

**LAPWORTH PARISH COUNCIL**  
MINUTES OF THE LAPWORTH PARISH ASSEMBLY HELD AT 7.30PM ON  
MONDAY 8<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2010 AT LAPWORTH VILLAGE HALL

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

1. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr Mrs Toogood and Cllr Cox

2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ASSEMBLY**

The minutes of the previous assembly of 9<sup>th</sup> March 2009, 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, Vice 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:

In June 2009 Warwickshire County Council went from being a council with no overall political majority to a Conservative Authority.

This has made the Budget setting easier but the present financial situation has meant that there is a shortfall in the finance to allocate to the services provided by the County Council.

Warwickshire is looking at new ways of working and indeed exploring joining with neighbouring authorities in Coventry and Solihull to protect and keep, if possible, such services as Library provision and the County Music Service. We already work with Coventry and Solihull in Waste Management and this could be extended.

The Fire Service Review is still ongoing as indeed the Atherstone on Stour Enquiry. The Review will not come back to the Council until all public representations have been considered.

Road Maintenance is always high on the rural agenda and after the severe weather this winter extra funding has been taken from the Warwick Area Budget to fill potholes which seem to appear almost overnight. The Gritting Teams have managed to keep the main roads passable and a review will take place during the summer to consider extending the routes. Warwickshire already grit nearly 50% of the network which is considerably more than neighbouring authorities.

The Street Lighting on main roads is under review to examine the possibility of dimming lights to save on electricity. Several roads in the area have had their lights dimmed on an experimental basis for the last three years.

There are plans, at an early stage, for two more railway stations. One at Kenilworth and the other at Stratford on Avon.

The One Stop Shop located at Shire Hall now has the front office service for Warwick Police – this having been moved from the Police Station. This is proving much more convenient as it is open for longer hours and six days a week.

Warwick Rural West Community Forum has met on a regular basis and the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team are always in attendance and in addition to giving a full report are available for individual consultations before the meeting starts. The Forum is settling down to this new way of consulting with the Community and I hope that more people will come along to voice their opinions on the services provided by both the County and Warwick District Council. Funding is available through the Forum for Community Projects and the Leader Project, serviced from Ryton Organic Centre, has money for anything connected with gardening or agriculture.

To conclude County Councillor Mrs Compton advised that Local Government is facing difficult years with an increasing older population to be cared for and more children coming into care and greater expectations by the public.

Councillors, the Chairman and clerk were thanked for their help and assistance in enabling Cllr Mrs Compton to fulfil her role.

## **5. DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

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

The District Council had set its council tax increase at 2.5% the lowest for 11 years. However if no action was taken it was anticipated that the Council budget would have a deficit of 3 million in the next three years. A five year budget was anticipating a reduction in the Government Grant each year, the Council was expected to make 3% cashable savings and £8 million of its housing revenue was to be diverted to Central Government.

To respond to this the District Council had a Budget Improvement Program in place that was scheduled to deliver £170,000 savings this year, and £550,000 over the next three years. New procurement contracts were anticipated to save £800,000 and recycling and waste to generate £200,000 income.

New ways of working including systems thinking, Agile Working and Virtual Desktop Programme were being instigated to save money and support staff in delivering services.

A cross cutting Leadership Development Program aimed at ensuring that the customer was put first in service delivery was being undertaken. Shared services were on the agenda, and the capacity and expertise of Legal Services had been increased by joining with the County Council. Also being explored was the potential for sharing top management with Stratford DC but that was still in its early stages.

Following the retirement of John Archer a new head of Development Services had been appointed and new head of Housing had recently taken up position.

An exciting new theatre project was underway at Spencers Yard, the Ford Site was due for redevelopment and a feasibility study was taking place into reinstating the mere at Kenilworth Castle. There was a two year project in place to turn the Spa Centre around and the free swimming for the over 60's and under 16's had proved very popular.

A new One Stop Shop is scheduled to open later this year at Riverside House and it is hoped that the Job Centre will join representatives from the Benefits Service, the CAB and the Police.

The travel tokens scheme and the Community grants scheme were scheduled to be reviewed. Meanwhile funding for Rural Initiatives continues to be available.

To summarise the District Council recognised that times were tough but was endeavoring to protect and improve front line services and be businesslike and efficient.

## **6. LAPWORTH CHARITY REPORT**

Mr John Waldron, Chairman of the Lapworth Charity advised that its accommodation had had 100% occupancy over the previous year and there was waiting list for properties. Heating at Pound Close had been upgraded to new storage heating all upgrades were scheduled to complete shortly.

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

Support had been given to the school to convert an existing classroom to a larger refurbished one. Educational grants had been given to 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 40 residents to go toward fuel bills.

The Charity continues to support the monthly shopping bus to Solihull on the last Friday of each month, however of late this had not been well used and residents were urged to use it or potentially lose it.

The Charity supported Lifeline telephones in Pound Close and the community and had the capacity to support more if requested and approved.

## **7. VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE REPORT**

Another busy year for the village hall in its 43rd year.

There are 14 local community groups that make the Village hall there home – just a few of these are the WI, History Group, Youth Club, Lapworth Players and Moles.

We also work hard at marketing the hall for other functions, such as birthday parties etc... These additional functions are an important source of revenue as they help to pay for the up keep of the hall.

Due to the fierce local competition from other venues, the need to update and modernise the hall is a constant agenda item for the village hall committee.

Some of improvements implemented this year include an upgrade to the bar area including a new dish washer, heating system upgrade, tidying and decoration of the rear storage area and an electrical appliance and safety test.

To help pay for the update and modernisation works, the village hall committee have carried out several fund raising activities.

Valentines Dinner, Shirley Band, Beetle Drive, Quiz Night, Black Country Evening and offering car parking for the fireworks at The Boot.

To top off the busy year we also have appointed Alan Kimpton as our new booking secretary.

## **8. LAPWORTH SCHOOL REPORT**

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

There were currently 145 children on the role at present, this would decrease to 143 in September after 25 children graduated and a new intake of 23.

Over the previous year 2 members of staff had left for pastures new and they had now been replaced.

Standards were high on the agenda for the school, which continued to maintain and develop them further. Particular work had taken place this year with more able students attending a number of enrichment activities with other local children. New resources for learning had been purchased these included new books and 20 new laptops. The ICT infrastructure had also been improved.

Improvements continued to take place and the school had been painted completely on the inside. The main work for the remainder of 2010 was a classroom extension, which is being matchfunded by the LA. A significant amount of money and assistance had been received from the Lapworth Charity and the school was very grateful for this. Work was due to start at the end of April, to be completed by September.

Funding from the national Lottery, supplemented by PTA funds, was enabling cycle storage to be installed. Money acquired from the 'Ernest Cook' Trust was to be spent improving the 'nature area' at the bottom of the school field. The PTA were also supporting the planting of more trees on the school site.

An active role was being taken within the community. A toddler group was now up and running, children from the school attended family services at St Mary's and running a number of PCSO Surgeries had been held at the school. This year a more

active role was anticipated in the Scarecrow Festival with parking being made available at the school

Sporting achievements continued with successes in indoor athletics, rounders and cricket. One of the pupils had been selected to represent the County at Cross Country and a tag rugby tournament was scheduled to take place shortly.

Information about the school was available on its new noticeboards and the school website.

## 9. **LAPWORTH PARISH COUNCIL REPORT**

Lapworth Parish Council Chairman, Councillor Mrs Francis, thanked all those who had made a contribution to the meeting. She reported on changes to the Parish Council over the last year. Councillor Ross Giles was co-opted after Mrs Pat Fox stood down. Mrs Fox had ably represented the Parish Council on the Village Hall Committee, a role that Councillor Giles had inherited. Shortly after joining the Parish Council Councillor Giles was put to work helping in a joint effort by the Parish Council to deliver Housing Needs Questionnaires to all households in the parish.

Councillor Mrs Francis thanked County Councillor Mrs Compton and District Councillor Caborn for the help and support on all district and county matters.

Over the previous year many Planning Applications had been considered, notably for stables and tack rooms which were now dotted over fields that have been divided up into smaller enclosures. Also the puzzling application that was granted allowing a perfectly good house to be pulled down replacing it with a new one, the Parish Council had thought they were following guidelines when voting against the plan. The plan for the marina at Hockley Heath is still ongoing and a decision not yet made.

Also continuing is the dispute about motorbikes using Dicks Lane to Lapworth Street, there had been strong public objections to this proposal and decision was scheduled to be made at the Area Committee at Shire Hall shortly. Discussions regarding the construction of a footpath on Station Lane at the Station bend were halted when British Rail withdrew. This is now back on the agenda and the Parish Council will do what it can to see it through with County Councillor Mrs Compton's help.

Councillor Polgreen had put time and effort to get a Parish Plan off the ground but did not receive public support to carry it on. However he did have success though his entry for the Calor gas Best Village Survey securing an award of £250 for the Parish.

The public toilets were well used and appreciated. The smooth running only disturbed by the regular removal of the bolt off the gents!

The Parish Council was requested by the Warwickshire Rural Community council to carry out a Housing Needs Survey. As previously mention questionnaires were delivered to all households. The results have been received and are now to be discussed and a decision made.

The Community Forum has been regularly attended by Councillors Corney, Mrs Toogood and Mrs Lester.

The Council purchased a new seat, in metal, for the end of Station Lane by the Village Green last summer, and it is still complete. A litter bin was also obtained for the Brome Hall lane carpark and two more grits bins are to be delivered, as these have proved essential this winter.

A couple of outstanding sores in the Parish are the state of the Old Warwick Road Canal Bridge, badly damaged and still awaiting repair. Also the recurring flooding, sometimes taking up two thirds of the road on Boot Hill.

The Village Hall children's play area has been checked by ROSPA and kept up to safety standards. A lock on the gate was replaced after the existing one was damaged.

Councillor Mrs Francis ended by thanking all the Parish Councillors for the time and effort they give to the village and to the Clerk for the efficient way she carried out her role for the parish Council and the Chairman.

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