

KNIGHTON ON TEME PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2021/2022.

MEMBERSHIP AND OFFICES

Detailed at the end of this report

MEETINGS

Since the end of Covid restrictions last year, council policy dictated the return to physical meeting held at the Parish rooms Knighton On Teme.

The next parish council meeting in July 2022 and will continue to be held in The Parish Rooms and open for all public to attend.

Last year the Council met all planning application deadlines during the period.

The Council wishes to encourage attendance by members of the public who are given an opportunity to participate during the informal Public Question Time and raise any issue they have within the parish area or raise a matter for future discussion.

David Chamber of the County Council regularly attends and sends reports to all of them. District Councillor Douglas Goodwin also regularly attends and gives detailed accounts of local council issues or progress..

COMMUNICATIONS

Agendas, minutes, the annual report and other documents of interest, are posted on notice boards around the parish area, outside the Parish Room and entered on the website <http://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/>

The Worcestershire edition of County Association of Local Councils (CALC) is circulated to all Councillors via email which is also used for agendas, attachments, and draft minutes.

Occasional articles and news items are published in Temespan.

PLANNING AND HOUSING

Nine Planning or Listed Building applications were received and considered, four of which were for approval, 2 for rejection and 3 for comments.

This process is seen as adding a valuable local dimension to planning approval procedures; the Public Question Time at the start of each meeting gives the opportunity for parishioners to give their views to the Council before it discusses an application. Planning application documents are projected during the meeting so that they can be seen by everyone present, and this works satisfactorily

HIGHWAYS

Requests for attention to potholes and gully problems have been passed to the relevant department. No action is taken on potholes which are assessed by the Highway Department as minor, and so the Council concentrates on reporting defects which are likely to meet their criteria.

Complaints on dog fouling on roads and paths around the village have increased. Malvern Hills have raised the levels of enforcement in relation to dog fouling and numerous signs have been placed around the parish area with advice and warnings.

The Council had previously purchased 3 litter bins which were installed around the Parish, we are now considering the purchase of further larger bins to cater for areas identified with a higher need.

There were two Litter Pick events during the year. This spring saw the largest ever turnout on the day and a high turnout of young persons joining in. Thanks are due to all those who took part and to regular walkers who pick up what they can during the year.

The Lengthsman Scheme operated extremely well through the year. Under this scheme the Parish Council takes direct responsibility for minor highways problems such as clearing gully grates, digging out blocked gullies, clearing verge grips, advising landowners and frontages when their ditches need cleaning or where overhanging vegetation needs cutting back, cleaning and clearing signs and similar tasks. The tasks are carried out by the appointed contractor directed by the Clerk, and part of the costs are recovered from the County Council.

The parish council have agreed to try to reduce the problem regarding speeding vehicles in Newnham Bridge. The council has agreed to purchase and install speed reduction equipment, which is being supported by highways. Further to this white gates have been purchased and are to be installed on the entrances to the village by highways department.

FINANCE. The internal audit system introduced a few years ago continues to operate efficiently. Payments during the year totalled £11,538.78 (previous year £7822.63); The Precept for the year £6520. Grants to local providers of services totalled £600, £150 each to Teme Span, CAB, PCC Churchyard, and Lindridge Pre- School, all unchanged from the previous year.

An amount of £1,500.00 + VAT was spent on a VAS speed sign as part of the parish campaign against speeding through Newnham Bridge. Unfortunately, the good were never provided and the money not refunded despite numerous attempts and threats of legal action. Good financial skills of the clerk resulted in the bank refunding all of the money so there were no actual losses. The amount reclaimed will be spent again on a suitable sign when an affordable option from a reputable supplier can be found.

PARISH COUNCILLORS

During the year, the chair of the council Kay Redfern resigned from the post. The Vice-Chairperson Duane Hubbard was voted in as chair.

Councillor Louisa Shorney also resigned during the year.

Current councillors are Duane Hubbard (Chair) , Roger Lear, Jonathan Barnes, Emma Mapp, Richard Bolton, Jonathon Bradley and John Ruffles.

Clerk to the Council Mrs Karen Yates retired from her post as clerk at the end of April 2022 after serving over 20 years. After interviewing two applicants Rachel Lambert was appointed as the new clerk.