

MINUTES
of
THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
held in the Parish Council Chambers,
Station Road, Codsall.
On Wednesday 18th April 2018
at 7.30p.m.

Present: Parish Councillors Mrs M Barrow, N Caine, Mrs V Chapman, Mrs K Ewart, B Holland, T Jeavons, S Jenkinson, I Kenyon, N Loftus, J Michell, Mrs C Millar, Mrs A Morrison, D Walls, P Wright. **Parish & County Councillor**

Members of the public: J Bradbury, J Bradury, P Allan, S Raeburn, B Charnley, C Charnley, J Arbfest, J Davies, S Skinner, K Elscey, L Jones

Presentation from Kevin Elscey of Codsall Police Cadets

Kevin Elscey advised the meeting that:

The Staffordshire Police Cadet scheme was initiated by the Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Ellis when he took office in 2010. Since then the number of units have grown, with our 10th unit in Leek going live in April.

Each unit will ideally have 30 cadets ranging from 13-18 years old. The units meet once a week usually between 18:30hrs and 21 :30hrs depending on location. One third of the cadets come from troubled/vulnerable backgrounds, giving them the opportunity to develop into the good citizens of tomorrow in a safe, protected environment.

No money from the Staffordshire Police budget is directed to the Cadets and as a charity they exist on donations from businesses and individuals to enable the leaders to deliver the program of events. The staff within each unit consists of Special Constable, ...Police Support Volunteers, Police Community Support Officers and Regular Officers who give their time voluntarily.

South Staffs (Codsall) Cadet Unit has been running since February 2016 and started meeting every Tuesday evening in Codsall and Bilbrook Fire Station. With the number of young people wanting to join the unit increasing and the restriction on the number of people allowed in the fire station at any one time, we found it necessary to relocate to larger premises. I felt it necessary to keep the unit within the Codsall and Bilbrook area as this seemed to be the ideal location for anyone wanting to join within the south Staffordshire area, as it is geographically central within South Staffs.

With this in mind and the need to be able to meet every Tuesday evening, the locations were quite limited. However, we approached Bilbrook Middle School and explained to them about the cadets and our need for larger premises. They were more than happy to assist with our request and in January 2018. The unit moved into Bilbrook Middle School and are reaping the benefits as we are now able to offer more places for young people. The current number at Codsall being 21, with more enquiries coming in all the time.

The Cadets receive inputs from many policing departments such as the Dog Support unit, Road Crime, Forensics, PCC, CMPG, Cyber Crime, Female Genital

Mutilation, Child Sexual Exploitation, Firearms and many more. But we also have inputs from outside partners such as the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue, West Midlands Fire Investigation Dogs, local MP's and Councillor's. We also work with the Rotary organisations, Lions Voluntary Groups.

The cadets are available to attend local community events. An example of this for the Codsall unit is their continued attendance and support at Wombourne Carnival, Codsall Carnival, Kinver Fayre, Remembrance Day Parades. The unit is keen to be more involved with local projects like the recent Great British Spring Clean with the Friends of Bilbrook Group.

I believe that the Staffordshire Police Cadets Scheme is a fantastic way for young people to learn new skills and become the good citizens of tomorrow.

Finally, on behalf of the Cadets at the Codsall Unit I would like to thank Bilbrook Parish council for Funding the purchase of the Digital Camera. This is now being used at local events to capture the Cadets in action. In the future it will also be used to teach the cadets how to record evidence from a crime scene.

Kevin Elscey then showed the meeting a power point presentation.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Parochial Church Charities, Cllrs Mrs A Morrison, N Loftus

2. INTRODUCTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS BY CHAIRMAN

We would like to welcome you all to the 2018 annual Codsall Parish Council meeting. I'm Megan Barrow Chairman of the Council.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Resolved that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 19th April 2017 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT ON PREVIOUS YEAR

This year has undoubtedly been a time when the Parish Council has been asked to build upon the firm foundations laid in previous years. There is a real sense we are moving forward and making a positive difference in our community.

It has been my privilege to be Chairman of the Council during this municipal Year. I would like to record my thanks to all my fellow Councillors, our Workman for the support they have given me and their outstanding effort on behalf of our Parish and a welcome to our newly appointed Assistant Clerk - Louise; she is already settled and making a useful contribution to the work of the Council.

A By-Election took place in February where Councillor Don Walls was duly elected - welcome back Don.

The development of the Business Plan back in 2016 has provided a framework to focus our efforts on delivering our extensive programme.

Regular monitoring of the Plan has ensured that we have moved forward in an open and transparent way to meet our targeted objectives.

Importantly, the Business Plan process has enabled the Council to be proactive in driving forward new initiatives and improve our Parish. Building on the process will enable the Parish Council to manage our resources effectively and efficiently – the current Business Plan ends in 2019 and we are currently drafting a new business plan to take us forward to 2022.

It has been particularly encouraging to see that the Parish Council effort to facilitate and promote community inclusion are bearing fruit. A good example of this was the Singing Lady Garden Project; Codsall Community Group led by Cllr Shane Jenkinson, undertook a major tidy up of the site, students at the High School Art department designed and painted the mural that formed the backdrop to the scheme and the Church community designed the peace garden that was incorporated into the scheme designed by Bonningale Nurseries ; Bonningales Nurseries also kindly donated plants to the value of £1,500.00 – the official opening took place in September with the blessing of the Garden held by Revd Simon Whitcombe, it was good to see so many people at the opening ceremony.

This year was the year of the 40th Anniversary of the biannual Arts Festival, the events on offer, offered something for everyone and was again a huge success. It was great to see a Community Day being given where the whole community could get involved. It is hard to believe that this wonderful event is organised and run by volunteers; well done to all that took part.

Codsall Community Group held its 1st Summer Show – a huge number of people attended, the event provided a good wholesome family event.

To all of our voluntary organisations I want to express the thanks of the Parish Council for everything that you have contribute to enhance our village life.

So much work goes on to ensure sure that all our financial and management policies are in order and fit for purpose. Amongst the tasks undertaken this year is to ensure that the Council is fully prepared and compliant for the General Data Protection Regulation Policy which will take effect in May 2018.

The comments made by the Auditor that the Parish Council is well run and managed and is on track to be fully compliant is an accolade of which we are justifiably proud.

Due to inflationary pressures, the Parish Council agreed to a 2% precept increase, which equates to a 0.02p a week increase to Band D properties. An ongoing theme we seem to mention at every Parish Meeting, is the Station Car Park. With the introduction in January of yellow lines being place on Chapel Lane, Broadway and Long acres has pushed vehicles into other streets that originally had not been affected by commuter parking, this is exactly what we the Parish Council thought would happen and every effort was made to try to stop the condition being placed by South Staffordshire District Council that the yellow lines had to be in place before commencement of the car park could

start, we have always campaigned for the lines to be placed in conjunction with the opening of the car park, however we are where we are.

The Tender documents have been finalised and will be sent to contractors once they have been uploaded on the Government website. Next steps to be taken by the Parish Council is for the consideration of the winning tender, if the Parish Council decide that they are happy to accept the tender, then the Parish Council will apply to South Staffordshire Council for the removal of a number of Planning conditions.

Challenging times lie ahead for the Parish of Codsall; the village is set to expand significantly in the very near future placing greater stress on our already hard-pressed infrastructure.

A strong Parish Council with the continuing support of our Community Groups and residents will ensure that our Parish remains a great place both to live and work.

It was also a sad year for the Parish Council with the sudden death of a long-standing Parish Councillor, Robert Marshall. Robbie worked tirelessly for the community and he never seemed to lose his enthusiasm – he is sadly missed.

5. POLICING IN CODSALL DURING PREVIOUS YEAR –

PSCO Louise Jones advised the meeting that Codsall is better off with regards to number of crimes compared to other areas. There has been an increase in car key burglaries and theft of certain types of vehicles. Matt is moving on. Inspector Meadon is moving on and Chief Inspector Mark Ward will be taking over.

The Police will be holding surgeries, and these will be advertised in the Parish noticeboards and on Twitter.

6. THE ANNUAL SUMMARY ON INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR TO THE 31st MARCH 2018.

The Clerk gave a brief presentation on the detailed accounts provided to all attendees.

The meeting was informed that the year end accounts have been inspected by the Councils Internal Auditor and approved by the Parish Council at the last meeting together with Governance and Accountability Return for 2017/18. The Parish Council's Income including adjustment of accruals for 2017/18 was £169,170 – Expenditure £141,421. Excess income had been budgeted for in order to increase project reserves as well as increasing the provision for the 2019 elections; the election costs have been estimated that the election could cost £20,000.00.

7. VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Report presented by Mrs P Allan:

Every now and then, a member of the Committee comes to a meeting and reports, "Someone (never named) says that the Village Hall never does anything for the village."

"The Village Hall doesn't do anything for the village" is a statement that is quite difficult to understand, when a thousand people a week use it. I wonder how many in this room have attended any of our events or any other apart from Civic Sunday? The 'Village Hall' presumably refers to the Committee, since that is how the building functions, but the group of 13 trustees and directors work with the village always in the forefront of its planning.

The funds for the original piece of land were donated by someone who wanted to provide a place for the people of the village to congregate, and that is exactly what it does.

Thirty different groups meet there either monthly or weekly for most of the year apart from August and Bank Holidays. Granted that the visitors don't all live in Codsall and Bilbrook, but without doing a poll I'm prepared to bet that the majority do.

These groups offer educational talks, like the History Society and the RSPB, sport and keep fit, seven different opportunities to improve your art, and also your flower arranging. Under-fives are catered for two mornings a week, and the Townswomen's Guild offers an interesting social group for the other end of the arrange. Codsall Dramatic Society and Codsall Cricket Club offer not only membership and pleasure, but entertainment to spectators as well. They are very pleased to call the Village Hall home.

Those of you who have listened to me for many years, will know that the income from these regular users, private hirers and grants does not cover our costs, so the Committee also puts on events to raise extra funds - 11 last year - targeted at the local population - which bring in about 100 people each time The Christmas Fayre, run on behalf of CVH, brought 370 through the door, and in view of last year's weather, I'd guess most of them were very local, because few risked bringing a car that day! We raised just over £4,000.00 a £1000.00 more than 2016/17

Our anonymous critic is right in that Codsall Village Hall does not put on something like the Carnival, or the Summer Show, and does not make donations to good causes; we need every penny we make, and, as a charity we cannot give money to other charities. Anyone can hire the Hall to do that, and indeed do so. It is available seven days a week all year round whenever it is not pre-booked, including Bank Holidays.

The committee is responsible for keeping this valuable resource open and in good repair. It pays the utility bills, manages the licences, insurance, taxes, pensions and insurance, employs four people and contributes 1600 hours of unpaid work every year. Volunteer hours are reckoned for grant application a minimum wage; last year that was £7.50 per hour.

Our most recent success is the completion of the ladies' toilets. Some of you will have seen them, but if you haven't, come along to the AGM in the pavilion on 18th June at 7.30pm for a guided tour. The grant from this council made it possible. We are now working towards refurbishing the gentlemen's toilets.

All our visitors and the Committee are very grateful for the support of the members here in helping us to continue to offer a base for so many people's

8. PRESENTATION OF PAROCHIAL CHARITIES ACCOUNTS

Accounts for year-end 30th September 2017 were distributed to all attendees of the Parish meeting.

9. PRESENTATIONS FROM INVITED ORGANISATIONS:

Codsall & Bilbrook Scouts Report:

As a group we continue to be strong in numbers with all 3 sections at capacity and with all sections having a waiting list of interested new comers.

Leaders remain loyal and committed, putting in a wide and varied programme for all members.

Over the past 12 months we have hosted our annual fundraising carnival which continues to be well supported by the local community, we held a fund-raising bonfire night for both youth members and their families in November and worked as a combined group to support the Scout Associations 'A Million Hands' projects raising awareness and much need funds for WaterAid. This was achieved by the Youth members completing a 3 mile walk around the local area each carrying a water container to highlight the efforts children of their age have to do on a daily basis to collect water for the basic requirements of daily living. We have managed to raise enough funds to provide a village well in a yet to be designated African country.

We have also been lucky enough to have 2 Scouts chosen to represent the group as part of the International Mediterranean Jamboree (MedJam) this summer in Malta and then 2 further Scouts and myself as a leader to join upward of 40,000 other Scouts from across the globe at the 29th World Scout Jamboree. This is to be held in West Virginia, USA during the summer of 2019. Both adventures provide a fantastic opportunity for the young people to learn and develop new skills, self-confidence and experience a wide range of cultures and adventurous activities. All participants are now working hard to raise the required funds to support their trips and will be hosting their own stalls at this year's Carnival as well as tapping into their creative sides planning and selling anything from home-made Christmas decorations, wood kindling and sweets.

Individually each section works hard to provide their members with a mixed experience of outdoor, teamwork, personal development and creative opportunities. Scouts and Beavers have undertaken several indoor camp opportunities, and this can now be enhanced to allow outdoor camping to be added to the list as I have recently gained the relevant permits to allow this.

Badge-work as a whole is a firm part of the term's programmes through all sections with a number of Beavers gaining their Bronze Scout Award — the top honour within that section.

We have appointed a new Group Scouts Leader to the team who is very keen on driving the group and use of the Scout building forward. We start this next year with plans for a more active carnival, improvement of existing facilities and work to spread the benefits of Scouting and volunteering as a whole.

Codsall & Bilbrook Twining Association Report:

In 2017, the CBTA hosted a visit from Les Grenouilles. The French party arrived by coach at lunchtime on Easter Saturday, then spent the day with host families.

On Sunday, we organised a Barn Dance and meal at the Codsall Village Hall, including an Easter Bonnet Parade. There were many splendid entries, and this made choosing the winners rather difficult. However, Councillor Megan Barrow skilfully made the necessary diplomatic selections.

A full coach party of French and British travelled to the ancient City of Worcester on Easter Monday. After visiting the Museum of Royal Worcester, we enjoyed an excellent lunch at the King's Head pub before spending time walking around the City. By Tuesday, it was time for the French to return to St Pryvé and they thanked us for a thoroughly enjoyable visit.

Hosting is expensive and we budget between £2½ and 3K for each visit. The funds are raised by the Association organising events (Quizzes, Skittles, Meals, Carnival stalls) each month over two years.

Next month we shall be visiting St Pryvé to celebrate 20 Years since the signing of the official Twinning Agreement between our villages. A coach has been booked and 35 members of the Association will be travelling. The full cost of the coach is covered by those members attending.

However, I am delighted that we will be transporting a gift of a road sign, produced by a local craftsman, to mark this special anniversary.

The cost is being met by the Parish Councils of Bilbrook and Codsall and it will be a permanent reminder to the citizens of St Pryvé of the link between our villages.

Codsall & Bilbrook History Society Report:

We have held 9 indoor meetings and 1 coach trip.

Wreaths were laid in Codsall and Bilbrook for Remembrance Day
In February we mounted a display and gave a talk to some of the residents of Springfield House on Codsall in Wartime as part of their Wartime Celebrations Day.

In March we produced a display to reflect 40 years of Codsall Arts Festival and some of the changes which have taken place in the village.

We remain affiliated to the Friends of Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service and the Staffordshire Parish Registers Society.

No new publications have been produced during the year, but one about Bilbrook is nearing completion. It will focus on its more recent history and people's memories.

Our display for Bilbrook to reflect the history of the village is now installed on the wall of Twentyman Village Hall.

Data Protection Forms are being collected in from all our members.

Our current membership is in the 150s and our evening talks always have an audience size of around 80 - 100+. Our financial position remains healthy.

Advance Notice – Over the weekend of 2nd/3rd June the History Society is holding a Local History weekend at Codsall Village Hall 10am – 4pm when many of our maps, photographs etc. will be on display.

Codsall Community Arts Festival Report:

The Arts Festival recently celebrated its 40th Anniversary Festival. The festival programme included a wide variety of music, celebrity events and drama. The festival ran a number of community events including an art exhibition at the village hall.

The Arts Festival could not happen without volunteers so thank you to Councillors Mrs C Millar & Mrs K Ewart for your support, also the festival could not take place without grants being received – so on behalf of Codsall Community Arts Festival a thank you to Codsall Parish Council for your grant.

Codsall Community Group Report:

Codsall Community Group will hold for the second time this year the Summer Dog Show & Fair on 1st July 2018 – marshals are required, and posters will be displayed around the village in the coming weeks.

The Group was formed 4 years ago to help maintain our open spaces, the group has grown, and we frequently hold Quiz Nights, Community Walks to help raise money – all the money raised goes back into the community.

South Staffs Work Clubs - Bilbrook & Codsall Work Club Report:

Attendees have grown from 21 to 35. A new constitution for the Work Club has been drafted by a solicitor at SSDC. A careers advisor attends the club and 49 CV's have been drawn up and 25 attendees have moved into employment.

The work club can help provide voluntary work placements to enable attendees' opportunities of new experiences and life skills.

The Work Club are always looking for volunteers to help run the club.

A Masterclass is being held on 26th April we would welcome all.

10. PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Mr Skinner a resident of Codsall was concerned when comparing the Parish Council's bank balance that it has risen in value – and that it is the tax payer's money that the Parish Council is sitting on.

The Clerk advised Mr Skinner that in accordance to proper accounting practices earmarked reserves are built up over time to enable projects to be undertaken - if the Parish Council budgeted within one financial for projects to be undertaken, then tax payers would suffer from huge increases in their council tax. An example of this is election costs – costs have dramatically increased with an estimate received for the 2019 elections from South Staffordshire District Council of approx. £20,000.00 for the Parish of Codsall. If the Parish Council budgeted for this in one financial year the Council tax would have to be increased by at least 12% the increase would only cover the cost of the election, however over the last four years the Parish Council have put an amount aside in a named reserve to meet the 2019 election costs without having to increase the precept to do so.

This, we feel, is a better way to lighten the burden on undertaking projects for tax payers.

NEXT ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
Wednesday 17th April 2019