

Minutes 07/21

WHITNASH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **remote** Town Council meeting held on 21st January 2021
at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillors: A Barton
B Franklin
Mrs L Burkinshaw
S Button
G Cancilla
B Colledge
Mrs J Falp
A Heath
R Margrave
W Pickett
T Shepherd
B Smart
R Sparkes

Mayor
Deputy

Town Clerk: Jenny Mason

In attendance: Mr J Greenwell High Sheriff of Warwickshire

The Mayor added an additional item to the agenda – 16(a) Dobson Lane Community Allotment Association.

101/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

102/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Sparkes declared an interest as a Member of Whitnash Sports and Social Club.

103/21 PUBLIC FORUM

There was no public forum.

104/21 POLICE

The Police Report was emailed to all Members.

The previous **two** month's crime figures, up to and including 12th January 2021, are as follows:

ASB – 23 calls to the police for anti-social behaviour related incidents.

Burglary – 3 calls to the police in relation to residential burglaries.

Damage – 0 calls to the police in relation to criminal damage.

Drugs – 0 drugs related calls this month.

Vehicle crime – 11 vehicle crime related calls in the Whitnash beat code.

In total there have been 231 reports to the police in the last two months. There were 110 calls in the last report to the Town Council and 134 reports the month prior to that. Bearing in mind the current figures are over two months and cover the Christmas period our figures are in line as to what should be expected.

Local policing is still different to how we would like it to be at this time, especially now we are currently still within Tier 4 and a new national lockdown. As a team and individually we will still be out patrolling and focussing on the current agreed Whitnash Forum priorities;

1: Anti-social behaviour

2: Speeding

3: Intelligence led drugs patrols

Anti-social behaviour impacts on the community in many ways so as a team we will patrol all of our known ASB hotspots, as much as possible, and respond to reports as quickly as possible when reported to the team. Intelligence led drug patrols relies on intelligence being generated by the team and also from information being supplied to us by the community. We still encourage the public to report anything they believe to be suspicious in relation to drug activity.

Good News

Mobile phone operation

As a team we will be part of a road safety mobile phone operation to target people driving whilst using their phones in Whitnash. This will run from 8th – 21st February.

Bike marking event

The team will be carrying out a bike marking event in conjunction with the primary schools in the area. This is in the planning stages and will be dependent on Covid safety and regulations.

Community van

We now have the community van based at Warwick which the team now have access to so we will be planning future mobile surgeries using the van. We will endeavour to set some dates and ensure all surgeries will be Covid compliant.

Facebook live

The team will also be hosting Facebook live Q&A events, the dates of which will be confirmed and advertised on social media. This will give the community the opportunity to ask questions of the police during these socially distanced times and will be run in conjunction with the Warwick SNT.

Other business

Drugs cultivation

Two addresses searched and found to be cultivating cannabis.

Covid19 car

The dedicated vehicle / team dealing with all reports of potential Covid19 regulation breaches has been launched again which has reduced the impact on the team being used for these calls to the police. This hasn't prevented the team still having to deal with Covid breaches whilst on duty. There have been 19 reports on the Whitnash beat in the previous 2 months.

Please keep reporting any issues to us via the team e-mail or individually, if all team members can be included, or by phone and we will respond as soon as possible.

Best wishes,

Jess, Steve & Mark

Members queried two properties cultivating cannabis – they are only aware of one in Whitnash.

105/21 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Good evening all and welcome to the first meeting of 2021. I am not sure what happened to 2020 and I will never prefer Zoom over meeting people face to face.

I would like to welcome Mr Joe Greenwell CBE Deputy Lord Lieutenant and the current High Sherriff, who will be saying a few words so start lining up the questions.

It has been a busy few weeks after taking over as Mayor from Cllr Margrave, my thanks go to him and Tracy-Ann for their 18 months.

Firstly, the office – May I thank our office staff for their continued perseverance in what is a difficult time. The office is as Covid secure as possible with the current lockdown minimal contact with the public and Councillors. Jenny and Catherine do work from the office, but where possible they work from home as per government guidelines. Kerry continues to work from home.

Christmas Snowball: With the help of Annette Scrivens from the nail bar and through Whitnash What's on Whitnash Town Council gave businesses the opportunity to carry out some promotions for the latter half of the Christmas run up. This was a reasonable success, but interestingly not one shop took up the offer. One thing came out of this exercise and I was really surprised how much unnecessary content is posted on these pages perhaps this needs sorting in the future.

Christmas WDC Foodbank Appeal: This was a great success and many thanks to all the people of Whitnash who supported this worthwhile cause whether it was a financial or a food donation. We managed to collect 250kg of food and £270 in cash many thanks to those that contributed.

School Painting Competition: This again was a great success. We asked all four schools to paint a picture of the new Civic Centre and Library. Three of the schools took part and winners from each school were chosen. The winners received book vouchers and each school received a monetary donation totalling £300 which was sponsored by a very generous local company Linleigh Electrical. We had the winning paintings made into banners and with the help of the High Sherriff, Mr Joe Greenwell we held a presentation ceremony on Acre Close. Unfortunately, the storm over Christmas destroyed the original banners, but I have just taken delivery of new smaller ones today, these will be zip tied to the gates.

Christmas Lights: Due to COVID the Christmas Lights switch on at the Plough and Harrow Pub was cancelled so instead I was invited along with the other Town Mayors to Warwick District Council's virtual Town Christmas Lights Display switch on. Those of you who did see it and wondered why I was running onto stage it was because I had tripped over the top step!!

Rotary Tre of Light: This year the Rotary trees of light in Whitnash and Leamington Spa raised an amazing amount of £13 500 for Myton Hospice.

Just as a footnote Jenny and myself interviewed a potential gardener this week, so hopefully when we go on our COVID walks the flowerbeds will start to look good for spring.

That's enough from me I would now like to ask Mr Joe Greenwell our High Sherriff to say a few words.

Cllr Adrian Barton

Mayor

Mr Joe Greenwell, the High Sheriff of Warwickshire attended the Town Council meeting and gave us an insight of what being the High Sheriff of Warwickshire entails.

106/21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Town Council meetings held on 12th November 2020 as circulated were approved and will be signed as a true record when face to face meetings are held again.

107/21 MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THOSE MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

108/21 REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Warwickshire County Council Report:

Most of the County Council meetings I have attended over the last couple of months have been about Covid 19, different ways of working and Recovery plans for the future. This while continuing with all the work that has to continue such as Adult Social Care and Fire and Rescue. The Library service has adapted its service

with e books, home delivery to those shielding and the Click and Collect Service. The local tip continues with the booking system that was introduced in the first lockdown.

The County through Public Health and the Communications team try to provide as much information to Councillors and the public about Covid 19, testing etc but a lot of the information and actions come from National Government and N.H.S. England and they are not so good at communications! The Local roll out of vaccinations (apart from hospitals) is being run by local primary care partnerships (groups of doctors' surgeries) and it is difficult to influence them in any way. County and District staff are helping where they can with testing and vaccination centres, such as car parking duties and assisting where they can to make the visit as fast and efficient as possible.

Most of the smaller schemes I asked for from my County Highways budget in 2019 have been completed. I have asked for Golf Lane traffic calming measures to be progressed (from my 2020 budget) though it may be the spring time at the earliest before they happen. Possible traffic calming in Brunswick Street will be looked at again in the spring or summer. No guarantee as this funding has been agreed beyond 2022.

We should know in the next couple of weeks if the May County, Police and Crime Commissioner and other elections for vacancies at District and Town will take place. There are mixed messages if they will or will not happen.

Cllr Judy Falp County Councillor for Whitnash

Warwick District Council Reports:

The closer working relationships we started with the Stratford District Council continues even during these difficult Covid times. We now share three senior officers that are in charge and lead on I.T., Neighbourhood services and the Climate Emergency work. The Warwick and Stratford Executives have now started to meet together on a regular basis. Cllr Margrave is going to be our representative on the shared board that will look at both our Local plans to produce a joint plan going forward. I am sure he will keep us informed as it progresses.

I have been extremely busy with my role as Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Protection during the Covid crisis. There have been raised complaints due to some residents and businesses non-compliance of the current regulations. Also, some District services have not continued as before due to the risk to both officers and the public. This is I know frustrating to residents but we have a duty of care as employers and risks both generic and personnel are identified. One offs (hopefully it will be) such as the stabbing in Whitnash also means a lot of work as I, my officers and the police work together on incidents such as this.

Lack of housing or needs for more suitable housing continues to be an issue for Whitnash residents and their families. Sofa surfing is a hidden homelessness that needs to be addressed. I am pleased the Portfolio Holder for Housing has consulted on a change to the current system used by Warwick District to allocate housing. This I believe will speed up the wait for those who have no home of their own. It should be going to the February Full Council meeting to be approved. Along with now setting up its own Housing Company to build new homes I look forward to this being a much better service for our residents.

Cllr Mrs Judy Falp, Whitnash District Councillor

This month there is not much to report from the District. I have had several Planning meetings online and two Licensing and Regulatory meetings. One of which involved the removal of an alcohol licence from a premise.

District Council staff are still working from home but a few who cannot have returned to Riverside House after Covid precautions have been put in place.

With the help of WCC Highways I managed to get Openreach to replace the cover in the footpath on Heathcote Road near the shops which had been left unattended for three months causing a danger to the public.

You will have seen the email telling us the two waste drop off sites at the Hodcarrier and St Margaret's Road are being removed at the end of February as part of the new extension to the waste contract. We must watch for fly tipping in these locations until residents realise what is happening.

Cllr Tony Heath, Whitnash District Councillor

I have joined two new working groups, The Code of Conduct Review, which will be communicating with Parishes and Towns very shortly and the South Warwickshire Plan Advisory Group. Both of these have met once.

As and when these groups are able to report back, I will keep the Town Council updated.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee hasn't met since the last full Town Council meeting.

Cllr Margrave, Whitnash District Councillor

109/21 CIVIC CENTRE AND LIBRARY UPDATE

Progress is on schedule with the roof on both buildings, blockwork started and the connection to the foul water outlet near the community centre now complete, although the recent rain caused a few problems. The connection of the storm water outlet across to Clarkson Drive will start at the end of the month and all the tenants of the houses are very supportive and given their approval to carry out the work.

Fortunately, or not, with the Covid restrictions not allowing the school to open gave Deeley extra time to carry out their work at the community centre.

Next month I believe we will see a marked progress. Cllr Heath will meet with the architects regarding the commercial kitchen, comms room and CCTV.

110/21 CIVIC CENTRE AND LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION PHASE FUNDING

A copy of the funding for the construction phase of the Civic Centre and Library was emailed to all Members.

111/21 PROLONGATION OF PULSE CONTRACT

A letter has been received from Pulse Consult (Quantity Surveyors) for a prolongation to the programme for the Civic Centre and Library at a cost of £12 000.00. The prolongation proposal was not sent to the Town Council, but apparently agreed with Warwick District Council. Authorisation is needed from Town Council so that another retrospective order can be issued. Members agreed to the prolongation proposal.

112/21 APPROVE PRECEPT FOR 2021 – 2022

The precept for 2021 – 2022 proposed an increase of 7.02% for Band D property. The Band D charge will be £65.89 per annum. The precept was approved and adopted. All Members present voted in favour of this increase.

113/21 APPROVE AND ADOPT EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND DISABILITY POLICY

The Equality, Diversity and Disability Policy was approved and adopted. All Members voted in favour.

114/21 RESIGNATION

Cllr Steve McFadden has resigned due to moving out of the town. It was proposed that a thank you letter be sent to Steve McFadden thanking him for his work and contribution to the town. Mr McFadden has kindly volunteered to continue posting articles on the town council website and Facebook page.

115/21 COMMONWEALTH GAMES STREET DRESSING

An email was received from Warwick District Council regarding the preparations for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games and street dressing details have been discussed to make the towns look welcoming to visitors. The focus is on the areas close to the Games venues. They need an indication as to whether our Town Council would consider an 'in principle' agreement to contribute to these costs. Members proposed in principle to get involved in the Commonwealth Games street dressing. Costs will need to be confirmed and included in the precept for 2022 – 2023.

116/21 SUPPORT FOR COVID19 RESTRICTIONS

Banners supporting Covid19 regulations have been erected around Whitnash.

116/21 (a) DOBSON LANE COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

A discussion took place regarding the transfer of the Lease for the Dobson Lane Community Allotments from Warwick District Council to Whitnash Town Council. The Dobson Lane Community Allotment Association currently pay £360 per annum and Warwick District Council want to increase the rent to £1000 per annum. The decision of Warwick District Council to increase the rent from £360 per annum to £1,000 per annum would require the plot rentals on the site to be increased dramatically by around 50%. An increase of this magnitude brings into question the viability of the allotments, at a time when so many people are experiencing financial pressures due to the pandemic. Under the circumstances, Whitnash Town Council voted last night not to take on this lease at £1,000 pa. All Members voted in favour.

117/21 CORRESPONDENCE

1. Email received from Dog Warden regarding floor stencils 'Clean it up' and 'Bin the Bag' in areas where dog fouling is a problem. Members had no objection and welcomed the idea of the dog fouling stencils being placed in areas where dog fouling is severe. Members proposed various places around Whitnash.

118/21 SCHEDULE OF APPROVED PAYMENTS MADE

The Schedule of Approved Payments from 4th November 2020 to 12th January 2021 was noted.

119/21 REPORTS FROM WARD COUNCILLORS

East: Nothing to report.

North: The steps to the Embankment Slide at Acre Close need to be re-instated. There were dogs in the fenced off toddler area. There used to be a 'No Dogs Allowed sign'. Bench near Town Green needs attention. Litter on verges on Tachbrook Road near Medley Grove.

South: Bollards on the grass verges between Cypress Lane and Morris Drive was requested again. Cllr Mrs Falp will if re-elected look at doing this from her WCC budget. Foliage from a tree is still covering lamp column 10 on Coppice Road near mini roundabout. Bushes on the junction of Erica Drive and Holyoke Grove need to be trimmed back.

West: Nothing to report.

120/21 REPORTS OF CIVIC CENTRE AND LIBRARY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Cllr Heath proposed that a receipt (in the form of draft minutes) of the Civic Centre and Library Committee meetings held on 19th November 2020 and 7th January 2021 are received.

Cllr Mrs Falp proposed that a receipt (in the form of draft minutes) of the Civic Centre and Library Committee meetings held on 14th December 2020 are received.

All Members voted in favour.

121/21 REPORT OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS COMMITTEE MEETING

Cllr Button proposed that a receipt (in the form of draft minutes) of the Christmas Lights Committee meeting held on 5th November 2020 are received. All Members voted in favour.

122/21 REPORTS OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Cllr Heath proposed that a receipt (in the form of draft minutes) of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meetings held on 19th November 2020 and 3rd December 2020 are received. All Members voted in favour.

123/21 REPORT OF HALL AND PLAYING FIELDS COMMITTEE MEETING

Cllr Barton proposed that a receipt (in the form of draft minutes) of the Hall and Playing Fields Committee meeting held on 26th November 2020 are received. All Members voted in favour.

124/21 REPORT OF STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD

Cllr Barton proposed that a receipt (in the form of draft minutes) of the Staffing Committee Meeting held on 17th November 2020 are received. All Members voted in favour.

125/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Town Council meeting will be held on 18th February 2021 at 7.00 p.m.

There being no other business the Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.

SIGNED..... DATE.....