

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WOOLSTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE WOOLSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HUB, HALL ROAD, WOOLSTON ON 25 JANUARY 2023

Present: Councillor D Hill (Chairman)
Councillors: M Banner, M Czekalski, AJ Hill, D Nowell, M Pearce,
S Rydzkowski, P Smith, R Tynan

Apologies for absence: Councillors J Greenslade, MH Greenslade, A McCarthy

C86 Chairman's opening remarks

The Chairman welcomed members and reported that she had requested the Vice Chairman, Councillor Banner, to chair the meeting for the item relating to the filling of the vacancy in the East Ward because of her knowledge of an applicant.

C87 Code of Conduct – declarations of interest Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

There were no declarations of interest.

C88 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors J Greenslade, MH Greenslade and A McCarthy through ill-health.

C89 Minutes of the previous meeting

Resolved,

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2022 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

(Councillor Banner in the chair).

C90 East Ward – co-option

The Clerk reported that two applications had been received by the closing date of 9 December 2022 in response to the public notice for filling the vacancy. Details had been supplied to the applicants of the arrangements for interview at this meeting together with information published on the Electoral Commission's website on the statutory requirements for becoming a councillor and the Council's Code of Conduct. Each applicant had supplied a written submission in support of their application. An applicant had subsequently withdrawn because of a change in work circumstances.

Members gave their approval to the proposed procedure to be followed in interviewing the applicant including the suspension of Standing Order 3 (s) and its substitution of voting by ballot.

The Chairman welcomed Mr P Smith to the meeting and informed him of the procedure to be followed, noting that each member had been supplied with a copy of his written submission.

On completion of the interview Mr Smith was asked to withdraw and members then gave consideration to the application. Following consideration members agreed to dispense with the ballot process and it was unanimously

Resolved,

That Mr Paul Smith be co-opted forthwith to the Council.

(Councillor P Smith in attendance. Councillors AJ Hill and D Hill (on health grounds) left the meeting).

C91 Matters of report from previous minutes

There were no matters to report.

C92 Budget and Parish Precept 2023/24

The Council considered a report of the Clerk on the Budget and Parish Precept for 2023/24. The report gave a summary of the estimated net expenditure for 2023/24 together with other financial provision to be made. The Council had agreed that the budget be prepared on a no growth basis (Minute C80(2)3 - 7 December 2022). Information provided by the Borough Council on the Tax base for 2023/24 was noted.

In determining the precept, the Council had regard to additional financial pressures on the community in common with other areas to be met in the coming year:

Resolved,

That

1. approval be given to a precept of £26,181 for 2023/24 maintaining the estimated amount for a Band D property;
2. the draft budget recommendations be approved, and a report be made on any adjustments required in the next financial year.

C93 Policing of Woolston – community liaison report

The Council considered the monthly report for December 2022. PCSO Roberts was unable to attend the meeting and any matters raised by the meeting would be reported to the Police:

Resolved,

That the report be noted.

(Please see appendix).

C94 Borough Council business

To receive reports from Borough Ward Councillors 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 and other issues relating to responsibilities of the Borough Council. (The Council noted that 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). Reports made to the Borough Council were also reviewed.

1. Borough Councillor reports – Councillor Tynan
 - Use of local residential roads by heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and speeding by vehicles – this issue had been raised with officers.
 - Maintenance of trees – boundary of Woolston Neighbourhood Hub with Baron Close/Dam Lane – this issue had been raised with officers to determine responsibility for maintenance.
 - Action meeting attended regarding the Warburton Toll Bridge.

- New bus shelter in place on A57 Manchester Road adjacent to the Woolston Social Club.
 - The Chairman reported that Councillor McCarthy had requested that the following matters be raised:
 - That the Borough Council give an assurance that all the bus shelters in the parish that had been removed were to be replaced.
 - That details be published of the surgeries to be held by Borough Ward Councillors where residents can raise issues.
- Councillor Tynan reported that details of his surgeries would be published and he agreed to contact the officers regarding the bus shelter replacement programme.
- Councillor Smith reported that during the replacement programme, a temporary bus stop sign had been provided at some stops and not others where the bus shelter was removed. Councillor Tynan agreed to raise this inconsistency with the officers.

2. Reports made to the Borough Council
No updates to report.

Resolved,

That the report from Councillor Tynan be noted together with the further action to be taken.
(The Chairman adjourned the meeting in response to the emergency alarm. Meeting resumed on confirmation that evacuation of the building was not needed.)

C95 Committee matters

The Council considered matters relating to the undermentioned committees:

(1) Environment and Amenities Committee

1. Parish Path Warden scheme

1.1 – condition report

Councillor Nowell reported on matters relating to public rights of way

1. River Mersey, Weir Lane – drop in level of the river.
2. Path 12, Nicol Avenue, remains blocked – reported to the Borough Council.

1.2 – membership of the Peak and Northern Footpath Society

The Clerk reported details of the cost of membership of the Society and Councillor Nowell report on the services provided relating to Public Rights of Way:

Resolved,

That approval be given to membership of the Society from the start of the year 2023/24.

2. Development of “Old Billy” scheme

Further to the report to the Council (Minute C80(1) 2. – 7 December 2022) the Clerk reported that Culture Warrington were progressing the amendments to the artwork to meet the standards agreed by the Borough Council for a sign in public spaces. These would be supplied to the Borough Council for their comments and consultation could then commence with members and the relevant outside bodies:

Resolved,

That the report be accepted.

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

3. Dam Lane Shopping Precinct

No matters to report (Minute C80 (1) 3. – 7 December 2022).

4. Tree maintenance, Martinscroft Green – appointment of consultant

Further to Minute C80 (1) 4. – 7 December 2022 the Clerk reported on the survey from The Environment Partnership Ltd in respect of tree works at Martinscroft Green to clear the highway. Holly Oak Tree Services Ltd, a contractor used by Warrington BC and who had previously carried out works at the Green, had been invited to submit a quotation. It was intended to undertake the works before the next growing season:

Resolved,

That the report be accepted and the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Environment and Amenities Committee, be authorised to accept a quotation if this is necessary to allow the works to proceed.

5. Battery Lane allotment site – management matters

The Council noted that monthly inspections of all plots at the site were being held with the Battery Lane Allotment Association and action taken as required on issues identified. The Clerk reported on a review of the agreement including consultation with the Battery Lane Allotment Association:

Resolved,

That

1. the report be noted;
2. approval be given to notice being given of the review.

– annual rent for the allotment year 2023/24

The Council considered the setting of the annual rent of a plot for 2023/24:

Resolved,

That the rent for an allotment plot for 2023/24 be set at £23 (£11.50 for senior citizens and persons in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance) and the required notice be given to tenants.

(2) Finance and General Committee

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

The Clerk reported and the Council noted current Government guidance on the conduct of council business during the Coronavirus pandemic.

2. Report on action under the scheme of delegation

The Council noted that no decisions had been required under the scheme of delegation approved for undertaking business during the Covid 19 pandemic since the last meeting.

3. Applications for grant aid – to consider applications

No applications to be considered.

4. Planting of tree in memory of HM Queen Elizabeth II – response from the Borough Council

The Clerk reported further to Minute C70 (3) 9 November 2022 that the Borough Council had suggested a suitable location for the tree would be Woolston Park and details had been provided of the estimated cost depending on the tree species and height. The location suggested alongside A57 Manchester Road at Runnymede was not considered to be suitable because of underground services:

Resolved,
That

1. approval be given to proceed with the planting of a tree in Woolston Park subject to further consultation with the Borough Council;
2. the Friends of Woolston Park Group be asked to assist in this project.

(Councillor Nowell requested that his vote against the proposal be recorded).

C96 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 – no report. Noted that information was published by the group on their website.
- Friends of Woolston Park group – report by Councillor Pearce for December 2022/January 2023 (please see appendix). Members recorded their thanks to Councillor Pearce.
- Public Rights of Way Forum – no meeting held.

Resolved,
That the reports be noted.

C97 Correspondence – consultation and information

– Police Budget 2023/24 – public consultation

The Council noted the survey being undertaken by the Police and Crime Commissioner on the budget for 2023/24. Details of the survey were published on the website to allow Cheshire residents to comment on police priorities and the police precept.

– Wildflower planting scheme 2023

The Clerk reported details from the Borough Council on the invitation to parish councils to support the planting of flower meadows. The scheme had been supported in 2022 by planting

areas alongside A57 Manchester Road. Consideration was given to alternative locations, and it was

Resolved,
That

1. approval be given to supporting the scheme to the sum of £500 as agreed for the year 2022;
2. the suggested options be on Manchester Road in the grassed areas at either Runnymede or adjacent to old Manchester Road.

C98 Planning Applications and results of appeals

The Council considered the following planning applications and details of appeals submitted for comment by the Borough Council:

PLANNING APPLICATION	LOCATION	PROPOSAL
FULL PLANNING (HOUSEHOLDER DEVELOPMENT)		
2022/41782	13 Dam Lane WA1 4HH	Proposed single storey side and rear extension to incorporate garage and living accommodation
2022/41753	11 Barnfield Road WA1 4NW	Part single, part 2 storey rear extension, single storey side extension, porch extension to front.
2023/00008/FULH	23 Alder Road WA1 4EJ	Part single storey and part two storey rear extension
2023/00002FULH	88 Longbarn Lane WA1 4QR	Two storey side and rear extension
2022/42583	23 Somerset Way WA1 4LP	Proposed single storey front/side extension
2022/42581	6 Durham Close WA1 4DZ	Proposed first floor front/side extension and single storey rear/side extension
2023/00028/FULH	10 Hertford Close WA1 4EZ	First floor side extension above and existing garage
2023/00011/FULH	31 Hertford Close WA1 4EZ	Proposed first floor side extension over existing garage
DISCHARGE OF CONDITIONS		FOR INFORMATION ONLY
2022/42747	Heathercroft Care Home Longbarn Lane WA1 4QB	Discharge of condition no. 6 (electric vehicle charging) and condition no. 7(landscaping) on planning application

PLANNING APPEALS		
None to report.		

Resolved,

That no comments be submitted in respect of the applications listed subject to consideration of any matters raised.

C99 Business raised by Council Members

1. Councillor Nowell reported on:

- 1.1. changes made to the publication of representations on the Borough Council's planning section of the website. It was understood that only documents in a pdf format were being displayed for planning applications.
- 1.2. Land at Deposit Ground No.1, south of the River Mersey - application 2021/35961 – A response had been received to an enquiry regarding the status of the application. The Development Management Committee had approved the application subject to the Section 106 agreement being signed by the applicant. Conditions relating to the application would need to be complied with once permission is granted. An application to discharge conditions would be available on the Council's website. The response also stated that parish councils were not notified of discharge of conditions applications.

It was agreed that these responses be raised with the Borough Council to clarify the current procedures.

2. Councillor Czekalski requested that the Council send their condolences following the death of the former Mayor, Councillor Morgan.

It was agreed that this action be taken and similar action be taken in respect of members who have served as Mayor of the Borough.

C100 Accounts

Resolved,

That approval be given to the following payments:

Cheque No	Date expenditure incurred	Payee	VAT not recoverable	Amount	Purpose	S137
4655	15/12/22	Employee 1	0.00	413.76	M9 December 2022	
4656	15/12/22	LiveWire CIC	0.00	42.00	Room hire 9 November 2022	
4657	15/12/22	HM Revenue and Customs (Clerk)	0.00	310.40	PAYE months 7 to 9	
4658	15/12/22	Battery Lane Allotment Association	0.00	5.49	Reimbursement – repairs to tap	
4659	19/01/23	Employee 1	0.00	413.76	M10 January 2023	
4660	25/12/23	Live Wire CIC	0.00	42.00	Room hire 7 December 2022	

4661	25/01/23	Woolston East District Scout Council	0.00	100.00	Grant – attendance at World Scout Jamboree 2023 South Korea (replaces cheque 4625 13 July 2022 £50)	Yes
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APPENDIX

Woolston December 2022 - Monthly Parish report

Neighbourhood Sergeant PS Nathan Gulam
Neighbourhood Officer PC Victoria Taylor
PCSO Bethan Roberts

Anti Social Behaviour

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

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

Burglary

0 Dwelling

3 Other 2x business thefts; 1x attempt business

Criminal Damage

4 2x Same premises, offender known; 1x vehicle damage; 1x business

Vehicle crime

0 Theft of vehicle

4 Theft from vehicle Business locations – parts, contents

OTHER

Operation Sceptre – national week long campaign to raise awareness and to tackle knife crime – which includes knife sweeps across parks/open spaces such as Woolston Park and Knife Surrender Bin taken outside Coop, Holes Lane. Our Youth Engagement Teams work with the schools across Warrington throughout the year to deliver inputs to high school pupils

[Week of action to clamp down on knife crime | Cheshire Constabulary](#)

- Woolston CE Primary – Christmas Markets attended
- Foxwood School – annual Santa Dash, attending PCSOs encouraged and engaged with the school participants
- Operation Stay Safe – safeguarding operation in progress across Warrington visiting parks and open spaces, areas of repeat anti social behaviour – officers patrolling areas in partnership with social care, health, outreach workers
- The new Warrington Youth Zone opened in Warrington town centre in July, the website provides for further information about membership and sessions
Website: <https://warringtonyouthzone.org>
- 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/>

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/>

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Schools & other events

Schools – liaised with schools regarding talks/visits

Surgery

Rixton & Woolston PCSO Surgery at Woolston Neighbourhood Hub

Face to face drop-in surgeries – dates as follows (subject to change) :-

23 Dec 17:00 – 18:00; 29 Dec 11:00 – 12:00

FOWP NOTES DECEMBER/JANUARY 2022/23 – PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Monday 5 December – FOWP Work Day

There were 6 volunteers who went litter picking, one person was clearing the cabin gutters of leaves and two of us were selecting tree cuttings for a couple of the YFOWP who were unable to attend the wreaths session last time, so they were catching up. When I arrived, I went and filled the bird feeders, 3 robins in separate areas were waiting patiently, one was so trusting as I walked past to fill the empty feeder, he obviously knew I had his food. At the end of the work session, we all gathered in the cabin for a cuppa and a chat.

Also Monday 5 December – 6th Form Children's Last Work Session in the park

In the afternoon the children arrived for their final days park work routine. We all litter picked as a group. On this rare occasion there was very little litter to be had. When we returned to the cabin, we made them chocolate drinks topped with cream, ate mince pies as a treat for the children. Again, lots of happy smiling faces to be seen. Some photos were taken and hopefully some of them will be shown in the Friends Facebook website soon.

Tuesday 6 December – Foxwood School, Santa Dash

The Santa Dash was the largest and best we have held in the park so far. Approx 100 people attended which included the children, carers and parents plus a few passers-by who joined in. We had music, fairy lights and lots of goodies to eat and drink. Lots of dancing around too, especially by the lovely Santa herself. Santa was amazing. All in all, a great morning for such a worthy cause.

Saturday 10 December – YFOWP Work Day

This was the day the first snow fell with only the Chairman and myself from the Friends able to attend. We had more or less a full house of YFOWP attending. 3 parents and their children wanted to make wreaths as they were unable to attend last month so I helped them to make the wreaths and dress them up in the kitchen and the Chairman worked with the other Young Friends in the FOWP room. They had acorns showing signs of roots and they planted them into plant pots to take home to look after until they need repotting, then they will be shown the next stage when they are growing and healthy. Near the end of the session each child received a box of treats plus a little badge with various bird/animal on it, a Christmas card, plenty of toast and mince pies with chocolate and cream drinks. As usual lots of smiling faces. Those smiles make it all worthwhile.

Monday 12 December – FOWP Work Day

The snow on the ground had become ice and very slippery. I saw 8 people on this very cold morning. One quickly went off litter picking, the others sat in the cabin for a while chatting and planning. After a while I went and filled all the bird feeders. When I returned the others were breaking the ice and clearing the ground by the cabin. I didn't want to work outside and I had family visiting at home so went home early. Whilst at home I had a message from Foxwood School asking me if I and someone else would go to the school as they had some gifts from the children. The Chairman and myself accepted their kind offer to attend the school where we were given armfuls of gifts and cards from the children for the FOWP. The Chairman has since taken them to the cabin so that on our return in the New Year we can share lots of lovely goodies and read those beautiful handmade cards.

The FOWP are having a Christmas break until Monday 9 January 2023

Monday 9 January 2023 – Work Day

This was the first official work day since 12 December 2022, although some did visit the park doing odd tasks on their own during the break.

Holidays now over and work began again. What a wonderful start, we had lovely homemade cakes made by our previous Chairmans wife, the large cake tin was returned and all cakes eaten plus plenty of chocolates and mince pies on the table too.

We more or less had a full house plus two new volunteers. The weather was reasonable, a few showers in between but didn't stop us. As was expected, there wasn't any shortage of litter, luckily there were several willing volunteers. All in all, a good start to 2023. Tucked away under the trees off the normal path was an old very heavy and large bin that was unused for a long time and after many trips emptying it bit by bit it's now empty. A couple stayed in the cabin to set up an old pc we had so that it can be put to good use. I just tidied up the 2 raised beds that are already showing new growth, one by the pond and the other by the cabin. As usual I looked after the bird's feeding areas as I had done over the holiday period. Later this week some of the Friends are meeting up for a get together at the Green Dragon in Lymm.

Saturday 14 January 2023 – YFOWP

It was the first visit for the YFOWP this year. Just 4 children, 3 parents and 4 FOWP attending. It was rather a wet start, so we stayed indoors for a while and played a board game called Bird Bingo, much the same as adult Bingo but this one was all about identifying birds, it was just a bit of fun. When the rain stopped, we all went out for a walk. Each child given binoculars and they were able to name several of the birds either by sight or listening to the singing and there was plenty of that. The YFOWP certainly are good at naming birds and wildlife. They put me to shame. Much as I love birds I'm hopeless at naming them. We ended the morning with the usual roast and a cuppa then sat discussing ideas for future YFOWP choices for the future. There were lots of ideas and some good ones. It was a nice easy start for the YFOWP to begin 2023.

Monday 16 January 2023 – FOWP Work Day

There was a good turnout, from memory I think there were about 10 attending so a good start. I don't really know what jobs were covered other than several litter picking because after I'd seen to the bird feeders, I went with one of the Friends and we cut back all overgrown weeds and brambles that were hanging over the steps down to the pond and then brushed it all away from the steps, making sure the steps were reasonably clean and safe. It was badly overgrown and the steps had become rather a mess and could have caused falls if left as they were.

Monday 23 January 2023 FOWP Work Day

It was a bitter cold morning so after filling the bird feeders I went off litter picking. 5 others set off before me and I do believe I probably followed some of them as I found very little to pick up. 2 of the Friends were repairing some of the bird nesting boxes to get them nice, clean and safe ready for when they start nesting. 1 of the Friends started listing an itinerary list of what items we have and their condition.

Being outside around the park was good to see such a lot of people out and about in the park and nice too that so many appreciate the park and say "thank you" for what we do.

Allotment during December and January

Since the last report the plot has changed even more, it's becoming like a different plot. Amongst the weeds and rubble were lots of rhubarb plants beginning to shoot and they are

being lined up along the fence. They've had some frost on them and that's good for rhubarb. As the soil is weeded it's clear to see the soil looks very good. Our first raised bed is now in position, has a cover on the ground to stop weeds getting through and plastic fastened to the insides of the frame to protect the wooden surrounds. Some daffodil bulbs were planted at the side of the path a few weeks ago and there are now signs of new growth peeping through the soil. Loads of garden waste unsuitable for composting has regularly been taken to the tip. The plot is coming along nicely. We're very pleased with it.

Chairman.....