

MINUTES OF WILLINGTON PARISH ANNUAL MEETING HELD AT WILLINGTON HALL HOTEL, AT 7.00 PM, ON TUESDAY 17th May 2022

PRESENT: Andrew Nicholas – Meeting Chairman and Chairman of the Parish Council
Rob Winterbourne - Clerk to the Parish Council
Parish Councillors - John Grimshaw, John Lindsay, Jane Lowthion,
Rob Merrick
Borough Councillor - John Leather
Twenty-three members of the public.

APOLOGIES: Local Residents: Craig Keating, Jinty Keating, Lynne Fattah, Jo Mason, Tracey Rustage.

1. WELCOME

Councillor Nicholas welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

The Chairman of the Parish Council described the work carried out by the Parish Council during the year to 31st March 2022 all of which is covered in his written report available as an attachment to the minutes.

3. FINANCE REPORT

The Clerk had prepared the Annual Accounts of the Council covering the year to 31st March 2022 with background notes. Copies of the report were available at the meeting and a copy is attached to the minutes.

4. WILLINGTON'S ENERGY CHALLENGES

Councillor Merrick delivered a short talk on the power challenges faced by Willington and other rural communities. There is limited network capacity in the village with little resilience compared to urban environments. In addition, rural communities are likely to be at the back of the queue for investment in power infrastructure. The opportunities provided by vehicle to grid (V2G) and similar technologies to return power to the grid, to make a profit for householder and to protect against local power cuts were discussed. A meeting dedicated to this topic will be held later in the year.

5. JUBILEE CANOPY TREE PLANTING IN THE VILLAGE

Councillor Nicholas described the *The Queen's Green Canopy* (QGC), a tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 which invites people from across the United Kingdom to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee".

The meeting discussed how Willington might take advantage of the initiative, but a show of hands indicated that there was little support for it in the room.

6. FUTURE OWNERSHIP, MAINTENANCE AND USE OF THE VILLAGE GREEN

Councillor Nicholas described the opportunity the village may have to take ownership of the Green from Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC). The risks and benefits were discussed; a show of hands supported the transfer of ownership in principle.

The Parish Council will investigate the possible transfer further and put the matter to the whole community via a referendum later in the year.

7. SPEED LIMIT REDUCTIONS AND VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGNS IN THE VILLAGE

Councillor Nicholas described the challenges the Parish Council are experiencing in getting CWaC Highways to progress the speed limit reduction on Willington Road (waiting for

CWaC to arrange the formal consultation period in the press) and the assessment of the speed limit on Chapel Lane (waiting for the assessment to happen). The difficulties have been escalated by our Borough Councillors and our MP.

Potential implementation of a vehicle activated sign (VAS) facing up hill on Chapel Lane was discussed; a show of hands was not in favour of proceeding with such a VAS.

The committed implementation costs (£5488), and potential further costs (for further traffic calming measures on Willington Road – e.g. circa £7000 for a VAS if needed) that are associated with the Willington Road speed reduction project, and a potential VAS installation on Chapel Lane were outlined.

8. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were various comments, suggestions, and questions. The topics covered were:

a. Implementation of 'fibre to home' broadband in the village. A working party will be established to investigate practicalities, cost suppliers and so on.

b. The state of the local roads and footpaths (and lack of CWaC progress in fixing them) was discussed. For example silted up passing places on Willington Lane and the retaining wall on the Little Switzerland footpath. The attendees were encouraged to contact CWaC Highways about the lack of progress. The next Parish Council newsletter will provide CWaC contact details to use.

c. The location of the benches, picnic table and bin on the Green was discussed. There are no plans to move the benches or table at the moment. It may be possible though to move the bin further away from them.

d. Tackling the Himalayan Balsam on Little Switzerland was discussed. The need to get a professional company with chemical sprays was mentioned. Councillor Grimshaw is currently in touch with the landowner regarding a solution.

There being no further business the meeting was closed.

Rob Winterbourne

Rob Winterbourne
Clerk to Willington Parish Council