

# BUBBENHALL PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Bubbenhall Annual Parish Assembly held on Tuesday 21 May 2019 in the Village Hall, Bubbenhall.

**Present:** Cllr Jan Lucas Chair of the Parish Council  
Cllr Sam Baker Vice Chair of the Parish Council  
Cllr Bob Powell  
Cllr Win Nwachukwu

**In attendance:** Cllr Pam Redford Warwickshire District Council  
Mr Doug Evans Parish Clerk

**Two members of the public present.**

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Joanne Shattock and Cllr Wallace Redford (WCC).

### 2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 15 MAY 2018 MEETING

These were confirmed and signed, subject to the amendment of the first sentence in Minute 9 to read "*....various issues with regards to fly-tipping....*"

### 3. REPORT BY THE CHAIR OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Cllr Lucas reported the following:

#### Planning

The planning committee was minded to approve Gateway South on the 12<sup>th</sup> December, but no resolution has yet been made. We have had further discussions with the planning department, and now await further news. I would like to thank Cllr Shattock for her untiring work in the fight against Gateway. Apart from Gateway, we have had some contentious applications in this last year, but I believe we have conducted ourselves in a fair manner, and thanks to those councillors who have taken the time to examine some of these applications in depth.

#### Warwickshire County Councils Draft Minerals Plan

In October 2015 Warwickshire County Council issued a draft minerals plan, which included the intention to extract at Coney Grey Farm. We objected to this aspect of the plan, but have just heard that it has been granted.

#### Liaison Committee, Landfill Site, Weston Lane

The Liaison Committee met in September 2018 and March 2019. As part of its normal business the Committee receives reports on the working of the site, proposed developments and environmental issues. It also works to resolve issues as and when they arrive. Smiths have applied to extend their workings for another two years, which we opposed, but this has been granted.

#### Village Green

Sadly, the Oak on the green has all but died, and we have been looking at our options – we have just had the arboriculturist's report and he recommends simply trimming the dead branches from the top, and leaving the stump as it is, since it is safe, and also provides wildlife habitat for several species.

The area around the tree is also in need of maintenance: the retaining wall has been cleaned up, and we will refurbish the spout and trough as part of a project together with the Oak. The pond is still being watched over by Tony Sproul and has had a clean-up. Work has also been done to replace broken pipe work in the drain from the pond. I would like to thank Tony Sproul for his work in managing the maintenance of the village green on behalf of the Parish Council.

### **Wild Flower Meadow**

The meadow is gradually taking shape. WWT are still keeping an eye on it and letting us know when anything (other than cutting) needs to be done.

### **Youth day**

In August we had the second of our Lottery funded Youth days, which was once again hugely popular. Thanks to Cllr Haynes, Cllr Baker and their team for organising this.

### **Litter Pick**

We held our 4<sup>th</sup> annual litter pick in April, and with good support from the village we again managed to collect a mountain of litter. This has been such a success that this year we are planning to have another litter pick in the autumn, on 5<sup>th</sup> October.

### **Finance**

Doug will give the financial report shortly, but I will mention here that we have increased the precept to £17,000.

### **Personnel**

Corrine Pilgrim has unfortunately had to resign after a short term as a councillor, due to work commitments. Ollie Wintle was co-opted in December 2018 to fill the vacant position. Ollie also took on the role of Police Liaison which replaces the old Neighbourhood Watch. Unfortunately, he too has had to stand down due to work commitments. I would like to thank both of them for their commitment to the job for the short time they were with us.

I would like to pay tribute to Steve Haynes who has decided not to stand this year. He has been a councillor for many years, and also served as chairman from 2015 to 2017. He has put in a lot of time and expertise to the various activities that the parish council is involved with. He will be missed.

Doug, our new clerk, has almost completed his first year and I'd like to thank him for coming up to speed with the job.

We are down to only 5 councillors after the recent election, and are actively trying to recruit 2 more councillors to make up the full council.

### **Other Matters**

I will leave Road Safety and the recreation ground to the reports of Cllrs Powell and Baker respectively, but would like to take this opportunity to thank both of them for the time and effort they put in to these responsibilities.

### **Community Safety**

Anti-Social Behaviour – there have been renewed incidents of drug taking, and possibly dealing, around the village hall and playing field. PCSO Sharron Underwood has again been instrumental in dealing with this, for which we are grateful, and we are looking at options for monitoring the area around the hall. The crime figures for the last year are as follows: 7 burglaries; 4 vehicle crimes; 1 theft and 1 hate crime.

Emergency Plan - The emergency plan for the parish has been reviewed and updated as required, thanks to Cllr Powell for doing this.

### **Conclusion**

I have mentioned some individual Parish Councillors already, but I would like to take this opportunity to thank **all** of the Parish Councillors who voluntarily give up their time to work on behalf of the Parish. I would also like to thank our County Councillor, Wallace Redford, and our District Councillors, Pam Redford and Trevor Wright for the support they have given us over the last year.

## **4. REPORT ON THE RECREATION GROUND/YOUTH SPACE**

Cllr Baker reported the following:

The Annual RoSPA inspection was carried out in December. It declared that the playground equipment

was in a good state of repair and safety. The following recommendations were made:

#### **Rospa findings**

*Multiplay unit* – the roof needs sanding back and painting.

*Toddler swing* – the chains need replacing soon

*Trim trail* – some logs are showing signs of decay.

*Tennis/multiplay court* – wire needs tensioning

#### **Parish Council response**

*Multiplay unit* – PC is seeking a variety of quotes to replace or maintain the roof. In addition, we are getting quotes for sanding back and re-painting most of this unit. Chris Goddard has agreed to jet wash the melamine yellow areas (side of slide/steps etc)

*Toddler swing* – PC is seeking quotes to replace the chains and have also decided to replace the seat unit as this is looking very worn.

*Trim trail wood* – quotes so far for wood maintenance are very expensive so this work may be delayed until the next financial year.

*Tennis/multiplay court* – Chris Goddard to re-tension the wire. Cllr Baker to supply any wire required. In addition a new tennis net has been ordered and a box made to house it.

#### **Maintenance undertaken April 2018-March 2019**

Summer 2018 new bark ordered and spread under multiplay unit and flying fox.

Ongoing mole control

Weekly checks by Chris Goddard

Repairs to damaged floor at top of multiplay unit carried out by Chris Goddard.

#### **Other matters**

It was agreed that there was not a huge demand for outdoor fitness equipment – surveys both emailed and on Facebook – therefore this will no longer be pursued

The regular delivery of playbark will be ordered before the Summer holidays. Chris Goddard will spread this.

### **5. REPORT ON ROAD SAFETY**

Cllr Powell reported the following:

#### **HGVs**

Three years ago the Parish Council secured the installation of 'No HGVs' signs at strategic entry points to the village. After that the number of large vehicles entering and passing through seemed to go down for a while. However, since the beginning of this year there appears to have been a noticeable increase in HGV traffic. While a proportion of these movements could be classified as deliveries, several articulated lorries have been seen (and some stopped in their tracks by local residents) so it has been decided to re-introduce the HGV survey which had provided such strong evidence in the past. Villagers are requested to log any incidence of HGVs coming into the village. A note of the name of company, registration number, time and direction, would help the Parish Council continue its close monitoring of unnecessary 'intruders'. Such evidence should be sent directly to [admin@bubbenhall.info](mailto:admin@bubbenhall.info) It has also been found that some buses, mistakenly or intentionally, are taking routes through narrow sections of the village and these have been reported to the companies concerned.

#### **Road repairs**

The Parish Council continues to report damage to roads or kerbs within the village boundaries. We are grateful to members of the public who identify such locations. It is useful to have photographic evidence when explaining where repairs are needed. Warwickshire County Council has been granted additional funds as part of the Government's 'pot-hole repair' initiative so we are hoping that any issues reported will be carried out with minimal delay. Reporting can be done directly to the Council ([www.warwickshire.gov.uk](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk)) - look up the A-Z of services under Potholes.

#### **Speeding**

A team of eight volunteer Community Speed watchers has been operating during the year. Details of vehicles caught speeding are sent to the local police and warning letters are sent to drivers. Repeat

offenders may be fined. The places where these speed checks can be done have been authorised by the police with due care to visibility and the safety of the participants. We now have a speed-gun on semi-permanent loan from Stoneleigh Parish Council. The Police covers the cost of annual industrial calibration. The gun has also just undergone a costly repair, fortunately also paid for by the Police. These speed checks can only take place inside the 30mph speed limit zone. Some drivers seem not to realise that the 30mph limit extends well beyond the Watery Lane/Stoneleigh Road/Bubbenhall Road crossroads, precisely because of the dangers presented by that junction and the presence of driveways.

We are now recruiting new speed-watchers to add to the team. To find out more, contact [admin@bubbenhall.info](mailto:admin@bubbenhall.info) and we shall tell you more about this important voluntary work and the training required.

### **Improving Road Safety**

In 2018 there were 35 people killed and 320 others who suffered serious injuries on Warwickshire's roads. The causes of road accidents are well known. The 'Fatal 4', as they are dubbed in police reports, are:

**Excess Speed** - 30 mph is already too fast driving through our village! And the A445 50 mph limit is frequently exceeded.

**Distraction** - Especially illegal mobile phone use while driving

**Intoxication** - Don't drink and drive

**No use of seat belts** - always belt up!

The Parish Council will continue to remind residents about the dangers on our roads and lanes but it is worth stating here that that not all those caught speeding in the village are outsiders. Road Safety begins at home!

## **6. REPORT BY THE VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE**

Cllr Lucas reported the following:

### **Finances**

Our finances are in a healthy state – total receipts for 2018: £15,967.33, total expenditure: £12,373.45 and we have a balance of £17,712.83. We will be increasing hall hire rates slightly in September.

We are grateful to our regular users for their support; and party and wedding bookings are still proving popular.

### **Activities**

We've had quite a busy year, and events put on this year include:

Picnic on the playing field in September

Halloween party

Christmas fair and breakfast

Quiz night

Two Live and Local events (children's show in December, and jazz band in March)

The film nights are continuing, though attendance has dropped slightly this season (an average attendance of about 25) we hope to restart in October.

In the coming year, among other events, we are hoping to repeat the September picnic day but are also proposing a wine tasting evening, and an afternoon tea dance.

### **Refurbishments and improvements**

The French doors we had a grant for last year have only just been put in, which has delayed the project of replacing the old plastic chairs with some more comfortable ones to this autumn. The solid armchairs will be got rid of at the same time. The committee would like to thank the Rural East Forum for the grant to help purchase the French doors.

## **7. BUBBENHALL PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS REPORT**

The Clerk reported total expenditure of £19,685.27 in the 2018/19 financial year with total receipts of £22,066.59. The balance carried forward to the new financial year was £25,211.45.

## **8. COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**

In Cllr Wallace Redford's absence, the Clerk reported the following from his previously submitted report:

The Warwick East Community Fund was underspent last year, whilst the surplus has been carried forward, we cannot assume that this will continue. It is very important that associations, clubs etc make applications for grants from the fund. The WCC still has budgetary constraints and difficult decisions still have to be made. There is some good news in that both the Adult and Children Services budgets have been increased Warwickshire fire & Rescue Service are providing a home resettlement service for older people leaving hospital (George Eliot and Warwick hospitals ) and doing safety checks in the home and can refer to specialists.

Locally, white lining has been carried out, pot holes continue to be a problem and are being repaired as quickly as possible. Moat Close footway is scheduled to be carried out this month. Currently I am investigating the siting of 30mph roundels on the road surface of Stoneleigh Rd. HGV traffic is always in need of monitoring and the work of the Parish Council in carry out its HGV surveys are very important and enable WCC Highways to have up to date information on the situation locally. Residents are encouraged to bring to my attention any issues of concern and I will endeavour to ensure that a response is provided as quickly as possible.

## **9. DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT**

Cllr Pam Redford reported the following:

As you are all aware the District Council elections took place on 2 May. The Conservative party is still the largest party but has lost overall control. However, with the support of the 3 Whitnash Residents Association Councillors we have been able to form the administration. This will mean that there will likely be more collaborative working in some areas. The Composition of the Council now stands as: 19 Conservatives, 3 Whitnash Residents Association, 9 Lib Dem's, 8 Greens, 5 Labour.

Cost pressure will remain a constant challenge as support from Central Government has fallen and will be Zero this year 2019-20, despite this WDC Community charge remains one of the lowest in the Country for a band D property and this is without making any significant impact on services.

In the past year we saw the first building of Council housing for 30 years and this has helped in contributing to reducing the Council house waiting list by half. Together with this over 38% of homes built in WDC have be affordable housing and more will follow over the next years.

A new homeless hostel has been set up for rough sleepers offering help and support for those who wish to use the facilities. The team working at the hostel also gets out to other rough sleepers to encourage them to use the facilities. This has meant the number of rough sleepers in our town has dropped.

In the past year the newly re-furnished leisure facilities at Newbold Comyn have been reopened. There has been a 41% increase in membership over this period and 381% increase since June 2017, with a significant increase in women, corporate and disability groups using the facilities. The refurbishment of our other leisure facilities will continue over the next year.

On a downside the Golf Course at Newbold Comyn has now closed, this was due to the operating company going into administration. WDC has recovered all monies due to them through the contract. It is thought that the market for this type of Golf course is diminishing so WDC are looking to see what use the area can be used as. At this point I want to reassure everyone that there will be no housing on this site. The whole of the area will remain within the Green Belt and will be a Green Space area for the District.

Policing issues still remain a priority for us in the rural areas and we were happy to note that the Warwickshire Police Establishment will shortly be once again at full capacity. We hope that there will be advisable improvement in policing through our ward with the increase in officers once their training is completed.

Both your District Councillors continue to work on your behalf, we attend all Parish Council meetings throughout the ward and represent your view within the Council so that the rural areas continue to have a voice.

**10. OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY AN ELECTOR OF THE PARISH**

There was nothing to report on this item.