# **Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting**

# **held on Monday 22nd April 2024 at 7.00pm**

## **PRESENT:**

Councillor D Glynn (Chairman of Parish Council )

Parish Clerk Mrs B Hodgetts

Assistant Parish Clerk Mrs L Higgins

Mrs PA Allen, Mrs S Beardsmore, N Caine, P Davis, K Elder, Mrs J Evans, C Evans, Mrs R Heseltine,

S Payne, C Rathbone, Mrs B Walters

4 members of the public

## 1 - WELCOME BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman welcomed everyone present.

## 2 - MINUTES

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 24th April 2023 were a true and accurate record.

## 3 – CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD 2023-24

## This year only one award was given. The resident has done a lot to bring football to Perton playing fields.

He has gone above and beyond, regardless of weather, to see that the pitches are up to standard and can be played on. He has also paid for repairs to the tractor, white lining including using his own staff to carry out the lining. It was with great pleasure that the Chairman presented the engraved plaque.

2 residents left the meeting.

## 4 - PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN’S REPORT 2023

Welcome to all members of the public who have come along this evening and fellow members of the Council. As always it has been a busy year for Perton Parish Council with many new projects under way or under consideration.

We said goodbye to four Parish Councillors in May but welcomed the newly elected Councillors May 2023. I was elected Chairman of Perton Parish Council having been Vice-Chairman for three years. Cllr Phil Davis was elected as Vice Chairman.

The Chairman’s Civic Sunday was held on 29th October 2023 with invited representatives from local organisations. The Service at The Church At Perton and reception at Perton Civic Centre recognised and thanked a number of local organisations that give time and effort to the local community. The event was well attended and the costs were covered personally by the Chairman and his wife and not funded through the Parish Council.

The Precept for the Parish Council had increased slightly for 2023/24 by 4.94% to £225,000. In January 2023 the Parish Council agreed an outline budget of £466,338 and precept of £248,001 for 2024/25. The required precept is an annual charge increase of £6.26 per annum based on a ‘Band D’ property. Much of the increase in expenditure is due to the rise in energy costs, additional staffing costs and Civic Centre repairs due to the age of the building.

The Parish Council was awarded the Foundation Award under the NALC Local Council Award Scheme in December 2023 which demonstrates that the Parish Council meets the requirementsfor operating lawfully and according to standard practice.

We were successful in securing a grant for £40,000 which will help install 65 solar panels with batteries on the Civic Centre roof. These will be installed within the next few weeks at a total cost of £43,177

Plyvine gave notice on providing bar services for Civic Centre events from November 2023. A new bar provider, Dangerous Sheep was appointed and they agreed a start date in January 2024 for the pantomime. The bar was refurbished and new fridges installed. Dangerous Sheep have also held several successful events and have more planned for 2024.

**Perton Playing Fields & Pavilion**

This year the sub lease to the Trustees of the Perton Playing Fields was terminated and control of the Playing Fields and Pavilion reverted back to the Parish Council. A working party was formed and has been extremely busy looking at how the facilities can be upgraded. The football pitches are very well used with 13 teams playing on them during the season.

**Prinses Irene Brigade**

Representatives from The Prinses Irene Regiment returned to Perton after many years. The Brigade met some of the descendants of the soldiers that served at the Dutch Camp at Wrottesley Park. The Dutch soldiers visited the site of their former camp which is now the Natural Burial Ground where a service of remembrance was held. This was followed by coffee and cake at Perton Manor Nursing Home which was formerly the Dutch headquarters. The visitors then proceeded to the Civic Centre for a buffet lunch and a presentation by Angus Dumphy It is hoped in 2024 that a new memorial will be placed at the memorial stone and a Prinses Irene Garden be planted. They will be invited back in 2024.

**Kings Coronation**

A flower garden was planted in commemoration of the Kings Coronation in June 2023. It can be seen at the rear of the Civic Centre along with the Platinum Jubilee Rose Garden.

A free Firework display was held for a second year on Sunday 5th November thanks to Perton Middle School and donations from Parish Councillors. The firework display was another success and an excellent family event. A lot of positive comments were received and a collection for Compton Care and Breast Cancer was extremely well supported with a total of £643 which was split between the two charities nominated by the Chairman and Parish Council

**Wrottesley Village**

The first phase of the new housing development, was finally ready to receive its first residents following lengthy delays getting approval for the access road.

**Perton Jubilee Allotments**

As part of the s106 the Wrottesley Village the developer provided a piece of land for the parish allotments along with a sum of £93,592.39 to create the plots. Work at the site was finally completed and ready for its new tenants on Friday 29th March 2024. A small opening ceremony on 27th March was held with the Chairman of the Parish Council, Chairman of the Allotment Committee and the Chairman of the District Council, Parish Councillors and new plot holders in attendance.

**Inner South traffic Island**

A car crashed onto the island destroying the Silver Birch tree in the centre. This gave the opportunity to redevelop the island as Wild About Perton had unfortunately informed the Parish Council that they were unable to look after it anymore due to the lack of volunteers. Councillor Mrs Allen paid for the clearing and grass seeding of the island and the Forest of Mercia have donated a Silver Birch for the centre. SSDC have agreed to include the island in their grass cutting regime.

**Staffordshire Police**

PCSO’s have regularly attend our Parish Council meetings to keep Councillor up to date with activity in the village. Unfortunately a new directive means the PCSO’s can only provide a report and join Parish Council meetings quarterly. The Parish Council has expressed its dismay at this decision. The Parish Council does thank PCSO’s A Tooth, S Carter and G Lloyd for their support over the last 12 months.

**Staffordshire County Council**

Our County Councillor Jak Abrahams has attended several Parish Council meetings during the year, providing a verbal report on County initiatives.There are a number of on-going County Highways issues which come up at Parish Council meetings time after time which are fed back to the County Council. These include :

* The poor state of Severn Drive
* Flooding issues on Dippons Lane
* Potholes
* Wrottesley Park Road.

The speed limit at Trescott on the A454 Bridgnorth Road was successfully lowered to 40mph

Traffic calming works at Wrottesley Park Road crossing to the Staffordshire Way to include, Slow road marking, pedestrian signs and pedestrian road signs costing £5,000 was agreed by the Parish Council, It is hoped that these will be installed very soon.

**District Council**

District Councillors Mrs Penny Allen, Mrs Rita Heseltine, Phil Davis and Christopher Evans report regularly at meetings on what is happening at District Council.

District Council have installed a barrier at the Pavilion car park and Kingswood Common, and also resurfaced some of the paths around the lower lake.

**Supporting The Community**

The Parish Council has a fund to support volunteer groups and organisations in Perton. During 2023/24 the Parish Council supported various local organisations. i.e.: Kingsway Food Bank: £100, Perton Playing Fields Association £6,500, FC Perton £400, Perton Library Science Fair: £480.

**Concessionary room hire** at the Civic Centre was also granted to various village events and organisations including the May Day Carnival, Christmas Fair, Community Choir and Silver Poplars Residents Association.

The Parish Council provides a storage room in the Civic Centre for the **Kingsway Food Bank**. The service provided 220 food parcels to Perton residents in 2023, along with parcels delivered to Codsall, Bilbrook and Pattingham.

**Perton Civic Centre** provides a wide range of activities including self-help groups, exercise, indoor carpet bowls, talks, family parties, weddings and anniversaries. There is an NHS pulmonary service, but unfortunately the diabetic eye screening has moved away from the centre. These activities provide a source of income raising some £88,958 this year.

And finally, I am pleased to say that the last twelve months have been very busy and very productive and, as this report demonstrates, we have made some very real progress for Perton making this an even better place to live.

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for their support and involvement during the last year whilst also recognising that the next twelve months will undoubtably be very busy and present new challenges.

I would also like to thank the Parish Clerk Becky Hodgetts for the help she has given and also thanks to both the Assistant Clerk Louise Higgins and Administration Assistant Sue Marks. Thanks also goes to the Civic Centre Staff, caretakers Hugh Rossington, Richard Holdcroft and Aaron Duxbury, the cleaner Caroline Harvey and the litter pickers John Dockery and John Leaver for their efforts and dedication ......Thank You.

## 5 – QUESTIONS ARISING FROM THE REPORT

A vote of thanks was given for the report.

The meeting was informed that the inner South island had been reseeded and the new Silver birch tree planted.

K Elder corrected the Chairman’s report that Wild About Perton were unable to look after the island due to the lack of volunteers, it is actually because the island became unmanageable. It needed simplifying and hopefully that has been achieved now.

The car that crashed into the tree destroyed the tree, the level surface and caused a lot of mess – no one is ever charged over these sorts of events and no bill every presented. Unfortunately no one is ever held accountable.

Mrs P Allen thanked the council for its support of the carnival and other community events.

Unfortunately, The Parish Council and councils in general are rebuked by the public. There are only two residents, that are not parish councillors, here which is very sad, the ‘keyboard warriors’ talk about things on Facebook but don’t appear to have the time to come and address the annual meeting to air their concerns.

The response from the new Staffordshire Police Chief Inspector was raised. The Clerk informed the meeting that this would be an agenda item in May. Clerk to invite the Commissioner following the election on 2nd May. Also to invite the Chief Inspector.

## 6 – PARISHIONER QUESTIONS

Thanks was given to the two members of public who attend the Parish Council meetings ‘as much as the councillors do!’

## Meeting closed 7.31pm

Signed ....................................................... Date .........................

Chairman