

Withington Annual Village Meeting

Will take place on Wednesday 8th May 2019 at 7.00pm
in the Parish Room

Agenda

101/2018: Present:

Councillors Phil Heath (Chair) Neil Maxwell, Lesley Stone, Alan Williams, Cllr Lezley Picton (Shropshire Councillor for Tern Ward), Denise Roscoe (Clerk) and 11½ members of the public

102/2018: Welcome: Cllr Heath welcomed everyone

103/2018: Apologies

Cllr Martin Timmis, Jon Scutt and Brenda Marshall

104/2018: Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting held on 2nd May 2018

105/2018: Report from Parish Council Chairman

The Chairman delivered the following statement at the meeting:

My report will focus upon the main issues that arouse most interest amongst our parishioners, namely planning applications, roads and Traffic and Crime

1. **Planning.** Planning applications have always aroused more interest and discussion than any other subject. The PC position as defined in the 2003, 2008, 2013 and the 2018 Parish Plan is that Withington has elected to be classified as “open countryside” and therefore there should be no new houses built within the Parish unless they are low-cost for local need or a conversion of existing building to residential use.

In 2018 Shropshire Council reviewed the Local Plan with a public consultation on Preferred Development Site Allocations and. I am pleased to say that Withington is currently not viewed as a development area and will remain as “open countryside”

There have been no new planning applications for houses in this year however there is the ongoing issue regarding applications for chicken sheds at the Rea Farm. Whilst this application is in the parish of Upton Magna it will have an impact on Withington and therefore your PC have objected on the basis of,

- Increase in HGV traffic even though Sundorne Estate assure us the contractor will use the route out to Berwick Warf & Atcham
- Smells & odours as the prevailing winds will bring these direct to Withington.

Our understanding is that the Rea Farm application has stalled due to objections from the Canal Trust that the development will encroach upon the route of the canal.

2. **Roads and Traffic.**

The condition of the lanes around Withington still remain a concern even though Shropshire Council occasionally patch and repair potholes. Parishioners who discover

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new potholes should report them as soon as possible to either the PC Clerk or Shropshire Council before they become an even bigger problem.

The number and size of HGV's has always been a problem for the Parish in terms of the safety of other road users and the damage they cause to the roads and verges. The majority of HGV's deliver to CJ Wildlife. The PC have worked with CJ Wildlife and Shropshire Roads Department to try and address the problem which has resulted in a reduction of the number of HGV's passing through the village.

We have also seen a significant increase in the number of very large agricultural vehicles in our area which has resulted in damage to roads and verges as well as large deposits of mud on the roads. These appear to belong to contractors working for local farmers over a short but intense period of time. Whilst we live in a rural community and should expect agricultural traffic and the noise/smells etc associated with farming we do expect the contractors to keep the roads clear and respect our environment.

Sundorne Estate has employed an Estate Manager, Jason Jordan, who has taken over from Balfours. I, together with our Parish Clerk met with Jason after his appointment to discuss the issues regarding HGV and agricultural vehicles. I'm pleased to say he was sympathetic to our concerns and did try and reduce the amount of vehicle hauling carrots by insisting the contractor took loaded trailers via Berwick Wharf and empty one returning via Withington. Jason attended our PC meetings to ensure he is up to date on Parishioners concerns.

Parishioners should report any damage, preferably with pictures, vehicle details etc to the Parish Clerk so we can follow up with Jason and if necessary, Shrewsbury Council roads department.

We have raised the issue of HGV's and Agricultural vehicles with Shropshire Council through the creation of a "Community led concern" report which we submitted in February of 2018. This is a formal process for reporting our issues and the three key priorities that we have requested to be addressed are

1. HGV's using Withington to access Upton Magna and as a short cut to other major roads
2. Contractors agricultural vehicles using Withington as a "rat run" to access farms in other villages/parishes
3. The increase in the number of field accesses being created to accommodate the larger agricultural vehicles.

Unfortunately, Shropshire council has frozen all funding for addressing such reports we will however be raising these issues with Councillor Steve Davenport who is the Portfolio holder for Highways/Transport at Shropshire Council who has agreed to attend our PC meeting on 3rd July 2019. I would encourage parishioners who have concerns with traffic to attend the meeting

3. **Finally.**

- I wish to thank my fellow Parish Councillors and our Clerk for their efforts and support over the last 12 months.
- Members of the Village Green Committee for ensuring that our village green continues to be maintained and improved to the benefit of all Parishioners. Parishioners are reminded that the work of the Committee is funded by charitable

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donations and not from the village precept and welcome donations from new members of “the Friends of the Village Green” to support this important village asset.

- I also wish to thank Helen Thomas who took over from Jenney Newby last year for maintaining the public footpaths in our Parish as part of the PPP (Parish Paths Partnership).
- I would also like to thank Neil Maxwell who organised the initial training session on the use of the defibrillator funded by Brian and Josie Smiths excellent vintage tractor event and Lesley Stone who organised the recent awareness sessions.
- Finally, I wish to thank Councillors Martin Timmis and Lesley Stone, our Clerk, Lucy Ford and Tina Pryce who, with myself, formed the Parish Plan working party and developed the questionnaire and resulting Parish Plan. A special mention should be made of Nick Williams of Damson Cottage who used his publishing skills to produce the Parish Plan and also funded the printed version which was distributed to each household.

106/2018: Report from Shropshire Councillor Lezley Picton

Councillor Lezley Picton delivered a summary of the following statement at the meeting:

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2018/19

Budgetary Pressures

Shropshire Council continues to maintain a balanced budget. In order to achieve this further cuts have been made and more will no doubt follow. We continue to try to increase income rather than make cuts and have been relatively successful in this, however it is not enough. It is recognised across England that Councils, especially rural councils, are now down to the bone with nothing further to cut. There have been strong rumours from Westminster that the local government funding package will change as from 2020/21 and it will be based on a fairer funding programme. We also await a green paper on the future of Adult Social Care funding, the outcome of which could have a major positive effect on Shropshire Council's budget. Both important programmes have, of course, been held up by the small matter of Brexit!

There have been a few one off grants from government for pot holes, high streets and litter picking which are welcome but do not replace vital core funding.

The current administration of the Council has forecast a balanced budget for the years 2019/20 and 2020/21 but with the current financial formulae to balance the budget over a five-year term until 2022/23 there is a current budget deficit of £40m.

North West Relief Road

Shropshire Council finally received Government approval for this scheme in March. The current timescales being worked on are completion of this and the Oxon Relief Road will be within five years. I will continue to update the Parish Council as more details become known.

Local Plan Review

We are now mid-way through the Local Plan review process with potential Hubs and Clusters identified, preferred sites published, and meetings have taken place with Parish Councils. The first round of consultation is now complete, and the Policy Team are

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currently reviewing the huge number of responses (thanks to all those who responded to the consultation). The next round of consultation will be towards the end of the year. There are no plans to change the planning status of Withington and the parish will remain as Open Countryside.

The Parish Place Plan will become a very important document as we move forward. It is important to capture all the aspirations for the Parish in this document. Whilst Withington is part of the overall Shrewsbury Place Plan, a new Shrewsbury Rural Place Plan area has been formed.

Highways

In the last financial year, on top of the base budget, we received additional grants from the Department for Transport of approx. £7million - this was spent on additional resurfacing works. The 2019/20 programme of work is being collated and programmed; once it is completed this information will be shared with the Local Member and affected Parish Council.

The Highways and Transport service has undertaken a major restructure; this new structure will go live [on 1st June 2019](#). You may have different people working in your area now, so updated contact information will be shared with you shortly.

Shropshire Council's Digital Transformation team have been working with Highways colleagues and have developed the MyShropshire portal which allows members of the public to report any issues from streetlights not working to potholes directly to us from an online portal. The account you have on MyShropshire logs all the enquiries raised but it also works with our Highway systems and at each stage of the process it will update the enquiry, so you know what's happened with it i.e. work ordered, work completed etc.

Local Matters

Locally, planning issues, highway matters, or more specifically pot holes and speeding traffic and dog fouling are still hot topics for my inbox. The issue of large vehicles through the village is yet to be resolved and we still await a date for the Rea Poultry Application to be heard at Committee.

I've very much enjoyed working with you all and I look forward to the coming year.

107/2018: Public Forum

- 2 large potholes on the road between Parks Farm and The Oaklands were reported. **Action:** Clerk
- Cllr William enquired about the progress of the development of the old sugar beet factory site at Allscott. **Action:** Clerk to contact Wrockwardine Parish Council. Lezley Picton also suggested that an alert could be set up on the T&W website in respect to the Sugar Beet Factory planning application. **Action:** Clerk
- Cllr Stone reported that to date 35 had received awareness training for the defibrillator. There will be further sessions arranged if there is enough interest.

108/2018: Date of next Annual Village Meeting: Wednesday 6th May 2020

109/2018: Closure of meeting: The meeting closed at 7.30pm

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