

SAMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

Minutes of the meeting of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Tuesday 10th May 2022 at 7:00 pm in the Parish Room.

Present:

Cllr Phil Jones	Vice-Chairman
Cllr Peter Taaffe	
Cllr Nick Moon	
Cllr Neil Edden	SDC (Studley with Sambourne)
Teresa Murphy	Clerk

There were 7 parishioners present.

In the absence of the Chairman, due to Covid, it was agreed that Cllr Phil Jones would chair the Annual Parish Assembly.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Adam Quinney, Cllr David Shaw, Cllr Peter Hencher-Serafin.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 26th April 2021

The minutes were agreed and signed by Cllr Jones.

3. Chairman's Report

Cllr Jones read out the Chairman's Report for 2021-2022:

Over the last year the parish council meetings have moved back to meeting in person from meeting via zoom. While meeting via zoom has proved a useful tool there is nothing like meeting in person. For the first half of the year, the work of the parish council was overshadowed by controversy from private correspondence between two former councillors. This has been reported elsewhere in detail and does not need repeating here. What should be noted though is that for all those involved, either directly or indirectly, this time brought about great stress and unhappiness. The Chairman at the time Dr Chris Clews, after many years' service as chairman, took the decision to resign from the council in August 2021.

Since taking over the chair of the parish council I have been working with my fellow councillors, with the advice from WALC (West Midlands Association of Local councils), to update many areas in how we work. Most of this is common sense but in this day and age it is more appropriate to have written guidelines.

It was good to see an election in October 2021, with two candidates for the vacated position on the parish council. Nick Moon was successful in that election. Nick brings with him a wealth of experience of Community Service.

I am pleased to report that the parish council meetings have returned to their normal cordial manner this year. This has given the opportunity for parish members to discuss with the parish council issues such as planning applications, possible future development of land between Studley and Sambourne (Stratford District Council responsibility), roadside verges, road flooding and broken drains (Warwickshire County council responsibility), traffic in the village, fly tipping (SDC) and access for all on local public footpaths (WCC). These discussions were helped with the presence of both District and County councillors at many of our meetings.

During the year a speed camera was purchased so that we could carry out speed checks independently of other parishes. I am very grateful to the volunteers who have now, on a number of occasions, manned the camera in the village. Each site where the checks take place have to be approved by the police and we are actively working with the police to get other areas in the parish approved.

I am hoping that now, without the problems that faced the parish council last year, we can get back to having a 100% focus on working for the parish again.

Finally, I'd like to thank those in the community who have devoted their time and energy for the benefit of the village. This embraces such activities as organising all manner of village events, setting up Christmas trees, enhancing the environment and ensuring our safety by maintaining the defibrillator.

4. Annual Accounts of Sambourne Parish Council for 2021-2022

The Clerk reported that the accounts for 2021/22 have been finalised and Part 2 of the AGAR completed.

- 1) The Certificate of Exemption for Smaller Authorities was signed and will be returned to the external auditors by the Clerk.
- 2) The Internal Audit Report has been completed and signed by Eleanor Choudry, the Internal Auditor for Sambourne Parish Council.
- 3) The Annual Governance Statement 21/22 was approved by a unanimous vote and signed by the vice-chairman.
- 4) The Accounting Statements 21/22 were approved by a unanimous vote and signed by the vice-chairman.

Action: Clerk

5. To receive a Report from the Sambourne Trust 2021-2022

In the absence of Cllr David Shaw, Chairman of the Sambourne Trust, Cllr Jones read the Report:

With the easing of restrictions in connection with Covid 19, the difficulties of the past two years were considerably reduced.

Much of the general maintenance work has now been completed and there have been a number of improvements to some of the properties. It is intended to replace the deteriorating wooden single glazed windows in the four bungalows. This will be done with UPVC double glazed window which will reduce maintenance and improve thermal efficiency to the benefit of the tenants. All our properties exceed the Government's Decent Homes Standard.

All the Trust's properties have been occupied throughout the year and there is, as usual, a waiting list should a vacancy occur.

With the closing down of Dudley's Coaches last year we lost the weekly shopping bus. However, after a few weeks and an extensive search, an alternative provider was found. We are now receiving an excellent service which the Trust will continue as long as it is being adequately used.

Increased financial support has been given to the Shakespeare Hospice, Myton Hospice and Primrose Hospice. The Friends of the Alexandra Hospital also received increased financial support, which is used primarily to provide equipment not always available through the NHS. The two Air Ambulances which serve our area have been given increased donations this year and a donation has been made to Cancer Research UK.

The Annual Distribution to Parishioners of seventy years of age and over has continued and lifelines, rented from Redditch Borough Council, have been made available to vulnerable people.

It is the Trust's policy to use local tradesmen wherever possible and they have served us well. The gardeners keep the grass and hedges well trimmed and they keep the ditch clear, ensuring that any heavy rain is quickly dispersed.

My fellow Trustees have shared the workload, keeping a general eye on the properties and surrounding area and liaising with the tenants. Increased legislation also has to be monitored as new rules have to be complied with. My grateful thanks to to them all.

6. To receive a Report from Cllr Justin Kerridge (WCC)

There was no Report available at the meeting.

7. To receive a Report from Cllr Neil Edden (SDC Studley with Sambourne)

Cllr Edden reported that positive steps have been taken this year and, with the easing of the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, councillors have been able to communicate and coordinate more readily. He also wanted to make it clear that it was hard work being a councillor and there is a lot of pressure that is generally slanted towards problem solving and administration.

Some challenges remain. From a Council point of view the Stratford District Council/Warwickshire County Council merger has fallen through. There are likely to be plans for another form of unitary authority but we will have to wait and see.

A further challenge to come about is the changes to the waste strategy, with the 1,2,3 + waste system affecting everybody. The district council will help everybody adapt to the changes and guide them through the new systems.

On a positive note, the lifting of Covid restrictions has had a beneficial impact on people generally. We are able to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee, which will bring about celebrations and opportunities to renew friendships.

Finally, District and Parish Council elections will take place in May 2023. It has been a pleasure to work with the parish council and we will wait to see what next May brings.

8. To receive a Report from Cllr Peter Hencher-Serafin (SDC Studley with Mappleborough Green)

In the absence of Cllr Hencher-Serafin, the clerk read his Report:

Cllr Hencher-Serafin attended Brickyard Lane recently as it was blocked with gardening rubbish. The police attended and the area was cleared very quickly.

There is no further news about the demolition by Redditch Borough Council of the old Railway Bridge. Cllr Hencher-Serafin will shortly be talking to WCC structural engineers about the next inspection of the bridge and will provide an update when the inspection has been carried out.

9. Other matters raised by an Elector of the Parish

There were no matters raised.

The meeting closed at 7:25 pm