

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 7th April 2021 at 7pm via video conferencing platform, due to the COVID-19 crisis and the need to observe social distancing.

Attendances by: Cllr D Grayson (Chair of the council)
Cllr G West-Robinson (Vice Chair of the council)
Cllr J Adams
Cllr O Davison
Cllr M Curtis
Cllr T Russell
Ms. R Raj (Clerk to the council)

Cllr Kevin Watt and Cllr Bridget Watts representing the Borough Council

	Action
<p>21/286 – To receive and approve apologies for absence</p> <p>Received from Cllr Ashworth and Cllr S Thomas-George</p>	
<p>21/287 – Chairman's Annual Report 2020/2021.</p> <p>Cllr Grayson read through is annual report, previously shared with the Council.</p> <p>RESOLVED – That the report is accepted. Proposed Cllr Russell and Seconded Cllr West-Robinson vote – 4 in favour 1 abstained.</p>	
<p>21/288 – Presentation of Accounts 2020/2021.</p> <p>The Clerk shared the financial report showing all income and expenditure for the financial year 2020/21.</p> <p>RESOLVED – That the statement is accepted as a correct record of finances Proposed Cllr West-Robinson and Seconded Cllr Davison, vote – all in favour.</p>	
<p>21/289 – Public Participation – 4 members of public in attendance</p> <p>Observing the meeting only.</p>	
<p>21/290 – Close time and date of next meeting</p> <p>Meeting closed at 7.12pm.</p>	

Chairman's Annual Report 2020/2021

This is my third and final report as the Cottingham Parish Council Chairman.

Covid has made this year the most bizarre of years. The last time the Council met 'face to face' was the February meeting in 2020, so this marks over twelve months of electronic decision making. Whilst I feel that the Council has become adept at meeting remotely, I look forward to a time when we can meet around a table rather than on a computer screen.

It has been a year when we lost our Borough Councillor and our County Councillor has become embroiled in the development of the new Unitary Authority and hence has not been able to give us the attendance at our meetings that I am sure she would prefer. However, despite this and the issues of lockdown, the Council has, in my opinion, had a successful year.

We now have a defibrillator and two radar speed signs, one on Rockingham Road and one on Corby Road. Additionally, the work of the Council throughout the year has included:

- The continued support of the Welland Wanderer bus service which has sadly been temporarily suspended because of the Covid lockdown but, will start again as soon as the lockdown rules allow it,
- work throughout the village on trees and fencing,
- Councillors' involvement on the development of the new Village Hall.,
- continuing inputs from the Council's Finance and Road Safety groups,
- footpath and verge maintenance, as well as dealing with inconsiderate parking,
- keeping and improving the Council's Website,
- improving Police information,
- responding to the Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' and the Corby Plan Part 2,
- Taking an active part in the Rural Area Forum.

There have been a number of other what could be called "day to day" activities, in which the Council has been involved that I have not mentioned above. Additionally, we do need to recognise the work of both Middleton and Cottingham Parish Council's involvement in the Street Champion Volunteer Scheme aimed at helping vulnerable people in the villages during the Covid crisis.

Throughout the year we have given our opinion on a number of planning applications issued by Corby BC Planning Authority. However, the application (or lack of it) that has given the greatest cause for concern is not directly a Cottingham Parish issue, that of the Traveller sites on Ashley Road. We have continued our support for Middleton Parish Council in their fight to prevent these rapidly expanding travellers' sites not only to support colleagues but to accept that such large developments could have an adverse effect on both villages.

Our Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted to the local authority so that what is known as a Regulation 16 procedure can be undertaken, that is the authority will now conduct its own six week consultation. It is worth reminding ourselves that there are still a number of regulatory hoops that we need to jump through before the plan becomes live. It is also worth reminding ourselves that once adopted the Plan will have to be made to work and it will need re-visiting in five years time, a

particularly poignant statement when considering that the new Unitary Authority will have its own developing plans.

In May we will be voting for representatives for the North Northamptonshire Unitary Authority. It is still unclear what consequences this will have on the operation of the Parish Council, it has to have some effect if only for the reason that the link between Parish and County which was the Borough Council will disappear.

Early in 2020, it was becoming increasingly clear that the Parish lagged behind other Parish and Town Councils throughout the country in terms of its policy and procedural statements. We have done a considerable amount of work correcting this and it is my belief that we now only need one or maybe two more additions to our policies to complete the work.

My thanks to Councillors and the Parish Clerk for their support throughout the year and here's hoping that the new year will be one when we can 'meet face to face' again.

Councillor David Grayson,

Chairman, Cottingham Parish Council

7th April 2021