WORLESTON & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

held at WORLESTON VILLAGE HALL 7.00pm 20th May 2021

present: Andy Hudson (Chair), John Schofield (Vice Chair), Fred Percival, Peter Jones, Malcolm Holman, Matt Evans, Victoria Higham, Gary Basford, Gary Vernon, Mark Astbury

1. **Introduction & Welcome:-**

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the Annual Meeting.

1. **Annual Report of the Parish Council by the Chairman, Worleston & District Parish Council.**

I’d like to summarise our main activities from 20/21 and also set out some of our key objectives for the coming year.

COVID put a halt on many of the normal activities and slowed down much of the business of local government through 2020/2021.

Praise goes to the way our community reacted to calls for support to help the vulnerable in the early months of the pandemic and we were able to assist other parishes in sourcing hand sanitiser via a grant which at the time was a scarce commodity.

Our thoughts go to those families who have suffered loss during these unprecedented times.

The PC continued to operate remotely, and praise goes to our Clerk Helen for keeping us on track with all of the usual hygiene factors of running the council.

From a planning perspective, we have seen a fairly consistent volume of applications for residential development and a few commercial developments as local businesses seek to upgrade their operations. CEC has had severe issues in responding to planning and many overdue decisions are still pending.

Kingsley Fields progress means that the A51 rerouting is now more imminent.

The temporary travellers site on Wettenhall Road has been proposed by CEC as part of their capacity plan under the G&T site allocation.

We continue to work with St Oswald’s Church and School and the school’s trust to improve the parking situation which in many peoples’ opinion is a major safety hazard and the Schools Trust will be resubmitting their planning request shortly in conjunction with Mr Wheatley.

Moving onto travel and transport within the parish, the SID’s on Main Road and the A51 have had some effect on speeds but certain offenders will still choose to ignore them. Cheshire Police have run an active campaign of safety camera vans and police intercepts and they have supported our request to vary the time of these exercises.

Cheshire Highways have implemented the traffic calming on Main Road and initial indications is that this is having a positive effect.

Agricultural traffic continues as a concern due to their size and weight when travelling at speed.

The state of the minor roads remains an issue. We have seen some success with support from our Ward Councillor and constant pressure will be required to obtain any small slice of the limited Highways budget in 21/22.

Localised flooding has been an issue on Main Road and The Crescent and our Ward Councillor continues to pursue Cheshire Highways and UU for remedial action.

Thanks to Cllr Matt Evans for taking action on improvements to the play area in line with our safety report.

With CEC support services hopefully returning to normal we should now be able to progress our neighbourhood plan and enter the consultation phase with residents.

Our Key Objectives for the coming year.

* Continue to support St Oswald’s in improving road safety
* Reach an approved Neighbourhood Development Plan
* Influence CEC’s proposed changes to parish structure and boundaries

Thank you to all councillors for their time, knowledge and dedication.

Thank you to our Clerk Helen Exley for her continued guidance and support.

1. **Statement on the Parish Council accounts for Year ending 31 March 2021 by the Clerk to the Parish Council.**

The expenditure for the financial year was considerably decreased on last year’s expenditure (which included the installation of SIDS on Main Rd) and so the total payments for the year were £6808. The closing reserve balance for the year ending 21/03/21 was £7,189.

We received a grant for Sanitisers to help with the COVID Pandemic, which enabled 3 parishes to purchase hand sanitiser and distribute to those most vulnerable in the community.

The annual Light Source grant of was paid totalling £1886. There have been no applications in this financial year for sponsorship, of which part of this grant is allocated to. We hope to see more applications this coming year.

We claimed a sizeable VAT return of £2134 from the previous year’s expenses.

Precept was increased by £687, equating to £1.44 increase per household. This has allowed us to cover all costs relating to running of the parish Council.

Thank you again to the Chair for his continuing support and to the Councillors for their help with Parish matters.

1. **Update on activities from Reaseheath College.** – Marcus Clinton (unable to attend meeting, but sent this message)

There is not a huge amount to report – it looks like work on the road diversion is picking up again which is good. In time we would like to seek planning to move the outdoor arena to the other side of the indoor arena and put a side on it to shield from the new road and as always, we are open to offers on the employment land as the college has no plans to utilise it.

Students have returned re Covid but that has been since early March and always feels a bit quieter this time of year. We all wait and see what the autumn term will bring but hopefully will be as normal as possible.

1. **To invite the public to raise any matters of interest**. – no members of the public present,

Meeting closed @ 7.15pm

……………………………………………………….Chair…………………………………………..Date