**KENNET VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES** of the **JOINT ANNUAL PARISH MEETINGS** held on Monday 13th May 2024 in the Kennet Valley Hall at 6.30pm.

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

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

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**: Cllr C Kohrt.

##### Cllr James Ward and Cllr T Tolputt were absent from the meeting.

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

As always, the year has been very busy. We have one part time employee- Our Clerk. All the Cllrs are volunteers.

We are pleased to report that we will be co-opting a new member onto the Council very soon which means there will be no vacancies on the Council.

Councillors continue to represent the Parish on various external groups-

Marlborough Area Board. Cllr Jill Turner Chairs the Health & Wellbeing Group and attends LHFIG and the Marlborough Flood Working Group. We attend Avebury Parish Council Traffic Meetings, Avebury World Heritage Site Steering Committee and the Kennet Valley Hall Committee.

The Parish Council links with Kennet Valley School and attend the “Communi-teas” they host and Christmas Events.

Planning remains buoyant with regular Site Visits carried out on planning applications within the Parish.

Earlier in the year KVPC along with Cllr Jane Davies spoke at the Eastern Area Planning Committee in support of a resident’s planning application and were successful in persuading the committee to grant permission for the proposal.

A request from an absentee landowner for an easement across Parish Council owned land was refused. This situation is still ongoing.

We were proactive in putting forward our concerns regarding BT’s proposed Analogue telephone Switch Off to landlines which would have had major implications to residents due to the lack of mobile signal. BT subsequently U Turned on this policy.

We are meeting with Danny Kruger shortly to discuss the ongoing lack of mobile signal in the area.

Traffic issues continue within the Parish.

Liaison continues with neighbouring Parish Councils regarding road safety/speed issues along the A4.

We were successful in obtaining waiting restrictions (double yellow lines) outside Fyfield Filling Station.

We continue to liaise with the Police regarding parking/safety issues with the popularity of the Burj at the Bell on the A4 in West Overton.

Parking and speeding issues continue in Lockeridge and as well as having a very active Community Speedwatch Team the Council has been exploring the possibility of installing mobile SIDS machines.

We negotiated the renewal of a further 4-year contract for the Parish Defibrillators. These are checked regularly by volunteers to ensure they are functioning and intact.

Annual Defibrillator Training has been once again arranged for residents next month on 16th June between 10am and 12 noon at the Kennet Valley Hall.

With extreme weather becoming the norm, the Parish has unfortunately suffered from flooding.

We are continuing to work with Residents, Wiltshire Council and Thames Water to seek solutions to prevent future flooding incidents. Due to the high volume of flood incidents within Wiltshire Council, progress has been slower than we would have hoped.

We have been successful in having Wiltshire Council jet drains within the Parish.

The Parish Council Emergency Response Working Group consists of residents and councillors working to ensure there are plans in place to assist our community in the event of an emergency situation.

Peacock Field in West Overton is now owned by the Parish Council, we would like to thank the kind West Overton residents who provided all the funding for this. We will be purchasing picnic benches, goalposts and a bin shortly following a successful application for a grant towards the cost of the items.

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

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

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

Unitary Cllr Jane Davies gave an informative update from Wiltshire Council.

Wiltshire Council continue to have sound financial footings despite all the recent challenges. The 2024/25 budget is balanced, and no cuts are being made to any of their services with no Reserves being used.

Adult and Social care make up nearly 60% of the Council Budget. This year they received an Outstanding in Ofsted in Children’s Services.

Additional funding has been made for Highways and Flooding with an additional 10 million pounds for roads and an extra 1.5 million pounds for gullies.

The Council has purchased some Bobcats for repairing potholes.

£8,000.00 has been invested into Enforcement for Planning, Fly Tipping and Living Conditions.

The Council Tax has been increased by only 4.9% despite their cost increase being in the region of 9%.

Cllr Davies is campaigning for Community Banking in Marlborough following the news the last remaining bank – Lloyds will be closing soon. Meetings are taking place with Danny Kruger MP and the Town Council to push this forward.

Cllr Davies has been lobbying for improvements to the Marlborough Leisure Centre since 2019 and was pleased to report Wiltshire Council have agreed to invest 2 million pounds to facilitate this.

Cllr Davies reminded the Parish Council grants are available from the Marlborough Area Board.

Cllr Davies thanked all the councillors and support staff for all their hard work.

The meeting closed at 7pm