

LAPWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK'S REPORT FEBRUARY 2023

The Parish Council met on Monday 13th February 2023 at 7:00pm in the village hall. The meeting was attended by seven Councillors and Cllr John Cooke (WCC), Cllr Illingworth (WDC) and Cllr Hales (WDC).

The meeting was attended by Mr Philip Seccombe (Warwickshire's Police and Crime Commissioner), Chief Inspector Faz Chishty (Warwickshire Police), Sally Rolfe (Warwickshire Road Safety Unit), Priya Tek Kalsi (Warwickshire Police Communication and Engagement Officer) and Sergeant Bev Wallington and PC Jo Whittaker from the Warwick Rural West Safer Neighbourhoods Team. Mr Seccombe and his colleagues answered questions from Councillors and shared the following information:

- WCC Highways are responsible for setting the speed limits on our roads, Warwickshire Police are responsible for enforcing them. Councils and residents can contact WCC to request a change to a speed limit but there must be firm evidence to support the need for a change.
- Chief Inspector Chishty provided insight into how the locations for Police speed checks are chosen, they are usually areas known for significant collisions, serious injuries and fatalities. He explained that during August 2022-February 2023, Warwickshire Police speed checks recorded 131 speeding offences within Lapworth Parish. Of these, 129 were low level speeding offences where the drivers were offered attendance at a National Speed Awareness Course, 1 was given a speeding ticket and 1 was taken to court.
- Mr Seccombe praised the efforts of the Lapworth Speed Watch volunteers and explained how valuable the data collected by Speed Watch teams across the county is to the Police. The Police use the data to identify repeat offenders and determine areas that could benefit from a regular Police speed check.
- Sally Rolfe explained that WCC have installed four average speed cameras in locations around the county in a pilot scheme to determine whether they have a positive impact on the number of collisions. The results will be reviewed at the end of the year and if they are found to be effective then it is likely that average speed cameras will be installed in more areas across Warwickshire.
- Mr Seccombe highlighted some of the initiatives he is funding to help to improve safe driving in the county, including road safety educational projects in schools and the recruitment of Approved Driving Instructors to join 'The Honest Truth' scheme (www.thehonesttruth.co.uk), where Instructors use a few minutes per lesson to convey vital road safety education and help young drivers to be more aware of the risks when they start to drive.
- Mr Seccombe also explained that a key focus of the 2023/24 budget will be increasing the number of Police Officers in Warwickshire.

The Council has a Councillor vacancy following the resignation of Mrs Rachel Bainbridge; the Council would like to thank Rachel for her contribution to the Council over the past 14 months. If you are interested in joining the Council please contact the Clerk.

The Council has received correspondence from several residents about the location of the northern extent of Lapworth Parish and the speed gate sign near The Boot Inn on the Old Warwick Road. The Council has drawn up a written response to the questions raised in the correspondence; the response has been included in full below.

The Council are currently preparing responses for the Issues and Options consultation published as part of the South Warwickshire Local Plan. Residents can submit their own comments on this

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consultation via www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/issues-and-options-consultation.cfm - the consultation ends on 6th March 2023.

The Rural Services Network and the Rural Issues Group of Citizens Advice are jointly running a Rural Households Survey on the Cost of Living to understand more about rural household budgets during this difficult time. The survey does not require you to give your name or contact details but the information you provide will help both parties to engage more effectively with Government Departments, MPs and policy makers. To take part in the survey visit [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Rural Households Cost-of-Living](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Rural_Households_Cost-of-Living),

The UK Government has introduced a requirement for voters to show photo ID when voting at a polling station at some elections. This new requirement will apply for the first time in England at the local elections on Thursday 4 May 2023 and from October 2023 it will also apply to UK General elections. If you don't have accepted photo ID, you can apply for a free voter ID document, which is known as a Voter Authority Certificate. For more information visit www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20657/voting_in_elections/1847/voter_identification

Households that are off the gas grid will receive a £200 payment towards their energy bill support over the coming weeks. The vast majority of qualifying households will get it automatically through their electricity supplier as a credit on their bill throughout February but a small minority of customers, such as those living in park homes or on static houseboats with no direct energy supplier, will need to apply to receive the payment through the AFP Alternative Fund portal that will launch towards the end of February.

The next meeting of Lapworth Parish Council will take place at the village hall on Monday 13th March 2023 at 7.30pm.

Minutes and Agendas for meetings are on the Parish Council website www.lapworthpc.org.uk

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Statement from Lapworth Parish Council in response to correspondence regarding the northern extent of Lapworth Parish and the speed gate sign.

There has been a lot of recent communications with the Parish Council, as well as an anonymous flyer posted through letter boxes, about the location of the northern extent of Lapworth Parish Council. This is connected to a wish by some people to relocate the "speed gate" sign just ahead of The Boot to a small area of grass at Glasshouse Lane which they cite (incorrectly) as the boundary of Lapworth to ensure that the northern part of the parish is not "pushed out of Lapworth to be absorbed into West Midlands".

There is **no intention** from Warwickshire County Council, Warwick District Council or Lapworth Parish Council to move the existing parish boundary in anyway.

We consider there is no need to move the sign. Aside from the safety concerns and cost implications relating to this suggestion, there is already an existing "Lapworth please drive carefully" sign located by Sands Farm just south of the Rybrook Garage and Hockley Heath Park parish boundary.

The "speed gate" sign and road markings were put in place in April 2021 as part of a series of measures to reduce speed down to 30mph when entering the village. The location for the "speed gate" was selected after several visits by Warwickshire County Council highways staff who identified the highest risk road sections in Lapworth Parish. The hill going round the bend before the very busy Boot carpark was considered the most dangerous section and therefore top priority for a high visibility sign.

The stretch of road from the "gate" to the southern Lapworth parish boundary by Lapworth Garage is the most densely populated with many driveways, several much-used pedestrian crossing points (used by parents with pushchairs and children, dog walkers, etc), a narrow canal and railway bridge and many parked vehicles which often reduce traffic on the road to effectively one-way.

There is some confusion in the correspondence about the names of Lapworth and Kingswood particularly as the OS map shows Lapworth village as Kingswood. The village focus shifted south from the Early Medieval core around St Mary's church and expanded following construction of the canals and the Great Western London to Bristol Railway in the 18th and 19th centuries. A local station was built in 1854 with the name Kingswood but this was changed to Lapworth in 1902 to avoid confusion with another station. The village became known locally as Lapworth and this is reflected in the name of the village hall, the shop, the school and doctor's surgery.

Throughout the parish, like many other areas across the country, there are many narrow roads where pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and drivers compete to share the same space.

Speeding remains an issue despite the introduction of a 40mph limit, "reduce your speed" flashing signs, road markings, speed signs and regular speed traps near the village hall although Warwickshire statistics show accidents to be low compared to other areas of the county and therefore of low priority for action. The recent introduction of a Community Speed watch Team operated by volunteer members of the parish shows the Parish Council's commitment to help keep Lapworth as safe as it

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can be. Parking is a particular concern at certain times e.g., early morning and mid-afternoon outside the school, along Packwood Road and the Old Warwick Road by the shop and garage. The Parish Council have been in touch with the County Highways Department about refreshing road markings, cleaning signs, cutting back foliage and seeing what other actions are required.

A separate issue was highlighted with regards to the South Warwickshire Local Plan for the period up to 2050 is currently underway and as part of this - as in previous local plan consultations - landowners in Warwick and Stratford Districts are asked to identify possible development sites and over 500 landowners including owners in Aylesbury Road and Wharf Lane have responded. Just because a site has been put forward does not mean that it is automatically included. Sites will be rigorously assessed against national, regional and local planning policies over the next 12 months to see if they should be included in the long-term spatial strategy.

Everyone is asked to comment on the South Warwickshire Local Plan consultation document and on the sites put forward as these will shape Lapworth over the next 30 years.

Lapworth Parish Council