

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ALBERBURY WITH CARDESTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Held at Wattlesborough Village Hall on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Present: D Parry (Chair), R Kynaston, M Davies, Mrs K Stokes, R Davies, C Bourne, Cllr. E Potter, and 7 members of the public, plus John Campion Police Commissioner for West Mercia (PCC), local policeman PC Richard Walliers and one colleague

Apologies: Mrs. S Evans, Mrs J Wilson and R T Hughes

The Police Commissioner addressed the meeting. Introducing his role, he said that he was responsible for the Police and Crime Plan and Budgets, and the appointment of Chief Constables. He acknowledged that rural policing had reduced in recent years although the rate of crime was low in the rural area ( 3 incidents in September, 2 in October, 2 in November) He had however just appointed 20 more Police Constables to the Safer neighbourhood teams and said that his priority was that people should feel safe in their local area, and on the local roads.

The Clerk noted that the detection rate for rural crime was only 5% and asked what was being done to improve this. Mr Campion said that he believed that better Community Policing and Community Intelligence was the route forward, and he noted that burglaries were down one third since the introduction of Smartwater.

A member of the public (MOP) asked if the crime statistics could be split out by parish and was told that this will be possible in the future but not yet. Another MOP said that recording the number of police visits to an area would also be useful.

Mr Bourne asked for harsher sentences for farm theft and more power for the farm owner to protect his/her property. An example was the current use of drones to scope out criminal targets, and the farm owner was not allowed to shoot them down. He was told that any such defensive action had to be justifiable and proportionate.

Former Councillor D Roberts related the lack of service he had received from the police when his car was stolen, and also said that he did not feel safe in Shrewsbury town centre, with worse numbers of homeless people on the streets. Mr Campion said that the number of police in the town centre had just been increased. On the matter of burglaries, West Mercia Police had signed up to the recent pledge to attend every incident in person, and there were now 2 PC's and 5 CSO's in the rural area around Shrewsbury.

Mrs Stokes said that access was difficult, she had recently tried to hand in a laptop to the Pontesbury police station and had had to go to Monkmoor in Shrewsbury; Mr Campion promised to look at this.

A councillor from Westbury Parish asked why their request for speed camera funds had been turned down twice and Mr Campion said he would look into this.

Councillor Potter said that there had been a lack of confidence in the police, hence the request for this meeting, but he appreciated that the PCC had attended the meeting personally and thanked him for coming.

**The normal Parish Council meeting then followed**

**1697 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING** Minutes 1689 to 1696 of the Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022 were proposed for acceptance by Mr Kynaston, seconded by Mr R Davies, and approved unanimously

**1698 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** None

**1699 CLERK'S REPORT** The Clerk reported that the new bench for Cardeston was on order and would be delivered before Christmas. MOP Mrs Carlyle suggested that some kind of 'ceremony' might be appropriate. He has also authorised the moving of the gate at Wattlesborough Village Green. He told members that the works on the car park at Wattlesborough Village Hall, which the Parish Council had assisted, were now complete (as evidenced by the surface all attendees had just parked on)

**1700 UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT** Cllr. Potter said that there would be serious cuts to the local council budgets next year and a 5.9% increase in Council Tax was likely, along with a tax on Green Waste collection. The new NW Relief Road is still held up in Planning, he said.

**1701 PARISH MATTERS**

- a. **Highways** Councillors discussed the additional hedge cutting for Rowton Lane which had proved beneficial this year, and authorised future expenditure on this, subject to sight of quotations. The parking in Wigmore Lane is still a serious problem and Cllr. Potter said he would get involved.
- b. **Policing:** Covered earlier
- c. **Platinum Jubilee:** My Kynaston advised that 5 apple trees were now available for sites around the Parish
- d. **Other:** MOP Mr Peake asked if there were any plans for the bus shelter at Halfway House to be improved, and The Clerk replied that a complete replacement was probably the best option and funds did not allow for that at present. It was possible that a new Bus Back Better scheme might be on the way, said Cllr. Potter, which would have funds attached.  
Mr Peake also said that he would soon move out of the caravan on the Halfway House Inn site and is planning to remove/strip the caravan in the New Year, ground conditions dependant.

**1702 FINANCE** Mr R Davies thanked the Council for the donation to the Alberbury fireworks display, and The Chair, who had attended, said it was a well-attended, excellent community event.

The Clerks Salary and expenses £303.94, Wattlesborough Copse tidy up £ 180, Wattlesborough playing field grass cutting £426, Alberbury grass cutting £19, and Village Hall hire £12, were proposed for payment by Mr R Kynaston, seconded Mr M Davies, and approved unanimously.

**1703 PLANNING** No matters arising. It was noted that the deceased Cedar of Lebanon tree at Rowton Castle had now been de-branched.

**1704 DATE OF NEXT MEETING** 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at Alberbury Village Hall, 7.30 pm

Further meetings next year will be on 13<sup>th</sup> February (Wattlesborough), 20<sup>th</sup> March (Alberbury), 15<sup>th</sup> May (W), 10<sup>th</sup> July (A), 4<sup>th</sup> September (W), 23<sup>rd</sup> October (A) and 4<sup>th</sup> December (W)

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm

Signed: Chairman

Clerk

Date: