

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WOOLSTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 29 APRIL 2021

This meeting was held remotely in accordance with the Coronavirus Act 2020, Section 78

Present: Councillor J Greenslade (Chairman)
Councillors: M Banner, MH Greenslade, D Hill, A McCarthy, D Nowell,
M Pearce, S Rydzkowski, P Wright

Apologies for absence: Councillor A Hill

C107 Code of Conduct – declarations of interest Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

Councillor Banner declared an interest in an item to be reported from Culture Warrington CIC, by reason of being a trustee.

C108 Apologies for absence

The Council noted apologies for absence from Councillor A Hill.

C109 Chair's opening remarks

The Chairman thanked members for their support during the past two years and especially during the period of the Covid 19 pandemic when virtual meetings had been held. He also gave his thanks to the Vice Chair, Councillor Banner, for her support during that time.

C110 Minutes of the previous meeting

Resolved,

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2021 be taken as read and confirmed as a correct record. The minutes, as approved, to be signed by the Chairman at the next physical meeting.

C111 Matters of report from the previous meeting

No matters to report.

C112 Policing of Woolston – community liaison report

The Council considered a report provided by the Police for April 2021. PCSO Roberts had submitted her apologies for absence and would follow up on any matters raised.

Members referred to the incidents of anti-social behaviour by youths in Woolston Park referred to in the report and noted that this behaviour was occurring in other parts of the Borough:

Resolved,
That the Police be thanked for their report.
(Please see appendix for report).

C113 Borough Council business

Borough Councillors McCarthy and Wright reported on matters under consideration by the Borough Council relating to the parish and on issues that the Borough Ward members had acted on for residents since the last meeting. (The Council noted that the report 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 renewal of road markings had continued and was to be carried out on Gig Lane and Longbarn Lane.
- Trees reported overhanging house gardens. Resident had agreed to contribute to cost of work if required.
- Environmental Health officers investigating report of rats being sited in Woolston Park pond.

Resolved,
That the report be noted.

C114 Committee matters

(1) Environment and Amenities Committee

(a) Woolston Playing Fields and Hillock Lane Amenity area – application for siting of storage equipment – Minute C100(1)(a) – 23 March 2021

The Clerk reported and the Council noted that Woolston Rovers JFC had been informed of the response from the Borough Council.

(b) Hydropol scheme, Weir Lane – Minute C100(1)(b) – 23 March 2021

The Council noted details regarding the delivery of the three Archimedes screw turbines to the site. Notice had been given to the public through the local social media site and street notices to help keep Weir Lane clear of parked vehicles. A video recording of the deliveries taken from a drone had been uploaded to the media site.

(c) Woolston New Cut Canal - “Old Billy” Heritage walk – Minute C100(c) – 23 March 2021

The Clerk reported that the Borough Council’s Environment Manager had given support in principle for the works required on Council controlled land for the scheme. This had allowed work to proceed on the development of the scheme.

The Borough Council’s Cultural Partnerships Development Manager had been made aware of the scheme by Culture Warrington. A virtual meeting had been held between the three bodies where details had been provided of a National Lottery Heritage Fund bid to be made by the Borough Council which 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

The Council was invited to contribute to the bid by linking the funding for the scheme being developed by Culture Warrington for the Woolston length of the New Cut Canal. A similar proposal would be put to the Poulton with Fearnhead Parish Council by the Borough Council:

Resolved,

That

1. the report be accepted;
2. approval be given to earmark a sum of £2,000 in reserves for the scheme.

(d) Tree survey report

The Clerk reported that the periodic report was being undertaken to survey the condition of all trees under the control of the Council. The results of the survey would be submitted to a future meeting:

Resolved,

That the report be approved.

(e) Woolston Park – response from the Borough Council on the use of CCTV in parks

The Clerk reported further to minute C98(2) – 23 March 2021, that the Borough Council had replied that a report was to be submitted to the Cabinet on the use of CCTV in parks and open spaces after the May elections:

Resolved,

That the response be noted.

(f) Battery Lane Allotment Site – operation of toilet facility

The Clerk reported on a site meeting he had held with representatives of Catalyst Choices and the Battery Lane Allotment Association regarding use of the toilet facility. The facility had been closed from the commencement of the Covid 19 lockdown in 2020. Given the changed guidance issued by the Government the site meeting discussed ways to reopen the facility to service users of Catalyst Choices and allotment tenants. Both bodies had provided a written Risk Assessment regarding use and cleaning. Agreement had been reached to allow use to Catalyst Choices and to discuss further the use by tenants when systems were in place to allow joint use:

Resolved,

That the report be accepted on the planned reopening of the facility.

(2) Finance and General Amenities Committee

(a) conduct of council meetings and business during the period of the Coronavirus pandemic

The Clerk reported on the High Court judgment issued on 28 April 2021 as detailed below. The effect of the decision on future meetings would be taken into account for meetings of the Council from 17 May 2021.

It has been announced today that the High Court has ruled against Lawyers in Local Government (LLG), Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO) and Hertfordshire County Council and their bid to enable local councils to continue meeting remotely.

The court concluded that:

"... the Secretary of State was correct in November 2016 and July 2019 to say that primary legislation would be required to allow local authority "meetings" under the 1972 Act to take place remotely. In our view, once the Flexibility Regulations cease to apply, such meetings must take place at a single, specified geographical location; attending a meeting at such a location means physically going to it; and being "present" at such a meeting involves physical presence at that location. We recognise that there are powerful arguments in favour of permitting remote meetings. But, as the consultation documents show, there are also arguments against doing so. The decision whether to permit some or all local authority meetings to be conducted remotely, and if so, how, and subject to what safeguards, involves difficult policy choices on which there is likely to be a range of competing views. These choices have been made legislatively for Scotland by the Scottish Parliament and for Wales by the Senedd. In England, they are for Parliament, not the courts".

Resolved,

That the report be noted, and appropriate action taken for public meetings.

(b) Management accounts – periods ending March 2021 and year ending 2020-21

The Clerk submitted the quarterly accounts for the period ending March 2021 and for the year ending 2020-21:

Resolved,

That the management accounts be accepted.

(c) Review of banking arrangements

The Clerk reported on the need to provide access to banking facilities following the action of NatWest Bank to withdraw counter facilities. A survey had resulted in the Unity Trust Bank being identified as providing the required facilities. The accounts with Nat West Bank would remain:

Resolved,

That

1. approval be given to the opening of a current account with the Unity Trust Bank plc with an initial deposit of £5,000 with members and the Clerk to the Council being

authorised signatories, subject to any two signatories being required to authorise payments;

2. the operation of the account be reviewed six months from its opening.

(d) Road safety schemes – (1) speed monitoring signs; (2) introduction of 20mph speed restrictions

No information to report.

(e) Applications for grant aid

The Clerk reported an application from the New Cut Heritage and Ecology Trail Group for a grant of £150 to assist in the purchase of additional litter picking equipment for use by volunteers in their regular clean-ups of the New Cut Trail and Paddington Meadows. A similar application had been made to the Poulton with Fearnhead Parish Council.

The Council also considered a proposal from Councillor M Greenslade that the work of the Friends of Woolston Park and the New Cut Heritage and Ecology Trail groups both be recognised having regard to the work carried out by volunteers to keep the areas that they work on free from litter and debris and their other valuable work for the community:

Resolved,

That a grant of £200 be made to each group in recognition of their valuable work to the community.

(f) Recognition of Service

The Chairman reported that further to the approval from the last meeting, he was to present a certificate to Councillor McCarthy in recognition of his 34 years' service as a member of the parish council and as a Borough Councillor for the Rixton and Woolston Ward.

Members noted with regret that current covid restrictions did not allow a presentation to be made at a public meeting and gave their thanks and best wishes to Councillor McCarthy.

C115 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 – No meeting held because of covid guidance. Information published by the group on their website.

Friends of Woolston Park – report by Councillor MH Greenslade:

- Young Friends of Woolston Park met 19 April (socially distanced) worked in Park and hope to meet monthly from now on.
- Litter picking and rubbish collection continues...as always!
- Two local schools wish to use the Park for work parties and Duke of Edinburgh work ... to be arranged next week.

- Most of WPC grant for equipment now used as per the list submitted to Parish Council...I have a list of equipment bought should anyone need to see it ..now well in use!
- Brass rubbing posts obtained via successful grant from Cheshire Community Foundation now ordered and route decided (subject to WBC approval) Circular central route of Park. For use of whole community..all age ranges and abilities, in order to experience learning in a fun and unique way.
- Unfortunately, Monks sports teams continue to use a "short cut" through the fence across the Park driveway to the playing field, in spite of the fence repair (pulled down) and a "no entry" sign. They should be using the Monks exit and the gate. Also, cars are parked along the driveway footpath during match days, causing pedestrians (including children of course) to walk in the road. This is obviously a serious safety issue and must be corrected as soon as possible before an accident occurs.
- Public Rights of Way Forum – Councillor Nowell reported that no meeting had been held. It had been suggested that a meeting may be held online. Reports had been made regarding the presence of Giant Hogweed along the New Cut Canal and the path from Woolston Weir to Woolston Eyes. Japanese Knotweed had also been reported adjacent to the Omega Scaffolding premises on the canal towpath.

Resolved,

That the reports be noted.

C116 Correspondence – consultation and information – 2020/21 external audit

The Council noted the receipt of details for the 2020/21 external audit.

C117 Planning Applications, appeals and decisions

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

Applications for consideration at meeting

Application reference: 2021/38812

Location: 1, BERKSHIRE DRIVE, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4EX

Description of development: Householder - Proposed single-storey front, side and rear extension.

Application reference: 2021/39252

Location: WILLIAMS TARR CONSTRUCTION, BRIDGE ROAD, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4AU

Description of development: Class O Prior Approval - Proposed Change of use from Offices to 19 Apartments

Application reference: 2021/39255

Location: 40, EDWARD GARDENS, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4QT

Description of development: Section 192 Lawful Development Certificate - Proposed single storey rear extension to replace existing conservatory.

Application reference: 2021/39238
Location: MOSS SIDE FARM, JUNIPER LANE, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA3 6DP
Description of development: Lawful Development Certificate - Application for the existing building to confirm its lawful use as commercial light industrial.

Application reference: 2021/39195
Location: 13, WENTWORTH AVENUE, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4NA
Description of development: Householder - Proposed two storey side extension and a single storey rear extension.

Application reference: 2021/39196
Location: ARMADILLO SELF STORAGE, 73 MANCHESTER ROAD, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4AE
Description of development: Full Planning - Proposed replacement 2.44m gate and fence

Application reference: 2021/39219
Location: 58, EDWARD GARDENS, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4QT
Description of development: Lawful Development Certificate-Removal of existing conservatory, proposed single storey rear extension.

Application reference: 2021/39096
Location: 254, MANCHESTER ROAD, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4DF
Description of development: Householder - Proposed single storey side and rear extension.

Application reference: 2021/39200
Location: 19, WALNUT CLOSE, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4HA
Description of development: Householder-First floor side extension and single storey rear extension to replace existing conservatory.

Application reference: 2021/39199
Location: 40, LONGBARN LANE, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4QJ
Description of development: Lawful Development Certificate - Proposed single storey rear extension to replace existing conservatory.

Application reference: 2021/39187
Location: 1A, MAPLE ROAD, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4DP
Description of development: Householder - Proposed removal of conservatory and construction of single storey rear extension. Proposed detached music room at bottom of garden.

Application reference: 2021/39130
Location: 10, HAWTHORNE AVENUE, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4AL
Description of development: Householder - Proposed Two storey extension to side of house and part two/ single storey extension to rear of house. Store formed to front of side extension. Vehicle entrance/ parking re-positioned. Cement render applied to whole house above DPC level.

Application reference: 2021/39128
Location: 1, GLOUCESTER CLOSE, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4HP
Description of development: Section 192 Lawful Development Certificate - Proposed single storey rear extension

Application reference: 2021/38985
Location: ROPE AND ANCHOR, MANCHESTER ROAD, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4HJ
Description of development: Full Planning - Retention of wooden structured pergola

Application reference: 2021/39098
Location: 9, DURHAM CLOSE, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4DZ
Description of development: Lawful Development Certificate - Proposed rear extension

Application reference: 2021/39083

Location: 10, MAPLE ROAD, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4DP

Description of development: Householder - Proposed Two storey wrap around extension.

Application reference: 2021/39100

Location: MOSS BROW COTTAGES, NICOL AVENUE, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA3 6DN

Description of development: Discharge of Condition - Proposed Discharge of Conditions 6 (Package treatment works) and Condition 7 (Road surfacing) on previously approved application 2020/36797 (Detached dwelling).

Application reference: 2021/38789

Location: SANDYCROFT, BROOK LANE, WARRINGTON, WA3 6DT

Description of development: Full Planning - Proposed replacement of existing containers with single storey storage building and stable block.

Application reference: 2021/39077

Location: 11, MONMOUTH CLOSE, WOOLSTON, WARRINGTON, WA1 4DU

Description of development: Householder - Proposed First Floor Side and Single Storey Rear Extensions.

Applications to approve action taken

None to report.

Resolved,

That no comments be made in respect of the applications listed, subject to any further comments received from members.

C118 Business raised by Council members

- Reports from representatives and committee functions

The Council gave consideration to a submission made by Councillor Nowell:

The current system of reports from representatives discriminates against other newer community groups that have not as yet developed close ties with Woolston parish council, such as for example clean up my community Warrington. A reporting structure should be set up to ensure that these groups get an equal say during council meetings. Perhaps restructuring the committees could be considered at the same time.

I would personally move amenities over to finance, the two after all are inextricably linked and have a separate environment committee. Unencumbered by a duty to put public amenity above environmental protection.

Members expressed the view that the operation of committees should be reviewed having regard to the experience of the current year when all business had been conducted at the Council meeting. The committees could be retained but with meetings held when the business required. The current risk of the Covid pandemic should be considered when holding meetings because of the statutory requirement that they have to be held in a physical location:

Resolved,

That these views be brought to the attention of the Council when considering the appointment of committees.

C119 Date and place of next meeting

The Clerk reported that preliminary consideration had been given to the location of the next meeting. The usual location, Woolston Neighbourhood Hub, would not be available until 21 June 2021 at the earliest; given the alternative use to the usual meeting rooms because of the Covid pandemic they may not be available for some months. An approach had been made to Kings Leadership Academy for use of the main hall which may be suitable for the meeting:

Resolved,
That

1. the report be noted and the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, be authorised to determine the location for the annual meeting of the council;
2. the annual meeting of the council be held at 6.30pm on Wednesday 26 May 2021;
3. the annual parish meeting be held at 7.15pm on Wednesday 26 May 2021.

C120 Payment of Accounts

Resolved,
That approval be given to the following payments:

Cheque No	Date expenditure incurred	Payee	VAT not recoverable	Amount	Purpose	S137
DD	14/4/21	British Telecom plc	0.00	161.28	Broadband and phone service 1/4/21-30/6/21	
4542	15/4/21	Employee 1	0.00	406.48	M1 April 2021	
4543	29/4/21	Battery Lane Allotment Association	0.00	10.00	Toilet facility keys reimbursement	
4544	29/4/21	Cheshire Association of Local Councils	0.00	1470.04	Annual membership fee 1/4/21-31/3/22	
4545	29/4/21	Zurich Municipal	0.00	52.42	Additional premium 1/4/21-31/3/22	
4546	29/4/21	Friends of Woolston Park group	0.00	200.00	Grant	Yes
4547	29/4/21	New Cut Heritage and Ecology Trail group	0.00	200.00	Grant	Yes
DD	29/4/21	British Telecom plc	0.00	618.60	Broadband and phone service 1/4/20-31/3/21	
DD	29/4/21	Water Plus Ltd	0.00	395.39	Allotment water meter supply 17/8/20-31/3/21	

**APPENDIX
MONTHLY POLICE REPORT**

**Woolston
April 2021 - Monthly Parish report**

Beat Sergeant PS Stuart Gibbard

Beat Manager PC Naomi Burnell

PCSO Bethan Roberts

Anti-Social Behaviour

15 Youths (7), environmental (6), personal (2)

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

Burglary

1 Dwelling Garage

1 Other Business

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Criminal Damage

4 3x linked – these also linked to a series across Warrington

Vehicle crime

2 Theft of vehicle 1x Business vehicle; 1x domestic subsequently found

2 Theft from vehicle

OTHER

- Patrols continue covering various parks, shops, Woolston Hub Car park, Woolston Eyes & New Cut Canal Path
- Dam Lane Shops – The area continues to be patrolled and monitored, and link in with shop staff. Spoken with new business unit owner
- Woolston Park – Bins fires and ASB – Officers from across other areas of Warrington (including other beat areas, Response, Specials) have been supporting us with patrols of the park. High schools across Warrington have been contacted to remind pupils/parents regarding youths congregating on parks across Warrington
- Local shops visited regarding ID checks for sale of alcohol, WBC Licensing contacted
- Warrington Youth Club – outreach teams, requested consider work on our areas
- Motorcycle Unit involved in an operation across Cheshire aimed at reducing the injuries and collisions of motorcycle users on our roads, also educate and encourage motorcyclists to ride safely
- Speed enforcement – 6 Apr, 13 Apr Hillock Lane – No activations, all below 30mph
- Spate of window damages across Warrington, investigation includes locations in Woolston
<https://www.cheshire.police.uk/news/cheshire/news/appeals/2021/3/police-investigating-spate-of-damages-to-windows-in-warrington/>

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/>

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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/>

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

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

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Schools & other events

Keeping in contact with our schools – whilst observing social distancing measures

Schools – Countryside Code presentation sent to schools

Kings – staff spoken to regarding local ASB issues, liaised over identification of youths

Patrols when other commitments permit in vicinity of schools start/dispersal times

Surgery

Rixton & Woolston PCSO Surgery at Woolston Neighbourhood Hub

Face to face surgeries cancelled until further notice, in meantime host virtual surgery

Chairman.....