our biggest expenditure in the 22-23 financial year will be for the new play equipment and for the outdoor gym set which has already been installed. The project will cost around £122,000; however, this money is already accounted for with money saved up by the Council for this purpose, some section 106 money, and by our application for a grant for £32,000 from FCC, which was successful. We are hoping that this upgrade to our play area will provide a welcome boost to the village.

We are very careful with the money we receive through the precept, and once again our Clerk has done a great job in ensuring that our expenditure remains within our budget. However, we do walk a tightrope between being a burden on the village and yet asking for enough money on the precept to run the village given the rising costs. This year we are asking for a precept of £180,300 a small increase on last year, however we can account precisely for where this money will be spent and our accounts are

THESE NOTES WERE TAKEN BY THE CLERK AND CANNOT BE REGARDED AS OFFICIAL MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS UNTIL APPROVED AND SIGNED AT THE NEXT PARISH MEETING

always available for public scrutiny.

AP22/5. ELECTORS' QUESTIONS WERE AS FOLLOWS

None

AP22/6. Those present were invited to view the tenders' drawings for the upgrade to the Play Park

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.20pm.

SIGNED

DATE