

LAPWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE LAPWORTH PARISH ASSEMBLY HELD AT 7.30PM ON MONDAY 14th MARCH 2011 AT LAPWORTH VILLAGE HALL

Present: Chairman Cllr Mrs Francis, Cllr Corney, Cllr Giles, Cllr Mrs Lester, Cllr Lewis, Cllr Henderson, Cllr Mrs Toogood Cllr Polgreen, C. Cllr Mrs Compton, Mr Waldron, Mr Smith

1. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr Cox and D. Cllr Caborn,

2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ASSEMBLY**

The minutes of the previous assembly of 8th March 2010, having been circulated were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED BY OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were none

4. **COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**

County Council Member for Lapworth, Chairman of the County Council, Co Chair of the Community Forum West and Chairman of Wawick Area Committee Councillor Mrs Compton made the following report:

As I write the report this year it seems that the reality of the spending cuts is just about to hit us. Times are not easy in local government and with WCC accounting for approximately 90% of the council tax and therefore being the largest spender obviously the reduction in overall departmental budgets is substantial with £60 million savings to be made over three years.

Every section has had to take its share with saving being made in Adult Services, with only substantial and critical needs being accommodated, selling off the remaining council owned care home; School Transport grants reduced with post 16 education transport cuts; County Music Service will have to be self financing; Youth Service grant reduced to £1 million which will mean that all Youth Workers will have to manage more than one location; Bus Services which are not commercially viable, which includes many rural areas reduced; Library provision 16 libraries across the County under threat of closure although the Mobile Service is safe at the moment but this is due to be reduced from five rounds to three. Street lights in certain roads switched off during the hours of darkness; non regulatory carriage markings not being replaced and so on. All staff under threat of redundancy with Strategic Directors now reduced to three plus the Fire Officer. I could go on but I am sure you have realised times are tough. There will be no increase to the Council Tax this year.

We have had the long awaited result of the Atherstone on Stour Fire Enquiry which has resulted in three senior officers being charged with corporate manslaughter and WCC itself being charged under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

On a more local level I have attended Lapworth Parish Council regularly and given advice on the proposed Marina development, with a site visit with officer from Highways. The long awaited scheme in Station Lane for a footpath extension is

finally going ahead, this has taken over four years to get agreement with Network Rail and many false dawns and funding issues. Several roads in the parish have been resurfaced and speeding problems have been addresses.

Warwick Rural West Community Forum, of which I am co Chairman at the moment has met regularly and Lapworth representatives secured funding for a screen and projector for the Village Hall. Many general matters of concern are voiced at these meetings and the last meeting in February addressed changes to the NHS.

I had the privilege in 2010-2011 of being Chairman of Warwickshire County Council. This has meant that my time has been taken with representing the County both within its borders and also in neighbouring counties. Many functions have been attended wit highlight being the visit of Her Majesty the Queen to open the new Justice Centre in Leamington. My primary function has been of course to Chair the meetings of the Full Council – this has been a difficult year as you can imagine with several very awkward debates to handle and 61 councillors names to remember. However all this comes to an end in the middle of May when I go back to the back benches.

5. DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

District Councillor Les Caborn, member for Lapworth and Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Communities gave the following report:

Much of my time this year has been spent ensuring the council has a sound financial footing for the hard times we live in. By having a ban on recruitment we have reduced staff by 20% without redundancy and increased reserves to weather the storm over the next 4 years .

We have in place a 5yr strategy to reduce costs, improve services and invest in the future. We have a zero council tax rise this year and will have zero next year if we retain control at the May election, all without cutting services. We are reviewing our property to ensure it meets our needs as well as allowing more staff to work from home.

The regional spatial strategy which threatened to impose large housing numbers on the district has been replaced by a Warwick District local plan and we are about to consult with you on the shape of the district for the future. This consultation is about the district shape not housing sites.

We are continuing with the development of the Loft theatre site in Leamington and have revamped the Spa centre with exciting new shows. Films and ballet now on the programme. The Newbold common Golf course has been contracted to the private sector and is flourishing.

We have entered an agreement to build 300 new social houses across the district over the next 3 years to meet rising need.

We live in interesting times for local government with the localism bill bringing a new dimension to how we run and deliver services and give people more influence over our decisions.

Thanks to you all for your support throughout the year

6. LAPWORTH CHARITY REPORT

Mr John Waldron, Chairman of the Lapworth Charity advised that its accommodation at Pound Close currently had one vacancy and applications were currently being reviewed. The five yearly inspection by an architect had given a programme of recommendations for the next five years.

The Charity has maintained scheme payments within the parish to the Church Wardens of Lapworth and Nuthurst.

Support continued to given to the school. Educational grants had been given to 11 local students studying for higher education and vocational training.

The Charity had continued with funding donations to LOPA and the Elderberries. Christmas payments had been made to approximately 38 households to go toward fuel bills.

Unfortunately the monthly shopping bus to Solihull on the last Friday of each month, had been withdrawn due to lack of use. There had been no adverse feedback to date.

The Charity supported Lifeline telephones in Pound Close and the community and was currently introducing a chiropody service. Take up was being monitored.

Lastly thanks was given to Mr John Gaunt who had joined the Lapworth Charity board in 1957 and was now taking a well earned rest.

Mr Waldron, was asked whether any proposed development would be for older people or a mixed development. Mr Waldron advised that it could be for either.

7. VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE REPORT

Councillor Giles, the Parish Council's Village Hall representative gave the following report:

After many years of driving the committee forward Doreen Halson has handed over the chair to Joyce Burn. Joyce has taken on her new role with vigour and is keen to put our village hall on an equal footing with it's peer's.

As with all buildings of this age, a little work is required here and there and last year has been no exception.

- The ladies toilets have been renewed, with excellent reviews from the users.
- The heating system has been upgraded in the main hall including a curtain heater in the foyer and frost protection thermostats in the main hall and kitchen to provide better protection in the depths of winter.
- Electronic time switches have been added to the committee room heaters, to prevent them being left on over night

- Baby changes facilities have been installed in the rear ladies toilet.

Alan Kimpton, the booking secretary, has been doing a tremendous job in getting new people to use the hall and has secured a long term contract with the Tickety Boo toddler club.

A new cinema club has got off the ground and the first public showing "Made in Dagenham" was very well received.

As we look forward, we know further improvements are required to the hall. At top of our current list is to investigate re-treating the floor in the main hall.

8. **LAPWORTH SCHOOL REPORT**

Mr Andrew Smith, Headteacher, gave the following report in relation to Lapworth School.

The present:

- Building work for new extension is now complete and means we have five full sized classrooms to work in.
- Many thanks to Lapworth Charity for helping us to pay for this expensive addition to the school.
- Changes in school budgets mean more freedom to spend public money, but this comes with more accountability
- Changes in education under the coalition government mean that we have slightly more autonomy, but this comes with added responsibility.
- Standards have continued to rise over the last 12 months and our school inspector judged us to be 'outstanding' in January for the first time.
- OFSTED wrote in the summer (2010) to tell us that they would not be coming until September 2011 at the earliest – very handy considering that we have two maternity leave covers in the school at the moment.

The Future

- Continued building work to develop toilet facilities in school for children; extra security fencing from the pavement to the main entrance and a path to the nature area (which has been developed with 60m of pathways and the housing of bird boxes etc)
- Five new, mature trees have been planted (one for each class) to provide additional shade during sunnier days.
- Our curriculum continues to evolve and develop – we are now in the final year of our three year rotation.
- Standards remain a focus for us as does raising an awareness of 'learning' for every child.

Our Successes

- Twelve children worked with a similar number of Elderberries in the summer (2010) to teach them how to use Windows on a computer.
- The school football team have reached the Midlands finals for small schools – only one step away from the National finals.
- Indoor athletics – we are currently South Warwickshire champions (from 2010) and have retained the Henley are crown for the fourth successive year.
- The school cricket team won the South Warwickshire tournament in 2010 out of 19 teams.
- Children are now making a contribution to the Parish magazine on a monthly basis.

Challenges

- Parent parking remains an issue for local residents particularly around busy times of the day.
- The school will be looking to appoint a new Headteacher as I have resigned my current post with effect from the summer and have been appointed to a new Headship in Warwick from September.

Mr Smith was thanked for his hard work at the school and wished well for the future.

9. LAPWORTH PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

Lapworth Parish Council Chairman, Councillor Mrs Francis, Thanks to all Parish Council members for attending, especially during the hard winter months and attending meetings on our behalf. Thanks also to Councillor Mrs Compton in the support and service that she gives us. In his absence thanks to Councillor Caborn also for his support and advice.

Looking back over the year I am happy to say there has been progress on some of the outstanding problems. The flooding occurring in Boot Hill has been solved. The Dicks Lane motorbike dispute was resolved, and more it looks like the footpath in Station Lane will go ahead thanks to Councillor Mrs Compton's tenacity.

However the outstanding application for the Hockley Heath marina is still unresolved. The canal bridge in Old Warwick Road is still damaged. A large number of planning applications were received. Most were passed by the Authorities. The Parish Council has become concerned at the number of medium sized houses converted into 'palaces' with all mod cons including cinemas, stables, tennis courts etc. Indeed Lapworth PC was confronted with so many applications for ménages and stables that we became alarmed at the fragmentation of the rural landscape. This prompted a wrap over the knuckles from the WDC Planning Chairman for objecting. We promptly invited him to our meeting to discuss the problem. Unfortunately I don't think we can stop the drain from agricultural land to urban sprawl.

The Village hall and play area is one of main concerns, being such a valuable and

integral part of the village. The parish Council has attended to the borders, hedges and grass upkeep. However the use of the football area as an overflow carpark is disastrous for the turf.

The Green on the corner of Station Lane presents a problem it used to be youths sitting on the fence – we solved that and now children kicking a ball about have worn the grass away. The shrubbery is trampled on and new plants destroyed. An ongoing problem.

The transfer of allotment land in Vicarage Road from Warwick District Council to Lapworth Parish Council is imminent and on the agenda tonight.

We do not envisage this making any change to the running of the allotments which is organised by their own Committee.

The toilets in Bromehall Lane were open for the season from April to October, with no problems.

In the summer a bad fire broke out and a man was taken ill in Tapster Lane. Fire engines and ambulances were needed both were seriously delayed due to the inability to find their destination. As a result Mr Ollernshaw, Fire and Emergency Officer, can to visit the Parish Council at our request. The Council was shocked and dismayed at the officers description of the lack of local knowledge and the ridiculous routes the emergency vehicles had taken. It was decided that residents in Tapster Lane would be told, when requesting help, to say exactly where there were. Overall not very satisfactory.

Two new grit bins have been purchased this year bringing our total in Lapworth to 16. Is this a record for a parish.

I will end with thanks to Elaine for the efficient way she does her job and keeps it all in order.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
There was none.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman declared the Annual Parish Assembly closed at 8.20pm.

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SIGNED

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DATE

