

LAPWORTH PARISH COUNCIL
LAPWORTH PARISH ASSEMBLY MINUTES
11th MARCH 2013 AT LAPWORTH VILLAGE HALL

1. **Apologies** – Cllr Child and Dr Nichol
2. **Minutes of the Previous Assembly** - signed as a true record
3. **Matters Arising from the Minutes** – none
4. **County Council Report** Cllr Mrs Compton

In spite of the general gloom about unemployment Warwickshire County Council has succeeded in attracting funding from the City Deal covering Warwickshire, Coventry and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council. This should enable apprenticeships and training to be provided to cover the skill shortage especially in Engineering and reduce youth unemployment. Also operation Football has £400,000 available to give assistance to our market towns and business led projects – grants range from £500 to £30,000 and the first grants have been awarded in March with May, September and November following on.

Other good news is that the application for a new station in Kenilworth has now been lodged and it is estimated that there will be over 400 passenger journeys a day when fully operational.

Warwickshire has not increased its share of the Council Tax for 2013/14 – indeed the Council Tax has not increased for the past four years although we have had to cope with £60 million cuts in Government Grant. This has obviously had an impact on services – libraries and youth in particular but has meant that with the re-organisation these services can still be sustained with many volunteers involved. Locally we still have the main libraries with the Mobile Service still travelling around and in conjunction with Age UK visiting housebound people with books, CD's as well as providing information.

From 1st April the public health role passes across to the County Council with the 'Health and Wellbeing Board' becoming an executive function and this will lead to independent scrutiny by the Adult Social Care and Health Committee. As Dementia Champion for Warwickshire I have been very involved in putting the 'Dementia Portal' on the WCC Web Pages to enable everyone to access information about this distressing illness.

In response to many concerns expressed by residents and Parish Councils I was successful at the Warwick Area Committee in having funding allocated from the Transport Seminar for speed reductions and these have now appeared. Speed Aware schemes can be initialized where necessary and of course drivers should always drive according to the road conditions but on the main the reduction seen to have been well received – they are always publicized before implementation and concerns taken on board.

I have co-chaired the Warwick Rural West Community Forum to which all members of the public are welcome to attend to bring matters to the County and District Officers and also our local Police Officers are always in attendance. We have given grants to many schemes including Village Halls, Defibrillators, Playgrounds, VAS

Sign, Marquee etc and funding towards the costs of Parish Plans. We look forward to receiving more applications for the next financial year.

I attend all Parish Council meetings and wish to thank all Parish Councillors and clerks for their help and co-operation in helping me to fulfill my role as your County Councillor.

5. District Council Report

Cllr Caborn

For the third year running the District Council has not increased its proportion of the Council Tax and has committed to no increase for a further 2 years. The District Council aims to be self funding by 2020.

It has been a busy year at the District Council. One of the deputy Chief Executive's has been seconded to support the Coventry City Deal bid; the Local Plan consultation is ongoing; a new manager is in post at the Spa Centre; a complete asset and property review is underway to ensure that the best use is made of existing assets. The District Council aims to support the regeneration of Old Town in Leamington by relocating its HQ there by 2016. The current offices cost over three quarters of a million pound to run each year. Bowls England is moving its venue to Leamington and this should bring over 1 million pounds to the local economy.

The fire station in Warwick is being converted in to social housing.. A peer review of the planning function has been undertaken, a quarter of a million pounds has been shaved off the waste collection service. I have continued to co-chair the Community Forum and have the lead role in relation to the Local Plan

6. Report from Lapworth Charity

Dr R Nicol

Dr Nicol was unable to attend

7. Report from the Village Hall Committee

Cllr Mrs Ludlow

This has been a busy year and the Village Hall Committee has continued to be active with bookings from both local organisations and private groups, with fundraising, maintenance and improvements to the hall inside and out.

Fundraising activities have included:

A popular 60s night

Beetle drive

Bridge evening

Ginny Davies – a 'one woman' show

Maintenance and Improvements to the VH have included:

Broadband is now fully installed to the hall

The Council has approved an annual alcohol licence and thus individual groups selling alcohol aren't required to apply for a licence for each event

The main hall was painted over the Summer and blackout blinds fitted (paid for by WI and Lapworth Players)

Lapworth Players received a grant to install a new roller, laptop and communication system between the loft and backstage

In the kitchen an additional sink water heater and 'Quooker' beverage water heater have been purchased and fitted and when the Food Hygiene Inspector checked the premises in September she was impressed by the standard of the facilities

A deluge of rain flooded the kitchen and committee rooms at the end of June – a quantity of 'Aqua-sacks' are now available as a flood defence

The bumper Scarecrow Festival weekend highlighted problems with the drains. A professional drains survey which included CCTV inspection was commissioned and identified several problems. Subsequently, a contractor employed by the insurance company has rectified these.

Our thanks go to the local bodies that support us financially; Warwick District Council, Lapworth Parish Council and Lapworth Charities.

8. Report from Lapworth School

Ms C Hatton

INSPECTION:

Following our successful OFSTED inspection on 7th and 8th February 2012, Lapworth School underwent the National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools on 19th March 2012. Mrs. Lizzie McWhirter, the inspector, judged the school to be a good school in all respects. I would like to share one of the key comments from the comments from the report which sums up the outcomes from this inspection process:

“This is a good church school where the whole school community is valued. Pupils are proud of their school, trust their teachers and value their friends. It is a place where Christian values are making a difference in daily life and where everyone is welcomed and encouraged to achieve ‘excellence through learning for all’.”

Standards in Learning

Standards in English reading, writing and mathematics remain high. Pupils are making good progress in all areas of their learning and achieving excellent outcomes.

School Buildings and Grounds:

At present, the school buildings and grounds are in good order, providing our pupils with an excellent learning environment.

The refurbishment of the ICT room is now complete! Lapworth pupils enjoy a roomy, well organised suite equipped with 15 new PC's, interactive whiteboard, data projector and laser jet printer. For our next development in ICT, we are evaluating the use of Ipads with our younger pupils and hope to purchase a trolley equipped with 10 tablets in the near future.

The re-vamp of the nature area at the bottom of the school field is now complete. Each week, come rain or shine, we hold a weekly 'Forest School' session for our very youngest pupils. The idea of Forest School comes from Scandinavia where children spend time exploring the great outdoors. The forest allows children to build their self confidence and to give them a positive experience of life beyond the classroom, enriching their lives and development further. Forest School enables the children to interact with nature and teaches them about birds, plants, smells and the dangers, all contributing to a practical learning experience.

We are also engaged in upgrading the school library. We have a number of parent volunteers currently helping to us organise and catalogue our existing book stock. The PTA are supporting us by purchasing a number of new, age appropriate, non-fiction project packs which support pupil learning. Fortunately, we have been able to re-use the existing library furniture and through purchasing some brightly coloured rugs have made the room look more engaging.

Looking ahead, we are hoping to install a cooking kitchen in the existing kitchen servery during the Summer term 2013. This will enable us to offer meals to the pupils which are cooked on the premises, instead of the current provision where meals are sent in from another local school. A number of local charities and the Local Authority have kindly offered to support the school with this project, which we hope will really improve the catering options available to pupils. In addition to the cooked lunches we intend to offer a range of healthy mid-morning snacks and a catered Breakfast and After School Club in the near future.

Sporting success:

In January, Lapworth School once again participated in the county finals of the County Small Schools Football competition, with our team representing the South Warwickshire District. Lapworth performed well in this tournament as we were by far the smallest school at the event, achieving a creditable second place overall.

During February, a number of Year 5 & 6 pupils took part in first round of the Indoor Athletics Tournaments, again securing a place in the final. Although we were eventually ranked in fourth place, all the children gave of their very best with some achieving 'personal best' performances.

The county-wide Cross Country events have been very popular with the children this academic year, with one of our Year 5 girls achieving selection for final race of the year on Saturday 16th March at Hatton Country World.

Professional Learning Community (PLC):

Lapworth Church of England School is part of the Henley and Warwick PLC's which encompass all schools in the Warwick and Henley area.

Through our involvement in these two Professional Learning Communities our pupils and staff have accessed a number of exciting opportunities this academic year including:

taking part in Gifted and Talented maths activities exploring maths problem solving and investigations

teacher Training Days

School Counsellor – weekly session of free counselling for pupils

Moderation of writing

Subject Leader Meetings

Aylesford School PE teacher providing gymnastics tuition to Class 4 and Class 5

Admin staff support meetings

Skills 4 Bills afternoon workshop for Year 5 pupils

Extra-Curricular Activities:

We continue to develop our extensive extra-curricular programme for pupils. This year, new experiences offered have included: Forest School, Tag Rugby and Cookery Club.

In addition we continue to offer: Recorder, Football Club for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, Cross Country, Dance and Drama, Choir, woodwind and violin peripatetic tuition and tennis. Lapworth School provides a wide variety of opportunities for our pupils to develop their own special interests.

Athletics and Gardening Clubs will begin again in the Summer Term.

Community Engagement

Following my plea for volunteers to support us in school, we currently have a number of adults undertaking voluntary roles. These include: listening to pupils read, completing admin tasks, leading choir, supporting forest school sessions as well as providing additional adult support on visits.

Staff and pupils make regular contributions to the parish magazine on a monthly basis.

Years 5 and 6 pupils have recently visited Packwood to plant a number of trees in their new Gorse Wood.

The school choir sang at the Elderberries Christmas Lunch in December.

www.lapworthschool.co.uk

Our new school website went 'live' in September 2012. A working party comprised of parents, school staff and members of the governing body worked together to develop a site which we felt reflected Lapworth and the strong partnership between school,

church and family. Content is updated at least weekly with e-mail alerts activated through subscription to the latest news section. If you would like to keep up to date with all our developments please subscribe!

9. Report form Parish Plan Steering Group

Mr D King

After much groundwork by the Parish Plan Steering Group, we started the consultation process with a public meeting in November and then a drop-in day at the Village Hall in February. Through these events and many other meetings with local groups, we have now logged over 330 comments on the issues that concern Lapworth residents. These have been used to compile a detailed survey that focuses on these relevant issues.

At the end of this month, we will be distributing over 800 of these surveys to all households and businesses in the Parish. If I tell you that each survey has around 100 questions requiring a yes/no/maybe answer and over 20 spaces for written comments, you will appreciate that we are (a) being thorough and (b) presenting ourselves a real challenge in analysing the responses!

However, by the middle of the year, we hope to have what amounts to a first draft of the Parish Plan, which will then go out for further public consultation.

Of the many issues that are emerging, there are three constant themes:

Communications, which seem to be a real problem in our community. Although there are several channels (for example the Parish magazine, notice boards, the Parish website and so on) a constant complaint from residents is that they are not being kept abreast of developments affecting the village.

Housing is of course a major current issue, with the full spectrum of views on the District Council's proposals for new housing development in the Parish. That said, there are two constants:

A strong desire to protect Lapworth's essentially rural nature; and
Overwhelming opposition to any form of larger scale "estate-type" developments.

Growing concern about traffic issues, especially speeding, parking, dangerous junctions and the lack of footpaths on some heavily used roads.

And of course there are many comments on public transport (or the lack of it), broadband speeds, mobile phone reception, flooding and youth issues, especially the lack of recreational areas for children.

We have already fed back summary comments to the Parish and District Councils and, in the absence of a Neighbourhood Plan for Lapworth, will be providing additional data from the survey analysis during the consultation period for the draft District Council Local Plan in May and June.

I look forward to reporting on the completion of the Parish Plan by next year's Parish Assembly and would like to thank my colleagues on the Steering Group for their efforts to date.

10. Chairman's Report

Cllr Mrs Francis

My report on the year's activities of the PC will be brief, as so many people are here to hear Mr Hay's talk about housing; and not Parish Council affairs.

So, thank you Councillors for regular attendance at meetings seem to be very lengthy these days, and for hard work and time spent on behalf of the Parish. During the year planning applications have become electronic enabling us to look at plans on screen.

A major concern has been problems at the Oaks, on the corner of Station Lane, the nuisance of children using it as a play area and the dangers of ball games on the corner. We have spent a lot of time talking, having site meetings and considering options to solve the problems. However after, landscaping, planting and erecting a sign I hear we still have a problem.

One of the recreation sites we look after is the picnic area by the canal in Bromehall Lane. A couple of years ago the BBQ's were damaged and removed for safety. Subsequently the wooden tables were burnt. These have now been replaced fire and vandal proof mock wood tables and benches. We are still one step ahead but its costly – new table and benches were nearly £2,000.

We are also responsible and proud of the fact that we keep the public toilets open from Easter to October when most public toilets have been closed. We bear the cost and the organisation.

We are about to install a defibrillator for public use outside the Village Hall.

We have been encouraged to have a Parish Plan by local government. Rowington, Shrewley and others have completed theirs, we have been slow to do ours. Cllr Polgreen attempted to start one several years ago, holding public meetings but it was abandoned due to lack of public support. Cllr Jay agreed to chair a new committee with one or two councillors but most with members of the public as advised. Cllr Jay has been working with the Committee, now chaired by Mr King, towards compiling an in depth questionnaire. This will include identifying the needs for housing and will be sent out to all households later this month.

Thank you sincerely Councillors for bothering about what goes on in Lapworth and putting in the time and effort. Thank you Elaine for all your work and patience with a job that is sometimes difficult.

I hope to see some of the audience at future PC meetings. The agenda is on the noticeboard or the Parish Council website

11. Any Other Business - None