

Minutes of the Annual Town meeting held in the Town Hall, High Street, Coleshill on Wednesday 12 April 2023

Chairman: Councillor Caroline Symonds, Mayor, in the Chair
Guest speakers: WCAVA, Warwickshire Neighbourhood Police, Town Hall Warm Room.

1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 11 May 2022 were agreed as a true record and the Mayor signed them.

2 WCAVA ASSISTANCE TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

WCAVA stood for Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action group. A presentation was given by Mr. David Simkins, the Funding & Group Development Officer. He was happy to assist or signpost all voluntary groups in the area, which included advice on grant eligibility, governance, constitutions, safeguarding training, organisational health checks and guidance on legal aspects of trading.

All services were free as WCAVA was centrally funded and organisational membership was also free. There were 3 network meetings per year, with 20-30 organisations present. These were ideal for networking and organising collaborative working.

Mr. Simkins highlighted the remits of the Coalfields Regeneration Fund (cost of living help), Sport England (Coronation year sports funding) and the NWBC Shared Prosperity Fund (central government monies to assist prosperity ventures).

Also present was Ms. Ellen Alcock, the WCAVA Volunteering Coordinator, who could help with helping match volunteers to organisations, identifying opportunities, giving advice about risks and offering plenty of templates for form and procedures. She added that those organisations which had volunteers serving often attracted the higher grant allocations.

Both speakers highlighted that WCAVA worked on an emailing list basis and encouraged all voluntary organisations in North Warwickshire to register with its database.

3 POLICE (PCSO) PROJECTS

These were outlined by PCSO Craig Marshall, who was part of the Coleshill Neighbourhood Team. Current projects of a proactive nature were the crime awareness visits to allotments and the speed check days.

The PCSOs were focussing efforts on upward trends in crime. While recent instances of burglaries (to home and business) were in low numbers, vehicle crime was on the up. A parishioner recommended a garage at Water Orton that did catalytic converter markings.

Recent successes had been the cannabis farm detection off Station Road, a stolen vehicle recovery and a trailer moved that had been creating a disturbance. The vehicle used in a robbery at the petrol station had been traced through the number plate captured on the CCTV system.

Residents raised matters of the stoning of a bus shelter by youths, juggernauts going over the Cole Bridge when no allowed and fly tipping and littering near the Lichfield Road store.

4 ANNUAL COUNCIL REPORT

The report of the Town Council over the past year was circulated. The Mayor, Cllr. Caroline Symonds spoke of the Council's restructure of meetings to be roughly one per month and with fewer committee meetings, which aided transparency of decision making and less disjointed decision making.

Cllr. Derek Axe spoke of the 87% approval of the 2017 Neighbourhood Plan and its ENP6 policy that encouraged the planting of a woodland on the "A446 Corridor" alongside where HS2 was due to run.

A few parishioners suggested measures to improve resident engagement: public forum events (like the Annual Town Meeting), diarising more frequent use of the Community Centre for meetings, filming and broadcasting meetings and regular pre-publicising dates in the Coleshill Post. A new website would help, due within weeks.

Parishioners spoke well of the Who Does What summary, that showed the roles and remit of County, Borough and Town Councils. The Town Guide used to explain more about the roles of different authorities and could do so on the next print. They also congratulated the efforts of the Community Hub, which seemed to be helping more people visiting it, as it was receiving more recommendations via the Warm Room volunteers (see next item).

5 TOWN HALL WARM ROOM

One of the regular Town Hall Warm Room attendees was Mr. Tony Baker, who spoke on behalf of the group. He said that, while it was set up in November to save residents money on heating their homes, some had been reluctant to be seen to be receiving charitable support. The larger numbers of attendees since the New Year (20 some days) had been because most saw the group to be for socialising, networking and mental health benefits. Even the tea, coffee, biscuits, cakes and soup were all donated by companies or attendees.

The Council had agreed that it should operate until June, but the group was looking at how it might develop. For instance, it could run outdoor events in the summer or mental health support sessions.

The Warm Room had been operating in the Community Centre for two months, as well.

6 RESOLUTIONS AND PROPOSALS FROM ELECTORS

No other resolutions raised.

With no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.25 p.m.

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Chairman