MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on Tuesday 10th May 2022, 7.30pm

at Kilby Co of E Primary School, Main Street, Kilby

Present: Cllr Andrew Collins (Chairman of the Parish Council)

Mrs Tina Cox, Clerk to Kilby Parish Council

1 Parishioner

The Reverend Canon Philip O'Reilly

Also present: Cllr Mark Pausey, Cllr Gerry Tunnicliffe, Cllr Iain Jones, Cllr Lisa McLoughlin and Cllr Les Phillimore.

1. Apologies - none.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting 7th May 2019. The minutes of the meeting 7th May 2019 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters arising from the previous minutes:

* The blocked sewage drain on Wistow Close has been resolved with works being carried out.
* Speeding cars – More police presence with speed checks being done, 20mph repeater signs now in place and Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs going to be installed.
* The Blaby Planning website has resolved itself.
* The willow trees on Wistow Road over the River Sence have been addressed and cut back by the Environmental Agency.

4. Chairman’s Annual Report: - the Annual Report was read out and noted the following:

I’d like to welcome you to this year’s Annual Parish Meeting. Unlike the bi-monthly formal meetings of the Parish Council, which only include a short Parishioners’ Forum slot on the agenda, this is an open meeting at which you may discuss village matters, ask questions or raise issues which you wish to be considered by the Council on a future agenda. You are encouraged to take part and your contributions are most welcome.

Three years have elapsed since the last Parish Meeting in 2019. As you will probably be aware, this gap has been due to the restrictions imposed by the Covid epidemic, when public meetings were forbidden. However, during this difficult time, the Parish Council was able to hold its bi-monthly meetings ‘virtually’ online. In January this year the Council was able to resume face to face meetings and, from March, we have been able to meet at Kilby School.

On the Planning and Environment front, we have seen the completion of a number of schemes, which I reported on at the last meeting. These include the two new houses at the rear of Limes Farm Main Street and another new house on Main Street at the corner of Wells Avenue. The Class Q application to convert two open sided barns at the rear of Broadway Farm Main Street was eventually replaced by an application for two new-build houses on the same site. After due consideration, including comments made by the Parish Council, the scheme was re-designed and approved, with a more in keeping appearance, with the larger house now complete and occupied. More recently, an application to remodel and extend the dormer bungalow at Halford Farm Fleckney Road has been approved, with work yet to start. However, another application to merge the two remote entrances to the farm buildings remains under consideration. Likewise, a decision has yet to be made regarding a proposed garage and workshop at Broadway Farm. Applications to convert a barn at 15 Main Street and a new 4-bedroom house at the rear of 35 Main Street were withdrawn during consideration.

Further afield, parishioners may be aware of a proposal by the owners of Wistow Hall to develop a ‘solar farm’ on open land between Wistow and Fleckney. The Parish Council submitted comments in response to an informal consultation, especially with regard to the environmental impact of the proposal. The developers have requested a ruling on whether a full environmental impact assessment is required, but a planning application has yet to be submitted. The Parish Council has also commented on the proposed Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange, especially with regard to potential adverse traffic and environmental effects on villages in the south of the County. At the last meeting, I reported on the adoption of the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan by the City, County and District Councils. A key aim of this plan was the construction of a new Leicester southern and eastern by-pass which would have passed close to our village. We understand that, following robust objections from affected communities (including Kilby PC) and other organisations, this has been quietly dropped. Cost may also have been a consideration, as the proposal would not be viable without central government finance. Following an informal consultation exercise by the developers for the Whetstone Pastures Garden Village, we await further information.

Since observations were submitted by District and Parish Councils, little has been heard since the proposal by County Council Leader, Nick Rushton, to disband the District Councils and replace them with a new unitary authority, based at County Hall was tabled. However, some merging of services currently provided by the districts is under way, for example a County-wide Building Control service.

Although the David Wilson development at Kilby Road, Fleckney is nearing completion, construction traffic travelling through Kilby remains a problem. Whilst there will be some HGV drivers who are legitimately servicing small sites in Newton Harcourt as well as Wistow Rural Centre, farms and other locations within the weight restricted zone, there are others who are using weight restricted roads as a short cut to Kibworth, Great Glen and beyond. We had a useful meeting last Thursday with our County Councillor, Les Phillimore, and representatives from Harborough Planning Dept and local police officers, at which we emphasised the need to restrict construction traffic to approved routes avoiding Kilby, for both projects beginning construction and future developments yet to be submitted for approval. Speeding and damage to kerbs, verges and gulleys caused by HGV’s were also highlighted, but County Highways were unable to send a representative to discuss the latter.

Speeding generally continues to be an issue and this has been discussed with Leicestershire Police and County Highways. Both organisations have carried out surveys using mobile speed guns and fixed equipment. The police believe that the main problem is with drivers speeding on approach and not slowing down until they are close to the speed bumps in Main Street. Councillor Phillimore has been very proactive in bringing the parties together and has also secured funding for us to begin installation of vehicle activated speed warning signs at strategic locations. Other measures such as chicanes have been considered, but discounted due to problems with buses, agricultural vehicles, etc.

Instances of fly tipping at the laybys on Spinney Road have reduced thanks to prompt reporting and rigorous investigation of sources by Blaby DC. However, illegal dumping still occurs in field gateways and on verges – parishioners are urged to report instances to the Parish Council or direct to Blaby DC. Likewise, in case of damage to local roads, including potholes, this Council needs to be made aware and we will report to County Highways.

Here in the village, the playing field and playground remain popular with local kids, especially Tony Kilsby’s castle. More recently, grant finance was obtained for the provision of two new bench seats in the park. Thanks are due to Councillor Pausey for his efforts in procuring, taking delivery and installation of these. He continues to seek lottery or other funding for continuing improvements, with the ‘wish list’ including new rubber surfacing and replacement of worn-out equipment. It is also hoped that the wooden ‘arbour’, which has reached the end of its life, can soon be replaced with new seating.

Finally, I would like to offer thanks to Councillor colleagues for their continued service to the Parish Council through the recent difficult times, with special thanks due to Deputy Chairman, Councillor Pausey for his efforts in keeping the park and playground up to scratch and his involvement in seeking resolution of the various highway’s issues. Also, to Tina Cox, Council Clerk, who continues to ably support the work of the Council and who can always be contacted by parishioners wishing to raise matters of concern.

Andy Collins

Chairman, Kilby Parish Council

5th May 2022

5. Parishioners’ time

* The Reverend reported that funding for the church was a growing concern. No funding centrally from the church means that the community needs to fund the church maintenance which includes the churchyard. It was likely a decision would have to be made on the closure or partial closure (only burials into existing graves) of the burial grounds within the next 10 years’. The Reverend suggested working parties similar to Newton Harcourt, Facebook groups, Get To Know Your Neighbours Group, could all be of benefit to helping by fund raising. Cllr Pausey asked if the funds raised by the pub could go towards the upgrade to the kitchen in the church. Cllr Pausey also restated that local trades people had offered their services for free towards getting the water, toilets and kitchen done in the church to enable a more diverse use to the building. The Reverend said he would need to enquire as to the feasibility for the works and what the process would be given that it is a listed building.

Meeting closed at 8.20pm