



## **TIMSBURY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

Minutes of 24th April 2023 at 7.30pm at the Conygre Hall, Timsbury

1. **The Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor Josie Pownall**, welcomed all to the meeting. In attendance were nine Parish Councillors, eleven members of the public and the Parish Clerk.
2. **Apologies for Absence** - None
3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022.**  
It was agreed by those present that the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.
4. **Matters Arising from the Minutes.** None

### **5. Chairman's Report**

The Chairman introduced the Parish Councillors present at the meeting and then described the structure of the Parish Council, outlining the Committees, Working Groups and those delegated to represent the Council on other organisations.

Cllr Derek Wheeler had stepped down after many years service and he was thanked for his dedication and hard work. Three members joined the Council, Cllr Peter Carroll, Cllr Peter Randall and Cllr Shaun Stephenson-McGall bringing the membership of the Parish Council to its full complement.

The village said goodbye to Les Robbins who, sadly, passed away after giving many years service keeping the village tidy and free of litter and weeds.

Liz Casson also stepped down as the Library and Hub-Co-ordinator to move on to pastures new and she was thanked for all her hard work.

A warm welcome was extended to Laura Smith, the new Co-ordinator of the Library, Sharon Mallon who does litter picking and generally keeps the village tidy and to Heather Kyte who empties the bins on the Conygre Field and in the Miners' Garden.

Thanks were also extended to Madeleine Potts, the editor of the popular Timsbury Letter and to Clive Pearce who arranges its distribution each month.

Appreciation was also extended to the Allotments Committee and to all the other volunteers including those working in the library, the distributors of the newsletters, the Speedwatch team and those helping with planting and litter picking.

### **Planning & Building Developments**

The Parish Council have been consulted on twenty planning applications for the village of which, seventeen were supported without comments, two were subject to objections and one, requesting several variations to a previous planning application, had only certain elements of it supported.

### **Streets and Safety**

The Streets and Safety Working Group work have a good working relationship with B&NES Highways and are able to promote suggestions regarding pedestrian safety and to put forward concerns and suggestions for enhancing the safety of bends and junctions in the village.

These discussions have resulted in much-needed improvements to the bend on The Avenue where the pavements have been widened and a safer crossing place established.

A build-out was the preferred option of the Working Party but, unfortunately, drainage problems and objections on safety grounds from both the Police and a highway safety audit ruled this out. However, the improvements implemented means that it is much safer for those pedestrians with pushchairs or using wheelchairs.

Discussions are continuing with regard to prioritising much needed enhancements for the junction of Church Hill and South Road. Also being addressed is speeding on Radford Hill and the feasibility of a 'no right turn – left turn only' restriction on exiting the junction with South Road. It is hoped that speed monitoring cameras might be installed in this area and in other areas of the village.

### **Speedwatch**

Cllr Bradley explained that Speedwatch is a national initiative and its purpose is not about catching speeding traffic but to get drivers to slow down and obey the speed limit. Speed kills and is antisocial with accidents being wholly avoidable. Statistics show that rural areas are four times more likely to have an accident than urban areas. Applicants for the Speedwatch team are rigorously screened and in Timsbury there are currently eight volunteers, with the team covering six sites. During this last year over 13,500 vehicles have been monitored. Those exceeding the speed limit are contacted and repeat offenders receive a visit from the local police and their actions may lead to prosecution.

### **Green Spaces**

Cllr Mary-Anne Ansell and her team were thanked for their dedication in looking after the Miners' Garden, Church Bank, the Triangle, providing the flowers around the village and for planting and maintaining the planters on behalf of the Parish Council. More volunteers for this work are always welcome. The Parish Council also continues to support the upkeep of the Conygre Field, the Cemetery and the Haha. Cllr Ansell is currently looking into participation in the 'nature chain' movement. This aims to encourage neighbourhoods to create more wildlife habitat in gardens and so form a network of nature reserves. Initially, residents would be asked to consider giving over 20% of their gardens to sustaining wildlife by providing water, food and shelter and so allowing nature to recover and leading to greater bio-diversity. The idea being to link with other surrounding villages and forming a nature corridor.

The Community Payback team have also been visiting the village on a regular basis and have helped out with clearing vegetation and litter picking.

### **Allotments**

The allotments are all tenanted and kept in a neat and tidy condition and thanks go to the allotments committee who put in a lot of time and work in managing the facility on behalf of the Parish Council. If any parishioner wishes to be added to the short waiting-list for an allotment they are asked to contact the Parish Office for details.

### **Youth Services**

Youth Connect South West (YCSW) and Timsbury Youth for Christ (TYFC) continue to be significant in the annual budget. Their efforts are working well and making a worthwhile contribution to life in the village. TYFC hold weekly youth clubs at the YMCA, including Secondary school age young people, and during the summer, sessions are held outside on the Conygre Field, including the Tennis Court.

YCSW runs the youth bus that parks up every Tuesday evening in the Conygre Hall car park and is aimed at the slightly older 16-19 years age group. There is an overlap of ages between the Youth Groups and both provide outreach services and support work on a one-to-one basis (if required) and arrange day visits or activities during the school holidays.

A Consultation exercise was held in February 2020, just prior to the start of the Covid pandemic, to find out the views of interested residents and young people regarding youth provision and this is now being restarted.

The Parish Council also support the Educational bus that visits St Mary's school and advises on specific areas such as the dangers of smoking and the need to maintain a good diet.

### **Community Library Hub**

The number of users of the Library continues to increase. Two new groups have also started, Coffee and Chat on a Monday afternoon and Knit and Natter every other Tuesday afternoon. Both groups are proving to be very popular and new members are always welcomed. During the winter months the library was designated a 'warm space', a dedicated public open space to allow members of the community to keep warm during the colder months. Further activities are being considered covering areas such as story telling or encouraging toddler groups and in addition, visits to schools continue with the possibility of visiting other groups like the Brownies and Cubs being investigated.

### **Conygre Field and Play Area**

The Parish Council continues to fund the grass cutting on the Conygre Field and pays for quarterly inspections and repairs to the equipment in the play area .

### **Community Infrastructure Levy**

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding stems from a levy imposed by B&NES Council on new developments and must be spent on village infrastructure for the benefit of the community. The Parish Council has responsibility for deciding on how this money is allocated and, following the submission of proposals by residents, has now allocated funds for several projects: Timsbury cemetery path reinstatement, rectifying damage by ant hills and wall repairs; cycle racks installation in Timsbury Co-op car park; Cricket Clubhouse help towards a lift for better accessibility and funds reserved for road/path improvements.

There are still funds available and in the near future a second trawl will go out inviting residents to submit ideas and suggestions.

### **Grants and Celebrations**

The Parish Council organised the Party in the Park in June to celebrate the Platinum jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen. It became the Party in the Hall, however, due to the inclement weather! Thanks are given to Timsbury Co-op for their generous donations of cakes, tea and coffee, the WI for serving and to Cllr Bradley for organising the music. The biggest thanks, of course, go to all of those villagers who came along and made it such a great time.

The Parish Council continues to provide grants for the Dial-a-Ride service, the Somer Valley Walking Festival, the Cam Valley Arts Trail and the Timsbury Gardening Club. It also funds and maintains the Defibrillator at Conygre Hall, publishes the popular Timsbury walks books, provides the Christmas tree in the Miners' garden that is decorated by a wonderful team of volunteers each year and funds the silver band for the Christmas carols evening.

### **Congratulations**

For the first time in its long history, Timsbury Athletic Football Club have reached the final of the Somerset Senior Cup after a nail-biting victory away to Somerset County League Premier Division leaders Chilcompton Sports. It is hoped that the whole village will get behind such a well-run club and turn up in force on 3<sup>rd</sup> May to cheer them to a well-deserved success.

## 6. Financial Statement

The Parish Clerk, Angela Wilson, presented the statements for the Parish Council's financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 including a breakdown of each budget heading. She highlighted areas where expenditure had been higher than the budgeted amount ie replacement of obsolescent current boxes needed whilst upgrading of the streetlights and an increase in rent for the office and library. Expenditure was lower than expected for the play and recreation areas, where the cost of repairs was less than anticipated and the renewal of the cemetery grass cutting contract resulted in less cuts and lower costs. With regards to income advertising revenue is slightly down on budget but showing signs of recovery. At the end of the period the reserves held by the Parish Council are £46,620.18 plus £53,013.99 Community Infrastructure Levy. The budget for 2023/24 was then outlined. Full details are reported on the website.

## 7. Items raised at the meeting

- Do we have a five year plan to decide what direction the village to go. The Chairman commented that currently there isn't one in place but it might be considered in the future.
- Are we expecting more houses. The Chairman advised that the current Local Plan had no provision for more houses to be built in the village.
- A resident raised concern that cars exit from the top of Radford Hill and straight out onto South Road even though there is a Give Way in place. The Chairman stated that it was hoped that this junction would be looked at along with the Church Hill junction with South Road. Hoping that this will be accounted for when church hill is looked at.
- Are the tennis courts used at Conygre Hall? Cllr Collett advised that the courts are being used substantially more than previously.
- A comment was made that if a Village plan is undertaken please ensure that all residents are consulted and involved.

## 8. Conclusion of meeting

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and taking part in the meeting which she hoped they found to be informative and interesting. Cllr Collett then explained to the meeting that the current Chairman had now completed a four year term of office and, in accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders, would be stepping aside and a new Chairman elected at the forthcoming meeting of the Council. He thanked her for all her hard work and commitment whilst in the role.

*Approved and signed as a correct record of the meeting:*

*Chairman:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date:*