

**The Parish of Guilden Sutton
Annual Parish Meeting
Wednesday 5th May 2021 at 7.00PM - Meeting via Zoom**

MINUTES

Chairman: Cllr D Hughes

Present: Cllr I Brown, Mrs V Downing, Cllr G Hardman, Mrs S Jessop, Mr P Lathaen, Mr B Lewin, Cllr M Littlewood, Cllr W Moulton, Mr R Norrie, Cllr P M Paterson, Cllr S Proctor, Cllr S Ringstead, and 8 further residents.

Clerk: Mr M Roberts

1. Apologies for Absence

None

2. Approval of the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held 16th May 2019

It was proposed by Cllr Paterson and seconded by Cllr Hughes that the minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting be agreed as a true record of the meeting.

3. Chairman's Report 2020-2021

Firstly, I would like to thank everyone here tonight for attending the Annual Parish Meeting. This is an opportunity to look at the activities the Parish Council has undertaken this last year and make any comments on them. As Chairman, I found it quite a difficult year last year because of the events that have happened, and I am grateful to the Council for their help in supporting me. The Councillors are all volunteers and give of their time freely and generously. We are doing our best for the village and sometimes this seems to be lost when we come up for criticism.

We were pleased to welcome Gaynor who has been co-opted as a new Parish Councillor, Ivan as the new Lengthsman and Mike as our new Clerk. We hope that they all will enjoy their time with us. We were sad that Lisa resigned as our old Clerk.

We are grateful as well for those who work on the voluntary groups and sub committees of the Council. It has been a particularly difficult time over the last 12 to 15 months because of the Covid pandemic. Our volunteers have been outstanding in the work they have done.

The biggest project the Parish Council has been involved with over the last year, has been the purchase of the field by the Greenspace Group and the planting of thousands of trees there. This was another outstanding activity in the village. After many difficulties, the land was purchased in the middle of February and within two weeks thousands of trees had been planted there. An army of volunteers emerged from the village and rushed down to the field to do their good work. It was amazing.

The Parish Council was closely involved with the Greenspace Group in this.

Discussions had been made between the two groups for many months before the land was purchased. It was always intended that the two fields available would be purchased together, but in the event, this was not possible and the Greenspace Group bought their field first.

This was a fantastic effort by Sarah Jessop and the Greenspace Steering Group. The Parish Council has set up a fund to support the field and the trees, so hopefully they will be with us for a long time to come. The Parish Council still hopes to buy the first field of the two fields available and will be working hard to do this in the coming months.

Unfortunately, because of the Covid restrictions, the Parish Council has had to adapt to a new way of working. Our meetings have had to take place via Zoom, because we couldn't meet in the village hall and many of our activities have had to be curtailed. Staff levels in Government and local authority departments were reduced and we have had to adjust to a lower level of activity all round. This has meant that some things have not been done at all or have taken longer to process.

The speed of traffic through the village has been a continual concern. To some extent, we have to take this as our lot in life. We are a rat run as a short cut between three major roads and we will always have fast traffic going through the village. That is not to say that we shouldn't do everything in our power to slow it down.

Traffic generally has been much lighter than before, but this has not prevented some vehicles taking advantage of the calmer roads to race through the village.

Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, the Parish Council has been unable to set up the Speed Indicator Device to warn vehicles of their excessive speed. I'm sure if restrictions are lifted in the coming months, we will return to the smiley face welcoming drivers to the village.

4. Open Session

Mr Lathaen noted that the Coronavirus support group was well led by Mrs Tiplady and wished to place his thanks on record, in addition he paid tribute to those who contributed to the Green Space project.

Mr Lewin noted that the Council could consider Climate Change/Emergency as a standing agenda item.

Mrs Jessop agreed with the suggestion made by Mr Lewin, and asked that Councillors may also consider Climate Change as a matter in each decision the Council makes, this point was also supported by Mr Lathaen. Mrs Jessop, as Greenspace Co-Ordinator, thanked all those who had been involved including Cllrs Parker and Heatley for the donations from their member's budgets.