



Whatton Village News

June 2009

Volume 3

Issue 2

PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS FUTURE TRAIN SERVICES FROM ASLOCKTON STATION

Monday 29th June 2009

at 7:45pm

Jubilee Hall

Church Street

Whatton-in-the-Vale

The meeting will be attended by:

David Horne – Commercial Director – East Midland Trains

Jim Bamford – Rail Officer – Nottinghamshire County Council

Martin Suthers (County Councillor for our division) and the Nottinghamshire County Council Cabinet Member for Transport have also been invited.

Residents are urged to attend the meeting to make their views known on the future direction of Rail services to and from Aslockton Station

The meeting has been organised jointly by Whatton-in-the-Vale Parish Council and Aslockton Parish Council

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

Introduction

The 2008/9 financial year was the second of this Council and my second as Chairman; I would like to thank my fellow members for their commitment help and support during the last year. All members deserve a vote of thanks for the work and effort they have put in to their council responsibilities this year, as does our Clerk whose wealth of experience has been a great help during the year.

Communications and Community Engagement

This council recognises the importance of communication, public involvement and transparency in the work of you parish council and have built on the measures taken last year:

As reported last year we:

Included an open session at every meeting where members of the public can voice there concerns or suggestions on issues affecting the Parish.

Published a Newsletter to keep residents informed about the work of the Parish Council and issues affecting the Parish. We have continued and will continue to publish that newsletter at least four times a year.

This year we have continued to improve our Community Engagement strategy with the launch of our own Parish Council web site in February 2009.

The Council have also resolved to hold 'surgeries' when at least one parish councillor will be available. It is expected that the surgeries will commence in June, the dates will be published in the Newsletter and on the web site:

At the fortnightly coffee mornings at the Jubilee Hall on a Friday, between 10 am and 12 noon and;

Once a month on a Saturday morning at the Jubilee between 10 am and 12 noons.

Precept and Budget

We published the budget and the level of precept in our Newsletter. In the main our total income is derived from the precept.

In setting the precept for 2009/10 we had to consider a number of factors:

Advice from the District Auditor as to the level of our General Reserve – this should be equal to our annual revenue expenditure which is currently in the region of £8,500. As reported last year previous Councils had not followed this principle, so we are playing ‘catch-up’ and clearly we can only do that over time. Our budget envisages a General Reserve of £2,830 at the end of 2009/10 compared with a target of £8,075.

The level of the Playing Field reserve – we are in partnership with Aslockton Parish Council in respect of the Playing Field. As reported last year previous councils have not maintained the same level of provisioning that our partners Aslockton Parish Council have so again we are playing ‘catch-up’. At the end of 2009/10 will anticipate a Playing Fields Reserve of £2,500, against a target of £3,500.

The need for a Capital Reserve – we started last year to build a Capital Projects Reserve. We have continued to build the reserve further this year by allocating £500.

The need to maintain and improve services to our residents.

The current financial situation

Despite increases in some of our costs the Council resolved to maintain the precept for 2009/10 at last years level of £10,855.

Planning

The local planning authority is only obliged to ‘take note’ of our comments or objections. We take planning applications very seriously and encourage residents to attend our meetings when planning applications are discussed. Where we object to planning applications we have do so purely on planning issues.

This year has seen two contentious applications:

The White Villa, Dark Lane

- A further application for 11 dwellings was made in May 2008. The Parish Council objected vigorously to application as did a number of local residents. The Local Planning Authority (Rushcliffe Borough Council) refused permission. The developer appealed the decision and that appeal was rejected in December 2008.
- An application for OUTLINE permission is now being sought. The application is broadly in line with the Outline permission granted in 2006.

Horticultural Development on Grantham Road.

- An application to use land west of Greenacres on the Grantham Road for horticultural business, including the construction of a barn, poly-tunnels, parking, access and recycling area. The application included the removal of a number of trees. The Parish Council and a number of residents objected to the application. Rushcliffe Borough Council refused the application.

Playing Field

The Parish Council jointly owns the Playing Field with Aslockton Parish Council and in May 2006 signed a deed of dedication with the National Playing Fields Association (now Fields in Trust) effectively creating a trust and ensuring that the Playing Field remained a recreational facility in perpetuity. Whatton-in-the-Vale Parish Council and Aslockton Parish Council is the sole trustee and day to day management of the facility is devolved to the Whatton and Aslockton Playing Field Committee, to which the Parish Council has a right to appoint two members.

The Play Equipment project was completed in February of 2009 with the installation of the equipment of the under 6's. This phase was funded jointly by Whatton-in-the-Vale Parish Council, Aslockton Parish Council and the Playing Field Committee. The

contribution (£3,750) from your Parish Council was funded from the Playing Field Reserve.

Grass Cutting

Technically we are only responsible for the Green in front of Ivy Row, the verges are the responsibility of the Highways Authority and the amenity spaces (the areas at the end of Azimnghur Road and Green Walk) are the responsibility of Rushcliffe Borough.

A programme was set up in 2006/07:

The Green in front of Ivy Row;

The Green by Green Walk;

Verges on Beverley's Avenue, Cottage Avenue and Green Walk;

The Green are at the Junction of Dark Lane and Grantham Road;

The verges at the Junction of Main Street and Grantham Road;

The verges along Grantham Road to Orston Lane; and

The verges around the Green in front of Ivy Row.

Rushcliffe Borough Council has informed us that they will cut the Green on Green Walk twelve times a year. The Parish Council believes that it is pointless to continue to include that area in our cutting schedule and we are currently considering areas that are not currently maintained adequately where the spare cutting capacity can be usefully employed.

Footpaths

There have been a number of problems in relation to rights of way in our Parish. The Parish Council do not have many powers in respect of Rights of Way; they are owned and maintained by the Local Highways Authority (Nottinghamshire County Council). The Parish Council will continue to lobby the County Council in respect of the problems in the Parish.

The Parish Council has in 2008/9 lobbied Nottinghamshire County Council in respect of three Public Rights of Way in the parish and

has been relatively successful.

- Whatton Footpath 1 (Blackberry Hill):
 - The introduction of a stile on the footpath made access difficult – the stile and now been removed.
 - The closure of the ‘farmers’ bridge meant that users had to use the old footbridge – the old bridge has now been replaced.
- Whatton Footpath 15 (Whatton to Aslockton – Church Walk):
 - Following representations from the Parish Council a new road stone surface was applied to the portion of the footpath that runs along Church Walk.
- Whatton Footpath 13 (Dark Lane to ‘Machins’ bridge):
 - An unregulated trough at the edge of the footpath was causing the right of way to be constantly flooded – following representations from the Parish Council the trough was removed.
- The Parish Council has reasserted its wish to join the Parish Paths Partnership.

Quality Council Status

The Parish Council has reviewed the criteria for achieving *Quality Council* status. Members believe that Whatton-in-the-Vale Parish Council meets the requirements to achieve *Quality Council* accreditation and the Clerk is currently collating the evidence required to support our application.

Power of Well-Being

Parish Council powers and duties are limited to those explicitly granted by Parliament in various acts.

Section 137 of the Local Government Act allows parish councils to spend a limited amount on activities for which it has no specific powers. Section 137 is limited in scope and the level of finance that

may be applied. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 added that the benefit obtained should be commensurate with the expenditure incurred, clearly a highly subjective test.

The ‘Power of Well-being’ (PWB) was introduced to Principal local authorities (District and County Councils) in 2000. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 extended the use of the PWB to parish and town councils. The Statutory Instrument to bring the PWB into force for parish and town councils was laid before Parliament on the 9th December 2008 and came into force on the 31st December 2008.

The PWB basically allows parish and town councils to do anything they consider likely to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area unless explicitly prohibited elsewhere in legislation. It is clearly a useful and extremely flexible power without the limitations of Section 137.

The PWB is not automatically available to parish and town councils; they must explicitly resolve to use the power and may only do so if they meet certain conditions. Once the PWB is adopted by the parish council it will only be valid during the lifetime of the Council, i.e. the power must be adopted by each new council upon its election.

Whatton-in-the-Vale meets the criteria to adopt the power, subject to councilors attending a training course on the use of the power.

The council has resolved that all councilors will attend the training course and it is the intention of the Parish Council to adopt the Power of Well-Being once the training requirement has been satisfied.

GR Redford Chairman – Whatton-in-the-Vale Parish Council
May 2009

ANNUAL RETURN FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2009

| Description | Receipts and Payments | | Variance on prior year | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|------------------------|--------|
| | 2007/2008 | 2008/2009 | Amount | % |
| Balances brought forward | £6,213.61 | 6,311.47 | £97.86 | 1.6 |
| Annual Precept | £8,515.00 | £10,705.00 | £2,190 | 25.7 |
| Total other receipts ¹ | £300.87 | £26,208.86 | £25,907.99 | 8611.0 |
| Staff and admin costs | £2,970.00 | £3,240.00 | 270.00 | 9.1 |
| Loan Interest/Capital repayments | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.0 |
| Total other payments ² | £5,748.00 | £37,228.08 | £31,480.07 | 547.0 |
| Balances carried forward ³ | £6,311.47 | £2,757.25 | (£3,554.22) | (56.3) |

¹Total other receipts for 2008/2009 include £22,957 grants in respect of children's play equipment on the playing field.

²Total other payments for 2008/2009 include £26,424.94 in respect of the purchase of children's play equipment for the playing field.

³The Balance carried forward for 2008/2009 of £2,757.25 is net of a figure of £5,173.82 for VAT Input tax for which a claim for refund has been made to Her Majesties Customs and Inland Revenue.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATES

The meeting dates are subject to change, additional meetings may be arranged if required. Formal notices of meetings are posted on the two Parish Council notice boards, one on Grantham Road (by the bus shelter) and the second on the junction of Cottage Avenue and Dark Lane. Minutes of previous meetings and agendas are also posted on the notice boards. Copies of minutes and agendas are also available for download from the Parish Council web site <http://www.whatton.org>.

Each meeting has a fifteen minute open session to enable residents to raise issues of concern.

All meetings are held at the Jubilee Hall, Church Street, Whatton-in-the-Vale.

The future meeting dates are:

| | | |
|--|---|---------|
| Monday 29 th June 2009 | - | 6:30 pm |
| Monday 10 th August 2009 | - | 7:30 pm |
| Monday 21 st September 2009 | - | 7:30 pm |
| Monday 2 nd November 2009 | - | 7:30 pm |
| Monday 14 th December 2009 | - | 7:30 pm |

PARISH COUNCIL WEB SITE

Residents who have access to the internet are reminded that the Parish Council now has its own web site <http://www.whatton.org>.

The web site is intended to compliment Whatton News and is updated on a regular basis.

Minutes and agendas are available for download starting from the October 2008 meeting.

The site also includes a simple 'contact us' form where residents can bring matters of concern to the attention of the Parish Council.

JUBILEE HALL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Jubilee Hall will be held on Friday 19th June 2009 at 7:30 pm.

All residents are welcome and refreshments will be served at the end of the meeting.

BITS & BOBS

Chairman re-elected:

Re-elected chairman of the parish council at the annual meeting was Coun. Gregg Redford. Vice chairman of the council again is Coun. Mrs Barbara Harris.

Ivy Row parking:

The parish council have received a call from residents to seek to bring to the attention of those concerned the difficulties that can be caused by inconsiderate parking on Ivy Row. Recently in one incident vehicles were unable to access the whole length of the road because of poorly parked vehicles. The concerns are that an ambulance or fire engine could one day be delayed if the road was obstructed.

Planning:

The parish council have objected to a planning application seeking permission for the retention of an extended hard surfaced area at the Elton Road Farm on Grantham Road. The council said they were of the opinion that a business operating on that site caused a danger for motorists on the A52 road and pointed out that a previous application for a farm shop there was refused.

Rushcliffe Borough Council have given permission to the Whatton Jubilee Hall Management Committee to build a single storey extension to their premises on Church Street.

MORE BITS & BOBS

Quality council:

Clerk Mike Elliott reported to the council that work had commenced on the initial staged of preparing for the application to the National Association of Local Councils for Quality Council status.

Representatives:

The council will be represented on the Whatton and Aslockton Playing Field Committee by Couns Gregg Redford and Ray Dawson.

Breakfast:

Those attending the annual meeting of Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire on November 2 at Kelham Hall will be served breakfast before it starts.

Hero's Fund

The parish council are giving support to the event being held on August 23 in the form of a cricket match for the Help the Heroes fund. The game will involve a team from the Whatton and Aslockton cricket club and one from the TV series Emmerdale.

Police action:

Nottinghamshire Police responded to the council's letter on vandalism and hooliganism at the playing field and said they were taking action to address the concerns of local residents. It was agreed that Pc John Kneal at Bingham Police Station be added to the mailing list for minutes etc of the parish council

EVEN MORE BITS & BOBS

Environment:

Rushcliffe Borough Council advised details of its Small Environmental Improvement Schemes Programme 2009/2010 Parish Planting and Landscaping Scheme and it was agreed it be discussed in detail at the next meeting.

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Chairman

Greg Redford
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Carol Key
01949 850087
41 Cottage Avenue

Vice-Chair

Barbara Harris
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Sarum House, Sunbeam Street

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5 Riverside

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WHATTON-IN-THE-VALE

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