

**MINUTES OF THE WESTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN
WESTON VILLAGE HALL
ON TUESDAY 10th MAY 2022 AT 7.00PM**

Present:

Councillor J Griffiths (Chair), Councillor Mrs H Hart, Councillor Mrs G Wray, Councillor D Leake and Councillor J Tallentire.
Stafford Borough Councillor Frances Beatty

DW Croxford, Parish Clerk

Four members of the public

Apologies: received from Councillor M Hardenberg and Councillor D Icke

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes

The minutes of the Joint Weston and Gayton Annual Parish Council meeting of 18th May 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman of the Parish Council as proposed and seconded by Councillors Hart and Tallentire respectively.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Report of Weston Parish Council

The Chair Councillor Griffiths Parish Clerk presented the Weston Annual Report of the council, highlighting key activities and achievements during 2021/22.

The ongoing effects of the Pandemic continued to affect all rural communities throughout the last twelve months and the catastrophic situation in Ukraine has had an additional adverse economic impact on rural families with significant fuel and food price hikes.

Following the return to face-to-face Parish Meetings we have held twelve full Parish Council meetings this year and one Extraordinary meeting. Parish Councillors and the Clerk have also represented the Parish Council at other meetings including the Trent Valley Collaboration Group and Weston Village Hall Committee meetings.

During 2022, Councillors Ken Barber and Graham Church resigned, and the Parish Council was sorry to see them retire. Both were thanked for all their good work whilst in post. Two vacancies now exist on the Parish Council and have been advertised.

During 2021/22 the Parish Council have:

Continued to work on the plan for the work of the Parish Council over the coming three years.

This plan was based upon questionnaires delivered to every household in the Parish and the results have triggered the priority work areas for the Parish Council. Progress is discussed at the monthly Parish Council meetings.

Renewed an ongoing substantial Grounds Maintenance contract to provide grounds maintenance for all the grassed public areas and other facilities owned by Weston with Gayton Parish Council. For the forthcoming year, instead of formal contracts administered by the Clerk, grants will be made to the Churches in Weston and Gayton, and Gayton Village Hall for maintenance of their grassed areas.

Repainted several items of the children's play equipment on the on the Village Green.

The Queens Platinum Jubilee extended Bank holiday will be occasioned with the welcome return of the Annual Village Fete on the Village Green on 4th June, followed by the Jubilee celebrations themselves, the following day, also on the Village Green. The Parish Council is supporting all the efforts of the volunteers organising the events of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee party. In March an oak sapling was planted with a Commemorative plaque under the Queen's Green Canopy initiative to formally mark the occasion.

Worked closely with both the Borough and County Councils on a range of issues from reviewing and commenting on planning applications, the speed of traffic, highway maintenance, pothole repair, footpath maintenance, dog fouling matters and flooding issues. Such dialogue and liaison with key officers at both Councils accounts for a significant proportion of the work of the Parish Council and ensures issues of concern in both Weston and Gayton are addressed as swiftly as possible.

The Civic Amenity/Refuse and Recycling Wagon will be returning to Weston and Gayton this year and the Parish Council have arranged for two visits to Weston at one at Gayton.

Supported the Community Speed watch Programme and continued to rotate the Speed Indicator Device between the two locations. Data continues to be collected regularly by the Clerk.

With local works beginning apace it is becoming clearer that the impact of HS2 construction traffic around Weston will be significant for an extended period. The Parish Council are monitoring the position closely. The Parish Council are planning to apply for a grant from HS2 Phase 2a Community Funding to improve areas around the village.

Looking forward to 2022-23

The Parish Council agreed the annual budget in January 2022 and the annual precept for Weston will be remain virtually the same for this year.

We will continue to monitor the roads, footpaths, rights of way and gullies in the area to ensure all remain functional and that the risk of flooding is minimised.

We will continue to maintain the pleasant environment of the Village public areas and painting of the children's play area is to begin shortly.

As indicated above we will also face additional challenges to our highways network once the construction phase of HS2 is underway.

Any Other Business (Public Participation)

A member of the public raised the issue of speeding through the village along Green Road, especially at school drop off and collecting times, with attendant inconsiderate parking near the school too.

Whilst noting the speed bumps on Green Road, the view of the meeting was that a 20 m.p.h. limit might be more appropriate, especially as Green Road bisects the unfenced village green, with children's play equipment in situ on one side, and the Village Hall on the other where many activities take place.

Relocating the Speed Indicator Device onto Green Road for a period was discussed but felt likely to be ineffective.

The meeting asked the Clerk to contact the Community Traffic Manager, at Stafford County Council, and our local PCSO, seeking a visit to the village, observe these issues and offer an opinion.

The meeting asked the Clerk to contact the Headmaster at St Andrew's School to bring the issue to his attention also.

Matters of course could well become more of a problem as the HS2 Construction traffic increases.

A member of the Village Hall Management Committee thanked Councillor Wray for her representation on both committees providing a valuable link between the two. The VHMC member advised revisiting the lease issue was a future priority and that the VHMC was critically short of committee members at this time.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 14th June 2022, 7.30 pm in Weston Village Hall

JAN GRIFFITHS