

Willoughby Parish

Minutes of the Willoughby Annual Community Meeting held on 7 May 2024 at
7.00pm in the Village Hall

Present

Cllr Beech – Chair of Willoughby Parish Council
Parish councillors Honess, Lewis and Sheppard
Jo Jarman - minute taker
Members of the public – 18

Cllr Beech welcomed everyone to the meeting and reiterated that this is a meeting for the parish, facilitated by the Parish Council this year. Residents can organise the meeting in the future, if they so wish.

Apologies

None

Purpose of the meeting

Cllr Beech explained that the purpose of the meeting is to share information and to provide updates on activities over the last two years. Residents were invited to share information and ideas.

Minutes of the last meeting

Rod Honess proposed that the minutes of the Annual Community Meeting held on 27 April 2023 be approved, seconded by Lynn Busby. **Approved.**

Matters arising

None

COMMUNITY ACTION REPORTS

The reports referred to below can be found on the Parish Council website under News
www.willoughbyparishcouncil.org

Upgrading the streetlights in the village to LED

Malcolm Lewis presented the report on the upgrade of the street lighting to LED. New dimmers will be fitted to ensure the lights dim at midnight by 50%. Feedback has generally been positive. A resident commented that she has seen a significant improvement when walking the dog at night.

Cllr Beech thanked the volunteers on the Street Lighting Action Group for their hard work and achievements.

Measures to reduce flooding

Bert Ogle was unable to attend so Cllr Beech, as secretary of the Flood Action Group (FLAG), presented the report.

Cllr Beech thanked the volunteers from the village for all the work they have carried out.

Cllr Keeling and representatives from WCC Highways had visited the village earlier that day; the junction at Lower Street and Main Street was discussed. A solution is being considered by WCC and contractors will visit in a week to discuss options and to carry out a cost vs

benefit analysis.

Culverts – silt has built up significantly due to the gradient of the stream. There are two watercourses running into one higher up so there will always be flooding; lowering the tarmac at the Lower Street/Main Street junction will reduce pooling as the water will flow down Moor Lane and away from the village.

Two leaflets have been produced by FLAG – these are available on the Parish Council website under Plans/Surveys: willoughbyparishcouncil.org/flood-action-plan

Highways issues

Cllr Beech presented the report. Stuart Sheppard reported that the Woolscott Road lights are now working. The delay was due to difficulty in obtaining a sensor.

The verge below 5 White Barn Close on Main Street was discussed with WCC Highways during their visit; WCC accepted that work needs to be carried out but there is no money in the budget to do it, at present. The ideal solution would be to widen the road, but this is not achievable; other solutions would be to tarmac the verge or put in concrete blocks (Grasscrete); the height of the verge would not be impacted. It was not considered that any work on the verge would impact flooding.

Speeding concerns

Stuart Sheppard has worked with the police who have confirmed recently that there is nowhere safe in the village to carry out a Community Speedwatch. PCSO Banks is more visible in the village and has said he will be carrying out speed checks.

Residents can report speeding concerns to the new website Warks Speed Concerns: warksspeedconcerns.org

Cllr Beech also pointed residents to Warwickshire Connected as a valuable resource: www.warwickshireconnected.com

Stuart clarified that a 20-mph speed limit is self-policing and would require such measures as speed humps which are not permitted close to properties.

Community Speedwatch can only be carried out in areas with a speed limit of under 40-mph so would not be possible on the A45.

There is a planning application for a convenience store in the car wash building; the Parish Council has not objected to the application but has logged a concern about the potential increase in traffic.

Footpaths and bridleways

Rod Honess presented the report and highlighted the length of time it is taking the WCC Public Rights of Way team to carry out agreed work. He also noted the three metalled footpaths which need to be resurfaced.

Residents reported the following issues:

- Footpath on the A45 between Woolscott Road and Main Street is overgrown.
- Footpath on the other side of the A45 between Willoughby and Braunston is very overgrown and is dangerous for people walking.

ACTION: Photos to be taken of the overgrown footpaths and reported to WCC Highways – Rod Honess (photos) and Parish Clerk (report).

Playing field

Rod Honess reported that the annual playground inspection only found minor maintenance that will be carried out.

Disappointingly, there has been some graffiti in the wooden shelter. The removal of this is being organised by the Parish Council.

Climate Change

Cllr Beech reported that all councils are being encouraged to declare a climate emergency. The report highlights what is currently being done by individuals and organisations, including activities that might not be considered as impacting on climate change.

It was suggested that, if the Parish Council declares a climate emergency it would have to do something. Cllr Beech invited residents' views.

Suggested actions:

- Awareness programme (website and Facebook)
- Rewilding has been considered in the past – Woolscott Lane is an ideal site – this is WCC responsibility
- Charging stations have been considered in the past
- The Parish Council already considers the impact on climate change in its decisions e.g. in planning applications, LED lighting, flood mitigation

The general view was that the Parish Council should not declare a climate emergency.

Residents to contact the Clerk if they have any ideas, particularly about how to progress an awareness programme for residents.

Willoughby Charities

Richard Heckford presented the reports for the Willoughby Charity (WC) and the Willoughby Educational Foundation.

WC - applications will be considered for residents in need; past grants have included for dentures, spectacles and, on one occasion, a stairlift. Relief in need grants are also given.

WEF – for under 25s e.g. music lessons, school trips.

Applications for grants from both charities are encouraged. The Clerk for both charities is Helen Heckford – hheckford@icloud.com

Other issues residents would like to discuss or ideas for future projects

Replacement dog bin: would come at a cost to the Parish Council. It was considered that there are sufficient bins in the village.

A space/track for small children for scooters, skateboards and bikes was highlighted as desirable in the village. Malcolm Lewis referred to Play Rangers being run on Mondays in July and August – this is funded by the Parish Council. The dates are on the Parish Council website under News www.willoughbyparishcouncil.org

Cllr Beech thanked residents for their contributions to the parish and for attending.

Joss Ray thanked the Parish Councillors for giving their time.

Cllr Beech highlighted the Parish Councillor vacancy.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.