

OLD MILVERTON AND BLACKDOWN JOINT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MONDAY, 26TH. APRIL 2021, VIA ZOOM

Owing to the Coronavirus Regulations no Annual Parish Meeting was held in 2020.

PRESENT: Councillors J. Emmerson (in the Chair), Mrs. L.Keeling, Rachel Pope and M. Rayner; County and District Councillor W. Gifford and County Councillor W. Redford; District Councillor D. Russell.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: District Councillors A. Boad, Mrs. C.Gifford, P. Kohler and Mrs. S.Syson..

1. MINUTES of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 29th. April 2019 were approved for signature by the Chairman.

2. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Chairman gave a report on the main business to which the Parish Council had given attention in the previous two years.

Five Parish Council Meetings were held in 2019-20 and four in 2020-21; planned meetings had to be cancelled owing to the coronavirus pandemic. The two latest meetings were conducted via zoom.

Personnel Mainstays of the previous councils, J Lander and Mrs. A Kelsey did not stand for re-election. J. Emmerson and L Keeling in Blackdown and W. Tansey in Old Milverton were elected unopposed. Then M. Rayner and R. Pope were co-opted as Old Milverton Councillors. J. Emmerson was elected Chairman and W. Tansey Vice Chairman

Finances The Parish Council held over £80,000 including over £7,000 of CIL funds. Total Precept income annually of £7,500 – less than £100 per dwelling

The main funds could be used mainly for professional advice in protecting the Green Belt. The CIL grant had to be spent within 5 years of receipt on appropriate infrastructure projects.

Matters dealt with The minutes of the Parish Council meetings had been displayed on the notice boards and posted on the website.

The highways engineers rely on the Parish Council to flag up highway issues such as blocked drains, obstructed foot ways and over hanging foliage. The hedges in Old Milverton were recently coarsely flayed, but an undertaking from the landlord's agent has been given to tidy up the area. The K2L cycle route between Leamington and Kenilworth, which the Parish Council supported was due to start during the present financial year. After careful discussion with WDC planners, the PC decided not to proceed with a neighbourhood plan *at the current time*. The Parish Council had

undertaken a survey of parishioners for sharing of views and suggest actions. Speed monitoring had been carried out in the two parishes, recently resumed unexpected after a lengthy pause due to the pandemic. New volunteers were always welcome: training is required and provided by the police. This issue is often put forward as a priority at the forum to set policing priorities but insufficient votes tend to lead to its not being prioritised.

Planning Applications The main focus of the Parish Council seems to always be Planning Applications and several of the notable ones were mentioned.

Future New local plan for Warwick DC combined with Stratford DC (South Warwickshire Local Plan) would guide development up to 2050: consultation phase about to take place.

Thanks Thanks were expressed to County Councillor Wallace Redford and County and District Councillor Bill Gifford; District Councillors A. Boad, P. Kohler, D. Russell, Mrs C.P. Gifford and Mrs S. Syson; all Old Milverton and Blackdown Parish Councillors; Internal Auditor Norman Pratt; and Parish Clerk Graham Cooper; together with anyone who mows an area of lawn they don't have to or picks up some litter and keeps the parishes in such a fine state. We are all lucky to live here.

3. PARISH QUESTIONNAIRE

Councillor Rachel Pope reported that since the Coronavirus Regulations had prevented the holding of a Parish Meeting in 2020 the Parish Council decided to circulate a Questionnaire to electors to ensure they did not miss out on being able to raise specific or general matters relating to the area. Responses were requested by 31st. October when there were 18 responses comprising 9 from Blackdown and 9 from Old Milverton. They were analysed into three categories: Roads and Transport; Environment and Wildlife; and Positive Matters.

The order of importance were in the order of (1) Green Belt issues, (2) traffic considerations, (3) walking routes, (4) cycling routes and (5) litter problems. The issues would be taken up with Warwickshire County Council, but not as expeditiously as would have been preferred because of the coronavirus restrictions. A newsletter had been produced for residents to keep them informed of progress.

4. UPDATING THE PARISH WEBSITE

Councillor Rachel Pope reported that arrangements were in hand to update the Parish Website to make it easier to turn up references and to encourage the addition of more information. This need had been demonstrated by the circulation of coronavirus information.

5. PARISH TIDY DAY

It was agreed to hold a Parish Tidy Day on Saturday 25th. September 2021 subject to the availability of Old Milverton Village Hall.

6. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Mrs. Ann Kelsey had represented the Parish Council at the local Neighbourhood Watch meetings and reported incidents in Old Milverton and Milverton as follows:

- (a). Drug dealing activities - police caught one group in a Rugby Road house.
- (b). Car theft and damage including removal of tyres, catalytic converters, and belongings
- (c). House break-ins to a lesser extent this year.
- (d). Shed damage, break-ins and theft of saleable items had increased.
- (e). Scams related to Covid, Parcel deliveries, Driving and Road Fund licences, Government departments, and many more organisations.
- (f). A wooden bench was stolen from the Village Hall grounds and later recovered from the spinney.
- (g). The Village Hall car park was listed on line to be a public car park, suitable for camper van use. As it is a small, private park, the public 'Car Park' notice was removed and the issue appears to have been resolved.
- (h). Unfortunately, very large lorries continue to damage the village roads and verges.
- (i). Drug dealing was suspected in Riversleigh Road and currently at the junction of Old Milverton Road with St. James Meadow Close.
- (j). In early March a garden shed was broken into and a blower and hedge cutter stolen. Then, at the end of March, 4 garden sheds and outbuildings were broken into with 2 chainsaws plus other items stolen during night hours, - without anybody being disturbed.
- (k). Owners of electric scooters should be vigilant. Recently owners were threatened and an e-scooter was stolen.
- (l). Extra care was needed when buying tickets online as lockdown eases.

Councillor Russell emphasised the need for vigilance in the matter of catalytic converter thefts from vehicles, from which thieves extracted precious metals: this constituted 3% of car related thefts.

The Clerk was asked to thank Mrs. Kelsey and to enquire whether she would be happy to continue the arrangement for another year.

7. LOCAL PLAN REVISION

Councillor Gifford outlined understood tentative arrangements for the forthcoming Local Plan Revision, consultation for which was expected to begin at the end of May and the need to prepare to advocate the Parish Council’s considered views.

.....
Chairman