**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT WILMCOTE VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 23rd MARCH 2022 – NO. 119**

1. **Present:**  Cllr. Ray, Chairman, Cllr Shilvock, Cllr. McMillan, Cllr. Stewart and two members the public.

1. **Apologies:** District Cllr. Shenton and County Cllr. Daniell.

**3. To receive written requests for dispensation for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:**

No written requests were received.

 **4. Application received from Mr. Leo Mahon expressing an interest in being co-opted onto the Parish Council:**

This resident and his family are known to Councillors and Cllr. Ray proposed he be co-opted, seconded by Cllr. McMillan and agreed by all current Councillors.

 A Declaration of Acceptance of Office was completed and signed. Cllr Mahon will complete and sign a Register of Interests and deliver it to the Clerk in due course.

**5. To approve for signature the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 19th January 2022.**

 These minutes were approved by all members present and signed by the Chairman.

**6. Public Participation:**

 The two members of the public were attending purely as observers.

**7. County & District Councillors reports:**

Reports from both Councillors are appended to the minutes.

**8. Planning applications:**

The status of current planning applications was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Planning application No. 22/00648/TREE St Andrews Church was then considered. As this appears to be general maintenance work to the trees Cllr Ray recommended approval and this was agreed by all Councillors.

**9. Correspondence:**

All correspondence received and previously circulated electronically was taken as read.

**10. To consider Adoption and Implementation of LGA Councillor Code of**

 **Conduct:**

 We were notified that this has now been adopted by Stratford on Avon and Warwick District Councils. Having studied this Cllr. Ray recommended that we also adopt it, seconded by Cllr. Stewart and agreed by Cllrs. Stewart and McMillan.

**11. Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. To consider a ‘one off’ fund for local community**

 **Groups and organisations to assist with events:**

We were contacted by Mrs. Lorimer asking if theParish Council would be able to assist with Public Liability Insurance and SDC licence costs for the use of the field off Glebe Estate for use during the event.

 Cllr Shilvock proposed up to £1000.00 be set aside to provide assistance to groups organising events. Seconded by Cllr Ray and agreed by all. As we don’t currently know if there are any other groups organising events a second proposal was made by Cllr. Shilvock that we initially offer £200.00 to Mrs Lorimer. Seconded by Cllr. Mahon and agreed by all.

 Cllr. McMillan queried whether the village hall are organising anything and wondered if they could add Mrs. Lorimer’s group to their insurance policy temporarily. As this was unknown Cllr, McMillan said he would check with a member of the committee.

**12. Keep fit/Tai Chi group and Board Games Group - possible assistance**

 **with funding.**

The Clerk was advised by Mr. Perry that funding was no longer required for the Board Games Group as Aston Cantlow Social Club are happy to host this Group without charge**.**

 A belated application had been received from the Keep Fit/Tai Chi organiser requesting assistance towards the cost of hiring the village hall. Since the pandemic numbers have been fluctuating and they may struggle to continue. It was agreed that we should support this group and a figure will be decided at the next meeting

 once we know the position of the Jubilee fund.

**13. Countryside Wilding Project:**

Mr. Perry is going to put out feelers to see if there is any interest in this project and will let us know if he might need some help with funding.

**14. Willow Wood Play Area update:**

Cllr McMillan reported that all is in order and the latest inspection report did not raise any concerns**.**

**15. 20’s plenty for Warwickshire campaign:**

County Cllr. Daniell reported at the Parish Council Assembly earlier that Warwickshire County Council does not appear to be considering introducing 20mph limits as a priority. The 20mph can only be considered in areas where speeds are below 30mph or where traffic calming can be installed.

**16. Gypsy & Traveller Site Pathlow:**

 Ameeting was arranged with our MP, Nadhim Zahawi, to raise awareness of the issues landowners in the parish have faced over the years. It was agreed that the best way to take this forward would be to follow this up with a meeting of landowners, representatives of Warwickshire County Council and the police, and District Cllr. Shenton. A meeting has now been arranged on 31st March at Wilmcote Village Hall.

**17. The Green: Vehicle damage.**

Concerns have been expressed by residents about the damage caused to The Green by vehicles driving over the edges and parking on it. Verge protection posts had been sourced and the Clerk was asked to arrange a site visit from a representative to discuss with the Chairman and provide quotation.

**18. Defibrillators**:

 Henley 1st Responders have said they would be willing

 to host an Awareness session in the use of defibrillators as and when we are ready. Cllr Stewart, Lead Cllr. for this item, is more than happy for the Clerk to go ahead and make arrangements.

**19. Councillors’ reports and items for the agenda for the next meeting**.

 Verge protection posts for The Green.

**20. Date of next meeting:** 18th May. Annual Parish Council meeting

 followed by ordinary Parish Council meeting.

No further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.16 pm

**District Councillor’s report as at 23/03/2022**

****

**Garden Waste subscription**

**The new rate that I have proposed and has been accepted by full Council is £42 per year which is a 5% increase on last year’s rate. There won’t be an early bird discount this year as it was an introductory discount to the scheme. The lines and website are now open for applications. Remember that you need a new permit from 1st April 2022 and we need at least a week to set up so renew now to ensure that your green bin continues to be emptied after 1st April**

**Edkins Park**

The Planner has said that they can’t see any application on the system and the Senior Planner has also sent me a note this afternoon confirming that no plans have as yet been received.

**VAS signage**

The last message on this appears to state that the original location causes less harm with regards to heritage assets. I have asked the planner this afternoon what she will be recommending to Graham Stanley but have not received a reply at this point.

**Gypsy &Traveller site Pathlow**

There is a meeting planned on Thursday 31st March at 2pm between the landowners, WCC, myself, Liz, Piers and Ben Hembry (Police).

**Community Speedwatch**

I am having difficulty in getting members of Wootton Wawen Speed Watch out as many work Monday to Friday. My aim would be to use a more flexible approach with Paul of Wilmcote Speed Watch and the newly formed Bearley Speed Watch which will hopefully add interest and mass allowing us to go out more.

**Revenue & Benefits**

The £150 payment to everyone on Council Tax Bands A-D from the Government is proving to be a monster to administer. Over 20% of people don't pay by DD so we don't have their bank details. Revenues & Benefits section will have to write to those residents, so it's not going to be quick or easy. If any resident pays by their council tax any other way than by direct debit I would suggest that they contact the customer service team at Stratford and check that they do have your bank account details or at least agree how the rebate will be paid to them. The number to call is 01789 267575.

**Climate Change**

I am the Chair of the Climate Change Panel and a few weeks ago I held the 3rd public question time which was well received and is broadcast live on You Tube. The next one is due to be held in May. It is broadcast live on Youtube or you can attend in person (subject to conditions and pre booking at this moment in time) so if you have any questions regarding the SDC response to Climate Change then get in touch and ask your questions either in person at the meeting or over the internet via Teams as I have changed the format to allow for a hybrid meeting where attendance can be in person or virtually. Questions must be submitted by approx. two weeks before the meeting and if accepted you will be asked whether you want to ask the question yourself or whether you want me as the Chair to ask the question on your behalf. The public sessions are always a great opportunity for you to have your say and ask the panel of six, specific questions about Climate Change.

**I attended and presented at the Warwickshire County Council conference held on Friday 11th March at Warwick University.** What I made clear is the adaptation is now more important than it has ever been due to the general acceptance amongst the experts that any hope of limiting global temperature rises to 1.5 degree C or below has now all but disappeared so it is essential that we learn to live with what is happening now because in many ways it is as good as it gets. Why do I agree with the experts well it’s because the fallout from the energy crisis, the war in Ukraine and that a number of countries including ourselves are now rethinking whether we should in the short to medium term use more coal and allow further exploration in the North Sea plus the unthinkable, fracking. We really do have no choice as renewables cannot provide a secure source of power at the moment that meets all of our needs. Even the Net Zero commitment to 2050 looks like it may be watered down. This makes more sense as I have been clear that we are trying to move to Net Zero before we have security of power supplies. The energy policy is flawed and we must be pragmatic and sensible about this and if that means slowing down the move to Net Zero at this point and increasing the pace in later years once we have energy security (or a greater level of energy security).

**Waste and the 123+ service (reminder)**

There has been increased interest in this but very little information given out and this is deliberate. Communications are now coming out and you will see a lot of messaging and during April the new food caddies will be delivered to every address, a smaller 7ltre caddie for in the house plus a 23l caddie for outdoors. Whilst they could be used now we are asking residents to save them until the 1st August onwards. Inside the caddie will be a booklet with the new collection calendar and further details of how the system will work. This new service is good for the environment as the food waste will be sent to anaerobic digester and the methane siphoned off to produce power whilst the green waste will not have to be treated at such high temperatures (to kill off pathogens) as putting food into the green bin will be ended.

**Tourism**

Shakespeare’s England Tourism Forum and our portfolio holder for Tourism (Matt Jennings – Henley) have issued the following message.

*Utilise TripAdvisor to help your local tourism – it makes a difference when people search for recommendations / things to do in the area - use it as it helps your local businesses get recognised*

**Planning**

I know that some applicants have complained about the lack of progress of their application but there has been welcome progress on planning recruitment with the appointment of a new Interim Head of Planning together with some internal promotions to fill a number of vacancies.

**Proposal to merge with Warwick DC**

Both district councils have agreed to submit an application to the Secretary of State asking for permission to merge. The application was submitted at the end of December and the indications are that we might get an indicative decision around May, in the meantime it is always possible that the County will be invited to submit their proposals for a single unitary. Where the process differs is that the two District Councils can apply to merge but the County have to be invited. In the meantime we continue to talk with our opposite numbers at Warwick district council and will be aiming to set up a joint Cabinet that will look at certain issues that affect both Councils. This has yet to be agreed but it is a logical step forward.

**Council Tax**

The budget for the next municipal year has been approved and I thought comparison of what the district council band D charge will be compared to other district councils within Warwickshire might be useful.

The levels of Council Tax to be charged by the other Borough/District Councils in the county for a Band D property in 2022/23 are, to the best of my knowledge:

 2021/22 Increase 2022/23

North Warwickshire £217.30 £5.00 £222.30

Nuneaton and Bedworth £244.66 £4.95 £249.51

Rugby - Town Area £230.25 £5.00\* £235.25

Warwick £176.86 Nil £176.86

**Stratford £149.12 £5.00 £154.12**

\* Assumed.

You can see that compared to other councils with the County the district council charge is actually low and therefore offers great value.

**Ukraine**

No one could fail to be moved by the pain and suffering of the people of Ukraine and the atrocities they are suffering from the invasion and war that Russia have inflicted upon them. Their brave soldiers and ordinary citizens are putting up an amazing resistance to this barbaric onslaught and our thoughts and prayers must be for this war to stop and the peaceful citizens of Ukraine be allowed to rebuild their lives. The impacts of the invasion will be felt across the world.

**Feel free to contact me if you need further details.**

**Cllr Ian Shenton**

**Proud to be the District Councillor for Wootton Wawen Ward (Wootton Wawen, Langley, Preston Bagot, Billesley, Bearley, & Wilmcote) – Tel 07971 343074 or 01564 795360**

**Weekly Update Warwickshire County Council**

**Alcester Division**

**Local updates**

Covid-19:

People aged 75 years and older, residents in care homes for older people, and those aged 12 years and over with a weakened immune system will be offered a spring booster of coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine. Appointments will be available from the National Booking Service shortly.

A leaflet with information about the spring booster jab for over 75s and older residents in care homes is available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/1058449/UKHSA-12308-COVID-19-spring-booster-guide-for-over-75s.pdf

Homes for Ukraine scheme:

On the 14th March the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, gave a statement to Parliament about the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

In the statement, he confirmed that the scheme will:

• Offer a route to those who want to come to the UK who have someone here willing to provide them with a home

• Enable individuals, charities, community groups and businesses to volunteer accommodation and provide a route to safety for Ukrainians, and their immediate family members, forced to escape their homeland

• Provide accommodation via sponsors for as long as they are able, but the government has a minimum expectation of six months

Someone is eligible for the scheme if they are a Ukrainian national or the immediate family member of a Ukrainian national and were resident in Ukraine prior to 1 January 2022.

The government will welcome as many arrivals as possible, based on the number of sponsors.

People arriving under this scheme will be able to:

• Live and work in the UK for up to three years

• Access healthcare, benefits, employment support, education, and English language tuition

Individuals who wish to sponsor a named person should get in contact with them directly and prepare to fill in a visa application with all the required details. The visa application will go live on 18 March.

Individuals who do not know anyone to sponsor may wish to get in touch with charities, faith groups or local community organisations who are starting to make connections between individuals.

Warwickshire County Council will work with the national government to ensure homes being offered are suitable and that every precaution is taken to ensure safeguards are in place for people offering up their homes and to ensure the safety of Ukrainian nationals.

Council exposure to Russian and Belarusian Companies:

On 11 March, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, wrote to councils about the government’s sanctions on Ukraine and Belarus.

In the letter, he urges them to keep up to date with the list of sanctions, which can be expected to grow, and confirms that UK legislation, guidance and updates are available on the Russia financial sanctions pages on GOV.UK.

The Secretary of State has also urged councils to scrutinise their contracts and determine their exposure to Russian and Belarusian owned companies, whilst also praising the work already being done. He also confirmed that the government is exploring what options are possible to assist councils who are

Grammar School 11+ Test:

Children currently in Year 5 in Warwickshire schools who want to apply to one of the county’s six grammar schools in September 2023 will now take an 11+ exam from GL Assessment.

Read more: https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/2808/warwickshire-grammar-school-applicants-for-2023-entry-will-take-the-11-test-from-a-new-exam-provider

SEND Webinar:

Warwickshire County Council is hosting another special educational needs and disabilities webinar and this time it is on the topic of educational transitions.

Please register to attend here: https://bit.ly/SendWebinarMar

Updates:

Please be aware that Mark and Piers post regular updates to /AmazingAlcester/ – but we are also keen to share good news. If you have any stories that you want us to share, please let us know.

www.facebook.com/amazingalcester/

www.twitter.com/amazingalcester/

www.instagram.