

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WOOLSTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE WOOLSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HUB, HALL ROAD, WOOLSTON ON 29 JUNE 2022

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

Apologies for absence: Councillor AJ Hill

C20 Code of Conduct – declarations of interest **Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012**

There were no declarations of interest.

The Council noted reports from Councillors Banner and Dixon on updates to be made to their Register of Members' Interests to remove items relating to membership of organisations.

C21 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence from Councillor Czekalski were noted.

C22 Minutes of the previous meetings

Resolved,

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2022 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

C23 Representations from members of the public

Further to Standing Order 10 the Council agreed to allow representations to be made by the public on an item not included on the agenda.

A resident reported on issues raised with the Council at the meeting held on 26 January 2022 relating to Dam Lane:

- Blocked drains in the highway resulting in flooding to gardens. It was accepted that further work had been carried out by the Borough Council to the drainage in Dam Lane but this had not stopped the flooding to house properties particularly in times on heavy rainfall.
- Use of the road by heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and speeding by vehicles – concern had been raised with the police at HGVs using Dam Lane to attempt to access the Grange Employment area and parking on the road adjacent to the shops. Reports had also been made relating to the spillage from overladen HGVs onto the highway resulting in potential hazard to pedestrians and other road users. The suggested introduction of a 20mph speed limit on Dam Lane was not considered to be a solution because of the lack of enforcement and there was a need to ban HGVs to improve road safety and to prevent the damage laden vehicles parked adjacent to the shops were considered to cause to highway drainage.

Councillor Dixon reported that following the January Council meeting he had met residents and had received reports from officers on work undertaken to improve highway drainage.

The Police representatives reported on the enforcement action that could be taken in respect of the speeding issues raised relating to HGV's. Concern was expressed by members at the speed of HGVs on A57 Manchester Road and local roads:

Resolved,

That

1. support be given in seeking action from the Borough Council and Police to remedy the concerns raised;
2. the report from Councillor Dixon be noted and he be requested to follow up on the matters raised with the Borough Council;
3. the action to be taken by the Police following the request for the monitoring of the speed of HGVs on Dam Lane and A57 Manchester Road be welcomed;
4. it was noted that the reported contraventions of parking restrictions on Dam Lane were a responsibility of the Borough Council and that action was needed to by that Council to prevent the regular parking of HGVs alongside the shops;
5. representations be made to the Borough in support of the matters raised.

C24 Matters of report from previous minutes **- Sainsbury's local store**

Further to Minute C18 – 18 May 2022, Councillor McCarthy reported that from observations made the present use of the store had not resulted in street parking by customers. However, he remained concerned that the original number of parking spaces had not been provided. A question was also raised on the loss of available spaces to employee parking. It was noted that the Borough Council was responsible for the enforcement of parking restrictions on Hawthorne Avenue and New Cut Lane.

Councillor Dixon reported that officers had confirmed to him that the development complied with the decision of the Planning Inspectorate following the appeal made after refusal of the planning application by the Borough Council:

Resolved,

That Councillor Dixon be requested to report the concerns raised to the Borough Council.

- Borough Council business – Woolston Playing fields

Councillor McCarthy reported on the undertaking given at a site meeting by the Director of Transport and Environment (C71 - 26 January 2022) to carry out maintenance of the path leading to Woolston Playing Fields adjacent to Kings Leadership Academy. No work had been carried out and maintenance was needed to provide a sound surface throughout the year:

Resolved,

That Councillor Dixon be requested to follow up on this matter with the Borough Council.

C25 Policing of Woolston – community liaison report

PC Hankin and PC Goodman attended the meeting to present a report on the policing of Woolston for June 2022. PC Hankin reported that the Neighbourhood officers for Woolston were unable to attend on this occasion.

Councillor Rydzkowski reported on incidents where off road motorbikes and powered scooters were used on the highway including footpaths. PC Hankin reported on the “Operation Scrambler” initiative to tackle this nuisance. The public were advised to dial Cheshire Police on 101 with detailed descriptions of the bikes and riders to allow an investigation to be made:

Resolved,

That the report be noted and the officers be thanked for their attendance.

(Please see appendix for report).

C26 Borough Council business

Borough Councillor Dixon 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:

- Abingdon Avenue – the Borough Council was to write to all residents to give an explanation and apology for the manner in which the resurfacing works had been carried out.
- Dam Lane – overgrown garden – the action taken by the Borough Council to deal with complaints from residents was noted. The Council noted that this had been a recurring issue.
- Objections had been made by residents in Orford and Latchford at experimental traffic restrictions to introduce Neighbourhood Calming. The Orford scheme had been paused. No schemes of this type were being planned for Woolston.
- The Council had been informed that the HS2 rail scheme routed through Warrington had been cancelled by the Government.
- Spillages and speeding on old Manchester Road/Bridge Lane – following a report by Councillor J Greenslade officers had been asked to investigate this complaint and had visited to the All Mix Depot based on Bridge Lane Industrial Estate and spoken to the site manager. The manager undertook to speak to his drivers regarding the loading of vehicles so that no materials spill on to the highway when leaving the depot and to reduce their speed when joining Manchester Road. The manager was advised to contact the road sweeping contractor to clear any spillages. The issue was to be monitored by the Borough Council.
- Juniper Lane – presence of Hogweed on private land to be reported.
- The change of party membership by Councillor Eastty had required the proportionality arrangements on bodies to be reviewed by the Borough Council:

Resolved,

That

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

C27 Committee matters

The Council considered matters relating to the undermentioned committees:

(1) Environment and Amenities Committee

1. Parish Path Warden scheme

Councillor Nowell reported on matters relating to public footpaths and on issues that had been reported to the Borough Council:

- An obstruction to Public Footpath 18 at Nichol Avenue had been reported to the Borough Council. This was caused by earthworks considered to be related to the recent development and the subject of a planning condition.
- The surface of the section of Public Footpath 27 beneath the Bailey bridge adjacent to the M6 viaduct was uneven and had waste materials on it that had fallen from the bridge. Materials had also been sighted falling from the bridge into the river.

The Council noted that both reports raised issues relating to the enforcement of planning conditions:

Resolved,

That Councillor Dixon be requested to follow up on these matters with the Borough Council to ensure that action is being taken by the Public Rights of Way Officer in liaison with planning enforcement officers.

2. Development of “Old Billy” scheme

Further to the report to the Council (Minute C11(1) 2. 18 May 2022) the Clerk reported an update from Culture Warrington on work to finalise the 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. No further details had been received from the Borough Council on the submission of their bid to the National Heritage Lottery Fund:

Resolved,

That the report of the Clerk on progress with the “Old Billy” scheme be noted.

(Councillor Banner declared a non-pecuniary interest by reason of being Chair of Culture Warrington)

3. Facilities for young people – progress report

Further to Minute C11(2) 3. – 18 May 2022 the Clerk reported that responses had been received from the Borough Council’s Outreach Team and the Police relating to initiatives to remedy anti-social behaviour (ASB) by young people. Both related to the work undertaken in the community by those bodies and no direct comments had been given on the survey results provided.

The Borough Council’s Community Safety and Resilience Officer (Youth ASB) had provided details of joint action with Cheshire Police that were planned at weekly meetings including:

- Use of Detached Youth Teams in parks across Warrington
- Working in areas to build a rapport with young people
- Use of the Youth Bus, Outreach work and the Detached Youth Team as needed
- Jointly with Cheshire Police to speak to school assemblies around ASB and what the consequences could be for the young person and the community.

A new Stay Safe initiative was being developed with Cheshire Police to involve a qualified youth worker working with police to react to live reports of ASB across the town.

PCSO Roberts had provided details of the youth club operating in Woolston Mission on Monday evenings for those in school year 5 and upwards and had referred to LiveWire centres across the town that offered a variety of sports, including special activities during school holidays.

Both the Borough Council and Cheshire Police had drawn attention to the opening of the Youth Zone in the town centre this week – contact details: - <https://warringtonyouthzone.org>

Resolved,

That

1. the information provided by the Borough Council and Cheshire Police be noted;
2. consideration be given to the action to be taken on the results of the survey undertaken by the Kings Leadership Academy having regard to the information received.

4. Battery Lane allotment site – management matters

The Clerk reported on an application from the Friends of Woolston Park group for an allotment plot at the site:

Resolved,

That approval be given to the application subject to the plot being held in the name of a Woolston resident who is an official of the group e.g., Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and payment of the relevant annual rent.

(2) Finance and General Committee

1. Audit of Accounts 2021-22

The Council considered:

(a) the report of the internal auditor on the accounts for 2021-22.

(b) the Annual Internal Audit report 2021-22 and (1) the Annual Governance Statements for 2021-22 and (2) the Accounting Statements for 2021-22:

Resolved,

That

- (1) the report of the internal auditor on the accounts for 2021-22 be accepted, including the statement of accounts;
- (2) the Annual Internal Audit Report 2021-22 be accepted;
- (3) approval be given to (a) the Annual Governance Statements and (b) the Accounting Statements for 2021-22.

2. Applications for grant aid

– Friends of Woolston Park

The Council considered an application for grant aid from the group for the purchase of equipment to continue with maintenance work in Woolston Park and the purchase of perennial plants for the Jubilee Garden and bird seed:

Resolved,

That the application be approved and a grant of £500 be made.

– Battery Lane Allotment Association

The Clerk reported on an application from the Battery Lane Allotment Association for grant aid in support of the work on the community areas at the site:

Resolved,

That approval be given to consideration being deferred to allow further information to be requested on the application.

3. Appointment of committees/working groups

Further to Minute C8 -18 May 2022 – Appointment of any new committees, the Clerk reported advice received from the Cheshire Association of Local Councils (Chalc) on the procedures relating to working groups and generally on the appointment of committees and sub-committees.

The Council considered the information and the procedures currently used:

Resolved,

That the information received from Chalc be noted and no changes be made at this time.

4. Remembrance Sunday 2022 – event planning

The Clerk reported a request from the Borough Council to submit an Event Management Plan for Remembrance Sunday 2022 to be held at Martinscroft Green. The Council had agreed to organise the event in 2021 that had previously been undertaken by the Vicar from the Church of the Ascension because of a vacancy in that role. The plan was to be submitted not later than 3 months before the event:

Resolved,

That

1. approval be given to the Council being the organiser of the 2022 event in liaison with the relevant local organisations;
2. the Clerk be authorised to submit an Event Management Plan.

C28 Reports from members appointed to local bodies

The Council received reports from members who were appointed by the Council or other organisations on local bodies including:

- New Cut Heritage and Ecology Trail Group – Councillor J Greenslade – the next quarterly meeting of the group was to be held in July. Information was published by the group on their website and details were reported highlighting current topics.
- Friends of Woolston Park group – report by Councillor Pearce (please see appendix). Members thanked Councillor Pearce for her detailed report.
- Public Rights of Way Forum – Councillor Nowell reported on the meeting held on 15 June 2022. Issues of interest to Woolston:
 - Public footpath 27 – barriers removed along river (1) metal gate near to Edward Gardens entrance; (2) Battery Lane and (3) stile at the Rixton end of the path – all reported to the Council.
 - Many cyclists now speeding on public footpaths
 - Councils advised to fix reflectors to any posts installed on paths to improve safety. Of interest to the “Old Billy” scheme.
- Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) liaison meeting with parish councils at the Town Hall, 31 May 2022 – Councillor J Greenslade reported on the meeting that he had attended the meeting on behalf of the Chairman. There were no direct issues relating to Woolston included in the report of the PCC. The absence of items relating to the north of Warrington had been commented on and members attending had raised issues with the PCC. Minutes of the meeting were to be circulated to the Council.

Resolved,
That the reports be noted.

C29 Correspondence – consultation and information

No items to report.

C30 Planning Applications and decisions

The Clerk reported that there were no planning applications submitted for comment by the Borough Council. The Development Control section had advised the Council that:

We are currently in the process of receiving a new Planning IT system, therefore our existing system was shut down on the 19th May in order to transfer the information, any applications submitted after this date are held with the portal until our system is up and running on or around the 20th June, after this date we will then start to validate and register the applications, please note we do have a backlog of around 250 applications.

Resolved,
That the report be noted.

C31 Business raised by Council Members **– A57 Manchester Road – maintenance of hedge**

Councillor McCarthy reported on the need for maintenance to the length of hedge on the north side of Manchester Road from Redwood Close towards Weir Lane. The hedge was sited on Borough Council land and had been funded by public donations. No action had been taken on requests for maintenance work; it had been emphasised to the Council that the hedge height should not be reduced:

Resolved,
That Councillor Dixon be asked to contact the Borough Council regarding this matter.

- A57 Manchester Road – maintenance of drains

Councillor McCarthy reported that the slots in the drains alongside the road were blocked with vegetation preventing the surface water to be cleared from the highway:

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

- Woolston Eyes – provision of defibrillator

Councillor Nowell reported that a defibrillator was now located within the site.

C32 Accounts

Resolved,
That approval be given to the following payments:

Cheque No	Date expenditure incurred	Payee	VAT not recoverable	Amount	Purpose	S137
4616	15/06/22	Employee 1	0.00	406.48	M3 June 2022	
4617	15/06/22	Friends of Woolston Park	0.00	69.49	Reimbursement of tree cost Queens Platinum Jubilee	
4618	15/06/22	Warrington Borough Council	0.00	1061.30	Woolston East Ward by election 7 April 2022 – first of four annual payments	
4619	29/06/22	HM Revenue and Customs (Clerk)	0.00	304.80	PAYE Months 1-3	
4620	29/06/22	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	0.00	141.80	Local Council Administration	
4621	29/06/22	Cheshire Association of Local Councils	0.00	1470.04	Affiliation fee 2022-23	
4622	29/06/22	Timpson (Clerk)	0.00	50.00	Queen's Platinum Jubilee plaque	
4623	29/06/22	Amazon (Clerk)	0.00	79.89	Printing and stationery	
4624	29/06/22	JDH Business Services Ltd	0.00	1194.00	Internal Audit fees 2021/22	

APPENDIX

Woolston June 2022 - Monthly Parish report

Neighbourhood Sergeant PS Nathan Gulam
Neighbourhood Officer PC Jack Brennan
PCSO Bethan Roberts

Anti Social Behaviour

2 Youths (1), environmental (0), personal (1)

Personal/environmental include neighbour, parking/traffic, Covid issues

Burglary

0 Dwelling

1 Other Business premise

Criminal Damage

1 1x relates to attempt theft of bicycle

Vehicle crime

1 Theft of vehicle

2 Theft from vehicle Parts/stock

OTHER

- Patrols continue covering various parks, shops, Woolston Hub Car park, Woolston Eyes & New Cut Canal Path
- Warrington Youth Club – outreach teams continue to work on our area particularly the park
- Operation Stay Safe – safeguarding operation across Warrington visiting parks and open spaces – officers patrolling areas in partnership with social care, health, outreach workers
- An offender was identified, arrested and charged in relation to some recent bicycle thefts. We will be arranging bicycle marking sessions at Woolston Hub (dates to be confirmed)

The Environment Agency have a 24hr hotline 0800 80 70 60 for members of the public to report matters such as flooding from rivers/streams, poaching/illegal fishing to them

- <https://www.gov.uk/report-an-environmental-incident>
- To tackle nuisance off-road motorbikes we need the following information – detailed descriptions of the bikes and riders, where the bikes are kept (lock-ups, garage locations), names if possible. Please quote ‘Operation Scrambler’ when you call Cheshire Police on 101. We continue our patrols and appeal for anyone with information to help us identify these individuals to get in touch (Crimestoppers 0800 555 111).
- Coronavirus Pandemic – Up to date guidance/advice on social distancing and social interactions is available on the Government website:- <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- 24/7 mental health crisis lines now free to call

North West Boroughs Healthcare has upgraded its existing 24/7 mental health crisis lines to Freephone numbers. This means they are now free to call from both landlines and mobile phones. The new dedicated phone numbers are:

- 0800 051 3253 for people living in Wigan
- 0800 051 1508 for people living in Halton, Knowsley, St Helens and Warrington

The crisis lines provide support 24 hours a day, seven days a week to people of all ages, including children and young people, who need urgent mental health support. You do not need to be known to our services to contact our crisis lines; they are available for patients and public.

Please be assured, anyone who dials the original local numbers will still reach our mental health crisis teams first time, without the need to be diverted. However, calls made to the original numbers will be charged.

Please advise people reporting an incident/crime to ring Cheshire Constabulary on 101 (999 in case of emergency) so it can be recorded correctly - not via facebook/twitter/email

Online Reporting is available via the Cheshire Constabulary website to report certain crimes, incidents, issues:-

<https://www.cheshire.police.uk/ro/report/>

.....
Useful Links offering advice and information:-

Online safety and advice

<https://www.cheshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/fa/fraud/useful-contacts-for-fraud-cyber-crime-advice/>

<https://www.getsafeonline.org/safeguarding-children/>

Advice & information regarding risks of substance abuse available on FRANK

<https://www.talktofrank.com/>

Home/Business safety and security information

<https://www.cheshire.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/residential-burglary/>

<https://www.cheshire.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/non-residential-burglary/>

<https://www.cheshire.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/theft-from-a-vehicle/vehicle-safe-and-sound/>

Advice to help keep your bicycle safe

<https://www.cheshire.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/theft-of-a-bicycle/how-safe-is-your-bike/>

Whilst the majority of dog owners act responsibly, a few do not always pick up and bin their dog's mess. Residents can use the WBC online reports to provide them with information which could help to identify irresponsible dog owners

<https://www.warrington.gov.uk/dog-fouling>

If you or someone you know needs advice and support regarding domestic abuse

<https://www.openthedoorcheshire.org.uk/>

.....
Schools & other events

Where commitments/shifts permit high vis patrols during start or dispersal periods around the various schools on our beat

Surgery

Rixton & Woolston PCSO Surgery at Woolston Neighbourhood Hub

Face to face drop-in surgeries – dates to be confirmed

PARISH COUNCIL NOTES FOR FOWP – MAY/JUNE 2022

Tuesday 17 May – Scouts

The scouts attended in the evening to plant a few trees as part of their Forestry Awards. They had already attended the previous week and will be back again next week. I was not involved in the planting.

Wednesday 18 May – Foxwood School

8 children attended during the afternoon together with their carers/parents and planted some bedding plants in the Jubilee Garden. Several of the Friends helped them too. It was a nice pleasant afternoon.

Monday 23 May – Work Day

Another successful work day. Work continued in the Jubilee Garden with trimming small shrubs and tidying up. Some of the benches had to be sanded down manually as some of the bolts were solid and couldn't be removed, plus the usual regular tasks in the garden. The last of all the nails were pulled out of the leftover wood by the small pond and the wood has since been collected by the Council. The Council wouldn't take the wood away until all the nails had been removed or made safe beforehand. There were many helpers working in the garden area in front of the cabin including making clear the area ready for the wood from the boardwalk, fastening the wood around the base an ongoing task and looking good. Several people weeding, again another endless task with nettles and strong rooted weeds. It will no doubt take a while to complete but will be worthwhile. Newly planted trees were watered and the birds feeders topped up.

Wednesday 25 May – Teddy Bears Picnic

A fun afternoon with about 40 young children attending with their parents/carers. Two entertainers set up their spaces, Mr Zippy worked his magic and artist Kate Burton with her artwork both entertained the children very well. They had a great afternoon. Several of the friends donated handmade cakes to help the FOWP funds. Many thanks to Mr Zippy, Kate Burton, parents and carers plus all the FOWP for all their hard work on that windy day.

Monday 30 May – Work Day

A quiet morning with just 6 volunteers and it was a cold and wet start. Some of us spent a bit of time discussing what needed to be done after the Council had been in working close to the cabin. Then a couple braved the wet weather and litter picked, another couple went off to continue previous work close to the small pond, our handyman was doing his jobs by the cabin and I checked the bird feeders and fed the birds. I left earlier than I usually do, I left the park in good hands.

Monday 6 June – Work Day

A good turn out today with several regular litter pickers. Not to mention several others who regularly pick litter up on their daily walks around the park. A couple of people were tidying up in the lockup making it more organised, another couple continued clearing the soil from around the garden in front of the cabin. It's now clear and ready to have the rest of the woodwork put into place and will stop the soil from falling back onto the road. Other volunteers were weeding in that garden area and some of the wild flowers plus a few garden plants are beginning to bloom. Another volunteer brought lovely healthy plants he had grown at home and planted them in that garden. It's a happy group with plenty of laughter throughout the morning.

The generator that recently went to be repaired was unfortunately kaput and not worth repairing.

As this week is a Volunteer Week, the FOWP each received a "thankyou certificate" for their help. There was also a certificate for Foxwood School too and I took it to the school and they were very pleased.

Saturday 11 June - YFOWP

Most of the Young Friends walking sticks have now been taken home. We worked close to the pond, cutting back nettles and thistles that were over-hanging the paths and steps down to the pond. One of the rubbing posts had become loose so that was dug out and re-cemented in below ground level. Some of the Young Friends were managing to pull branches/sticks out of the pond from the walk-way that goes out into the water. They certainly enjoyed that part. A new girl arrived with her mother and has joined up to be a member of YFOWP. She quickly settled in with the Young Friends. It's a happy group. They all get on so well.

Monday 13 June – Work Day

Yet again, more willing volunteers happy to help out with whatever is necessary. This week they were involved with the usual litter picking, more weeding in the Jubilee Garden and the other little garden in front of the cabin, continuing fixing the woodwork around base in that garden, some worked in preparing the new wildlife area.

Monday 20 June – Work Day

Another active morning with at least 10 volunteers generally doing routine duties: litter picking, weeding, a mother and son turned up again continuing the park work for their D of E scheme. More painting/protecting the benches in the Jubilee Garden, another was chopping up some of the wood on the ground for other uses. Our handyman was digging out the soil in front of the cabin, saving lots of the daffodil bulbs which will get planted in other areas. We have plans for that space and I hope to report on it at a later date. I took some plants and re-did the raised bed near the pond. The soil was so very dry so had a good watering from the pond. Perhaps it will be a good food conditioner for the new plants. The young newly planted trees also had a good watering. Two worked around the small pond area. Another nice surprise was a donation of 4 large pots of plants from a man who has an allotment and no longer needed or had too many of the plants. They will be appreciated by many.

Monday 27 June – Work Day

Not a lot to report really. 3 of us began by wandering around weighing up parts of the park in need of attention. One area is the bridge near the pond, it really is in poor condition. I then went back, fed the birds and continued working in the garden by the cabin with 2 others. We had regular litter pickers, a couple continuing preparations around the small pond. This area is an ongoing project and will take time. 2 more Friends went over to the Longbarn side, I'm not sure what they did.

Looking forward I've checked with Gardeners World re cutting back the Pyracantha shrubs in the garden in front of the cabin hard after the berries have been eaten by the birds in Spring and they agreed that's the best time and that the harder we cut them back the better the plants will be. So that was good news. We'll be able to get at all those weeds in the middle of the plot without being attacked by the thorns. I have high hopes that area will get better month by month.

Chairman.....