

PEOPLETON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 9th September 2020 @7.00pm via zoom

1. **Present:** Cllrs Phillips (Chair), Mason, Bailey, Smith, Wall, Hennerley, CC Adams, DC Robinson, Steve Smith and 3 members of the public
2. **Apologies-** None
3. **The minutes of the 2019 Annual Parish Meeting held on 15th May 2019 were approved as true and correct**
4. **Chairman's Report on the past year and going forward**

We held Parish Council Meetings May, July, September, November 2019, January 2020 and one in March 2020. It has been encouraging to see more residents attend the meetings and all have an opportunity to speak before the meeting itself. This has been very helpful to Councillors in understanding interests and concerns that residents have in the village and how best to support developments and the needs of all the villagers.

Council meetings are held bi-monthly with the alternating month being set aside for potential planning committee meeting – however these have not been needed as all planning applications have come through the full Parish Council Meetings.

Despite our attempts to gain new councillors for the parish, during 2019 this has not been possible although there is now positive interest in the current positions and will shortly be filled.

On behalf of the councillors and the parishioners I would like to thank Lisa Cope our Clerk and financial officer, who has been a very effective and efficient Clerk. Lisa has an unassuming and insightful manner to which she works and her efforts to convey in a straightforward and proactive way the stream of information from county, district, and individuals during COVID 19 has been invaluable.

Councillors and Clerk have continued to utilise training and advice through the County Association of Local Councils and attended conferences and district meetings at County Hall and more recently in utilising online training.

During the year, the parish council have dealt with a series of planning applications and regular agenda items have been dog fouling, drains maintenance and enforcement issues.

Without any doubt, we are very well served by our district and County Councillors – Linda Robinson and Rob Adams. Both carry out their work with exceptional passion and commitment and will follow up questions raised at our meetings and support our work – our grateful thanks to you both for your tireless efforts.

Having looked back over the year of meetings there has been a great deal of activity and would like to give a flavour of our work the last 12 months.

Community Legacy Grant

The greatest financial Support has been through the Wychavon Community Legacy Grant that the Village Trust applied for and successfully secured. At the November 2019 meeting, Steve Smith Chair of the Village Hall Trust presented the plans for the playground with plans to lift trees and clear the site before contractors could start in March 2020 • Of course this has had to be delayed but we look forward to the day when children can play on the zip wire, tunnels, slides and the spider

Budget

This year the Budget for 2020/2021 was agreed with precept set as £8,542 resulting in a band d levy increase of £0.95p which is 2.93%. The Council are committed to the mowing and clearance services of the Lengths man in the village and see this as an essential and effective service for the parishioners.

Lengthsman Work

On behalf of the community, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Steve Pike for his excellent service and flexibility in dealing with the jobs around the village. We were one of the first villages to ensure Steve could continue during lockdown by submitting a revised Risk Assessment procedure to Wychavon District Council whilst other parishes held back.

Our thanks to Steve for his vital work to keep the village both safe and attractive.

Petition to reduce the speed of traffic along the A44

For some time, residents have been expressing their concerns about the speed of traffic along the A44 junction with the village and that of Drakes Broughton. A petition was completed and presented to the County Council, but the response drawn up by the County Council in 2019 was a disappointing one. This was despite enormous

PEOPLETON PARISH COUNCIL

support and efforts from our County Councillor Rob Adams. Since this time however, there has been improved markings and replacement signage at this junction.

Village of Culture

At the September council meeting, Mark Constanduros was invited to outline our parish submission for Village of Culture. He presented an updated version of the current village website which is now 10 years old. It includes more useful information for villagers and involves more of the activities, groups and events which currently take place in Peopleton. Information fed into the site will also lead to a e-newsletter to subscribers and compliment Bowline. All Cllrs agreed it was a worthwhile and great project and thanked Mark Constanduros for all the time he has spent on project and the submission was agreed for the parish. Unfortunately, the parish was not successful but during November 2019 Mark held a meeting with relevant village groups on how to use and update the new site and this attracted 45 subscribers within the first month. It was agreed that a small monthly cost will be paid by the Parish Council.

The e-newsletter has been very helpful in keeping people in the village informed during Covid- 19 and it illustrates how the council is forward thinking in its ideas.

Flood alleviation plan for south side of the village

Existing flood alleviation scheme in the village is so far working well and Peopleton did not suffer in the round of flooding that hit Worcestershire so badly at the start of 2020. Concerns for the south side has led to the council meeting with BNB consultant Stuart Nelmes in February and in March he submitted a report back with options for a flood alleviation plan on the south side of the village.

The Council discussed the options available and this is now at a survey stage with financial support from the Parish Lands as agreed at the May 2020 meeting.

Speeding through High Street

Following concerns of speeding from parishioners, PC Riley visited the village in March 2020 and monitored activity in the village, giving advice to one driver who was registered over the 30mph limit. In April 2020 it was planned to carry out a week long speed survey in the village through the Safer Roads Partnership but this has been postponed due to COVID 19 and school closures.

Bus Service for the Village

Having heard from a number of parishioners about the loss of bus service in the village the Council has now been able to set up a recent meeting to include members from Vale Public Transport Group and County representatives to discuss alternative or reinstatement of a bus Some positive news is likely to be made in the next month on this so I will not steal this from Tim and will therefore finish this report by finally saying

As I complete my role as Chair after 4 years, I would like to thank my fellow councillors and Clerk for their commitment to the parish council and the community, their ideas, advice and most importantly their good company. I will continue as Councillor and delighted that Tim has agreed to take on the role of Chair and wish him the very best. I have enjoyed serving my community and pleased to see that the Council is active and strong especially at this very difficult time with so many unknowns about the future. One thing is clear, that the village has been a wonderful environment and a supportive place to be through these times.

5. County Councillor's Report

Cllr Adams stated that never in his history has he seen the County Council working together so well and closely with the district to support communities and 'Here to Help' was a great achievement. As lockdown is eased, he urged everyone to still resume the basic safeguards such as social distancing and hand washing for everyone to remain mindful and alert.

He stressed the importance of keeping pressure on Highways to reduce the speed limit to 40 mph on the A44 junction and if they cannot lower the speed limit he will push for the area to be better lit.

Highways have more gangs allocated to catch up with the backlog of works and there is currently a major push forward on funding apprenticeship schemes and getting young people into work.

With regards Planning the SWDP continues and there is lots of work around the new Parkway development which is also a major achievement with the first train station in 100 years in the County and the development of Pinvin crossroads. There is currently a review of the District wards, reducing members from 45 to 43 but he does not anticipate that this will affect the Upton Snodsbury ward. Cllr Adams thanked the Chair -Cllr Phillips, Cllr Mason and all the Councillors at Peopleton for their continued support with such a large area to cover he would not find it possible without all of their efforts and that of Cllr Robinson as District Cllr.

PEOPLETON PARISH COUNCIL

6. District Councillor's Report

Since your last annual meeting it seems as though our world as we knew it has been turned upside down by the Covid epidemic and its consequences for us all. We have all had to get used to working remotely (although I have not yet sat in a zoom meeting in pyjama trousers as I believe many have! As Councillors we have been focussed on keeping residents safe and sharing information to our parishes plus sign posting those in need.

At this point I would like to offer huge thanks to all those who have helped and supported others in our rural communities. A special mention here for the Pantry who managed to stay open despite many of the volunteers shielding themselves and still offered an invaluable delivery service. The Bowline was also invaluable for sharing updates.

As so often in times of crisis we have seen tremendous community spirit and many selfless acts particularly from NHS workers and carers many of whom live in our villages. My heart goes out to anyone who has suffered loss or bereavement. Thanks also to your parish chairman and Cllr's who have certainly played their part. Also to your clerk Lisa for acting as an essential go between for us.

The District & County have demonstrated commitment to their slogan Here to Help. Wychavon's emphasis is now on recovery and encouraging people back into our High streets thus supporting local businesses. So far 29 million has been paid out from our legacy grant to small businesses and hospitality. Government also through their Bounce Back loan and Coronavirus Business interruption loan has paid out 1,810 loans to businesses in Mid Worcs. totalling £66.5 million. To help to continue to keep you safe I have sent your clerk a copy of Wychavon's publication Easing of Coronavirus measures from 15th August

Which includes advice on staying safe particularly for those who have recently been shielding and includes a useful link to download face covering exemption cards and also some of Distance Aware Scheme's give me space badges'. (possible display on notice board

With today's news that new measures are being re-introduced due to an increase in cases nationally from Monday 14th limiting social meetings of more than six people We do seem to go two steps forward to go one step back but the clear message is to keep aware and stay safe .

At Wychavon we now have a new Chief Executive in post Mr Vic Allison who was formerly Deputy to Jack Hegarty who has now retired. The Civic Center has been closed for several months but staff are returning in a phased approach, but I suspect many will continue to work from home and all Council meetings remain online. There is limited access to the front desk.

7. Police Report

The last 12 months has seen a change of Safer Neighbourhood Officer to PC Daren Riley and one of the teams PCSO's has left to have a baby. Whilst this has reduced the team to two we have continued to maintain patrols of an ever expanding area. As of the start of March we are once again up to full staff numbers with the welcome arrival of PSCO Faye Allen-Carter.

Whilst we have not been able to attend the village surgeries as regularly as we would like we have been actively involved with numerous village events especially with the launch and registration of Smartwater in a number of our villages. This seems to have had a positive effect on significantly reducing the number of burglaries over the autumn/winter period. Neighbourhood Watch Schemes are also seeing a resurgence which positively assists us in sharing and gathering information.

We have seen a recent increase in coverage of the rural areas with the introduction of a number of Rural and Business Crime officers and there has been an increase in police officers generally as promised by the PCC.

The team remain committed to tackling all levels of crime throughout the area including rural crime and poaching and providing security advice and support to victims and vulnerable residents.

This report is based using the recorded crime figures between 11/05/19 and 11/05/20 the comparison is relating to the corresponding dates in 2018/19.

Overall the police recorded 46 incidents that were reported by members of the public this is compared to 61 incidents reported the previous year.

Of the 46 incidents the Parish had 10 recordable crimes (incidents where a specific offence has occurred) this was in comparison to 27 recordable crimes the previous year.

The breakdown of offences is as follows:

PEOPLETON PARISH COUNCIL

	2019/20	2018/19
Burglary Residential (includes garages and sheds)	1	1
Burglary Business	1	4
Theft of Vehicle	0	3
Theft from vehicle	0	3
Theft other	2	3
Criminal Damage	1	0
Deception/Fraud	0	1
Other Offences (Includes mostly concerns for welfare or domestic related incidents and assaults)	5	12

The 'other offences' incidents are increasing throughout the West Mercia area as police are dealing more often with vulnerable people and mental health issues. We do not normally mention these on the monthly crime reports as they have little or no impact on other residents or the community in general and further information is not released into the public domain due to GDPR.

The team would like to offer our thanks to the Parish as a whole for its continued support of the local policing team and for the numerous calls we have received relating to suspicious activity, all we ask is that you continue to do this.

8. Reports from Village organisations:

Village Trust- Steve Smith

The new children's playground is currently making good progress with some equipment now in place including the zip wire, the contract runs until 25th September and there is no variation on costs expected. There would normally be a launch event but looking as though that will not be possible with the current restrictions in place however this will be looked into and there will still be some publicity and communications to go out with regards it opening to the public.

The Village Hall has been impacted negatively due to the health crisis but Steve thanked colleagues for attaining the small business grant and Wychavon for the financial support which has been invaluable since they have not been able to hold events and take bookings. The Hall is fully covid-19 compliant now however there are no events planned now for 2020 but we look forward to 2021 and hope for it to be very different.

Village Shop- Cllr Mason

The shop has stayed open throughout the pandemic and provided a service for the local community and is proud that Pershore Rotary are awarding the shop with a certificate for being community champions, Cllr Mason would like to thank Jenny the Manager for her support throughout. Wychavon were thanked for the business grant which provided great support financially and allowed improvements and a new chiller. New shop furniture has also been purchased thanks to a Post Office grant. Shop AGM is next Tuesday but to be confirmed if this will be held in the Village Hall as planned now or via zoom

Flood Group-Cllr Wall

BWB consultants have provided a flood alleviation appraisal for the south of the village with two different options to consider: an overflow to Bowbrook or a flood storage tank and a possible area within the village has been identified for this. Flood prevention has been a key topic throughout the year at Parish Council meetings and is an important issue for many residents and therefore the options should be explored. Cllr wall proposed a meeting to discuss the report with the Councillors via zoom asap- clerk to arrange.

9. The date for the 2021 Annual Parish Meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 12th May 2021

Signed (Chairman).....

Dated.....