**KENNET VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES** of the **JOINT ANNUAL PARISH MEETINGS** held on Monday 25th April 2021in the Kennet Valley Hall at 6.30pm.

**PRESENT:** Cllr J Drew (Chair), Cllr J Turner, Cllr M Bates, Cllr R Richards, Cllr D Woolley, Cllr V Hemery, Cllr M Dissanayake, Cllr A Miller & Cllr C Rogers.

**IN ATTENDANCE**: Mrs S Roberts (Clerk), Unitary Cllr J Davies & 7 parishioners.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**: None.

##### CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR – Jayne Drew

The Chair welcomed everyone present and gave a brief overview of the year:

I am pleased that the Parish Council is once again able to hold an “in person” Annual Parish Meeting after the last two were affected by Covid 19.

The Parish Council returned to face-to-face meetings held in the Kennet Valley Hall.

Our Councillors are all unpaid volunteers, our Clerk, who is our only employee works part time.

The Council has carried out site visits for the many planning applications that have been submitted.

Community Speedwatch returned after a long break due to Covid 19. We have several volunteers carrying out speedwatch duties. More volunteers would be welcomed. It is disappointing that despite regular patrols, CSW notes approximately 15% of vehicles are travelling through the village in excess of the 20mph speed limit. There have been some vehicles have been recorded travelling more than 30mph.

We continue to consider and respond to the various consultations on behalf of our Residents.

As part of the West of Marlborough Traffic Group we liaised with Avebury and Preshute Parish Councils. We met with Danny Kruger MP in November and shared our concerns with him about road safety issues along the A4 from Manton to Beckhampton.

Cllrs attend meetings with other organisations such as Marlborough Area Board, CATG and Avebury World Heritage Steering Committee.

We are working with Avebury Parish Council and local landowners to monitor ongoing issues regarding The Ridgeway and liaise with other stakeholders in respect of this.

We have council representatives who liaise with both Kennet Valley School and the Kennet Valley Hall.

We are waiting for finalisation of paperwork on Peacock Field in West Overton. We hope this will be completed soon which will be an additional recreation space in our Parish.

Defibrillator Training took place in January attended by a very good turnout of residents along with residents from neighbouring parishes who came to be trained by SWAST.

Works to our new website continue. Cllrs are now moving across to having council email addresses rather than using personal emails.

Both Anstice Baring and Linda Davies have recently resigned from the Parish Council after years of service between them. We thank them for all they have done in their time on the Council. We now have two vacancies, 1 in Fyfield and 1 in West Overton/ Lockeridge.

Sadly, it was necessary to have two trees felled on The Dene recently due to Ash die back disease. The Council is looking at replacing them.

The winter storms meant Lockeridge struggled with fallen trees. At one point both Back Lane and Ivy Lane were blocked. Many thanks to those residents who assisted in chopping/moving the trees to enable the roads to be reopened.

We noted with sadness that the Over 60’s club has now closed. We very much hope the Youth Club can soon restart soon after Covid 19 interruptions, but additional volunteers are needed.

We voted in favour of requesting a small rise in the precept of 3.5%. This is to ensure adequate reserves, cover the cost of unexpected works in the Parish and to guard against large increases in costs of other services.

1. **Reports from Committees and Working Groups**

Copies of the reports had been distributed to the members of public in attendance.

The question was raised as to whether anything could be done about Wiltshire Council Planning Officers seemingly ignoring the Councils objections and comments on planning applications. Cllr D Woolley commented that it was not helped by their reluctance to carry out site visits. Cllr J Davies advised we are only statutory consultees and the Planning Officers closely follow policy.

1. **Report from Unitary Councillor Jane Davies**

Unitary Cllr Jane Davies gave an informative update from Wiltshire Council. Homes for Ukraines - 1500 households have registered in Wiltshire, 843 Ukranians have been matched with homes, 415 visas have been issued so far and 94 are in Marlborough.

All households who are in Band D or lower for their Council tax will shortly receive an energy rebate of £150.

CATG has now become the Local Footpath and Highway Group and the budget has been doubled.

£150 million has been allocated to adult social care.

As a Marlborough Town Councillor she is organising the bunting making workshops for the Jubilee.

The Ridgeway continues to have issues with Travellers, recently the gate has been left unlocked enabling 2 vans to park further up the Ridgeway. Highways and Archaeology are taking the situation seriously, but Wiltshire Council try to avoid costly appeals.

1. **Action for the River Kennet**

Charlotte Hitchmough gave an illustrated talk about the work of ARK and their recent projects. It was encouraging to hear about the increasing population of water vole in the area. ARK will shortly be starting a project in our Parish to create a water meadow and wildlife habitat to alleviate the issue of contaminated water running off the A4 directly into the river Kennet.

Discussions followed about Thames Water discharging sewage directly into the river, although they can be fined for excessive discharges this money would go direct to the Treasury and they often choose to provide environmental undertakings which can directly benefit works and projects on the river to avoid being fined.

The meeting closed at 8pm