

WICKLEWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

3rd April 2023 at 7.30 at Wicklewood Village Hall

Present: John Seville (JS) Chair, Richard Goodings (RG), Stephen Brown (SB), John Hipperson (JH), Hilary Matthews (HM)

In attendance: Helen Frayer (HF) Parish Clerk

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies received Nick Kemp, Margaret Dewsbury, Richard Elliott, Mike Gamble. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting,

2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD 4th APRIL 2022: Resolved, to agree these as correct – RG proposed, JH seconded, all agreed.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

At the annual Parish Council meeting May 2022, the positions were elected as follows: John Seville - Chairman, Nick Kemp - Vice Chairman, Playing Field & Play Area Inspector - Louise Downton and Allotments Inspector - Richard Goodings. Joel Pailles resigned from the Council in September 2022 due to a conflict of interest with his new job. I would like to thank Joel for his service. The vacancy was advertised, and Hilary Matthews was co-opted in December 2022. Louise Downton resigned from the Council in March 2023 and due to the forthcoming elections in May 2023 the vacant position was not advertised. I would like to thank Louise for her service. As no one came forward to take over the Playing Field & Play Area inspections I agreed to take this on until the election in May 2023. If after the election no one volunteers for this role (Councillor or Resident) then the Parish Council will have to contract this out at a cost to the council. I would like to thank our Parish Clerk Helen Frayer on behalf of myself and my fellow councillors for her work during the year. Our Booking Clerk Rachael Mold resigned in July 2022. On behalf of myself and my fellow councillors I would like to thank Rachael for her service. The vacancy was advertised, and Tina Philips was appointed to the position in August 2022. On behalf of myself and my fellow councillors I would like to thank Tina for her service to date.

The Council has continued through the year to maintain the Village Hall to a high standard. The hot water heater in the kitchen broke down during the summer and had to be replaced. The opportunity was also taken to relocate the water heater to the boiler room and supply hot water to a new butlers (bucket) sink in the boiler room in addition to the kitchen. This has eliminated the situation of cleaning buckets being filled and emptied in the kitchen, which is unhygienic. Dream Team Cleaning continues to provide cleaning services at the Village Hall and the licensee of the Buck Public House at Morley continues to provide a licenced bar at the Village Hall when required.

The letting income from the Village Hall is the major income stream for the Council. The Village Hall evenings and weekend hire rate remained unchanged from April 2022, but as previously agreed at the December 2020 review, the two-tier pricing system with a lower weekday daytime hourly rate was removed, resulting in a single daytime hourly rate from April 2022. Due to unexpected increases in the hall running costs and the predicted rise in energy costs it was agreed to implement a small increase to the hire rates from September 2022. At the annual review in February 2023 a further increase was approved from April 2023, due to further increases in costs identified in the parish budget for 2023-24. Despite the increases in hire rates, they continue to be some of the most reasonable in the area.

The Playing Field and the children's play area continues to be enjoyed by parishioners of all ages. Replacement Goal Nets were purchased during the year and the worn goal areas were levelled and returfed in March 2023. Play equipment ground repairs, which includes levelling worn areas and new safety matting above, was approved in March 2023 and has just been completed.

The allotments continue to be enjoyed by parishioners, with all plots let. The new community orchard with wildflower underplanting would appear to have survived the very hot summer. The two Council owned agricultural fields continue to be let for commercial use under a farm business agreement.

The Council once again undertook the verge cutting in the parish, together with the areas of grass which are maintained within the village, with the County Council paying the Parish Council for taking responsibility for these activities.

The Speed Awareness Monitor (SAM 2) (flashing speed sign) continues to be moved around the pre-approved locations to record speeds and flash when vehicles are over 30mph. The readings generated are recorded on the village website. Councillor Nick Kemp and Stephen Brown assist with the SAM2.

A Community Speed Watch consisting of a group of parish volunteers received training from the police during the summer and following this have been carrying out speed watches at the police approved locations. On behalf of the parish, I would like to thank the Community Speed Watch volunteers for their work and look forward to their report.

A Bus Shelter near the Cherry Tree PH, funded through the 50/50 Parish Partnership Scheme and a Members Highways Grant via our District Councillor, was installed during May 2022.

The Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee event took place on Thursday 2nd June 2022 at the village hall and playing field culminating in the lighting of a beacon. This was organised by a Wicklewood Community Group who donated 75% of the profit towards new play equipment on the Playing Field and 25% to a charity supporting Ukraine. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the UK's longest-serving monarch, died on 08 September 2022 aged 96, after reigning for 70 years. The Council placed a book of condolence in the lobby of the Village Hall for those who wish to leave messages in remembrance of Her Majesty The Queen. The book is now held by the Wicklewood Archive Group. At the time of writing a group of residents were organising a Coronation event on Sunday 07 May 2023 to celebrate the Coronation of His Majesty The King and Her Majesty The Queen Consort.

The Council held Anglian Water to account regarding the maintenance of their foul water pumping station and emergency sewage discharge to the river. The maintenance was completed, but the installation of a standby generator to maintain supply to the pump during power outages, thus reducing the emergency sewage

discharge to the river, is still outstanding. This was supposed to be completed by the end of financial year ending April 2023.

The Council made representations to the South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan objecting to the proposed 40 plus house surrounding the school, which would be an unprecedented scale of development for the village and would destroy the extensive open views of the surrounding countryside and the setting of the village.

I will let the Clerk go through the financial details of the year, but I am pleased to say through careful management and despite recent increased costs, due to the unprecedented global cost of living crisis caused by coronavirus lockdowns and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Council has been able to maintain the parish precept for 2023/24 at the same level.

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for all their hard work during the year, particularly those who have special responsibilities. Richard Goodings and Louise Downton for carrying out their regular safety inspections and Nick Kemp and Stephen Brown for the SAM2 speed sign. I would also like to thank John Hipperson who has contributed to discussions and the working of the council during the year and more recently Hilary Matthews.

4. OBSERVATIONS ON PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023
HF delivered the report, full details attached. End of year balance £44,448.63.

5. REPORTS FROM:

5.1 County Councillor – MD had provided a written report, attached and circulated.

5.2 District Councillor – RE provided a written report, attached and circulated

5.3 Wicklewood Support Fund (Poors Charity) – Mike Gamble, Secretary and Treasurer of the charity had given apologies and sent his report

- In September the charity applied to The Norfolk Community Foundation under their cost-of-living winter crisis fund for Old Age Pensioners. We received £100 which enabled us to donate £50 each to our two eligible 2021 applicants
- The Income of the charity in 2022 from our investments was £216.00
- At Christmas 2022 the charity made grants of £55 each to four applicants
- The charity's assets are held in 398 COIF Charities Investment Fund Income units which on 31st December 2022 had a value of £7223.42.

5.4 Old Village Hall Trust – Peter Woodrow provided a report, attached. Grants totalling £340 were given through the year and balance carried forward is £4.14

5.5 Community Speed Watch – John Beckett reported, based on data available from police.

- Speedwatch was carried out at four locations in the village determined by police.
- The current number of volunteers involved is 10
- 37 sessions, average of one hour per session. Average number of sessions per month is seven point four. 111 man hours of Speedwatch have been completed
- 111 speeders were recorded
- The average number of speeders is 22.2 per month

- 95 first letters and five second letters sent by police. There were two further actions
- The speedwatch was most active on the High Street, 45 speeders in 18.5 hours at an average of 2.43/hr. Number 82 Hackford Road there were 27 speeders recorded in 5.75 hours giving an average of 4.69/hr. The lowest return was by the pub at 1.87 speeders per hour
- We only record speeds of speed limit plus 10% plus 2 ie. 35 or above in Wicklewood.
- We do not survey when school lights are flashing.
- Offenders have included No 6 bus, an agency postal operative and the police themselves.
- The maximum Speedwatch recorded was 52 miles per hour on the High Street.
- Levels of abuse has been very low, maybe one gesture or verbal comment per session. Many drivers indicate thanks and support, maybe five or more per session.
- Community support has been excellent

Success of the Speedwatch can be evaluated by: Public support & community awareness, Volunteer support, Driver reaction (slowing), Collective conscience awareness, Police action.

Overall Conclusion - There are many variables at play viz. weather, time, day of week, seasonality, personal skill level, location et al. It is too early to say statistically that we are reducing the numbers of speeders significantly although we strongly suspect that we are. Perhaps we should tally those vehicles we see noticeably slow down when they notice us. Bonnet dropping as brakes applied, descending read out on machine, change in engine sound, skidding. Had we done that our numbers would be very impressive indeed. I estimate 50 cars per session ie. 1850 vehicles have been encouraged to slow down during our sessions.

Thanks to David Wakelin for coordinating the group, and all the volunteers.

5.6 Wicklewood Primary School – No report received

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- 6.1** Resident said it was disappointing that for the second year running there had been no response from the school. The head teacher has recently changed. Agreed Clerk will write to say how much the village would appreciate their input.
- 6.2** Resident commented how few bins there were. JS responded that previously when there had been an attempt to install more dog bins, residents objected to having them outside their properties. Commented that people were welcome to use the black bin at the village hall