

# **KNIGHTON ON TEME PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024.**

## **MEMBERSHIP AND OFFICES**

Detailed at the end of this report

## **MEETINGS**

Throughout the last year the Parish Council has continued to follow protocol for physical meetings held at the Parish rooms Knighton On Teme.

The next parish council meeting will be on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024 and continue to be held in The Parish Rooms on the first Thursday of alternate months, publicised within the agenda and open for all public to attend.

Last year the Council met all planning application deadlines during the period. The Council wishes to encourage attendance by members of the public who are given an opportunity to participate during the informal Public Question Time and raise any issue's they have within the parish area or raise a matter for future discussion.

David Chamber of the County Council regularly attends and or sends reports to all of them. District Councillor Douglas Godwin also regularly attends and gives detailed accounts of local council issues or progress.

## **COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS, EVENTS AND INVOLMENT**

The last year saw King Charles ascension to the throne in May and many parties were held throughout the Tenbury Wells area and Knighton On Teme Caravan Park hosted a celebration open to all the community.

Tenbury Young Farmers hosted a bonfire and firework event in Tenbury. They worked relentlessly before and after to make a spectacular event for the community, worthy of a special mention and thanks. Fireworks are a controversial subject to some and as the event was hosted as far as possible from livestock and equestrian land, the parish sponsored the event with a donation to help fund it.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Agendas, minutes, the annual report and other documents of interest, are posted on notice boards around the parish area, outside the Parish Room and entered on the website <http://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/>

The Worcestershire edition of County Association of Local Councils (CALC) is circulated to all Councillors via email which is also used for agendas, attachments, and draft minutes.

This council run website is soon to close and during the last year the parish has been researching suitable website builders to create the parish councils own web page. This is currently in the process of creation and will be up and running mid 2024. This will bring parish news to a wider audience where we can encourage community feedback and reporting on local matters.

Occasional articles, helpful advice plus news items are published in Temespan.

## **PLANNING AND HOUSING**

There were 11 planning applications received during the last twelve months. Of these applications the parish council supported all but one application.

The parish council did not support an application regarding a change of use at Newnham Farm for agricultural building to be turned into buildings for commercial use. There were numerous objections from members of the community both from within the Newnham Farm estate and surrounding areas. The council supported the arguments of the responding objections and Malvern Hills Planning are assessing all comments while making their decision on the planning application.

This process is seen as adding a valuable local dimension to planning approval procedures, the Public Question Time at the start of each meeting gives the opportunity for parishioners to give their views to the Council before it discusses an application. Planning application documents are made available via the planning portal for all councillors to view and copies are available during the meeting so that they can be seen by everyone present, this works satisfactorily.

## **HIGHWAYS**

Requests for attention to potholes and gully problems are reported to the relevant department. They are assessed by the Highway Department to ensure they meet their criteria and are repairable at public expense. The parish have continued to report any matter requiring attention to the highways department, plus further reports for road sweeping to maintain clean kerbsides and drain cleaning on the main roads.

This year we have continued to promote the use of the existing litter bins within the parish area and to encourage dog owners to pick up their dogs mess.

There were two Litter Pick events during the year. Both the Autumn and Spring litter picks were well attended with members of the community taking to the street in their own time collecting litter as they went. Again, the most litter was collected from the A456 through the parish area, the lay-by near the Talbot yet again being identified as a real hot spot for litter.

In view of this the parish has purchased a new double sized litter bin which has now been installed at the lay-by location to reduce the amount of litter deposited on the highway.

The Lengthsman Scheme operated extremely well through the year. Under this scheme the Parish Council takes direct responsibility for minor highways problems such as clearing gully grates, digging out blocked gullies, clearing verge grips, advising landowners and frontages when their ditches need cleaning or where overhanging vegetation needs cutting back, cleaning and clearing signs and similar tasks. The tasks are carried out by the appointed contractor directed by the Clerk, and part of the costs are recovered from the County Council. The reporting is being upgraded so Worcester Council can have greater accountability for the work undertaken.

Speeding traffic has again been a priority and ongoing problem along the A456 through Newnham Bridge. Councillor David Chambers, highways and the Parish Council have

spent much time pursuing solutions and over the last year we have seen improvements to the signage and the installation of two new solar powered LED speed activated signs that warn and encourage motorists to slow down and stick to the 30mph limit. So far the data and observations have shown that these are making a significant impact on speed and traffic noise.

The Parish Council try to encourage landowners to maintain their land that borders highways and neighbouring properties. The parish published an article in Temespan to encourage landowners to cut their hedges and carry out maintenance during the cutting season. However, the Parish Council have this year received an unprecedented number of reports and complaints regarding overgrown hedges, dangerous trees bordering highways, unkept ditches, roadside flooding and debris on highways. Where possible these matters have been dealt with locally by Parish Council communication to the landowner and on other occasions the matters have been forwarded to Worcester Council and Highways to assess and address.

### **FINANCE.**

The internal audit system introduced a few years ago continues to operate efficiently. Payments during the year totalled £19,769 (previous year £11,699); The Precept for the year £10,000.

Grants to local providers of services totalled £650, £150 each to Teme Span, PCC Churchyard, plus £200 towards the coronation celebrations and £150 towards the Young Farmers bonfire.

### **PARISH COUNCILLORS**

During the year we have seen the resignation of councillors Richard Bolton and John Ruffles.

Following the advertisement for new councillors the following were agreed and welcomed as new member of the Parish Council:

Julies Cornes, Samuel Perry, Lynn Quinn, Janet Spilsbury and rejoining - Emma Mapp. These joined the elected councillors Duane Hubbard (Chair), Roger Lear, Jonathan Barnes, and Jonathon Bradley. The parish council has its full quota of elected and co-opted councillors.

Mrs Rachel Lambert remains the Parish Council Clerk.