



LITTLE WOLFORD PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the General Meeting

22 October 2020, via Zoom

Present via Zoom: Helen Bostock (HB), Chairman; Adam Bewsey (AB); David Farman (DF); Jo Barker (JB) County Councillor; Simon Lewis-Beeching (SL), RFO; Jane Revere (JR); Michael Revere (MR); Henry Warriner (HW); Sarah Whalley-Hoggins (SW) District Councillor

Apologies for absence had been received from Bob & Shirley Large and Roz Warriner.

1. **The Minutes** of the Annual Parish Assembly on 11 Aug 2020 were proposed by SL, seconded by DF, agreed by all, and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.
2. **Matters Arising**
 - a. There is still a problem with manhole/pothole as you leave the village so HB has reported it again on FixMyStreet. JR said that the gullies along the road by Birds Lodge and Manor Farm had been cleaned during the previous week. DF said that the road at the top of Rosary Lane had been resurfaced but they did not go down deep enough to fix it and so he has contacted FixMyStreet again. He said the culverts really need replacing. JB to be kept informed of continuing problems [**Action DF/HB**].
 - b. Covid volunteering for vulnerable residents – there have been very few takers, but all are willing to continue volunteering over the winter.
 - c. As the village hall remains closed, the emergency equipment (except sandbags) remains at the home of the Chairman.

Reports on other matters were deferred until the Chairman's Report.

3. **Chairman's Report**
 - a. No progress on potholes around Broadmoor Farm entrance. Reported again to FixMyStreet on 17/10/20. Unsafe footbridge on public right of way between the Wolfords has now been replaced with a new bridge, allowing the Right of Way to reopen.
 - b. Since the last meeting, the roadside footpath between the two villages has been cleared of overgrowth by Highways Agency which is an improvement but not repaired. (HW made the Meeting aware that the buried Water Meter in the footpath is now exposed with a loose cover.)
 - c. A Website Accessibility Statement has been created and added to the parish website to make us fully compliant. A new local matters page has been written on Climate Emergency to act as a hub for good practise and local initiatives.
 - d. A Community Grant of £401.60 has been received from WALC (Warwickshire Association of Local Councils) towards the defibrillator fundraising appeal, with further donations from individuals within the parish. This now means that we not only reached our target, but slightly exceeded it (£2,047 raised of a target of £2,012). Additional moneys can be put towards annual support costs. The Wolfords Village Hall will be contacted to discuss installation. DF suggested the end wall of the old forge property might make a suitable site. Both options to be pursued by HB, who will also liaise with Community Heartbeat Trust to initiate the defibrillator purchase and installation process. [**Action HB**]
 - e. No planning applications have been received since the last meeting.

- f. The chairman has attended a number of virtual meetings and training sessions on behalf of the parish; WALC 3 Tier Event on Climate Change (24 Sep), WALC Understanding the Planning System (1 Oct), and two meetings to discuss Devolution/Unitary Authority (3 Sep, 19 Oct).
- g. **Financial report:** The second tranche of the Parish Precept (£500) was received from Stratford on Avon District Council on 28/09/20. Two items of budgeted expenditure have been settled since the last meeting: £16.00 for the hire of the Village Hall car park (re the al fresco Parish Assembly on 11/08/20), and £15.00 for WALC training (attended by HB). We also received £401.60 from the WALC Grant Fund on 01/10/20, which was subsequently transferred to the LW Defibrillator Fund on 09/10/20. Anticipated spending for the remainder of the financial year is as follows: £24.00 (approx.) to Easyspace Ltd re Web Domain Name renewal (due in Feb 2021), and £200 to Wolford PCC re Cemetery maintenance (due in Feb/Mar 2021). The balance in the Treasurer's Account as at 22/10/20 is £1,788.55.

4. District Councillor Sarah Whalley-Hoggins addressed the meeting

- a. SW said the test and trace self-isolation payment now available through SDC website, subject to meeting criteria. SW warned of keeping property locked up at this time of year and to send HB details of current financial scams in circulation. **[Action SW]**
- b. SW gave assurances that as District Councillor her stance is to ensure villages and their needs would be represented during consultations for a Unitary Authority. DF queried if plans were now on hold after the letter from Robert Jenrick, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. SW explained Warwickshire will not be in the first tranch (2-year time frame) of councils moving to a Unitary Authority but planning would continue as significant savings need to be made. In all likelihood we will have only one councillor under a UA system, not two as exists now.
- c. SW is strongly supportive of any measures the parish meeting takes on helping tackle climate change.

5. County Councillor Jo Barker addressed the meeting

- a. JB explained she is a District Councillor for Shipston South, in which capacity she strongly believes in the positives that moving to a Unitary Authority could bring. Joint working agreements are already in place across the District but there is disagreement over whether a single UA or two UAs (North Warwickshire/Stratford District) are best. Government are unlikely to support Warwickshire's bid for devolution until agreement is found between the District and the County councils. Savings might be achieved if bureaucracy is thinned down. Certain jobs should be done at higher level, such as Highways and Health.
- b. JB advised checking on and requesting top up of salt bins (sited at Rosary Lane and The Green) for the roads in the winter. **[Action HB]** As a County JB suspects that we might be going up an alert tier in Covid-19 after half term, as cases are now >100 per 100,000. She also said that school transport had improved.

6. Budget requirement for 2021/22

- a. These were laid out as follows: £120 for LWPM website support costs; £60 for Hall Hire (assuming no Covid-19 restrictions); £13.20 for WALC subscription; £60 for WALC training; £200 for Cemetery maintenance; £162 for Defibrillator annual support costs; £150 allowance for admin/supplies/stationery; £150 for three fruit trees/stakes for village green; £40 for Christmas lights and batteries for village green. HB therefore proposed a budget for 2021/22 of £955.20; this was seconded by SL and approved unanimously.

7. Precept requirement for 2021/22

- a. HB suggested raising a precept of £1000 (no change from last year). This was seconded by DF and approved unanimously.

8. Matters of particular local importance

- a. Single Unitary Authority. It was agreed HB continue to be involved in discussions with other local parish councils to represent the interests of LWPM. **[Action HB]**
- b. Apple trees on the Green. HB followed up from the last meeting to pursue the idea of planting apple trees on the Green. Permission has been granted from SDC. Two heritage apple trees with a connection to the county and a crab apple tree were proposed, obtainable from Heritage Fruit Trees of Banbury. These are to be bought and planted this winter. **[Action HB]**

9. **Any other business.** None raised.

10. **Date of next meeting:** 15 Apr 2021

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

[Minutes approved and signed by the Chairman at the Annual Parish Assembly on 29 Apr 2021]