

SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD VIRTUALLY**

On THURSDAY 6th MAY 2021 at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillors: A Waller (Chairman), T Whiskard (Vice Chairman), G Barber, M Bhatia, R Chamberlain, J Flitcroft, D Fosbrook, B Griffiths, M Horrox and J Sinclair Smith.

Also Present: One member of the public, Cheshire East Ward Councillor A Gregory and the Parish Clerk.

1.0 CHAIRMAN’S WELCOME

The Chairman, Mr A Waller, opened the meeting by welcoming those present.

2.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors M Eardley and E Jones were not present.

3.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

THE COUNCIL RESOLVED to **approve** the Minutes of the Meeting dated 9th May 2019 which were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.0 ANNUAL CHAIRMAN’S REPORT FOR CIVIC YEAR

The Chairman then gave his account of Council business over the past two years:

“Good evening everyone and welcome to the Annual Parish Meeting (APM). I am Andrew Waller, Chairman of Sutton Parish Council.

I will present an overview of the varied activities of the Parish Council since the last APM in May 2019. Given the unusual circumstances that led to the cancellation of the 2020 APM I will present this report in two parts, the first covering the period May 2019 – May 2020 and the second covering the period since May 2020.

May 2019 to May 2020

A number of changes have taken place within the Council following the elections in May 2019. Cllrs Gibson, Heath, Snape and Hoines stepped down from the Council and during that year we welcomed new Councillors Elizabeth Jones, Jane Sinclair Smith, Jeff Flitcroft and Michael Eardley. They have all been excellent additions to the Council.

The local council elections also saw the retirement of our Cheshire East Council (CEC) Ward Councillor, Hilda Gaddum. We thank Hilda for the tremendous support that she always gave to Sutton and wish her well in her well-earned retirement, she will be greatly missed. Our new CEC Councillor Andrew Gregory is proving a worthy successor to Hilda and is providing a high level of support to the Parish Council.

Finances

The Parish Council finances remain in good order. We passed our internal audits with flying colours and the Council precept for 2019/20 was set at £22,000.

Policing

The Parish Council note the excellent work of PC Ric Walker and PCSO Sarah Wilson, who have now moved on to other areas. Our new PCSO Jim Newns is providing an excellent level of service to Sutton, attending Parish meetings and working closely with the school and establishing regular clinics for residents to attend.

Other PC activities

Remembrance Day service and Parade which took place in the usual manner and was blessed with fine weather. We have been liaising with CEC and the Police Commissioner to endeavour to secure future support of the police for the temporary road closure for Remembrance Day.

In December the Council organised the installation of Christmas Trees in Langley, Sutton and Lyme Green with events organised for Sutton, Lyme Green and Langley.

Defibrillators

We continue to support four defibrillators and have added a 5th in Macclesfield Forest at the Ranger Station with the support of donations from United Utilities, Cheshire East Council, Peak District National Park and the National Lottery. We also ran an additional community awareness session in conjunction with the Heartbeat Trust Foundation in Langley. The defibrillators have been a great asset to the rural community in Sutton, Langley and Lyme Green.

Playgrounds

Robin Lane - An order was sent to Ansa to carry out drainage work and we congratulate Park 4all @Lyme Green with their successful grant applications for playground equipment.

Allotments

We took over the running of the allotments in Lyme Green in February and all tenants signed their agreements at an open meeting towards the end of the month. The Allotment Association attended and gave an excellent briefing to tenants and Councillors.

Macclesfield Forest Working Group meetings

As a Parish Council we continue to attend and constantly highlight problems within the Parish associated with Parking, Litter Control, Dog Fouling, Group Dog Walking and Mountain Bikers. Thank you to Cllrs Whiskard and Bhatia for attending meetings at the macclesfield forest working group.

Sunflower competition

We still have a great connection with Hollinhey Primary School running the Tallest Sunflower Competition once again. Entry forms went out for this year's competition with an impressive uptake by the children. Many thanks to Cllrs Gill Barber and Mili Bhatia for their involvement in the organising, running and judging of the competition.

May 2020 to May 2021

This has been a very unusual period due to the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. We held an Extra Ordinary Meeting on 20th March to adopt delegated powers. This allowed Members to suspend the holding of meetings and allow for the continuation of council business. Council meetings in April and May were suspended and the Chair and Vice-Chair remained in their posts with the Parish Clerk operating under delegated powers. This meant that the Annual Parish Council meeting was unable to take place.

Regular meetings recommenced in a virtual form in June 2020 and all meetings since that time have been held 'online' where Members have coped very well using Zoom.

Clerk

The Council congratulate our Clerk, Sarah Giller, for completion of her academic studies and exams leading to her becoming a fully qualified Parish Clerk. Her performance review was undertaken by a small team of councillors and appropriate salary increase was agreed by the full Council.

Events

Most activities in the village were cancelled due to the pandemic including the Remembrance Day parade and the Christmas tree lighting. A small Remembrance service at the Cenotaph, by invitation only, was held and the Christmas trees were installed without celebration. During this period we were advised that the police would no longer provide the traffic management for the Remembrance Day parade.

Sunflower Competition

Despite the challenges of this year, we were able to supply Hollinghey school children with sunflower seeds. The children took on the challenge with excellent results, despite dry conditions, with flowers measured in September and a virtual presentation at their Harvest assembly in October.

Precept

After careful consideration by the Council the precept for 2021/22 was set at £24750. The increase is to cover existing and projected expenditure including Remembrance Day policing, allotments, salaries and the increase in installation costs for our Christmas trees. This adjustment will ensure that we will not be operating at a deficit.

Policing

Our PCSO Jim Newns continues to provide an excellent level of service, he maintains a frequent presence in the three villages including monitoring the effects of parking from Macclesfield Forest and regularly attends Council meetings. He undertakes speed checks of traffic and monitors the issues associated with inconsiderate parking, particularly around the school at drop-off and pick-up times.

Macclesfield Forest & Wildboarclough Working Group Meeting

The Parish Council and Ward Councillor continue to liaise with stakeholders regarding issues caused by the increase in the public in the forest since COVID restrictions.

New Seating

We installed two free standing, stainless steel, seats in the bus shelters at Walker Lane (Sutton) and Lindrum Avenue (Lyme Green).

Closing

It has been a busy, challenging, frustrating but rewarding year which I have thoroughly enjoyed.

I would like to thank Andrew Gregory (CEC Ward Councillor) for his continued high level of support to the Parish Council, providing excellent advice and helping make sure things happen! I would like to thank my Vice Chairman Tim Whiskard for his support and also Sarah Giller (Clerk to the Parish Council) for all her hard work and commitment keeping the Parish Council operating effectively and efficiently during this difficult period.

Lastly, thank you to all my fellow Councillors for their hard work, support, advice and good humour throughout the last two years..."

5.0 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chairman then invited questions from the public. There were no questions from Members of the Public.

6.0 DATE OF NEXT ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday 12th May 2022.

There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked Members for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 19.47 p.m.

Minutes agreed by Sutton Parish Council as a true record.

.....Chairman