

**MINUTES OF WISTASTON PARISH COUNCIL'S ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD AT WISTASTON MEMORIAL HALL ON THURSDAY 21ST APRIL 2022, AT 8.00 P.M.**

Present: Cllr. J. Moore (Chairman)
Cllrs. D. Houston, D. Lucas, R. Moore, G. Roberts, R. Squirrell, J. Scott & E Perry.

In Attendance:

Kerri Wilcox (Clerk) 2 representatives of Wistaston Organisations.

1 APOLOGIES

Cllrs Mrs Margaret Simon, Kilkenny, PC Clarke, PCSO Siddall, 3 Wistaston Organisation representatives.

2 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 8th April 2021, be approved, and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

3 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 126th Annual Parish Meeting which is our first face to face meeting in 3 years which is pleasing as he has found it much more engaging than conducting meetings online. We are seeing in many respects more normal life routines, and he thanked everyone for attending meetings. The Council is now back to normal monthly meetings since last summer.

We have welcomed three new Councillors to Council since the last face to face meeting, Diane Houston, Wistaston Parishes Cheshire East Councillor Margaret Simon and most recently Samantha Perry. We also have a new PCSO for Wistaston, PCSO Bradley Siddal.

Our Village groups are again fully engaged (the Conservation Group, Litter Picking, Wistaston in Bloom and our sports group of WSLA has reported almost back to full use). One that has not restarted is the Speedwatch team but if anyone has an interest in helping then please let us know. Restrictions still applied last year in October / November when we were considering our Civic Service, so Council decided to cancel it this year, but we hope to resume the service next year.

We set out our plans to keep the precept the same as last year whilst supporting voluntary groups and grant support to almost £9000. Our capital budget has been kept to mainly provisions for future needs

- Supporting WSLA mains drainage scheme
- Extending the use of SID's.
- Replacement / additional waste bins.

The SID deserves a mention as this is a project to address resident concerns over speeding vehicles. Our planned installation of a street unit on Broughton Lane was requested of Cheshire East Highways in March 2019 and this has been continually progressed and we have today received confirmation that the posts will be in place within a week or two.

Cheshire East Governance review takes place approximately every 10/15 years which aims to review boundaries / number of Councillors in both Parishes and Towns / population changes and developments. Cheshire East have completed their meetings and recommendations and for Wistaston the boundaries will not change but they are reducing the number of Councillors from 15 to 11.

It was particularly pleasing to see our previous Clerk Andrea Cross who was in office for over 23 years was awarded the Wistonian of the Year. Congratulations have been sent for a well-deserved award.

The Chairman thanked the Organisations, Councillors and the Clerk and apologised for the lack of refreshments but commented that we hope to be fully back to normal for the next Annual Parish Meeting in 2023.

4 PRESENTATION OF ACCOUNTS

The Accounts for the year 2020/2021 were made available for inspection and no questions were raised.

5 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES

- (i) Wistaston Memorial Hall Committee - Diane-Heather Edge-Robinson reported that there are currently 12 trustees who attended the Annual General Meeting which was held later due to lockdown so it took place on the 21st May 2021. There was some improvement on the previous year but it was still difficult for larger groups for return to normal. There was no fund raising last year it was only the Remembrance Day Parade that took place. There have been two sub committees created on being the Document Review Subcommittee and the other the New Build Subcommittee as following a unanimous vote it was agreed not to spend the money on having another surveyors report carried out on the soundness of the current structure of the Memorial Hall. the previous report said the structure would last another 20 years and that deadline had come. It was believed that it was now time to initiate and work toward the rebuilding project. Visits to other Village Halls have started to take place and a request for initial views had been sent out to the Parish Councils of Rope and Wistaston, to the Wistaston Academy, the Bowling Club, and Tennis Club and to every household in Wistaston via the Roundabout magazine. Room hire has been down during the pandemic but they have managed to obtain two grants which has kept them going throughout.
- (ii) Wistaston Sports & Leisure Association – Councillor Squirrell reported that Last year was once again dominated by the pandemic. Initially we were closed completely but we opened for outside activities as soon as we could. We were fortunate in attracting new business from football clubs using our multi use games area and a school holiday club. As the year progressed football and cricket restarted. We were allowed to open the pavilion for businesses before it could be opened for community use and that helped us as well. We received some more government grants and that was a big help. As we moved into the autumn our pavilion bookings picked up and things got closer to normal. Since Christmas things have been going well but we still have bookings being cancelled due to covid. So far we have managed to retain much of the new business. As Tom reported last year, our clerk and treasurer resigned, and Tom and I split the role between us on a voluntary basis. We did find a replacement clerk, but she decided it was not what she wanted during the trial period and Tom and I have continued. This has reduced our wage costs and so that has also helped our finances.
- With the grants, the extra business and the reduced wage costs our finances have been boosted and we are able to start our project to get the Brittles connected to the main drains. We do not have the full amount to complete it yet but we should be able to complete it next year.
- The high winds in January damaged the roof of the Brittles but fortunately we were able to get it repaired before the next storm came. We had a grant from the Football Foundation to help us improve the quality of the football pitch and we are pleased with the progress so far. We will be continuing that work this year. We are renewing the lease with the cricket club. This will enable them to get grants to maintain and improve their facilities. We have ordered a broadband connection for the Brittles which should be installed by the end of May.

Once again we would like to thank Kevin and Pauline Jobbins for their considerable help with the running of WSLA. Without them a lot less would have been achieved.

In summary, I think we are now in a good position and that we should be able to continue improving the facilities in the coming year.

- (iii) Wistaston In Bloom – Bill Heath reported that both himself and his wife have been doing a lot of work in the Parish throughout the pandemic so they still managed to plant the bedding. The Britain in Bloom judging was delayed due to family problems for the Judge so it took place in August 2021 which happened to be a lovely day and saw Wistaston in Bloom winning a gold Award. 2022 is showing to be a little more challenging due to price increases which we have managed to reduce by planting small shrubs in the Laurel Drive bed and Crewe Road Nurseries are sponsoring the Westfield Drive bed. We have reduced the watering to 20 visits but may need more if we have a hot summer and Wistaston in Bloom will strip the beds. They have sent letters to local businesses asking for sponsorship which so far they have received donations from Graham Tressiders and Wistaston Community Council. They have entered this year's Britain in Bloom competition as have Wistaston Conservation Group which last year won an outstanding award, but both organisations are short of volunteers so if anyone wishes to help out then please get in touch.
- (iv) Wistaston Jubilee Tennis Club – Bill Heath reported that the club has a thriving youth section and teams playing all seasons in both the South & Mid Cheshire League and a team has recently joined the Cheshire and South Lancashire national league. They are currently wary about the new build Memorial Hall project as the Tennis Club surface will need replacing in the next 2/3 years and if they are moving to a new location then they do not want to replace the surface of which they have a budget of £25,000.00 for.
- (v) Wistaston Scout Group – The Chairman read a report from the Wistaston Scout Group which reported that like most groups they could not meet properly during the pandemic, but they are slowly returning to normal and have planned their week long summer camp this year at Criccieth in July. The ribbon of Poppies at St Mary's Church was a huge success and gained national publicity on both the radio and TV and raised £2900 for the Royal British Legion. We also had a request from Scout HQ for a cub scout to be selected to go to London to the Royal Chelsea Hospital to meet a Colonel who was a World War 2 Veteran and HRH The Duchess of Cambridge, the lucky cub scout selected also received an invitation from the Duchess to attend the Christmas Carol concert at Westminster Abbey. They thanked the Parish Council for their donation to the heavy duty gazebo which has now been purchased and also gave a huge thank you to their leaders and families.

6 OPEN DISCUSSION

No matters raised.

The meeting closed at 8.43 p.m.