

# MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF NAUNTON BEAUCHAMP

Held at the Church on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7.00pm

**Present:** Cllr A. Howarth (Chair) Cllr. G. Edwards  
Cllr D. Hudson Clerk  
Cllr D. Dickens  
County & District Councillor L. Robinson

## 1. Apologies

Cllr S. Reeves

## 2. Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on May 5<sup>th</sup> 2022 were approved as true and correct.

## 3. Annual Report of Parish Council presented by the Chairman.

The Parish Council has met six times over the last year. Thank you to Councillors , Gill Edwards and David Hudson for their support and work during the year , and also to new Councillors Dave Dickens and Steve Reeves who joined as co-opted councillors during the year and have now been elected. Thank you for their hard work and commitment to Councillors Nick Roberson and Lettie Brennan who retired this year.

We are also very grateful for the support of County and District Councillor Linda Robinson who regularly attends our meetings and supports our village keeping us up to date with District and County issues.

Other thanks also go to Peter Holpin for continuing to complete the internal audit of the Council' s accounts.

I would also like to record our thanks to the Parish Clerk Lisa Cope who does a tremendous job and is very efficient in the management of all the Parish Council paperwork.

### PARISH LENGTHSMAN

This is a fully funded service provided by Wychavon. We should like to record our thanks to Luke Farnsworth and his father who have been our Parish Lengthsman for several years and have recently retired. We are pleased to welcome Carl Brassington who has been appointed as our new Lengthsman.

### VILLAGE GREEN

Thanks must go to Councillor Dave Hudson who regularly mows the village green. We now have a new bench on the green commemorating Queen Elizabeth II' s Platinum Jubilee last year and the green looks most attractive. Thanks to Councillor Dickins for sourcing the bench and to all the

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volunteers who helped to install it on the green. Also thanks to Chris and Ros Pretty for regularly mowing the churchyard and helping to make the village look tidy.

### HIGHWAYS

Thank you to Councillor Dickens for taking over responsibility for the speed camera and to Councillor Edwards for extracting the data. The data shows that while most drivers do observe the speed limit through the village, those who do exceed the limit are mostly under 35 miles an hour however there are still a number of inconsiderate drivers going too fast through the village. The increase in very heavy farm vehicles has had a devastating effect on the grass verges leaving deep ruts at the side of the road. We do urge villagers to keep their road side hedges trimmed back and for farm vehicles to go slowly through the village.

There are also concerns about vehicles speeding down Seaford Lane, which is a single track and used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. To this end a proposal drawn up by Councillor Dickens and approved by the Council has been sent to Highways requesting the 30 mile speed limit be extended to the whole extent of Seaford Lane. We are hoping that it will also be possible to have some extra signs to help calm the traffic. There have been several vehicles stranded in the ford when it is in flood, this is in spite of the fact that there are three large depth signs showing the height of water in the middle of the ford. Recently an elderly gentleman had to be rescued by the fire brigade and looked after by a villager. During the summer months the bed of the ford can become very slippery and dangerous for cyclists, horses and motor cyclists. We have requested Highways to regularly scrape the road surface. We are also concerned about the footbridge which is a historic Bailey bridge but which does need regular maintenance.

### DONATIONS

An annual donation is made to the church for the use of the church for Parish Council meetings and a contribution towards the upkeep of the churchyard.

### PLANNING

District and County Councillor Linda Robinson has kept us informed of the latest South Worcestershire Development Plan and Councillor Dickins and Councillor Edwards attended a meeting about the proposed development at Throckmorton which would have a major effect on the roads and traffic in the vicinity of Naunton Beauchamp.

The Council has considered one planning application from Old House Farm to extend their garage adding an upper floor. The Council made the objection that the site is listed and that this development would overlook and shadow a neighbour's garden.

### DRAINAGE

Highways have continued to monitor the drain by the Main street bridge. The Lengthsman is required to clear the entrances to the village drain at the easterly end of the village. Again this winter we have not had any flooding in the village.

### BT Telephone Box

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The telephone box which houses the defibrillator is now in need of repainting which is the responsibility of the owners, the police.

#### Fly Tipping

This is an ongoing problem and affects all areas of the village but particularly the picnic site at Seaford. As part of the Kings ,Big Help Out ,a thank you to volunteers who have been out litter picking round the village.

#### Coronation of King Charles and Queen Camilla

The village held a very successful afternoon party on Sunday May 7<sup>th</sup> in Orchard Lea when commemorative coins were presented to the children in the village. Thanks must go to everyone who helped to make it such a pleasant and happy occasion and of course the weather which was perfect.!

#### **4. Parish Council Accounts**

The Accounts for 2022/23 have finalised and the Internal audit completed by Peter Holpin the Annual Income for the year was £6,447 and the Annual Expenditure was £7,402.

#### **5. County & District Councillors Annual Report**

I am delighted to have been re- elected as your District Cllr in the recent elections. A position I have held for the last 16 years and have also represented you at the County now for half of my four-year term which has and continues to be quite a learning curve.

#### **Budget update.**

A five per cent rise in Worcestershire County Council's share of the Council Tax was approved last month. The £935million budget for the year ahead will fund delivery of a wide range of essential services including services to keep the most vulnerable people in the county safe.

As part of the budget, the council will be putting in place an uplift to its Council Tax. The 2.94 per cent rise in Council Tax will help to fund the increased costs of delivering improvements for residents and businesses while an additional two per cent uplift in the rate for the Adult Social Care levy will support vulnerable adults.

Major improvements for Worcestershire residents which includes improving roads, pavements and street lighting, in addition to funding a brand-new school in Worcester to help with school places more of that later. County Hall will spend £268 million over the next 12 months to ensure residents who need Adult Social Care support will continue to receive it.

A total of £146 million has been allocated to ensure the County Council can continue to improve the lives of children and young people across the county. £91million is being invested into supporting people to live independently for longer, through the dedicated work of the county's Public Health and Communities teams. The budget also includes investment to maintain bus services with £3.5million invested on top of the £1.5million commitment made this year.

An additional £500,000 to enable minor highway works to be actioned more quickly such as the pruning of trees and the replacement of damaged street furniture and signage.

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The council is facing similar challenges too, from both the impact of inflation on costs of materials and services to increasing demand for services, all of which adds significantly to the pressure on our budget. “With more vulnerable people needing our support than ever before and with the cost of this care increasing significantly, our budget for next year reflects this added pressure.

“Our Council Tax remains one of the lowest of any County Council in the country. Wychavon froze their share of the Council tax for the sixth year in light of the ongoing Cost of living crisis.

Highway’s issues take up a large amount of my time as a County Councillor so here is some information you may find interesting. Following the recent announcement of £200m additional capital funding for highways maintenance, the Department for Transport has now published individual allocations for local authorities. This is in addition to the previous Dft funding and local additional monies already allocated for improving roads and pavements in the budget.

### **Update from the Acute Trust at Worcs. Royal**

ALL non-emergency operations will be moved away from the city’s hospital in an attempt to cut the huge backlog for treatment and cut long waiting times.

The county’s health bosses have agreed to a plan which will see only emergency and vascular operations performed at Worcestershire Royal Hospital in Worcester with the rest moved to the Alexandra Hospital in Redditch and Kidderminster Hospital by the end of May. NHS England has tasked the county’s hospital trust with cutting the longest waiting times – which includes 18-month delays and two-plus-year waits – for all ‘planned’ hospital appointments and treatment.

The ever-mounting wait for care has built up since the Covid-19 pandemic when a decision was made to pause all non-emergency care – with hospital staff told to focus only on treating the virus, most planned operations and cancer treatment.

A ‘recovery’ plan, which was published by the NHS in February last year, called for all two-year waits for care to be “eliminated” within six months, 18-month waits to be removed by April this year and year-long waits to be wiped out by March 2025.

The target before the Covid-19 pandemic for GP referral to treatment was 18 weeks but astonishingly the hospital is now having to battle to make sure people are seen within a year for some treatments.

Matthew Hopkins, the chief executive of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, said two-year waits had been “largely eliminated” last September and the trust is currently focusing on cutting 78-week-plus waits before attention shifts to cutting 65-week and then year-long waits.

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Mr Hopkins, who has revealed the trust's biggest priority was cutting waiting times even if this came at the expense of balancing the hospital's budget, said the biggest challenges to cutting wait times were staff shortages as well as previous and pending strikes by hospital staff.

The acute trust boss said recent industrial action – which saw junior doctors strike for 72 hours straight earlier this month – had caused “significant problems.”

Junior doctors went out on strike for four days as part of a 96-hour walkout between April 11 and 15.

“To be honest the main constraints are our theatre nurses because there is a challenge,” Mr Hopkins told Worcestershire County Council's health and overview scrutiny committee on March 13.

“As the NHS looks to gear up elective capacity, theatre staff will be the group that becomes the sought-after nurses and allied health professionals... We have done quite well with overseas recruitment into theatres, that is going to be a particular challenge if we are increasing the actual quantum of operating theatres and lists.

“We're going to need more staff.” Bosses are looking overseas to fill the gap with the vacancy rates for nurses at the trust at around eight per cent – up from five per cent after more posts were created – and a recruitment drive in the Philippines is said to be “going well.”

Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust is also building two more operating theatres at the Alex to add to the seven theatres already in place. A further four theatres will eventually be built in Redditch with a completion date so far unknown.

The trust said its plan to separate its care in this way was in line with best practice guidance and would lead to shorter waiting times and reduce the risk of cancellation. It would also help the recovery from the impact of the pandemic and ease pressure on urgent and emergency care, the trust said.

On a personal note, my husband was admitted to the Royal last week with acute pancreatitis and the care he received over seven days from being rushed into A & E on the first day of the Doctor's strike was exemplary.

My only criticism is the total lack of parking available on site which leads to unacceptable delays for relatives trying to visit patients.

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## **6. Reports submitted by community organisations:**

### **a) Women's Institute- Jackie Plant**

Membership has remained a little lower since lockdown with 19 members and a core attendance of around 15 at meetings. We hope to be able to boost these figures over the forthcoming year.

We have enjoyed a variety of interesting talks and activities throughout the year ranging from an insight into volunteering at the Commonwealth games by Duncan and Gill Jubb, Queen Victoria in Portraits by the dynamic Dr Gillian White through to hula hooping, curling and lots in between. This year saw the introduction of a group Stir up Sunday session in the village Hall which was well received.

At our Christmas party we took the decision to bring items for Pershore food bank rather than hold our usual present exchange. A substantial number of items were donated.

Our walking group continues to explore the local countryside on a monthly basis to enjoy fresh air, exercise and good company with refreshments thrown in.

As always, we have been active on a county level, taking part in the skittles tournament, a summer murder mystery event the county quiz and various talks and workshops. The highlight of the year was winning the County craft competition for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. A fantastic achievement for such a small club when you consider that there are over 130 clubs in Worcestershire.

Potential new members are warmly welcomed to give us a try. Our meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at Upton Snodsbury Village Hall at 7.30 pm

### **b) Naunton Beauchamp Church**

It has been nice to have a return to "normal" in 2022 and we were able to hold services and social events in the church but also to continue with outdoor and community based activities where these had worked well.

In 2022 we had 15 services including the Ash Wednesday service for the 2 Benefices and the Christmas Day service for the Flyfords. Rev Emma Goldby led 5 of the services. Other services were lay led by Steve Reeves and Gill Jubb

Our average attendance at the usual Sunday services is 7 with more for special services such as Harvest and Carol and Crib Services. The harvest service and lunch was held in the church this year and this was a successful event. We held the Carol service in the church but also had a separate "Carols on the Green" with such a good attendance that we ran out of Carol Sheets!

The other special services were the Jubilee Songs of Praise and The Christingle service. Steve Reeves and Gill Jubb completed their Authorised Lay Worship leaders course in September and the Rev Emma presented the Certificates in Jan 2023.

Social events held in 2022 were the return on the Chocolate and Wine Bingo in March, Quiz evening in May and Beetle Drive in October. All with good attendance from people of all ages and of course the usual Fish and Chips.

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An addition to the Village Calendar for 2022 was the Open Garden held at the Old House by Gayle Rowe. She offered the opportunity to the church to serve teas as a fund raiser at the gardens and this was well supported by the WI and many in the village. The church was decorated with flowers on each of the three weekends and had many visitors. Thank you to Jackie Plant for co-ordinating the teas and the flowers and to Duncan for manning the church each afternoon. This event proved an excellent fund raiser for us and dates are in the diary for 2023.

The Fabric of the Church is generally in good order, overseen by the fabric officer Mandy Pyne. Some work is required on the roof and the gutters and quotes are being sought.

The Churchyard, continues to be maintained by our wonderful volunteers Ros and Chris Pretty. Sadly the lawnmower is requiring more maintenance and has had to have 2 repairs this year. It is currently with OHMS, but we are hoping to be able to keep it going

**c) Police- Julie Pardoe- No report**

**7. Questions from members of the public**

None

**This report concluded the meeting.**

**Meeting closed at 7:25pm.**

**SIGNED..... Chairman**

**Date .....**

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