

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Portbury Residents  
held in the Village Hall, High Street, Portbury  
on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 7.30pm**

**Present:** Cllr Mr Phipps Cllr Mr Coles Cllr Mr Romanski  
Cllr Mr Cheek Cllr Mr Mangnall

**Chairman:** Cllr Mrs Cowlard

**Clerk:** Mrs Drower

**Others:** Fourteen members of the public

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**Introduction** – Councillor Wenda Cowlard welcomed residents and explained the purpose of the meeting. Residents were requested to turn-off mobile devices and advised of emergency exit locations. Cllr Wenda Cowlard asked residents to leave questions until the Q&A at the end of the meeting. Residents were advised that the meeting was being recorded. She also introduced Councillors individually and explained their role within the Council. Cllr Wenda Cowlard introduced:

Cllr Nick Cheek our Vice Chair - a Portbury resident all his life – he cuts the green for free and various jobs around the village including replacing the gates at the playing fields.

Cllr Mike Phipps a Portbury resident for over 40 years and former Chair, is our planning and development representative and also our contact for the Village Hall, Social Club and War Memorial, Dock liaison, street cleaning and gullies.

Cllr Tony Romanski resident of 35 years our representative for crime and disorder and street lighting.

Cllr Tony Coles a resident of 14 years is assigned finance and donations, parking and street signs, and has been heavily involved in the rejuvenation of the allotments.

Cllr Keith Lanham a resident for over 20 years is our representative for Sheepway, highways and road diversions.

Cllr John Mangnall who has recently joined us and has been a resident for a year, is our representative for the nature reserve and risk of flooding.

Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that she has been a resident for over 40 years and is assigned the Village Green, health and safety, the village lengthsman, the school, newsletters and bus shelters ably assisted by Nick Cheek the vice chair and all other councillors.

Cllr Wenda Cowlard introduced the Clerk Dawn Drower and explained that she is the first point of contact for residents, either by letter, phone, email or via the website. Any queries will be forwarded to the relevant councillor.

Cllr Mrs Cowlard commented that meeting details were posted on our website, a leaflet specifying the time, place and of this meeting was delivered to each property in Portbury.

Cllr Wenda Cowlard also commented that Portbury resident of over 40 years and former chair Les Summerfield has continued supporting the council looking after our footpaths, rights of way and wildlife.

Cllr Wenda Cowlard thanked all councillors for all their hard work which they do without hesitation and for free.

- 1. Convening of Meeting** – Cllr Mrs Cowlard read the Notice to convene the meeting and was accepted as Chairman for the proceedings.
- 2. Minutes of previous Annual Parish Meeting** – The minutes of last year's meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021 were presented and agreed by all.

**3. Statement of Parish Accounts 2021/22**

Clerk Mrs Drower presented the end of year accounts. Income received totalled £29443 which includes allotments. expenditure totalled £26307.60, leaving a balance of £2597.90. This surplus was agreed to be ringfenced towards replacing old play equipment. As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, closing bank balances were £26149.90 in the current account, (available £24113.53 after uncleared cheques), and £21007.15 in the reserve account, including a ring-fenced amount of £5143.86 which has been reserved for the allotments, play scheme, and war memorial maintenance. The monies are either donated or set aside by Cllrs at meetings throughout the year.

Clerk Mrs Drower explained that the council meet annually in January and set a budget for the coming year. This is paid to us by NSC as a precept in two halves, one in April and one in September.

A full set of financial statements are available to view on the parish website.

Clerk Mrs Drower advised residents that if they have any queries over the finances, they can contact the office by phone or email.

**4. Portbury Parish Council Chairman's Report**

**Annual precept increases** –

The annual precept rises are always kept to a minimum, but as always costs are rising for all of us.

**Traffic and parking issues** – Cllr Mrs Cowlard commented that speeding is a huge concern to residents, and Cllrs work tirelessly to try and find a resolution to this, but sadly there is no quick fix. Residents recently presented a petition to NSC, and although this did not in itself result in any action from NSC, it does help the fight overall and backs up what Cllrs are trying to achieve. Together we are stronger on this. Residents were urged to keep reporting and incidents related to speeding to NSC as

well as the parish council.

Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that the Road Traffic police are now taking an interest and have deployed sensors to all entrances to the village and are currently recording volume and speed of all traffic. This will take several weeks to collect and evaluate the data, and then will issue a report which we can submit to NSC and highways. They will also give us and NSC advice on how we can move this forward.

Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that we had to disband the Speed watch team as we did not have enough volunteers and asked for residents to come forward to help.

Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that the volume of traffic will only increase due to many factors including traffic avoiding the clean air zone.

Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that parking is also an issue in the village, and when the layby is full, commuters park in the village. Sensible parking is not an issue, but cars parking and causing an obstruction should be reported to NSC if they need to be moved then the police should be called on 101.

Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that during Bluebell Wood when parking invariable increases with visitors to the display, the parking cones that were put out did raise some queries. We are not trying to stop parking, but merely help visitors park responsibly so that the roads in the village do not become obstructed, as happened this year. We keep in touch with NSC about our intentions and bring the cones in during the weekdays.

**Crime overview-** Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that thankfully crime is very low in Portbury but reminded residents to remain vigilant and report anything suspicious by ringing 101.

**Planning overview including Neighbourhood Plan** – Cllr Mr Phipps commented that after spending much time on developing a local plan for Portbury, we have been told that we do not need one as Portbury is predominantly green belt, and development will not be allowed in the green belt. The Local Plan 2038 produced by North Somerset has now finished consultation. This governs where further development will happen in North Somerset. This is important to us as further development in Nailsea will increase the traffic through Portbury going to the M5. This has been brought to the attention of North Somerset. There are some changes to the 2038 plan already, North Somerset have made a case for less development in North Somerset because of the environment we live in – the Mendips, the coast and the flood plains.

**Litter** – Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that residents are very helpful and are often seen out litter picking. We have a youth who is litter picking as part of the Duke of Edinburgh award, and children are helping too.

**Allotments** – Cllr Tony Coles commented that there has been another good year at the allotments with a full uptake on plots, though recently there have been a couple of vacancies. There has been wildlife area and pond put in as well as 60 trees. The possibility of an allotment plot being used a therapy plot, or for use for less abled is being looked at.

**Toddler Play Park** – Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that the new toddler play park has been a huge success. The original play park is now in need of replacement and the council has put some funds aside, but this alone will not be enough and we are looking at available grants to assist with this.

**Website and communication** – Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that we have an active website, but if residents are not able to use this, we also email residents with as much information as possible. We also post news, meetings and agendas on Facebook. All our minutes, agendas and news can be found on our website.

**Priorities for the next 12 months to 48 months** – Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that we are monitoring the improvements to Jct 19, but HE want to review the work once the holiday traffic increases before making any decisions about any further changes.

Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that we are looking into providing a car park for the Village Hall.

Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that we will continue our good relationship with National Grid and monitor the expansion of Portbury Docks at Shipway Farm. We will also continue to monitor the opening of the railway, continue improvements to our play parks, and also monitor the proposed cycle path through Priors Wood.

**Councillor vacancies** Cllr Wenda Cowlard asked the members of the general public to put their names forward if anyone is interested in joining us. We currently have two vacancies.

#### 6. Open Forum – Q & A's

Cllr Mrs Cowlard opened a question and answer session, topics included speeding and traffic.

A resident asked could we do more bunting around the village for the Queens Jubilee. Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that she along with Sharon Worthy have tried to get interest from residents but could not get any.

A resident commented that her mum while walking her daughter to school had been clipped by a passing car, The police have been informed and there was a photo. Cllr Wenda Cowlard commented that if the resident sends the photo to her, she will forward it to the traffic police. A resident commented that bars alongside the pavement are necessary.

A resident asked what levers do we have to help with the speeding. Cllr Mr Phipps commented that we will write to NSC along with support from residents asking them for a solution.

A resident commented on the state of the pavements in the village. Cllr Mr Mike Phipps replied that he has been around with a representative from NSC to view the pavements but it was felt our pavements are not that bad in comparison to other areas.

A resident commented on how bad the speeding and driving in the narrow road at the end of Mill Lane and asked if large flower tubs could be put along the pavement to slow the traffic down. Cllr Mike Phipps commented that advice should be sought as to the legality of it.

A resident commented that the funds the Bluebell Café raised enable donations of £1169 to St Peters Hospice, the school and the church.

Cllr Mrs Cowlard thanked residents for attending and the meeting closed at 9.15pm

**Signed as a true record of proceedings;**

**Name:** .....

**Position:** .....

**Date:** .....