

ALLESLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** held at 7:00pm 13th May 2024, held at Corley Village Hall, Church Lane, Corley

Present: Councillor T Burton (Chairman) Councillor A Hobson (Vice Chairman)
Councillor Mrs M Davies Councillor S Grove
Councillor I Farrar

Ward Councillors: Councillor Jandu

Public: 0

1. Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Swann and Mrs Parry.

3. Minutes of the Meeting 9th May 2023

The minutes from the meeting held on 9th May 2023 were received and discussed.

RESOLVED THAT the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 9th May 2023 be approved.

4. Chairman's report on the past year and future plans

It's been a very busy year for most of us, and it doesn't feel like 12 months since our last annual meeting. Last year's meeting was delayed by a day to accommodate the King's Coronation. Since then, we have encountered numerous issues, some new and some ongoing year after year.

As I read through the minutes from the past 12 months, I did have to double check which month I was reading – so many issues on our agenda for this evening's meeting were on the agenda 12 months ago. The common reason in failing to resolve these issues is clear – the inadequacy of our Principal Authority and the inability, or unwillingness of its officers to do their jobs.

I feel like flooding on Oak Lane has been a problem since the dawn of time. We have stood firm in insisting that the blockage was the City Council's responsibility, and I was delighted to hear that the new culvert had finally been installed. After years of reminding residents of their riparian responsibilities in terms of clearing ditches, the new tenant farmer at Alton Hall astonished us by doing so. This wasn't met with universal approval, but I am certain that the long-term benefits will outweigh a little short term setback to the verges.

Verge mowing was I think, ultimately a success. We were able to cut at exactly the right times, although there were some issues with the quality of cut which we were able to resolve by amending our instructions. It has been a learning curve which I hope we are coming to the end of.

Road closures have been another recurring theme, and the incredible feat of closing Oak Lane for 7 weeks out of 8 all for different closures just typifies the incompetence we have to deal with both within the City Council and for the most part Severn Trent. There have even been some random unofficial road closure signs thrown in for good measure, just to keep Cllr Davies on her toes.

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We were joined by one parishioner at most meetings to raise an issue with dogs barking. This has involved a lot of work for both myself and the Clerk and I hope that by maintaining a hard stance with the City Council some action may be taken in the foreseeable future.

As the Pickford junction on the A45 approaches completion, a small group of us were pleased to attend a site visit in April. I have to thank Ian Lewis, Project Manager, who operates in a totally contradictory manner to any other City Council officer and has kept us informed and updated throughout the project. I'm sure his highlight will be herding goats off the A45 on several occasions.

The last 2 months of the year threw two very difficult issues our way. On 27th March a leaking 1000l IBC of waste oil was dumped on Pikers Lane. Thanks to the persistence of the Clerk a council operative was in attendance within 2 hours of the report. However, subsequently the cleanup has been minimal and as I write this it is still far from completion. Communication with both the council and the Environment Agency has achieved little, with the latter washing their hands of the matter.

In February we discussed the fact that the Oak trees which line Hollyfast Lane have not got TPO protection and set about trying to rectify this. Within days of the February meeting marks appeared on some of the trees, and we escalated our request to the City Council. Thanks to Cllrs Davies and Farrar who spent a Sunday morning measuring all the trees to prepare a report. However, once again the inadequacy of the council was demonstrated, as before the Tree Officer had visited the site one of the trees was cut down by a local businessman. Hard work and some direct language was needed to force some action from the Tree Officer, and we await the outcome of his enquiry.

It has been good to have met with our local police officer PCSO Kris Underwood and her team on two occasions. We have been able to furnish them with CCTV footage on several occasions now, although unfortunately they are unable to tell us whether this evidence has been used in any convictions for legal reasons. Our own inhouse detective Cllr Farrar was congratulated for investigating some items which had been found while carrying out the tree survey, resulting in them being returned to their original owner.

Coming to planning, numerous issues have been raised with the planning department and their responses have been minimal to evasive. I have to thank Cllr Grove for his efforts in documenting and following up issues, along with the Clerk.

Our plan to close Watery Lane has remained extremely popular and we have worked hard to drive this forward. The City Council at last conceded that they would cover the cost and consultation began in March. I have not seen the results of this yet, although well done to the Clerk who put a stop to rumours being spread by one landowner not resident in the Parish on Social Media.

We are currently in the midst of a boundary review within the city, and it was much to our surprise that the City Council had proposed reducing the size of the parish by moving our southern boundary up to the A45. This is something we had discussed, but the lack of courtesy on the City Council's part was once again astounding. I sent a detailed response to the Boundary Change Commission, but response to this has been delayed by the local elections.

Our proposal to move our boundary away from Coventry to a new principal authority has made a small amount of progress. The Clerk and I met with City Council officers, and it was made clear that we could do nothing before the Boundary Change Commission report was implemented in 2026. However, we are permitted to carry out background works and consultation, so this has to become a priority for the new year.

I will finish by thanking everybody for their hard work throughout the year, I must give particular thanks to Cllr Davies who has worked with me and autonomously on many issues, we could not function at the level we do without her input.

As the wider world has become a more dangerous place, I hope that we can all take some satisfaction in doing our bit to make the Parish of Allesley a place to feel proud of.

Of course, I have to finish by asking you all to be observant for the invasive Asian Hornet.

5. Reports from Coventry City Councillors

Local Election Result – it was noted that Steven Keogh lost his seat to Cllr Bea Christopher, Labour in the May elections. Labour has gained 3 seats in Coventry, previously Conservative seats. There are now 12 Conservative Councillors in Coventry.

The election in Radford was postponed after one of the candidates died. The contest to elect a councillor for Radford Ward didn't take place on 2nd May. It has been rescheduled after the death of Dave Anderson, who was standing for the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC). The election is now likely to take place in June.

Brown bins – CCC will start charging for the brown bin collection in June. Residents could purchase the permits via the CCC website.

6. Open Forum discussion on: - Projects, suggestions and ideas for APC for 2024-25

- Boundary Review
- Tree planting
- Kissing gate update – list going to the Rangers

Meeting closed at 7:25pm