

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH MEETING OF RUSHTON held at JESSIE HUGHES VILLAGE HALL on TUESDAY 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 at 7:30pm**

**Present:** Cllrs. N. Thompson, E. Shaw, G. Sime, O. Vertija,

**In Attendance:**

L. Worrall – Parish Clerk, Mr Mike Wilson

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. E. Leslie, P Hodgson (cutting picnic area grass)

**2. Chairman's Welcome**

Cllr. Thompson welcomed all those who were present.

**4. Minutes**

The minutes of the last Annual Parish meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023, had already been signed off and were noted.

**5. Matters Arising from the minutes of 16<sup>h</sup> May 2023**

None

**6. Chairman's Annual Report**

**Please note that the official Annual Report is now posted on the Parish Website**

Cllr. Neil Thompson - Chairman, presented the annual report.

**Communications**

- The website has continued to be developed by Parish Clerk, Lindsey Worrall.
- The Parish Newsletter continues to go out quarterly to the Parish. This year it continued via email, and a smaller number of printed copies. Mike Wilson had taken over on a temporary basis until a new editor can be found – again a big thanks to Mike for stepping in on what has now turned into a more permanent role until another volunteer steps forward!
- Parish Publicity Officer Mike Wilson continued to produce communication content for the Jessie Village Hall and Parish Council along with producing content for the Parish Newsletter.
- Super-fast Broadband – Thanks to a brilliant, combined effort from Councillors, Local Ward councillor, residents (and some help from our MP) we have managed to secure fibre broadband for the remaining properties in Rushton that missed out on the initial rollout. Many thanks to Councillors Eddie Shaw and Phil Hodgson along with local resident Sarah Proctor who worked tirelessly to make this happen.
- Facebook – our Facebook page continued to be used this year and is administered by Councillors Oliga Vertija and Emma Leslie.

**Environment and Development**

- The initiative of co-ordinating hedge cutting for residents on busy roads was offered again, co-ordinated by Mike Wilson and Eddie Shaw.

- Oulton Mill Picnic Area continues to be well maintained, well used, and well visited by local residents and those further afield. Local resident Nick Raynor has continued to support with grass cutting and Councillor Eddie Shaw with hedge cutting along with members of the community who also supported with the maintenance and upkeep of the site.
- Our Ward Councillor, Charles Hardy has spent his first full year helping to keep the Parish on the agenda of CWAC departments. Our thanks to Charles for his continuing support of items concerning our Parish and representing our interests at a CWAC level.
- The leaf collection on the village green was repeated this year, supported by a large number of volunteers who turned out for this yearly event which really helps with the surrounding area – our thanks to all those that participated.
- Mary Wilson continued for another year as “litter picker co-ordinator” and the Council would like to again thank all volunteers who continue to work to keep the Parish tidy and free from litter.

### **Road Safety**

The following activities have continued this year:

1. Speeding – the efforts of previous years continue to pay dividends though we continue to monitor the situation through resident reports and VAS data. The VAS on lower lane has been out of action for some of the year as we had to reposition it due to a resident not wishing to have it located in their garden. We have found an alternative location and the re-instatement of the unit is imminent.
2. 20mph speed limits - concerns about the positioning of 20 mph signs continue to be raised by the Parish Council to Highways who have now agreed to correct one of the sets of signs.
3. Entrances to the Village – the Parish Council continue to look at ways to shape the areas around entrances to the village, including potential new signage in order to help create a feel of village community and deter speeders. This will continue into next year.
4. Resurfacing of parts of Beech Lane and also Hickhurst Lane have brought some respite for motorists from the dreaded pothole but there is much more work to be done by CWAC Highways – this remains on the agenda for next year as a priority item.

### **Community, Youth and Social Activities**

- Remembrance Day – each year a growing number of residents are gathering at the Cross to remember those who have lost their lives in conflict. This year, Reverend Jim again led a short service at The Cross where wreaths were laid and children from the village read out the names of villagers who lost their lives in the two world wars. Thanks to everyone who took part.
- The Annual Village Golf Day was again held this year.
- The Play Zone and MUGA has continued to be a popular and attractive part of our Village that is also enjoyed by the pupils of Eaton Primary School. The amazing team of 52 helpers continue to support the facility along with Mike and Mary Wilson and Councillor Olga Vertija.
- Collaboration with the Village Hall – continued this year – thanks to the Village Hall and its committee members.
- Women’s Institute Celebrate Milestone – this year was the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the Eaton Women’s Institute and was celebrated in style with a party at the Jessie Hughes Village hall!

### **Finances**

With increasing financial needs due to increases in costs of maintenance of key facilities like the Playzone, MUGA, Picnic Area, and Village Green, along with a macro backdrop of high inflation, it was again decided to raise the precept in this financial year. The accounts are shown at the AGM which follows this meeting.

### **United Utilities work on Supply Pipes**

The United Utilities project to reline the old (1890) water pipes supplying many Northwest towns from the Vyrnwy reservoir continued the work in the Parish this year and is expected to last a further 18 months. The work is entering a more significant phase for our area in 2024 so we expect more disruption. We will continue to work with United Utilities to keep residents updated in advance of planned work.

### **Projects for next year**

Our priorities this year will be firstly to improve the signage for the entrances into the village, incorporating some traffic calming measure where possible and secondly, we have been asked to look at ways to tidy up the village green, in particular with curbing/edging along the roadside. Both of these initiatives will be subject to the required funding being found.

### **Community Spirit - Help & Volunteers**

Finally, and most importantly, without the help and support of all the volunteers who contribute so much of their time (including Parish Councillors in they are volunteers themselves) we would not have the sense of community we do, so once again a huge thank you to everyone who gives up their time to help others in this community. We would not be able to achieve anything without this support and the Parish would not be such a lovely place to live.