

Worldham Annual Parish Assembly
Minutes of Meeting
held on Wednesday 19th May 2021 7.00pm
Via Zoom Conference Call

Present: Cllr W Brock (Chair)
Cllr B Bagnell
Cllr C Sole
Cllr R Twining

Also present: 11 members of the public
County Councillor Mark Kemp, Gee
District Councillor Ken Carter
District Councillor David Ashcroft
Mashood Ahmad, MD Grayshott Gigabit
Pamela Hibbins, Parish Clerk

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1 Welcome and Introduction

Chair of the Parish Council, Cllr W Brock welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Apologies of absence – none

3 Minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 10th April 2019. There were no matters arising from the minutes. To note Annual Parish Assembly did not take place in 2020 as exempt due to Covid-19.

Proposed: John Denyer, Seconded: Terry Blake

Action: Clerk

4 County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Mark Kemp-Gee was in attendance and expressed his thanks for being re-elected and paid personal tribute to Terry Blake over his long and distinguished service for the council. Cllr Kemp-Gee recognised the challenging year and highlighted the role of local government, at all levels and in particular, parish councils, who provided food parcel services, and ran errands across their parish and that parishes across the district did this.

Worldham has had a number of issues this year in regards to planning and enforcement issues. Cllr Kemp-Gee expressed his sincere gratitude to officers at EHDC and SDNPA for their help and acknowledged that this has taken a considerable amount of time and resources from them.

Cllr Kemp-Gee would like to instigate a visit from highway engineers and traffic calming officers to Worldham to help identify possible traffic calming measures.

It was **AGREED** to send the letter from Worldham Parish Council to Hampshire Highways to Cllr Kemp-Gee reference the diversion of A3 traffic along a B road and in particular concerns reference the 7% gradient of Worldham Hill that makes it inappropriate for lorries.

Action: Clerk

It was **AGREED** to move the SID and record vehicles along blanket street before and after the Oakham traffic measures are in place.

Action: Speedwatch co-ordinator

5 District Councillor's Report

District Cllr K Carter and District Cllr David Ashcroft were in attendance and confirmed that Cllr David Ashcroft remains on the Planning Committee, and Cllr Ken Carter retains his Joint Human Resources Committee, Vice Chair position.

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Three members of planning committee, Cllr Graham Hill, Cllr Malcolm Johnson and Cllr Ken Carter had to stand down from planning due to political imbalance of representatives from all parties and were all duly re-elected post elections, returning to the committee at the next meeting on the 10th June 2021. It was noted that the new central planning legislation, makes any challenges to officers' recommendations much harder than the previous process of 5-10 good objections being enough to call in an application to the planning committee.

Cllr David Ashcroft confirmed the Councillor Community Grant Scheme for 2021 -2022 is now open for application. The scheme is a budget of £4,500 which is allocated to each District Councillor to support voluntary and not for profit organisations within, or that benefit, their ward.

Penns place will reopen and hold its first physical planning committee meeting, on 20th May 2021, since March 2020 when it was closed as part of measures taken to combat the spread of coronavirus.

Chairman's Report

The Chair Cllr William Brock presented a report on the work of Worldham Parish Council in the past year.

The Chair recognised what an unusual year the council and residents had had under Covid-19 but that Worldham Parish Council continued to operate throughout and find new ways to engage with the community by adopting virtual meetings so that parish council business can run as usual.

The Chair wanted to acknowledge the changes in the parish council over the last 2 years since the last Annual Parish Meeting. Formally thanking Chair Cllr Andrew Aldridge for his many years of service and in particular for his expertise in planning, Worldham's loss is certainly Froyle Parish Council's gain. Cllr Bill Fife also left the area and therefore had to stand down from the parish council and again the Chair thanked Cllr Fife for all his hard work during his tenure. Cllr B Bagnell returned to the council in the role of councillor, Robin Twining moved sideways from clerk to councillor and was replaced by Janes Ives and subsequently the current clerk, Pamela Hibbins who joined in January 2020. Chris Sole and Kerrie Malin joined the team. Cllr Malin has since had to stand down due to personal circumstances but continues to be an involved member of the Worldham community. Throughout the many changes to the team our constant has been Cllr Terry Blake and the Chair echoed Cllr Mark Kemp-Gee's words of gratitude to Terry and the positive impact that he has made to the parish throughout his years of service. The Chair thanked all of the current councillors and clerk for all their hard work over the year in continuing the council business despite the restrictions that we have been under.

The Chair also thanked Kish, Jill and Mike for all their help running the village hall in a year where we have had to close and then reopen under Covid restrictions, and then close again.

The council were able to continue reviewing planning applications on behalf of the village. In particular

- VEOLIA 33619/007 - Alton Materials Recovery Facility, A31, Alton GU34 4J Development of an Energy Recovery Facility and Associated Infrastructure. The Council objected on concerns in regards to the surrounding landscape. For the proposed site 4 of the noted 21 viewpoints are in Worldham. The addition of the proposed industrial structure against the current rural view will be visible from these viewpoints. The additional traffic generated and that other sites were not being considered. It was felt this site on the border of the SDNPA was inappropriate. To note that this is now back on public consultation reference an environmental application.
- SDNP/20/03365/FUL Meadow Farm Green Street East Worldham Bordon GU34 3AU Raising levels of an agricultural field with imported soils to solve a drainage. It was AGREED to OBJECT due to the lack of evidence of agricultural use of this land in the recent years as well

as any clear future intention to use the land for agriculture. The Parish Council consider the method of raising the level of the land for drainage purposes to be inefficient as well as potentially damaging to the landscape and wildlife by rendering the land sterile as well as creating a flood risk to the adjacent land.

- SDNP/19/03709 Oaklands Farm Green Street East Woridham Bordon GU34 3AU This application was withdrawn by the applicant from the January 2021 Planning Committee for the second time.
- (EH1159)2020 East Hampshire (Wooded Land Opposite Oakland Farm, Green Street, East Worldham) Temporary Tree Preservation Order the Council supported a temporary TPO as well as a permanent order. Hope this is resolved soon and acknowledged all the help of all officers involved.

The EHDC enforcement team have been unable to make many site visits due to Covid but hope to go back to normal soon, however it was noted that along with SDNPA, EHDC were able to resolve issues along the B3004 at the bottom of Worldham Hill

The Parish Council also manage the Worldham Community Benefit Fund which helps to fund projects that will benefit the communities of the Parish Council and awarded a grant to King's World to cover costs of posting the publication as due to Covid, hand delivery was not advised. The parish council were delighted to be able to award this in recognition of the importance of the publication and residents being connected at such a challenging time and thanked all people involved from the editing team, to the distributors and the contributors. The Benefit Fund also funds the annual support for the village defibrillator and we hope to be able to run a training course in the Autumn, assuming government restrictions are lifted, on how to use this life saving equipment.

In other news.

The Three Horseshoes was once again awarded an Asset of Community value by East Hampshire District Council, being recognised for its importance in the village.

Ownership of Church lane was confirmed as Hampshire County Council owned and managed and includes the parking at St Mary's.

The multi play unit was finally repaired after significant delays from the supplier, thank you to Cllr Becky Bagnell for her persistence with this and the park has since had a new park bench and picnic table added to the site.

Thank you to Paul Grace for keeping village hall and playground looking so neat and tidy.

VE Day celebrations were sadly cancelled this year due to lockdown measures but I believe that Nicky will cover this in her report.

7 Financial Statement of the Accounts for the year 2020/2021 – The Clerk

The Clerk provided a review of the end of year accounts.

1- Balances brought forward	£23,206
2 (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	£12,268
3 (+) Total other receipts	£21,060

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4 (-) Staff costs	£6,500
5 (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	NIL
6 (-) All other payments	£11,391
7 (=) Balances carried forward	£38,643
8 Total value of cash and short term investments	£38,643
9 Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	£379,283
10 - Total borrowings	NIL

We started the year with £23,206 in the bank and in the year spent £17,890.70 (this largely went into council running costs, such as maintenance of local community areas such as the Village Hall, Playground and the annual grounds work as well as insurances and salary of the clerk. In total we received £33,129.51 in the year

The income that the Parish Council receives is made up of 3 elements – the precept, the amount you the Parishioners pay in Council tax payable to the Parish Council, hiring out the village hall and any grants that the Parish Council applies for. We ended the year with a significantly higher balance than we carried forward from the previous year. This is largely due to the Parish Council receiving a £10,000 Covid Small Business Grant, that the parish council intends to use to reinvest into the village hall and retrospective funding for projects completed in the previous financial year.

We are a small parish with a small annual precept so it is vital that the council are proactive in applying for other funding in order to benefit the community.

We were successfully awarded the following: -

- £10,000 Covid 19 - Business grant and this money will be reinvested back into our village hall.
- £540 - from SDNPA S106 funding - for a new window in the Village Hall
- £1,307 - from SDNPA Open Spaces S106 funding - for the new bench and picnic table at the playground.
- £2,919.00 - from SDNPA Traffic S106 funding as a retrospective contribution to the previously installed Village Gateways.

Worldham Parish Council has once again signed up to the Lengthsman's scheme. The Parish is provided with a budget of £1,000 (equivalent to 50 hours of labour a year). This has meant that some of the maintenance work has come out of this budget rather than from the Parish Council's budget.

Worldham Parish Council made donations to East Worldham, West Worldham and Hartley Mauditt churchyards for the upkeep of the respective burial grounds and wanted to thank all those involved who to continue to manage and look after these sites.

In recognition of the financial strain that Covid-19 has taken on residents and local businesses the council AGREED they would not request an increase in the precept this year.

8 Reports from Officials

a) Neighbourhood Watch - report by Kate Denyer, Worldham Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator

A short report this time: Lockdown has had a dramatic effect on what I have received as our Worldham co-ordinator, so I had far less to pass on to everyone. We have not been getting the normal reports on incidents and crime in our own Alton Rural area, as the volunteers are not able to visit police stations to pass them on. This means we have little knowledge of other crimes across this whole area. It is more important than ever to consider your both own security and the Worldham community. You can report any suspicious activity to the police by calling 101.

Scams and cyber crime remain of great concern to our police and many Worldham residents will have had some such criminal contact attempts. Hopefully everyone is being mindful of the regular advice we get on this subject.

Numbers of those subscribing to the Neighbourhood Watch messages roughly the same. We have a number of new residents in the parish, some of whom have joined our Neighbourhood Watch, but please encourage others to join us. Hopefully 'normal service' on alerts will resume at some points. I look forward to increasing our membership numbers this year – the police really need our help in combatting criminal activity

Chair emphasised it is important to report all crime, no matter 'how small' as helps support the evidence of what is going on in the area and how to redeploy the police/community

b) SpeedWatch - report by Nicki Twining, Worldham SpeedWatch Co-ordinator

Speedwatch, I'm afraid, was a victim of Covid. We always have a break over the winter anyway, while the weather is inclement, and due to the restrictions and lockdown were only able to be operational from August to October. It was noticeable particularly in the early stages of the first lockdown that although there was less traffic it was going much much faster, very frustrating as we were unable to do any roadside activity.

However, we managed after the risk assessments with a willing volunteer group of 15 to deploy 10 sessions, each session with 3 volunteers, at a site where the pavement and verge are suitable for social distancing just by Wyck Lane. For Robin and I, and I think some of the volunteers, it was a welcome social event, being that so much else was banned and we hadn't seen each other for so long! Interestingly we were one of the few local groups to re-start Speedwatch.

During these shifts 2325 cars passed us with 100 speeding, making an average of 4.3% cars speeding, that is going 35mph or more. Many more travel at more than 30mph, the speed limit but we are only allowed to record those at 35mph or higher. The average number of cars passing in one direction was 232 /hour. The number of cars passing varied from 140-302/hour depending on the time of day and those speeding varied from 3 % to 7 %.

As a result of our efforts Hampshire Constabulary were able to send out 74 first letters to those speeding, 8 second escalation letters to those who have been recorded speeding in any Speedwatch area in Hampshire before and there was one multiple offender who would have received a visit from the police when Covid restrictions allowed.

Historically we have always recorded more speeding cars on Worldham Hill but the pavement there is narrow and social distancing is not possible. Hopefully after June 21st we will be free to site Speedwatch back on the Hill as well as by the bus stop.

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Last year the Parish Council encouraged people to report to the police anyone witnessed speeding or driving dangerously with the number plate, make and colour of the vehicle and to let me know so I could record this data. I have had reports from only one parishioner who in total has reported a staggering 7 incidents of quite horrifying driving, particularly those who overtake on the double white lines at speed on the Hill. I would urge all parishioners to make reports to the police to help make our roads through the villages safer.

The SID does have a noticeable effect and moves around the village to the various approved sites. Unfortunately, it was out of action for some of the year due to dodgy batteries but Councillor Twining has managed to persuade the company to replace these free of charge and I'm pleased to report that it is now operating and with a much brighter screen! In the first lockdown April/May 2020 there was just over 10,000 vehicle movements per week in one direction by the bus stop. In June/July after some easing of Lockdown there was just under 14,000 vehicle movements / week going down the hill. It was disappointing to note that roughly a quarter of all traffic in this latter period were speeding at more than 35 mph with over 400 vehicles going over 55mph. The SID in fact recorded 105 vehicles going at more than 63mph. It was unlikely that these were all emergency vehicles responding to call out. It is noticeable that the SID does provide a visual deterrent as you see cars slowing down and I dread to think what the numbers speeding would be without it. The percentage of speeders is even more reduced when we are out manning the Speedwatch equipment providing not only a visible deterrent but also the worry that they will be reported to the police for speeding.

I would like to thank my able assistant Councillor Twining who inputs the data captured for me but more importantly the band of volunteers without whom Speedwatch wouldn't happen. New volunteers are always welcome. It does make a difference!

C) Footpath - report by Nicki Twining, Worldham Footpath Officer

I am pleased to give you my report as Footpath Rep for Worldham. It has been an important year for our local footpaths which have been a life saver for many with Covid restrictions and lockdowns. What would we have done without them?!

Consequently, I have had a busy year, I have made 12 reports to Countryside Access regarding footpath problems within the Parish and 2 reports in neighbouring parishes. Many of these have been instigated by parishioners who have noticed an issue on their walks and informed me. The problems have ranged from obstruction due to fallen trees or branches, broken stiles or kissing gates, broken signage or confusion in the route after tree felling work. All of these have been resolved by Countryside Access except a broken stile on Footpath 27. Robin and I deal with the more minor issues with his trusty saw! It does seem that repair of stiles and kissing gates is the landowner's responsibility now.

There has been an application for diversion of Footpath 27 again. This is the footpath that crosses the land where the Jalsa Salana is held. The application was delayed, as on one of our walks we discovered that the notice Countryside Access had put up was inaccurate and showed incorrect information. The notice had to be rectified before the application could proceed. The results of this are still awaited. I suspect that the stile on Footpath 27 has not been repaired pending the outcome of this application.

I have received several complaints about the state of footpaths from parishioners and have needed to contact the landowners who are always very helpful. I even received a text from a local landowner soon after 7am on Good Friday about an issue, above and beyond the call of duty for both of us I feel! . I will mention the large potato field between Wyck and Clays Lane, although it is an issue from April this year, because it has caused a great many concerns with 2 very popular footpaths crossing it. The landowner has been very responsive and has kindly agreed to allow

walkers to walk around the field edges on a temporary basis and has put up notices to that effect. As it is a wildlife area he requests that dogs are kept on leads.

Dog mess continues to be a problem on some paths despite articles in the Kings World. It is a continuing issue which could be solved if dog owners were more responsible in picking up the mess.

You may be aware that we have a brand-new permissive footpath in the Parish. This is a very unusual occurrence. It may not be used a lot by locals as it runs from the B3004 to the Hangers Way alongside the far end of the solar farm. It means that those walking the Hangers Way do not have to cross the A31.

I am hoping that every household thanks to a grant from EHDC at the request of the Parish Council will receive a laminated ordnance survey map of our local footpaths very soon. So please enjoy our footpaths. We are so blessed to have so many and please continue to report any issues to me and I will attempt to deal with them.

A member of the public raised question of kissing gates and dog gates it would be good to have more but it is up to the landowner as advised by Countryside Access but there is potential to apply for use of S106 money as a contribution but would need to be approved by the landowner also.

9 Village Agent

Report by Nicki Twining, Worldham Village Agent

Thank you for asking me to do a report on my role as a Village Agent for Age Concern Hampshire. I thought that I would first remind everyone what the role entails.

It is supported by Hampshire County Council so thank you to our county councillor.

Village Agents are volunteers in rural areas who help people find the information and support they need to stay living safely and independently. The range of topics is vast but most frequently includes finding help around the home, local social activities and what government help such as benefits, someone may be eligible for. I cover the Kings World area.

During Covid restrictions and lockdown it has been very frustrating because as volunteers for Age Concern Hampshire we have been restricted in what we are able to do for the safety of the clients and the volunteers. We have not been permitted to do home visits nor garden visits even when those would have been possible ... no Zoom and strict guidelines for leaving or picking up documents etc. from someone's house. I must praise the local Whats App group set up to support those shielding and self-isolating and they have done a wonderful job in supporting people practically.

So, during the last year my time as a Village Agent has been spent supporting some local people over the phone during Lockdown. I also help people, across all of Hampshire, who are struggling with various forms such as applications for Attendance Allowance or a Blue Badge. It takes, sometimes, several phone calls particularly for Attendance Allowance and typically takes up to 3 hours phone time to complete. I do find everything a lot harder over the phone.

I am therefore looking forward to being allowed to resume home visits again.

Lastly the Village Agent role is being re-branded. So, along with a new name, to make it clearer what Village Agents do, there will be other changes. I will keep you updated.

10 Fibre Optic Broadband in East Hampshire

A presentation was made by Grayshott Gigabit who are offering Gigabit speed broadband (up to 1,000Mbps) to the residents/businesses of East Hampshire. Over the past few years Hampshire Council in conjunction with Openreach created the county wide programme to enable Superfast broadband to increase broadband speeds to between 24-80Mbps. However, the Government has now tasked itself to push the country to adopt new technologies to bring in Gigabit speeds

(1,000Mbps) to improve the digital economy. The Government has pledged £5bn to improve the nation's broadband connectivity to full gigabit enabled fibre to the premise to 85% of the population by 2025. To take advantage of the government's initiative and funding for rural areas, a scheme called the Gigabit Voucher Scheme for Rural Communities has been set up, and suppliers such as Grayshott Gigabit will apply on residents' & businesses to leverage funding to enable faster gigabit technology. To note that East Worldham got fibre to the cabinet approximately a year ago, and BT is currently connecting communities between Alton & Bordon over the next 3-4 years, as part of their Fibre First programme. Grayshott Gigabit has urged residents to go directly to BT to question when they can receive a connection as part of the Fibre First Programme and get full fibre to their homes. If there are any delays on the part of BT, and residents still yearn for high-speed internet faster than the plans that BT have communicated, Grayshott Gigabit can support services of 100Mbps to 300Mbps over Fixed Wireless Access. Grayshott Gigabit can deliver as early as beginning of 2022, based upon demands on the parishioners, and uptake in demand. Interested parties can register their interest in the scheme with no obligation on the Grayshott Gigabit website; www.grayshottgigabit.com. Please note this is not a scheme that the Parish Council are running and so any commitment/contract is between individual households with Grayshott Gigabit directly.

A member of the public asked if there is a line from Oakhanger which is nearer to us than the Worldhams. Can we be connected to Oakhanger and they would need to contact their provider about this directly but they are eligible for the Grayshott Gigabit offer.

11 Open Forum and Public Questions

A member of the public asked about the current status of activity on Green Street. There is currently a court injunction against further work on site and is being monitored by EHDC and SDNPA officers.

To note that the 25th July 2021 is marked for the Worldham's Post Lockdown Celebration event, government guidance allowing. This will take place by the pond below Kings John's Hill and tickets at £1 will be available soon.

It was asked if there would be organised celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, due to take place 6th February 2022. There are no current plans but the VE day committee may pick this up post the lockdown celebration event.

The possibility of the Village Hall opening as a pop-up social space in recognition of the ongoing closure of The Three Horseshoes was highlighted and an update will follow in The King's World as well as the Parish Council website and social media channels.

The Vice-Chair of the Parish Council, Cllr B Bagnell expressed her thanks to the Chair and clerk for continuing to lead on Parish Council business.

12 The meeting closed at 9.15pm