

## **WEST WITTERING PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES** of the Annual Parish Assembly of the Parish Council

held on 27th May 2021 at 7.00pm in the Cricket Pavilion, Millennium Meadow, Elms Lane, West Wittering.

**PRESENT** Mr R Hutton, (Chairman), Mrs J Barrett (Vice Chairman), Mr K Martin, Mrs N Pike, Mrs B Wright, Mr S Debeger, Mr W Buckland, Mr H Patel and Mrs L Handford. and 37 members of the public. Councillors Mr P Montyn (WSCC), Mrs S Taylor (CVDC) and Mr G Barrett (CDC) were also in attendance.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None given.

#### **2. MINUTES**

On a proposal by Cllr Barrett, seconded by Cllr Pike, the minutes of the meeting held on 30th May 2019 were read by the Clerk, agreed as a true record, and signed by the Chairman.

#### **3. CHAIRMANS REPORT**

The Chairman presented his report for the year 2018/19 a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

#### **4. PRESENTATION by James Crespi, Chief Operating Officer of West Wittering Estate Plc.**

Mr Crespi outlined the changes that had been made by West Wittering Estate as a result of the pandemic stressing that safety was their main concern. Mr Crespi also summarized the main issues being experienced pre-pandemic and the mitigations put in place to deal with these issues as the Temporary Traffic Regulation Order and regular Safety Action Group meetings of all key stakeholders. A presentation on the future plans for East Head was then given and this was followed by a question and answer session.

#### **5. PRESENTATION by Councillor Nicolette Pike**

Cllr Pike updated residents on the progress being made with the Neighbourhood Plan and explained the importance of Neighborhood Plans within the planning system. The WWPC Neighbourhood Plan was due to have a further consultation period due to the first consultation exercise being impacted by Lockdown. Cllr Pike encouraged all present to take part in this consultation and put forward their views and some policies have already been added as a result of the initial consultation.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 20:30.

Signed.....

Date.....

**WEST WITTERING PARISH COUNCIL**  
**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
**27th MAY 2021 at 7pm.**

**Annual Parish Assembly May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021 - Chairman's report 2020/21**

At the last Parish Assembly I reported that it had been a challenging year. I was, like all others, totally unaware of what was in store for us all this year. The Coronavirus lockdown resulted in the need for an emergency meeting of the Parish Council to devolve the day to day working of the Council to the Clerk and myself as it was not legal at that time to hold Parish Council meetings virtually. The Government soon enacted legislation after which we were able to meet virtually. Fortunately, we were ahead of the game in so much as we had already purchased iPads for every Councillor to ensure that we were GDPR compliant.

We purchased our zoom licenses and we were up and running again for our monthly virtual Parish Council meetings and the separate Planning Committee. It was encouraging that our County and District Councillors joined our meetings as did parishioners and zoom became a way of life.

We had to take a decision on whether to close the public toilets or to make them Covid compliant. With people being encouraged to walk and take exercise daily we believed there was a need to keep them open. We had budgeted already to upgrade the toilet facilities over a three-year period but we were only in year one. We were fortunate that the Woodger trust came forward with a substantial grant which enabled us to carry out all of the works including an electrical update in one go. There was also a requirement to uplift the cleaning regime and Wettons, a specialist cleaning company were appointed for this task. I am pleased to report that West Wittering Estates, due to the kind offices of James Crespi, agreed to fund the ongoing cleaning contract which also covered the locking and unlocking of the building.

A tree has been planted on the Village Green with a plaque to mark Richard Shrubb's 33 years of unbroken service as a Parish Councillor. A small group met on the village Green, socially distanced, to unveil the plaque and it was good to see Richard again and to acknowledge his major contribution to the village over this long period of time.

We have at last succeeded in getting our own electrical supply into the village green as a power source for the Christmas tree lights and a power supply for a PA system for the carol service or any other events. We have also permitted the landing café to put two picnic tables on the village green to support their business throughout the lockdown as they have been operating purely as a takeout service. We have also received some funding to decorate the outside of the public toilets and clear the brambles and expose the flint wall at the rear of the toilet block and to seed a wildflower area. Regrettably the area was underwater for most of the winter, and we have needed to re-seed it.

The allotments continue to be in great demand, especially during the lockdown and despite a number of large plots being divided into two there is still a waiting list. I am grateful to the Allotment Association, under the Chairmanship of David Thompson, for looking after the day-to-day operations of the site. We did have several breakthroughs of the hedging on the northern and eastern boundaries by the Deer who found the growing

vegetables very nutritious. To resolve the situation, we had to install 80 meters of deer proof fencing.

Forty of the fence posts on the East West cycle path failed and I am once again grateful to the Woodger trust for funding the repairs. The footpath surfaces have been an issue this winter with many walkers complaining about the water and the mud. It has been exceptionally wet this winter and most of the footpaths are just soil based so there is little that could be done other than to advise on wearing the appropriate footwear.

As you will all be aware parking has been an issue and we have worked continuously with West Wittering Estates, Chichester District Council, Sussex Police and West Sussex County Council to try and improve the situation. CDC enforcement officers issued parking tickets continuously throughout the holiday period - in May, 295, June 246, July 82 and August 181 tickets were issued. What became obvious was that the fine was not a deterrent. We are currently working with all of our partners to increase the cost of the fines so that it does act as a deterrent, but it is unlikely that this can be in place for this summer as it requires legislation and consultation.

Once the vaccination programme commenced for Covid, it was evident that getting to Selsey for their jab was proving difficult for some parishioners. We instigated a free transport service using volunteer drivers and the MMVS service at the medical centre. Thank you to all who volunteered their time to do this.

The Parish Council continues to support the work of our excellent Community warden, drew Allardice by contributing £3,329.00 to Chichester District Council towards the cost of the post.

We invested much time and some funds to fight the appeal to maintain the natural foreshore at the property called Dolphins at Rookwood on the harbour edge which was being turned into a manicured domestic garden. Regretfully we were not successful, and the Planning Inspector found in favour of the applicant. There is now a risk that this action may escalate along the harbour edge.

We did, as in previous years remove the shingle from the top end of Joliffe Road to create a route down onto the sandy beach for pedestrians, we then replaced it in October in readiness for the winter tides.

The children's play area and urban gymnasium on the Rookwood Road site are being cleaned and sanitised regularly by Eradipest and were opened as soon as the Government allowed this and have remained open.

I was pleased that we were able to save the closure of the Marine Drive Mobile Waste transfer station and it should now be secure for the next three years. I am grateful to our County Councillor, Pieter Montyn, for spearheading the project and for having the confidence that the Parish Councils across the Manhood could come together to ensure the continuation of the service. Thank you to all who contributed to the survey organised by WSCC or who came to the Parish Council to tell us your views on this.

Each year the Parish Council is allowed to offer grants to local organisations whose work directly benefits the residents of the Parish. This year the parish Council decided to increase the amount normally awarded as Covid-19 had dramatically reduced fund raising opportunities or caused other issues such as the break in learning for our young children. The Parish Council was pleased to award the following grants:-

4 Sight Vision Support, Homestart and MMVS all received £300.00.

The Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul received £1,100

West Wittering Church of England Primary school received £2,000.00

Witterings and District First Responders received £1,000.00

A total of £5,000 was awarded to benefit our residents this year.

We were pleased to welcome two new Members to the Council last year, Lesley Handford and Steve Debeger and we are now at our permitted full strength of nine Members.

We are now into year four of the Neighbourhood Plan and I am most grateful to Nicolette Pike for taking this over from Ray Lewis and she is now leading the project. We will hear from Nicolette later this evening.

Due to the increase in the number of planning applications we now receive we removed planning from our monthly Parish Council agenda and set up a separate planning committee who meet during the daytime at 11am on the Wednesday of the week before the full Parish Council meeting. I am most grateful to Councillor Keith Martin for chairing this meeting. This year we considered and commented on 104 planning applications as well as keeping an eye on enforcement issues and contributing to Appeals where necessary.

I should also like to thank my Vice Chairman, Jean Barrett and her husband Graeme who walk the footpaths and provide a comprehensive condition report for us. We have more miles of footpath in our Parish than any other council on the Peninsula. I liken it to the Forth Bridge once you have walked them all it is time to start again.

My thanks also go to the remainder of the Parish Councillors who have all engaged with zoom meetings and have all given their time and commitment freely to ensure that we support all sections of the Parish Council in its work. And to our residents, many of whom volunteer tirelessly for the benefit of our community.

It will be remiss of me not to record our thanks to our County Councillor and three District Councillors who have always been supportive of the work that we do.

And finally, a big thank you to Sue, our clerk, who has had the difficult task of keeping abreast of the everchanging covid regulations and ensuring that we are compliant.

Thank you,

R D Hutton

Chairman West Wittering Parish Council.