

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WOOLSTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE WOOLSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HUB, HALL ROAD, WOOLSTON ON 18 MAY 2022

Present: Councillor D Hill (Chairman)
Councillors: M Banner, J Dixon, D Nowell, J Greenslade, MH Greenslade, AJ Hill, A McCarthy, M Pearce, S Rydzkowski, R Tynan

Apologies for absence: Councillor Czekalski

C1 Election of Chairman

Resolved,
That Councillor D Hill be elected Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.
(*Councillor Hill completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office*).

C2 Chairman's remarks

The Council recorded their thanks to Councillor Banner for the way she had undertaken the duties of Chairman during the past year.

C3 Election of Vice Chairman

Resolved,
That Councillor Banner be appointed Vice Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

C4 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence from Councillor Czekalski were noted.

C5 Code of Conduct – declarations of interest Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

There were no declarations of interest.

C6 Minutes of the previous meetings

Resolved,
That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2022 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

C7 Review of the terms of reference for committees 2022-23, including any delegation of powers, and to appoint the Chairman and members to serve on the under-mentioned committees (a) Environment and Amenities;(b) Finance and General

The Council considered a report of the Clerk on the terms of reference for committees 2022-23:

Resolved,

That approval be given to the terms of reference for 2022-23, as set out in the report of the Clerk, and the following committees be established consisting of all members of the Council and to the appointment of Chairmen as follows:

Environment and Amenities Committee – Councillor J Greenslade

Finance and General Committee – Councillor Banner

C8 Appointment of any new committees

Councillor Nowell suggested that the Council consider the principle of appointing working groups. These would be used to consider particular subjects and report their findings to the Council:

Resolved,

That the Clerk request advice from the Cheshire Association of Local Councils on the use of working groups.

C9 Review of procedures

Resolved,

That the Finance and General Committee undertake the following:

- a) Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses;
- b) In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
- c) Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;
- d) Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;
- e) Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
- f) Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation;
- g) Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
- h) Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;
- i) Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence;
- j) Review of the Council's complaints procedure;
- k) Review of standing orders, financial regulations and risk assessment;
- l) Review of the Code of Conduct.

C10 Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back to the council and appointment of representatives

Resolved,

That approval be given to the following appointments to outside bodies with reports being made to each meeting of the Council by the representatives:

New Cut Heritage and Ecology Trail Group – Councillor J Greenslade

Friends of Woolston Park – Councillors Pearce and Tynan

Public Rights of Way Forum – Councillor Nowell

C11 Committee matters

The Council considered matters relating to the undermentioned committees:

(1) Environment and Amenities Committee

1. Parish Path Warden scheme – appointment of Path Warden

Resolved,

That Councillor Nowell be appointed as Parish Path Warden for the ensuing year as part of the Borough Council's Path Warden scheme.

2. Development of “Old Billy” scheme

The Clerk reported that the Council had agreed (Minute C 13(2) – 26 May 2021) to support a bid by the Borough Council to the National Lottery Heritage Fund aimed to:

- Tell the story of “Old Billy” and promote him as a Heritage Mascot for Warrington;
- Support local heritage groups to attract new audiences, particularly young people and families;
- Attract new heritage volunteers and provide training for existing and new volunteers.

This scheme had not proceeded.

Further to the report to the Council (Minute C 101(2)(g) – 27 April 2022) the Cultural Partnerships Development Manager for the Borough Council had provided further information on the revised bid application. The Council was requested to support the revised bid as set out below:

Old Billy Heritage Project Briefing

Introduction

This project ties in with the enhancement of the New Cut Heritage & Ecology Trail by providing animation linked to points on the trail, accessed via mobile devices, or on a website which informs visiting families about the history of Old Billy, the world's oldest horse. <https://www.historic-uk.com/CultureUK/Old-Billy-The-Barge-Horse/>

The project aims to:

- *Engage young audiences and their families in Warrington's heritage;*
- *Connect people to their heritage and inspire people to support local heritage;*
- *Bring communities together and connect them to the place where they live;*
- *Develop new skills amongst participants and volunteers;*
- *Encourage a sense of well-being through being outdoors and walking a trail.*

The Project

- *The culmination of the project will be a family-friendly event in Victoria Park which includes a live performance, heritage stalls, entertainment and a food and drink offer. This will be in September.*
- *A life-size puppet of Old Billy will be created and will feature in the live performance at Victoria Park which will tell the story of Billy's life.*

- *The Old Billy puppet will then be used at future heritage events which aim to attract younger audiences.*
- *A local artist will create the puppet from recycled/sustainable materials.*
- *A local youth drama group will create the performance and will provide youth volunteers to be the puppeteers.*
- *Heritage volunteers and members of the New Cut Heritage group will be trained to provide Old Billy trails along the canal.*
- *An illustrated Old Billy story book will be created and copies will be donated to local schools.*

Funding

- *The New Cut Heritage and Ecology Trail enhancements will be funded by Woolston Parish Council.*
- *A National Lottery Heritage Fund bid, if successful, will fund the puppet, performance and family-friendly event.*
- *Match funding will be provided by Culture Warrington (Old Billy story book) and Warrington BC.*

It was noted that the Council had agreed to earmark funds for the scheme being developed in partnership with Culture Warrington and this would be reported as part of the bid.

The Clerk reported that Culture Warrington were to provide details of the final scheme for approval and to allow consultation with Poulton with Fearnhead Parish Council and the New Cut Heritage and Ecology Trail Group who were to be invited to participate in the project:

Resolved,
That

1. approval be given to support the bid by the Borough Council as outlined in the brief;
2. the report of the Clerk on progress with the "Old Billy" scheme be noted.

3. Facilities for young people – progress report

Further to Minute C101(1)(c) – 27 April 2021 the Council considered an analysis provided by Councillor J Greenslade on the survey results reported by the Kings Leadership Academy of children in years 7-9. The Clerk reported that no response had been received for comments on the results from the Borough Council's Outreach Team Council or the Police:

Resolved,
That

1. Councillor J Greenslade be thanked for producing the analysis of the survey undertaken by the school:
2. a copy of the analysis and a further request for a response be sent to the Borough Council's Outreach Team and the Police.

4. Woolston Park – anti-social behaviour

The Clerk reported on a request made by a resident to the Borough Ward Councillors and the Council for assistance in removing furniture that had been fly-tipped to create a den in an area in of Woolston Park adjacent to Spittle Brook. The resident was concerned that the Borough Council had been unable to identify the location and no action so far had been taken.

The resident had also made a report to the Police to control the anti-social behaviour. A report had been made to the Borough Council's Street Scene service and the furniture was removed:

Resolved,

That details of the incident and the action taken be noted.

(2) Finance and General Committee

1. Conduct of council meetings and business during the period of the Coronavirus pandemic

The Council considered the arrangements for meetings at the Woolston Neighbourhood Hub and the use of the Wellbeing Suite having regard to current Government Covid 19 guidance:

Resolved,

That approval be given to the use of the Wellbeing Suite for the next meeting.

2. Applications for grant aid

No applications to report.

3. Management accounts – periods ending March 2022 and year ending 2021-22

The Clerk submitted the quarterly accounts for the period ending March 2022 and for the year ending 2021-22:

Resolved,

That the management accounts be accepted.

4. National Salary Award 2021-22

Resolved

That approval be given to the payment of the salary award 2021-22 in accordance with the provisions of the contract of employment for the post of Clerk to the Council.

C12 Calendar of Council and committee meetings 2022-23

The Council considered a report of the Clerk on the time and place of meetings of the full council and standing committees up to and including the next annual meeting of the full council. The dates avoided Development Management Committee meetings of the Borough Council in accordance with previous decisions.

The proposed meeting place was the Woolston Neighbourhood Hub to meet current guidance during the Covid 19 pandemic. The calendar identified the dates of meetings to be held and reserved dates for meetings:

Resolved,

That the report on the calendar of meetings for 2022-23 be accepted subject to the commencing time being 7.00pm, unless otherwise stated.

C13 Matters of report from previous minutes - C101(f) Woolston Weir – Hydropol scheme, Weir Lane - update

Councillor Nowell reported proposed changes to the operation of the Penny Ferry at the Manchester Ship Canal. It was understood that following the retirement of the present employee the service was to change to a motor boat:

Resolved,

That information be requested from Peel Holdings on the reported changes to the service.

C14 Policing of Woolston – community liaison report

The Chairman welcomed PC Brennan, Neighbourhood Officer, appointed for the parish to his first Council meeting. The Council noted that he intended to attend meetings of the Council to provide a report on matters dealt with by the Police and to respond to any issues raised by the Council. A verbal report was provided on recent matters relating to the parish:

Resolved,

That the report be noted.

C15 Borough Council business

Borough Councillors Dixon and A Hill reported on matters under consideration by the Borough Council relating to the parish and on issues that they had acted on for residents since the last meeting. (The Council noted that the reports related to the parish council area and not to the wider area of the Rixton and Woolston Borough Ward unless there was an issue of interest to Woolston).

Details of matters since the last meeting:

- The decision of the Planning Inspectorate on the appeal made against refusal of approval to a Tree Preservation Order relating to Bowfell Grove was awaited.
- Councillor Dixon had attended a meeting of the Development Management Committee with the Chairman, Councillor Banner and Councillor Nowell to speak in support of the objections made to Application reference: 2022/41289: Land to rear of 48-58 Cliftonville Road, Woolston, Warrington. Description of development: Change of use of land to enable the siting of storage containers to be used as self-storage units. The Committee had approved the application with conditions.
- Complaints relating to trees and pot holes had been reported to officers.

Resolved,

That

1. the reports be noted;
2. Borough Ward Councillors be asked to submit a written report to the Council if they are unable to attend a meeting.

C16 Correspondence – consultation and information **- Consultation on Warrington’s Dog Control Public Space Protection Order**

The Council considered the draft public space protection order submitted by Warrington BC for comment:

Resolved,

That consideration be given to the submission of comments before the closing date of 29 July 2022.

C17 Planning Applications and decisions

The Council considered the following planning applications submitted for comment by the Borough Council:

Applications for consideration at the meeting:

Application reference: 2022/41190

Location: 23, Martinscroft Green, Woolston, Warrington, Warrington, WA1 4QG

Description of development: Fell x 1

Application reference: 2022/41417

Location: HEATHERCROFT NURSING HOME, LONGBARN LANE, WARRINGTON, WA1 4QB

Description of development : Minor alterations to the elevations of an existing care home, provision of new cycle store, bins store and smoking shelter, upgrade of boundary treatments, introduction of a new gate access to the side of the main site entrance, addition of a small ground floor extension to the existing lounge area to the rear of the main building.

Application reference: 2022/41462

Location: 43, MANCHESTER ROAD, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON

Description of development: PROPOSED DISPLAY OF 2 NO. INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED FASCIA SIGNS, 2 NO. INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED TOTEM SIGNS AND 2 NO. NON-ILLUMINATED DOUBLE-SIDED POST SIGNS

Applications to approve action taken

The Council on 27 April 2022 agreed to submit an objection to Application 2022/41289.

Location: Land to rear of 48-58 Cliftonville Road, Woolston, Warrington. Description of development: Change of use of land to enable the siting of storage containers to be used as self-storage units.

Details of the objection submitted are shown below:

Application 2022/41289 sits immediately adjacent to the disused New Cut Canal and its associated towpath Woolston PRoW no. 23 and alongside Bridge Lane PRoW no. 22. The proposed development includes security fencing along path no.23. This boundary is currently a combination of trees and shrubs which form part of a valuable nature corridor and wildlife habitat along the disused canal.

The submitted planning statement refers to retaining this foliage, but it seems difficult to imagine how this could be achieved given the width of the proposed container unit storage area, into which the vegetation currently intrudes. Any such installation risks a substantial impact on the passage of local wildlife including protected species such as Willow Tits and Bats. Granted the latter species may not necessarily roost in the area but from observation they certainly forage there. Removal of the tree line even if undertaken outside bird nesting season would result in permanent loss of habitat and passage space.

The visual amenity of the popular 'New Cut Heritage and Ecology Trail' would also be impacted.

The site has been identified as a potential niche for individuals and small businesses wishing self-storage facilities not provided by mainstream operations. This runs the risk of materials and potentially vehicles such as off-road motorcycles not permitted by other storage providers to be sited at this facility. Fly tipping is endemic in the adjacent area. Such a facility could also exacerbate that situation and encourage antisocial behaviour. The applicant anticipates infrequent use which would not likely result in congestion on the site. No parking or turning circle information is therefore proposed. This overlooks the likelihood of vehicles towing trailers frequenting the site.

Bridge Lane does not attract a high volume of foot traffic. This in part is due to its frequent use by heavy goods vehicles, with no segregation with pedestrians. Adding another business along this route could make its use as a public right of way even less desirable. The proposed development would impact on the amenity of the residents adjacent to the site through random use of the facilities during the day and evening through increased traffic on the access and noise.

A single parked vehicle may obstruct the narrow lane and increase the risk to road safety:

Resolved,

That

1. the objection submitted in respect of application 2022/41289, land to the rear of, 48-58 Cliftonville Road, Woolston, Warrington be confirmed;
2. no comments be made in respect of the other applications listed subject to any further comments received from members.

C18 Business raised by Council Members **– Sainsbury's local store**

Councillor McCarthy reported on the opening of the new store that had been granted planning approval on appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. An issue with the development was the provision of car parking for customers to avoid on-street parking. Concern had also been expressed at the need for enforcement of the waiting restrictions on Hawthorne Avenue and New Cut Lane:

Resolved,

That Councillor Dixon be asked to contact the Borough Council to ensure that the conditions for parking spaces have been met and to request enforcement of the waiting restrictions.

– Woolston Playing Fields

Councillor McCarthy reported on the undertaking given by the Borough Council at a site meeting to improve the surface of the footpath alongside the Kings Leadership Academy leading to the playing fields:

Resolved,

That Councillor Dixon be asked to contact the Borough Council to confirm that the work is to be carried out.

- Friends of Woolston Park - report

The Council thanked Councillor Pearce for the submission of a report on the work of the group.

(See appendix for report).

- Poulton-with-Fearnhead Parish Council – community event 4 September 2022

Councillor Rydzkowski reported on an event to be held on Bennett’s Recreation Ground that local groups including the Friends of Woolston Park and the New Cut Heritage and Ecology Trail group were welcome to attend. Members were asked to pass the information on to groups that may be interested in setting up a stall at the event.

C19 Accounts

Resolved,

That approval be given to the following payments:

Cheque No	Date expenditure incurred	Payee	VAT not recoverable	Amount	Purpose	S137
4612	18/5/22	Employee 1	0.00	406.48	M2 May 2022	
4613	18/5/22	John Lewis Partnership (Clerk)	0.00	629.00	Apple iPhone 12	

APPENDIX

PARISH COUNCIL NOTES FOR FOWP – APRIL/MAY 2022

After the successful visit of Fungal Punk Dave last month, he sent a list of the sightings on the day. I have a list if anyone is interested.

25 April 2022 – Work Day

Work was continuing in the Jubilee Garden and is now looking nice and tidy. Over the last few workdays much has been improved, the benches are being repaired, sanded down and painted and some of the tiles have been lifted and levelled. The round path in the Jubilee Garden is in need of repair or a completely new path is really needed.

Some of the wood from the board walk that was recently removed is being put to good use. It is in the process of being fastened around the triangle in front of the cabin. During the winter with heavy rainfall the soil was being washed onto the roadway. Not only is it putting the unwanted boardwalk to good use it makes that small garden look so much better.

One of the Friends has donated another couple of bird feeders and another local man who regularly visits the park to feed and take photos of birds has kindly donated birdseed. Thank you for such a kind donation. So much appreciated because we use such a lot and it's important to keep feeding the birds throughout the year.

1 May 2022 – FOWP (Sunday)

Another successful Sunday working in the Jubilee Garden with Friends and local residents. Week by week the garden is improving.

2 May 2022 -Bank Holiday – No work

4 & 11 May – Tree Planted

At the last Parish Council meeting discussing ways of celebrating the Queens Jubilee, it was agreed to contribute a tree for the park. A crab apple tree was purchased and planted in the Jubilee Garden in Woolston Park to celebrate the Queens 70 years reign. At the time it was in full blossom and looked beautiful. The FOWP are delighted with it.

9 May 2022 – Work Day

The morning started earlier for several of the Friends to do a bird study walk. Work also continued in the Jubilee Garden. A lady arrived with several plants that she had thinned out from her garden and donated them to the Friends. They were then planted in the triangle in front of the cabin and are looking in good health. Many thanks to that lady. Also, work was done in the area around the small pond.

11 May 2022 – FOWP Monthly Meeting

Several of the items discussed at the meeting have already been covered in this report. Outstanding issues include the state of the cabin, cabin repairs, entrances, especially the toilets, the 3rd toilet is now causing problems. All the toilets are in a bad way.

Allotments – one of the FOWP is now on the waiting list for a plot and several of the other Friends are willing to help out when an allotment becomes available. The Friends have asked how long approx will they have to wait.

Other activities include the D of E Awards, currently students with a parent continue to come and work as part of it.

The 27th Scouts have 3 evenings booked; on the 17 May they will be planting some trees in the park. Warrington 10K will be here on 30 June.

Other future activities include Teddy Bears Picnic, Café Days, Music afternoon and a Bat Walk.

13 May 2022 – Visit to Ingreivity

After the visit last month from Ingreivity who came and helped the Friends in the Jubilee Garden. In return the Friends were invited to visit their site. It was an interesting morning with lots of chatter. The Friends made cakes and the Ingreivity staff gave donations in appreciation to assist the Friends in the park.

14 May 2022 – YFOWP BIRD WALK

We started a little earlier for the bird walk. Not many attended, yet it was such a lovely calm morning. We are fortunate to have one of the Friends who has a lot of knowledge of birds and was willing to share his knowledge of the many wonderful sights and sounds of the birds. Even a Moorhen came so close to us by the pond, stopped and plucked a big worm out of the pond, swam back to her young with the worm. Such a wonderful sight to see right in front of us.

16 May 2022 – Work Day

After the usual chatting as to what needs doing. I went off to fill all the bird feeders that are emptying quickly whilst the birds are feeding their young, everyone had gone off to do their various tasks. Some litter picked and so did I, some in the Jubilee Garden, some trimming hedges/bushes, some continued with the woodwork from the boardwalk being placed around the triangle. It was another positive work morning

Chairman.....