



**Minutes of the
Worstead Annual Parish Meeting
held on 20th April 2021 – virtually**

PRESENT: Cllrs. S. Cole (Chair), M. Smith, R. Barrett, S. Ginn, A. Bond, A. Millar and J. Bacon.

ALSO PRESENT: 1 member of the public and District Councillor Saul Penfold.

Clerk: S. Martin.

21.01APM: Apologies of Absence

Apologies were received from representatives of St. Mary's Church, Worstead Primary School, Worstead Festival, Police Beat Manager and Bob Eagleton.

**21.02APM: To consider approval of the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held
On Tuesday 16th April 2019**

Cllr. R. Barrett proposed to accept the minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr. M. Smith, all agreed. Chairman Cole duly signed the minutes after the meeting.

21.03APM: Police report :

Apologies had been received from the Beat Manager. There was no report, but happy to be contacted if any question arises.

It was raised some anti-social behaviour which has been reported at the playing field and that the Police have been made aware.

21.04APM: Report from the Chairman of Worstead Parish Council :

Yet again it has been a strange year for us all. We had to abandon last year's meeting at short notice due to the Corona virus lockdown and because we did not, at that time have the technology in place to hold it "virtually"

Here we are, one year on and we are only just coming out of lockdown.

Many ongoing projects have had to be put on hold and we will hopefully be resurrecting them and working to completion.

Some things have been completed including a new defibrillator in the old telephone box in Meeting Hill with a second being sited at the Station, when circumstances permit.

Speaking of the Station, it is hoped that fairly soon, the cycle shed will be opened up again all decorated and looking spick and span ready for those commutes who arrive by bicycle.



Since the last parish meeting, commemorative benches have been installed in the Square, on the Fairstead and in the Cemetery.

We have been successful with two Parish Partnership bids enabling kerbs to be installed in Meeting hill, as mentioned in my report of 2019 and a lovely new gateway sign as you enter Briggate.

Following on from a parishioner's suggestion of a community orchard, we hope to be meeting up with the local landowner this coming Thursday to discuss how to integrate this into the farm's higher stewardship scheme for the benefit of all in the Parish. Thanks to Andy for his particular involvement.

HGVs continue to be problematical where the drivers may be using the village as a shortcut or simply following sat navs. I would urge all parishioners that if they observe this happening, please do take note of when and where, also any company markings on the lorry and ideally the registration number. This will enable us to make contact with the companies concerned and hopefully reduce the problem.

Our Sam II signs continue to be moved about in accordance with our Rota and as necessity dictates although there was a bit of a pause when one unit had to be returned for a repair to its data collector. Thanks to Ady & Ron who do a Stirling job.

This last year has seen more littering on the Playing Field and sadly, reports of antisocial behavior as well as cases of abuse. In the case of the last two, the Police have been made aware and will be investigating.

Since the last Parish meeting, Councilors, Jake Allen and more recently Sue Harris have stood down. I would particularly like to thank both of them for their valued contribution over the years and wish them well. On that score, I would like, on behalf of all the councilors, to welcome Bob Eagleton who joined when Jake stood down and John Bacon who replaces Sue.

I am sure that everyone looks forward to the months to come when we can all meet again in person around the table.

Lastly and as Chairman, I would very much like to thank all the Councilors and the Clerk for their continued involvement and dedication to what I believe is a very dedicated and proactive Council.

21.05APM: Reports from local clubs and committees :

St Mary's Church report – received from Church Warden :

Last year was a stop and go as far as church services and opening the church was concerned however we did have security cameras fitted to the roof. We did have a lovely outdoor carol service which lots of village folk enjoyed. At the beginning of the year the alterations of the church pews went ahead. This has made a huge difference to the church as a whole. Thanks to Worstead festivals generous donation towards this. It is hoped to open the church for Worstead Wednesday in July. Services should continue on a fortnightly basis and the church will be open every day.

Worstead CE VA Primary School report – received from Head Teacher :

First of all, thank you for inviting me to share the work of Worstead School with the Parish Council.

When we think of the year just gone, it is of course dominated by the coronavirus pandemic. For us it started in late February 2020 when the departments and agencies we rely on, started to become overwhelmed in trying to work from home or cope with illness or self-isolation. We of course had these same issues as a workplace and struggled to keep our school open, especially in the last few days before the lockdown, when we were on the edge of having to close due to lack of key staff.

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Sadly for us, the following week, one of our long-serving dinner ladies, Vera Clark, died quite suddenly, although not of coronavirus. She now has a memorial bench on the school field, funded by the Friends of Worstead School and she is fondly remembered. We were also able to have an outdoor memorial service for her, during the summer term once restrictions had eased up, led by John Hindley, a local Christian minister who often comes into school to talk in assembly. This was the only time that the entire school (of 110 children and 20 staff) had been in the same place, at the same time since last March.

By the summer term, we were able allow our Year 6 pupils to safely come back into school so that they could leave their own legacy and feel like they had finished primary school in a positive way. We also felt it so important that our incoming Reception children made the right start, so we ensured that our induction days in July were able to go ahead.

I am proud to say that we have remained open throughout, for as many children as we could safely accommodate, with our workforce, and national and local advice constantly changing, especially in the New Year.

Nevertheless, throughout all of this, children of critical workers and those who are themselves vulnerable have remained at school being taught by staff, whilst simultaneously others have had to learn remotely, taught by teachers and teaching assistants who have rapidly learnt the requisite skills.

A lot of this has been supported by local villagers and associations who have kindly donated their unwanted computers to support those children in need of them at home, or at school. This has been bolstered by the county council who delivered their older machines to us. I would like to recognise their contribution, not just through the pandemic year, but the effect it will continue to have in enhancing the teaching of Computing as a curriculum subject in its own right.

Despite the challenging year we have had, my vision is for much good to come out of it. The legacy of coronavirus, for us, will be unbreakable links with our village community, resilient staff who have come out of the hardest working year of their lives with goodwill and good humour, and a sense that when our children, and their families, needed us to do our job most, we did it – and we always kept the good of the local community at the heart of every decision we had to make. I would like to express my thanks to all my staff and governors, the Worstead parents who kept us going with their messages of support and encouragement, and of course the children of Worstead whose education and nurture are our mission.

If the Worstead Parish Council would like to get involved with anything we do, or vice versa, as always do not hesitate to get in touch.

Nick Read, Headteacher, Worstead CE VA Primary School

Worstead Festival – report received by Chair of Festival Committee :

The Worstead Festival started back in 1966 and up until this last year it has only once before not taken place. As I write this, we have sadly had to cancel it for the second year in a row, due to the current pandemic.



As much as we all wanted it to happen this year it just was not going to be safe. As trustees we decided that the money spent putting on the festival would be better used to give out grants to local charities. We have so many ideas to develop and improve the festival we are going to use the time to redesign the website, making it easier book stalls and attract companies to sponsorship deals. Going forward we do not know what measures will have to be put in place to deliver a safe festival. As trustees we are determined to come back next year bigger better and safe for our visitors' volunteers and everyone involved in putting it on.

Jane Bond - Chair of Worstead Village Festival

Queen Elizabeth Village Hall – report received by Management Committee :

The village hall has, like everyone, had an interesting year - we will not dwell on the pandemic as every business, event or club has been affected in the same way.

With the Pre-school mostly still operating - the hall has not been able to 'mothball' completely, so work has gone on in the background to make sure it is functioning properly, and not losing money.

To this end, the money distributed by North Norfolk District Council from the government via its Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant (RHLG) has been a much needed welcome addition to our accounts.

With the Pre-school as the only occupants there was conclusive evidence a realistic rent was needed to cover their expenditure in the building. This is now a healthier situation for the finances of the QEHW and gives us the ability to improve the area the Preschool uses.

When people have been allowed in the building, many of the clubs featuring older or more vulnerable people have not recommenced. As vaccines are rolled out, and the infection rate of the virus continues to reduce, we hope to welcome them back.

The fitness and exercise clubs or sessions, have continued to be well attended, when the option has been available. Pilates and Badminton have continued, and new events for the hall, in Karate and Boogie Bounce have been of great benefit. So much so, that we are struggling to juggle enough evenings in the week to find space for them all to take place.

Having taken on the management after Shirley's decision to hang up her hall keys; Shane has taken on the management task of fitting all these into the schedule and keeping the hall COVID-19 secure.

There is an excitement about the possibilities for the hall. When the main hall heating was replaced two years ago, the size of the hall was felt to be severely problematic. With the continuing need for space and airflow, the area we are blessed with is now a tremendous asset.

Updating heating in more parts of the hall, installing internet and wi-fi to be used by hirers and sprucing up the interiors are the main points on the agenda to make the most of the building.

Making the Queen Elizabeth Hall welcoming and inclusive for all members of the Parish and surrounding areas is imperative for the wellbeing of the community as we re-enter life outside of our own four walls.

Withergate Rifle & Pistol Club report :

This last year has seen the club closed due to the Coronavirus lockdown.

Several members were in the throes of shooting competitions which sadly got abandoned.

The club received a grant enabling commitments to be met without a detrimental effect on its finances thus assuring that the club will still continue as it has done for many years.

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It is hoped that we can resume in June when the Government allows and to that end, entries for the Summer season are being booked.

21.06APM: District and County Councillors reports:

There was no County Councillor report

District Councillor report – Saul Penfold

There is currently no County Councillor.

Report from District Councillor Saul Penfold:

Dear Friends,

I do hope you are all safe and well in what has been a very difficult and frightening year for us all.

It's great that the vaccine programme is progressing so well, and that society is slowly beginning to re-open, including our children being back at Worstead School, where I continue to be Vice-Chair of Governors. The impressive response to the challenges of Covid19 in Worstead is true of the wider community across North Norfolk, who have been supported fantastically well by Officers and Members at North Norfolk District Council (NNDC). As at April 2021 NNDC has also now paid nearly £120m in various business grants covering nearly 30,000 transactions with minimal fraud and error identified - quite phenomenal within the space of 12 months. NNDC has also been a key part of the multiagency vaccine rollout and will support our residents as the pandemic continues.

It is of course a privilege to represent and serve this Ward and the Parish of Worstead as I have done as its District Councillor since February 2018.

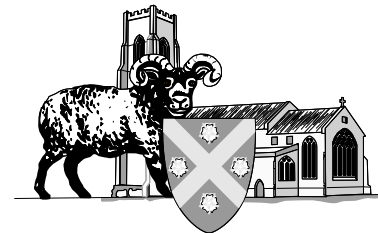
During the past year I have attended monthly Worstead Parish Council meetings and have supported the Parish and local residents by providing a 'bridge' between residents and their District Council. This is something I will continue to do to the best of my ability.

I have also been busy with a range of local casework on behalf of Worstead residents including planning, housing, road safety issues, better broadband coverage and environmental improvements, such as NNDC's tree planting scheme, an element of which I hope to support to fruition in Worstead.

I have represented Worstead Parish residents at Full Council meetings held at NNDC, all of which have been held virtually. I have voted on a range of important issues affecting the District including its budget setting and was proud to have voted to freeze North Norfolk's share of Council Tax for the financial year 2021/22. I currently Chair NNDC's 'Sustainable Communities Grants Fund Panel' – which provides funding to community based projects across the District that seek to deliver positive environmental outcomes, encourage biodiversity and ensure that our communities are more healthy and sustainable places in which all life can flourish.

I am now also Vice-Chairman of NNDC's Governance, Risk and Audit Committee, which is responsible for overseeing the council's governance structure, independently reviewing the council's financial and risk management and for ensuring internal controls are adequate for council services. This committee therefore plays a vital role in providing checks and balance on the activities of the Council.

Thank you for reading my annual report and if you need to contact me at all, my phone number is 07501 353962 and my email is saul.penfold@north-norfolk.gov.uk Thank you and best wishes Saul Penfold.



A question was asked around the sustainability of The North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund, in the terms of how long the fund will be open. Cllr. Penfold responded that it has enough funding to be running for at least the next few years.

21.07APM: Questions, answers and suggestions.

A parishioner added to the Church report that they are looking forward to when the Church can fully reopen. At present there is no Vicar, however there are plans to develop the Church and its Heritage, including working with the School and holding events such as a History exhibition. It is hoped that funds can be raised to install toilets and kitchen facilities which will enhance the Church for residents and also for visitors and for when holding events. It was noted how many people commented on the successful Carol service held at Christmas and has been asked if further outdoor events could be planned.

A couple of points raised for the PC to consider:

1. The Church path, which is used as a throughfare for the village, was suggested improvement as considered by the Church to be hazardous.
The Chair stated that this is believed to be the responsibility of NNDC, however the PC will look into this.
2. Graveyard extension Project – it was explained by the Chair that this project in terms of the PC has been put on hold for further investigation as to gain clarification as to who is responsible.

Cllr. Cole finished the meeting by thanking all who attended and hopes that next year the meeting will be a bigger get together.

Meeting closed 19.22