



WOMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
held on **Wednesday 27th April 2022** at 7.30pm
This meeting was held in the Council Chamber.

Present -

Councillors: Barry Bond MBE, Mike Davies, Dan Kinsey (Chairman), Vince Merrick, Martin Perry, John Pike, Mary Roberts, Daisy Tait.

Clerk: Rachael Wright.

Public: 11 members of the public.

01/22 – Welcome from Chairman of the Parish Council – Councillor Daniel Kinsey

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, noting how fantastic it was to see so many members of the public present. He expressed how pleased he was the meeting was being held face to face this year in the Council Chamber, as last year the same meeting was held via Zoom.

02/22 – Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Cheryl Davies, Jan Evans, Mark Evans, and Alan Peace.

03/22 – To approve minutes of the last meeting held on 28th April 2021

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 28th April 2021 were approved and adopted.

04/22 – To decide the winner(s) of the Shop Local poster competition

The Chairman presented Alice aged 5 and Maisie aged 8 with an art set and certificate each and informed them their fantastic posters would be displayed in each of the Parish Council noticeboards to encourage residents to shop local.

05/22 – To receive an update on policing in South Staffordshire from Detective Inspector Dave Wain

Sergeant Jason Dorrington passed on apologies from Detective Inspector Dave Wain, and explained he was attending to provide an update in his absence.

He began his report by stating crime was up 3% over the previous 12 months, broken down as 10 less residential burglaries (50 to 40), 10 more theft from vehicles (40 to 50), 15 more vehicle interferences (16 to 31), violent crime was down 13 incidents to last year, and down by 4 serious incidents. Anti-social behaviour was down 29% with 203 reports (including neighbour disputes), but there were repeat locations including the library where extra patrols had been sent.

Sergeant Dorrington explained the Chief Constable had recognised the need for a change in the response to crime in the area, and from June, the number of response officers was significantly increasing. He hoped this meant better coverage for Wombourne, and more officers available throughout the day to respond to calls.

The Chairman thanked Sergeant Dorrington for his report and noted how pleased he was to hear of the changes coming in June and hoped it would alleviate pressure from the existing team who could then subsequently feel more positive about the future.

A resident from Station Road asked for an update on how the local team were targeting motorbikes along the Railway Walk, which she has noticed was becoming a more frequent problem. Sergeant Dorrington explained the Neighbourhood Team could not chase the bikes, only the Police Crime Team could do that, but they were able to put preventative measures in place such as teeth down and would continue to follow up any reported incidents.

The Chairman informed residents the Parish Council had appointed a Police Liaison in Councillor Vince Merrick and noted the importance of collaborating with the Neighbourhood Team in dealing with local issues. Councillor Vince Merrick highlighted the success of the new partnership and explained by working together the Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Team will achieve better results for residents.

06/22 – To consider the grant application from 3rd Wombourne Girl Guides

Girl Guiding Leader Helen Standish Bevan explained she was in attendance with one of her guides, Rose, to apply for a grant for the ongoing upkeep of the frontage of the Allen Hall which they had owned since 1986. The Allen Hall was home to over 200 rainbows, brownies, and guides, with various other groups using it too. It was available to hire, and by improving the frontage, the group hoped to attract more bookings.

The first part of the project would be to clear the area, plant with shrubs, and create a rookery area, with 2 large planters which would be filled with seasonal plants. Helen explained they had engaged with Ashwood Nurseries who had agreed provide advice and assistance.

The Chairman noted there had only been one eligible candidate to apply for the grant funding. Councillor Barry Bond MBE proposed the full £500 grant be awarded to 3rd Wombourne Girl Guides, Councillor Mike Davies seconded the proposal, and all Members were in favour.

It was **REOLVED** to award a £500 grant to 3rd Wombourne Girl Guides.

07/22 – Parishioners Questions – An opportunity for elected members of the Parish to ask questions or raise matters of local interest

A resident from Apse Close noted there were 3 tiers of Government looking after Wombourne with three pots of money, whereas residents of Wombourne only had one pot of money. He recognised 3 issues within the Parish, specifically, a delay in fixing the public toilets, potholes in numerous locations and a black and white chevron on A449 which has been knocked down several months ago and not repaired or replaced despite his reports. He also noted residents had received blue recycling bags and hoped this did not cause disruption with them blowing around everywhere when empty.

Councillor Mike Davies informed the resident Staffordshire County Council budget £7m per annum to deal with potholes, but when adult and child social care costs £1m per day other budgets have to be squeezed and there may be a delay in dealing with some issues as a result, however he agreed to follow up with the County Council regarding the damaged chevron. He explained a new operating model for road maintenance is being rolled out by Staffordshire County Council, so the most urgent repairs will be prioritised.

Councillor Barry Bond MBE informed the resident South Staffordshire Council had no option but to implement the blue recycling bags, but the bags are weighted and therefore should not cause an issue with them blowing around. He explained literature would be sent out with the bags on what can go in

them so that residents would be fully informed. Councillor Mary Roberts agreed that was something that could be included in a future newsletter the Parish Council would be looking at producing.

In relation to the public toilets, the Chairman informed the resident that there had been a delay in parts being received to enable repairs to be completed, but the toilets should be open in the next week.

Mrs Julie Collins representing KOSSMIC thanked the Parish Council and in particular Councillors Barry Bond MBE and Mike Davies for their support with the group, but confirmed they were unfortunately closing.

The Chairman expressed his sorrow at this news, and thanked Mrs Collins for her dedication to the group over its lifetime.

08/22 – Chairman’s Annual Report and close

Councillor Daniel Kinsey explained he prefaced his report last year by saying the previous year had been something of a rollercoaster ride, and whilst certainly better this last year had had its challenges and had been one of contrasts.

He noted last year’s meeting was held via Zoom as restrictions were still in place due to the pandemic, but this year the meeting was being held in the familiar setting of the Council Chamber as we approached Her Majesty’s Platinum Jubilee.

Noting the changes over the past year, he said the Council returned to face-to-face meetings shortly after last year’s Annual Parish Meeting, the national vaccination programme was well under way, and as the year went on, restrictions continued to ease and life returned to recognisably normal, with the celebrations at Christmas demonstrating exactly how residents cherished being together.

The Chairman said 2022 started with great optimism, however, we soon found ourselves pitched into another international crisis as Russia invaded Ukraine. Once again, and as before, the people of Wombourne stepped up to held. Fundraising and the collection of essentials took place across the village, and even today residents are offering their homes to support refugees.

He explained over the last year we have seen changes to the Parish Council, with the incredibly sad passing of Councillor Reg Williams, who along with his late wife Joan had been Councillors for many years, and their mark on the Council was undeniable. Two other longstanding Members had retired – Alan Hinton and Ken Upton. He noted their shoes had filled with three very keen, knowledgeable, and dedicated individuals who are already making an impact, noting he was thrilled to know there are residents willing and ready to represent their community.

The last year has been spent supporting local businesses, and encouraging residents to shop local, which has been done through dedicated and constant support with local traders, and via increased attention on our High Streets through our programme of High Street Days, culminating thus far in this March’s Spring Fling – the events have brought opportunities for our community to come together and enjoy themselves; such an important need after the ravages of isolation.

Beyond this, he explained the Parish Council have worked to integrate every further with the incredibly hardworking community groups, and it was exciting to see these collaborations continue. Security at Brickbridge Playing Fields has been improved over the past 12 months with a regime of locking the gates, and installation of CCTV is underway. Considerable time was spent in November and December

last year producing an extensive and detailed response to the latest stage of the Local Plan Review. Along

with substantial detailed critique, it also sought to offer options, and we await the impact of this response later in the year.

The Chairman explained he looked forward to the next 12 months, when the Council would proceed with the renewal of the lease at Brickbridge Playing Fields and deliver unique Platinum Jubilee celebrations in a months' time.

Moreover, he explained the Parish Council would continue to deliver even greater transparency and community engagement through a Parish newsletter, and to pursue Powers of General Competence, which will empower the Council to do more than ever before. He thanked all Councillors for their passion and hard work over the last 12 months, and to the Clerk for her amazing dedication and the rest of the Parish Council Team.

He encouraged residents and Members to stay after the meeting for tea and cake.

The meeting concluded at 20.40pm.