

**Minutes of the Withersfield Annual Parish Meeting held at 7:00pm on
Tuesday, 4th May 2021, held virtually via Skype**

Present: Cllrs Terry Rich (Chairman); Ian Kinloch (Vice-Chair);
Frank Eve, Sheila Horton, Julia Korona, Peter Lord, Indunil Wijenayaka; Clerk: Laura Crump;
District Cllr: Peter Stevens; County Cllr: Mary Evans;
and one parishioner.

1. Report from Chair of Parish Council, Cllr Terry Rich

The chair had submitted his report prior to the meeting which was shared amongst the PC. There were no questions or comments raised from the report.
The clerk will ensure the report is also published on the Parish Council website.

2. Report from Chair of Traffic Working Party, Cllr Frank Eve

Cllr Eve had submitted his report prior to the meeting which was shared amongst the PC. There were no questions or comments raised from the report.
The report will also be published on the Parish Council website.

It was noted that the PC has received a donation of £2000 from Friends of Withersfield towards traffic calming measures, to which the PC were very grateful.

Cllr Eve updated the PC on the Quiet Lanes initiative as having been approved for wave 2 for Withersfield Road to become a Quiet Lane, at no cost to the PC.

The chair acknowledged the sterling work of the TWG and the success that they have achieved.

3. Report from County Councillor, Mary Evans

Cllr Evans had submitted her report prior to the meeting which was shared amongst the PC. The report has been published on the Parish Council website.

The Chair had been contacted by a parishioner about the damaged railings at Hanchett End, querying whether the works had been ordered. Cllr Evans assured she would find the answer to this in her meeting the next morning.

Cllr Evans expressed her thanks to Cllr Eve for his great effort on the Traffic Working Group and to the Parish Council as a whole for all efforts made over the years.

The PC returned their resounding gratitude to Cllr Evans for all her work and help as County Councillor and wish her the best in her future as she steps down from the role.

4. Report from District Councillor, Peter Stevens

Cllr Stevens reported:

This last year has been shaped by the Covid Pandemic and West Suffolk Council has responded to the challenging conditions in the following ways:

- Maintained our waste and recycling service during challenging circumstances.
- Supported local businesses with arrange of grants totalling over £11 million and start up support as the covid restrictions are eased.
- Supported families with housing difficulties and housed over two hundred homeless people in temporary accommodation.
- Managed the markets in our market towns and encouraged their restart as social distancing allows.
- Maintained our planning service with virtual meetings whilst engaging with the wider public on our new emerging Local Plan.
- Working with neighbouring parishes to highlight speeding and the volume of traffic on our rural roads.
- Suspending charges in our off-street car parks at the height of the pandemic.
- Supporting local bodies with Locality Budget funding.

The chair referred to a concern raised by a resident of Barsey Close regarding the continued issue of ownership of the land adjacent to Barsey Close and the incidence of rats. Cllr Stevens revealed that there are no registered owners for the piece of land and that even though the Council have no obligation to do so, they will be cutting the grass on this area once a year. Cllr Stevens stated he would like to work with the Parish Council to come to a conclusion for a maintenance plan for this land. He reported that rats appeared to have been attracted by residents leaving out bird seed in a neighbouring garden.

5. Reports requested from:

i. Chair of Village Hall Management Committee, Tom Mytton-Mills

None received.

It was pointed out that the electric needs to be checked every 5 years in the village hall which is likely to be due. Cllr Horton will raise this with Tom Mytton-Mills.

ii. Chair of Sports and Recreation Committee, Denis Elavia

The 2020 season having been cancelled due to Covid there was no sports activity to report however from a recreational perspective there has been a significant increase in people using the ground to take exercise and walk their dogs. The amount of dog mess regularly found on the sports field has become an issue, a bin is provided and we ask on behalf of all users of the facility that people pick up their doggy deposits and dispose of them in the bin provided.

The ground continues to be used by Wratting Lions CC and a report from them can be found on the Parish Council website.

iii. Speed-Watch, Chris Oaks

No Speed-watch sessions were held in 2020 on the advice from Speed-watch HQ at Landmark House. It is hoped to re-commence these sessions in 2021.

The VAS was installed constantly throughout the year and traffic volume and speed data was collected. This has proved to be most useful in supporting the Traffic Working Group/Parish Council in its efforts to lobby for and success in achieving a commitment by Suffolk County Council (Highways) to implement a 40mph buffer and 20 mph zone project (subject to funding).

CLlr Korona has recently taken on the responsibility of organising the setting up the VAS at various locations through the village.

iv. Parish Tree Warden, Alexander Talbot

None received.

It was suggested that the Parish Council explore whether a more local Tree Warden should be appointed.

v. Suffolk Police

A report was not received, but the introductory letter from the Matt Paisley, the new Locality Commander for Sudbury and Haverhill, was noted.

The meeting closed at 19:37.