

AILS WORTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH

held in the Cedar Centre, Castor on Monday May 24th 2021 at 7.15pm

Legislation allowing Councils to hold remote meetings ended on 7th May 2021 and so Councillors are again required to be present at a venue for a meeting. As there are still Covid-19 restrictions in place, a bigger venue was chosen, but this was to be limited to 20 people maximum.

Present: Councillors M Ellershaw, S Langston-Jones, R Moon, A Perkins, J Phillips, J Pickett, M Samways (arrived 7.25pm) and the Clerk, J Rice.

Members of the public: 3.

1. Minutes of the last annual meeting in 2020

The minutes of the meeting held in 2019 were signed – there was no meeting in 2020 due to the pandemic.

2. Review of the year in report from the Chairman

The report was circulated and also read out by the Chairman;

Welcome to our annual parish meeting. Life has been very different this year for most people. Normal meetings have become zoom meetings but we are really pleased to be meeting in person again for the first since 'lockdown' began more than a year ago.

We welcomed Mr Richard Moon to the council at the start of the year and at the end of the year we have welcomed Mr Sean Langston Jones to join us bringing us up to our full strength of seven councillors.

Due to the many changes in the ways of working and restrictions applied on many of the things we wanted to progress it seems to take much longer to achieve a result. We have now got 20mph signs in place but we are still waiting for re marking on the roads to be done and a new speed indicator in Helpston road to replace the one that no longer works. A joint working group with Castor has been set up to look at road safety and set up a project to have a speedwatch in the village, progress has been slow but steady and should be operating quite soon- more volunteers would be welcomed.

Parking is still a concern in the village due to lack of space and fairly narrow roads but we are still investigating ways to improve the problem and also how to reduce damage to the verges.

Members of the council have met on zoom with NPT, Langdyke trust, Nature recovery and climate change groups and are working with them on environment projects. Many of the things for these have started but will take quite a time to complete and again we hope many people will also take part in.

Although most of the usual local groups have not been able to meet together in person we have supported the Covid-19 group, Good neighbours and helped school to provide computers for home schooling. The help residents in the village have both received and are being given by many others has been very much appreciated and clearly demonstrates the way we all try to care for our community.

The allotments have been well used and we have invested in extending the water pipe and installed two extra taps to make it easier to use. There was a large water leak in the water supply to New close field and a new tap and meter will be fitted shortly.

There have been the usual number of planning applications – mainly for house extensions and some for work to trees, we do request and try to encourage replanting trees and hedges but have no power to enforce this. It is good to see that work has started on the shop and look forward to having it back to full time working again.

I do thank all the councillors and the clerk for their help in so many ways often quite unseen but some are seen – Like Jon Phillip painting the phone box- which now looks so much better. The other thing that shows how much we love our village is the way we all try to keep it looking good and a thankyou also to those decorate our green and post box for special occasions and is much admired by many.

3. Financial report. There was a report circulated with end of year figures and notes by the Clerk as follows;

Notes

- The basic budget is managed tightly and 96% of expenditure has been spent, with some variances from normal but overall it is fine. 99% of receipts have been received and basic expenditure to basic budget/receipts is acceptable.
- Variances include tree works (APC are waiting for PCC to schedule this), audit fees are reduced so far due to increased internal controls, web costs are high due to legal changes for accessibility, maintenance/allotments costs are high due to additional, unforeseen works and a water leak.
- It is good to note the full budget for donations to village groups of £1400 has been spent.
- Bank balance going into 2021/22 is over 40k however.
- This is due to the budget for projects not being spent again and money is carried over. The budget for speed restriction measures has been carried over due to slowness of PCC, other projects such as trim trail, playground improvements and nature recovery/bio diversity have not been implemented.

SINCE 1/4/21 C/F in accounts £14727.09, £20000 and £5399.26

Payments made totalling £2619.18

Receipts (precept and VAT refund) £6586.87

Bank balances for May annual meeting = £44094.04. Represented by:

£18694.78 current

£25399.26 savings

There was a question raised about the high level of reserves. It was explained by the Chairman that there is always an amount of 8k in the reserves for a PC owned stone wall should it need repairing/rebuilding, an amount for the village hall refurbishment, an amount is still there for speed restrictions project which has been really slow and some extra S106 monies were available instead of PC spending on part of the play area project. It was further explained that the precept was reduced this year to reflect the projects that have not been carried out and budget not needed therefore reserves have built up.

4. Other reports from village groups if available.

None had been requested due to the pandemic. It was suggested that an Open Evening type event should be held later on face to face in the Autumn maybe to better engage with the community and get feedback on their views and concerns and perhaps jointly with Castor Parish Council. This will be added to the agenda for the next joint meeting.

5. Any questions or comments from residents – a chance for residents to raise any issues or concerns for the Parish Council.

There were no comments made.

This meeting was followed by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council