



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

In Weedon Bec Village Hall

on

WEDNESDAY 27th April 2022

Present: Parish Cllrs: Neil Anthony, Tony Crease, Libby Hart, James Mantz, Ann Ranshaw,
Elizabeth Taylor, Fiona Thomas, Julie Yates
Parish Clerk: Sue Halkett
Unitary Councillor David Smith
14 members of the public

Chair: Cllr Mr Tony Crease

Meeting commenced 7.00 pm

Apologies: Councillors George Atkinson, Jill Cooke

The Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on the 27th April 2021, were signed off the Parish Council's AGM in May 2021.

Welcome to the Meeting.

Councillor Tony Crease welcomed everyone to the meeting.

PRESENTATIONS

Weedon Surgery – statement read out by the Parish Clerk.

For most of the last year the surgery has been providing care pretty much as normal during the working week and vaccinating at weekends. They have provided over 60,000 vaccinations but just when they thought they had finished the Government moved the goal posts and they are now giving boosters to all those over 75 years of age. The practice has also provided medical support, since last autumn, to the Afghan refugees living at a local hotel.

During the last year the team of professionals at the surgery has expanded. They have managed to recruit practice nurses back to a full team and also employing two pharmacists to help with and improve medication reviews. Shortly there will be two paramedics and, with a bit of luck, a physiotherapist.

As many of us know Dr Hill will be retiring in June after nearly 38 years working in Weedon. Certainly, things have changed a lot since the portacabin days and he knows he leaves the surgery in good medical hands.

The Chairman asked for thanks to be sent to the surgery on how impressed and proud the village is of the efforts they have all shown and to please thank all their volunteers on behalf of the village. A resident also asked whether some sort of village wide recognition could be given. To be discussed at the next Council meeting

Weedon Food Bank – presentation by Dr Elizabeth Taylor

Dr Taylor advised that the food bank was set up at the request of the school. It was held there from the start but when the children went back to school, it had to be moved. The Church offered the use of the Chapter House and that is still used today. Whilst the Chapter House is being used by the church, the Food Bank was offered storage and use of the facilities. They have a standard 4 parcels, depending on the size of the family although the majority given out are for single people. Since the start of the pandemic they have given out 1025 parcels, with the majority in the first year. It still averages around 4-5 parcels a week and has started to see another increase in the amount needed per week. They are still relying on the general public to drop off food when they can. They also have financial help from residents and groups so use that when they need specific items.

Dr Taylor was thanked for her presentation and thanks were also given to the team who have worked tirelessly on this since the start of the pandemic – there were no questions.



Weedon Boxing Academy – presentation by Mr Arron Hill

From his roots in the south Mr Hill advised that he was persuaded to start up a club, very soon after arriving in the village and the Boxing Academy had now been running the Weedon Boxing Academy for 21 years, currently they are in the Depot but started off at the Village Hall.

Weedon Boxing Academy is a registered charity and currently trains around 50-60 children. They have never received benefits nor asked for anything.

They currently have a British boxing champion amongst their group. Luke Harper from Weedon Bec is the current National Schoolboy Champion and will soon be defending his title in Banbury. There is also a young lady who is doing well and in the running for a British title. There now have 4 coaches training the children. Mr Hill invited all to pop along to the Academy and see what goes on.

Mr Hill was thanked for his well-received presentation. There were no questions

Weedon Bec Trust, Charities Report – Mr John Wilshire

Mr Wilshire was welcomed to the meeting. He confirmed that during this year they had not received any requests for student book grants but they have helped people in circumstances of hardship. This could include things like transport to the hospital, help with household issues and even in the purchasing of much needed health items. The total paid out, including disbursements and fees was £1,700. The year-end accounts to 31 December 2021 are available for inspection upon request.

Mr Wilshire was thanked for his presentation. There were no questions

Weedon Sports Association – statement read out by Parish Clerk

Following the successful application to the Football Federation WSA has been awarded a grant of £148k. This sum together with funds from the WSA and Weedon FC are to be made available to provide the much needed sport and community facility at the Jubilee Field. The project will be in excess of £220k when completed. The previous changing room at the Jubilee was provided by WSA in 1993 and after many years of service became unfit for purpose and beyond economical repair. However, it has been recycled and being used as a storage unit by a local business.

The old disabled wc unit has also been spruced up and is serving as the project site hut complete with cctv covering the area.

Shortly they will effect a top strip of the site and commence setting out of foundations for the three units being placed.

Since the offer of the grant from the FF it is known that building materials and costs have escalated considerably. The grant application was based on a cost plan with a 5% contingency. Unfortunately, in the intervening period between grant offer and acceptance the building costs estimate has risen around 20% which takes us outside of the funding limitations available. The Football Foundation has advised they are **not** able to increase their grant to accommodate the additional costs and of course the rise has eroded the 5% contingency allowed.

This means we must now effect significant cost savings through valued engineering, utilising volunteer and pro bono help as well as seeking further grants to ensure the project is viable and continues. To protect the interests of the WSA Charity and Trustees and the Parish Council as our co-applicant with the grant we intend to take out an indemnity bond or similar to protect against financial failure should the main supplier fail to meet contract obligations.

It is hoped the units will be ordered within the next 7 -10days

A great deal of work has been carried out to date on this project and with more effort and some element of luck Weedon residents should be enjoying the new facility by the end of the year.

In conclusion I would like to thank Parish Council for their very positive help and support towards the project; Weedon Football Club and all the folk who have offered their time freely to help.

Police report – nothing received.

Unitary Councillor Report –

Cllr Smith advised that following election to the new West Northamptonshire Council, he is serving on the Cabinet committee. Planning issues were proving to be a big task to remedy. They are also looking to set up youth forums across the area.

Grant: Covid recovery scheme. Some money has been offered to groups in the village but there is still some grant money left, if anyone knows a group needing help.



Roads: Pot holes are a big issues with some large holes in roads around the village. Cllr Smith is meeting with a representative of Highways to have a walk around and look at some of those reported.

Cll Smith was thanked for his report.

Q: Trees by the village sign. Who do they belong to and can we get them chopped down?

A: Cllr Smith will investigate but it is believed that they belong to Highways. Resident to email Cllr Smith directly.

Q: Who owns Riverside Drive and Princes Close as there are large pot holes there and no one fills them?

A: It is believed they are not adopted but he will check this out. Resident to email Cllr Smith

Q: Electric Vehicle Charging cables: Can you tell us the legislation on this ie cabled over footpaths?

A: WNC are writing up a new policy on this and he will let us know soonest.

Financial Report

The Financial Statement of the Parish Council's Accounts for the year to date was read out by the Clerk. No questions were raised.

Chairman's Report

Apart from the day to day work of maintaining the services of our village your Parish Council has also been assessing ways to improve life in Weedon.

We have been working with the football club to add an additional football pitch and some games are now played on Croft Way Playing field.

The Parish Council and Weedon Sports Association are collaborating to replace the old changing rooms on Jubilee Field, improve the very tired car park and uplift the general landscaping.

We communicate with the parish through our own website, Facebook, village magazine and notice boards.

There have been two recent surveys in the village to assess the demand for an outside gym and the need for extra street lighting.

Work has continued on the Pocket Park, nettles and brambles have been removed to allow wild flowers to thrive, several stumperies have been built to increase the animal habitat of the area, seeds have been sown, wildflowers planted and new seasonal information boards created.

We have offered free advertising in our parish magazine to all local businesses to give them a boost following Covid, updated the tourism leaflet and distributed them around the county.

Both our allotment sites continue to be in demand and two new plots have been created. The hard work the plot holders are doing has resulted in the high standard of presentation.

Our cemetery continues to look great due to the excellent work of Stuart and Doug A wildflower area has been created at the cemetery, a range of flowers and grasses have started to show, providing areas for insects to flourish.

We are also looking to create an eco-friendly burial area in the cemetery.

A decision was taken to create some rewilding areas around the village, Croft Way playing field, New Street/South St banking and along Ellands Lane and we look forward to watching them develop.

The village sign on Bridge St has been painstakingly refurbished and our thanks go to Antony MacRae for a first class job, aided by John Wilshire and his strong men.

You will have seen our handyman John around the village refurbishing seats, noticeboards and most recently the telephone book exchange on West St.

It took some time to finally organise funding to improve the High Street traffic situation. Some work has been done and you would have seen the bus stop has been moved although the new shelter is still to arrive. There will be new parking bays, an additional 'watch your speed' sign, a new gateway at the top of the High Street, is on order and the design is similar to the Flore gateways. A traffic weight restriction to reduce HGV traffic has been agreed but is being held up by the bureaucracy of Highways England but we are assured it will go ahead.

Next week we have a visit from the judges for the village of the year competition and we hope to build on our previous success.

It has been a quiet year for planning and the Parish Council has received 39 applications. The majority of these were for local residents making improvements to their own homes.

The travellers site at Stowe Hill Farm has an application outstanding to include 5 static homes and 5 touring caravans. This reflects the site as it appears at this time with the addition of transient caravans, along with a number of commercial vehicles the site is considerably busier with traffic than originally planned.



The application has yet to go to planning committee and our Unitary Councillors are keeping an eye on it. The Dodford Wharf development is well under way. The developer has suggested that he would like to build around 50 more houses in the field behind the existing development. This land is part of Dodford but the only access to it is from our High St and through the existing site. The Parish Council has written to the developer expressing concerns over narrow access, the large scale of the project, volume of traffic and pressure on local services. If this comes to planning your Parish Council will inform you and let your views be known.

I am amazed at the willingness of residents to help out when needed and I would like to mention a few. Keith Crouch who has served as a volunteer on the Cemetery and Allotments group for a year. Gwen and Tony Martin- Becket who regularly tend the Pocket Park along with a number of others who have helped out with clearing and planting. A small army of volunteers who deliver the Weedon News every two months. Mark our own litter picker who does such a good job, aided by others who litter pick in their own areas of the village and along the canal and outlying roads. Our Wardens: Flood warden Jeff Dark Tree warden Clive Bunker Highways Jeremy Palmer Footpaths Robert Iveson Gren and Hazel Myles and John and Jenny Willshire who look after our flower boxes Steve Edwards our police liaison. And many more. To all of you a big thank you.

I thank our excellent Clerk who is always available with the answer to our many questions.

Last but by no means least my fellow councillors who give their time willingly to help keep Weedon a great place to live

Issues raised by the members of public

- Q: There seems to be some tyres and pallets dumped on Riverside Drive allotments, can they be moved?
- A: These belong to the Brownies who are setting up a small garden area, they will be used for planters. We believe they are having problems with lack of volunteers willing to help them set it up at present but will check.
- Q: Can the Parish Council tell the allotment holders via the newsletter, when they will be undertaking the allotment inspections so that the tenants can be present, should they wish to be?
- A: Allotment group to discuss but difficult to put in newsletter as that is issues every two months and dates are set closer to the inspection and is weather permitting.
- Q: Farthingstone Road – going uphill – has deep ruts on the edges which could cause issues for motorbikes – can it be reported. Also the road seem to be cracking up near the sign.
- A: Clerk to check it out and report to WNC

Chair advised people who comment on social media that if there is a problem, call or email the PC directly as not everyone sees the posts.

The Chairman thanked all present for attending.
The meeting was declared closed at 2005 hrs

These minutes will be presented to the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council for signing.