

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday, 10 May 2016, in the Committee Room, Leek Wootton Village Hall

Present: Councillors Smith (Chairman), Coates, Kirkwood, Knott, Moore and Tunkle, County Councillor Mrs Compton, District Councillor Mr Whiting and Miss Eldridge (Clerk)
Members of the Public: Mrs Eileen Clayton, Mrs Tricia Reeve, Mr Peter Robins

1. Apologies were received from Cllr Eassom, Cllr Eldridge, D/Cllr Mrs Gallagher, Mr B Melling, Rev J Perryman, Mr P Wartnaby
2. The previously circulated minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 12 May 2015 were approved and signed.

There were no matters arising.

3. **Chairman's Report 2015/16**
Councillor Colin Smith

My report for last year set out the preparatory work carried out by the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group, following the formal designation obtained in November 2014. This process was presented to the community at a public meeting held on 23 June 2015, with the expectation that we would move forward relatively quickly to the formal submission and consultation stages of the plan.

However, two factors forced a change to our proposed timetable and have necessitated a great deal more work by the Steering Group to bring the draft to a conclusion.

Firstly, the suspension of the WDC Local Plan submission by the Government's Planning Inspector, made it clear that the projected new housing numbers contained in the original document would need to be revisited. Secondly, the announcement by Warwickshire Police that they proposed to vacate the Woodcote site completely and sell the land for development has changed the parameters for our Neighbourhood Development Plan.

As reported last year, the original proposals for expansion of Leek Wootton were based upon an increase in the number of dwellings by 26. This was considered to be relatively modest in the overall scheme for the District and followed a successful lobby and representation from the Parish Council alongside English Heritage (now part of Historic England).

Using grant-aided support from a firm of planning advisors (AECOM), the Steering Group had begun work on conceptual layouts for the various designated sites in the Parish, mainly at Woodcote.

As a result of a call for more potential development land from WDC, the Police put forward the entire Woodcote site, including the area currently occupied by offices and workshops, as well as the listed manor house, suggesting a potential for development of up to 120 properties.

This clearly changed the dimensions for our own Neighbourhood Development Plan, necessitating a rework of the AECOM concepts with specific focus on Woodcote.

It should be noted that the neighbourhood planning process cannot ignore what is happening within the development of the Local Plan, because any proposals must be "in conformity" with the wider Local Plan, otherwise the Neighbourhood Development Plan will not be accepted – and cannot be "made" as the terminology goes.

In the event, the proposed amendments to the Local Plan have suggested potential for 115 new dwellings on the Woodcote site plus 5 on the informal car park at the entrance to the Warwickshire Golf and Country Club. This provides the frame of reference for the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Parish council has therefore had to revise its own proposals and now foresees the possibility for 86 new dwellings at Woodcote, including a mix of 2, 3 and 4-bedroom houses, as

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well as bungalows and some apartments. This would be supplemented by up to 15 additional apartments and houses on the Warwickshire site. At the time of writing, this is still a matter for discussion with the various interested parties.

What is clear is that all proposals can only be considered as a guide. Final numbers will only be determined at the stage of submission of a full 'Outline Planning Application' by a prospective developer. This would need to take account of far more detailed criteria concerning housing mix, the need to satisfy the requirement for inclusion of "affordable homes" and, of course, the associated infrastructure.

The Parish Council needs to work alongside WDC and the professional representatives of the Police to ensure that it can continue to influence decisions, even if this does sometimes seem fruitless. We have received many comments and individual representations regarding the future planning of our parish – most recently following a further public meeting held at the beginning of March. We will therefore modify the content of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, where necessary, but most importantly, we will continue to "argue our corner" with the planners.

The more we are able to achieve a mutually agreed basis for planning in the future, the stronger the WDC position in opposing any destructive development proposals based solely upon economics.

We have thus started the new fiscal year with more work to be done in finalising the Neighbourhood Development Plan, whilst at the same time maintaining the Council's influence.

Although planning has been something of a preoccupation we continue to work on all other aspects of preserving the Parish as a self-sustaining and vibrant community, albeit surrounded by three, larger towns, all with their own agenda. Leisure, sporting and social facilities will continue to be an important element of the Parish Council's work.

During the last year we have also seen some changes in the composition of the Council. Our Parish Clerk, Eileen Clayton, retired at the beginning of 2016, having contributed enormously to the efficient workings of the Council over many years. We are pleased to welcome her successor, Helen Eldridge, to the role.

More recently we have co-opted Jim Kirkwood to the Council, filling the vacant position and, as a professional engineer, bringing many years of valuable experience to the group.

The role of Parish Councils is promoted by the Government as an important mechanism for devolving power to the local level. The realities of how this works in practice are often more mundane. We can expect that the burden of maintenance and protection of our local environment will gradually shift to the level of the Parish as higher local authorities face increasing budgetary constraints. We will look to take advantage of all services that are available but it is clear that voluntary efforts – even if only organizational – will become more the order of the day if we are to preserve the benefits of the place that we live in. Unfortunately this voluntary effort is often taken for granted.

It therefore remains for me to personally thank all members of the Council for their efforts and support in what is an increasingly complicated environment for a group of volunteers to contemplate.

Your Council will nonetheless persevere.

4. **Financial Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2016**

Helen Eldridge, Clerk

The total income the Parish Council received for 2015/16 was £11,290.40. We also received £21,299.60 from WREN (being the second tranche of our grant of £42,599.20 for the playground renewal) and a grant of £5,400 from the Community Development Foundation towards the Neighbourhood Plan expenses and this has produced a distorted income figure for 2015/16. Although £7,587.36 was brought forward into the 2016/17 financial year, more than half of this is Neighbourhood Plan grant money, meaning in real terms, the sum of £3,501.21 was brought forward for the 2016/17 year. There were unexpected expenses of £450 for fallen tree and fence repairs, which the Council is seeking reimbursement for, because the tree was on Warwickshire County Council land. We also contributed to the Leek Wootton History Group,

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production of Leek Wootton Link, Royal British Legion, plus the usual grants we award to the PCC and Sports Club.

Of the £5,400 Community Development Foundation grant, only £3,639.75 was spent. We were unable to complete the Neighbourhood Plan within the time period of the grant, due to delays that were out of our control. £1,760.25 will therefore be returned to the Community Development Foundation and a new grant will be applied for in order to complete the Neighbourhood Plan.

The precept for 2016/17 has been increased slightly to £8,010, a 3% increase of £103, total income for 2016/17 amounts to £10,710. The Parish Council manages a very small budget to the best of its ability, being unable to obtain extra income due to restrictions on increases in the precept, but endeavours to give value for money at all times.

5. Reports from Parish Organisations

Verbal reports were presented by Mr Peter Robins and Mrs Tricia Reeve. A number of other written reports were submitted by other groups, these are also included here.

Leek Wootton Women's Institute

Presented in person by Tricia Reeve

The WI in Leek Wootton now has over 50 members. We meet, in the village hall, on the third Tuesday of each month, except for August. The meetings are an opportunity for members to hear speakers, discuss issues, create, exercise, socialise and basically have fun. Each meeting may include all or some of the foresaid activities!

Our speakers over the past year have presented on various topics – history, gardening, health, beauty, charity and law! As part of the Warwickshire Federation of WIs our members can join in outings and attend courses. They can compete in quizzes, play darts and be creative in craft, cookery and needlework. Some members have also attended courses run by the National Federation.

As a village WI we have groups to reflect our interests – walking, craft, reading, theatre and dining. We are always keen to try out new things and our skills certainly range beyond those of jam and cake making. We are happy to participate in village events such as the Church Fete and Sports Club Quizzes.

Visitors to our meetings often comment on how welcome they feel and are quite envious of the village hall. We are always happy to welcome visitors and hope to encourage the younger generation to try the WI.

Leek Wootton War Memorial Recreation Ground

Presented in person by Peter Robins (Trustee)

We are pleased to report the appointment of two new Trustees.

In January we were joined by Richard Coates and look forward to the benefits of liaison with the Parish Council. Brian Jones decided to retire after many years as Trustee and most helpfully persuaded his son Robert to be willing to replace him. This appointment was unanimously welcomed.

Less progress has been made with Warwick District Council in the proposed improvement to the car park and access to the ground. Planning permission is needed and on 4 March 2016 the Development Manager agreed that a meeting on site would be the first step and that they would be keen to arrange this and would suggest potential meeting dates shortly. After two months and a rather frustrating exchange of emails, no suggested dates have been offered. There are issues of traffic hazard, inconvenience and funding, which will need to be addressed but until the pre-application process for planning can start we are getting nowhere.

The issue of the planning pre-application process and also site visit by the conservation officer to assess whether the trees and hedges can be removed were passed to D/Cllr Whiting to follow up with the Planning Department at WDC.

Written Reports

All Saints' Church, Leek Wootton

Written report submitted by Rev Jim Perryman

Once again, I want to acknowledge first and foremost the corporate nature of leadership in this parish. Without the faithful service of many others, the varied aspects of Parish life that are valued by so many simply wouldn't happen. Some of these are well known with roles that put them in the public eye, others are often overlooked with their more background role. Each one is a vital element of the whole and we should all be thankful to them.

One of the highlights of the past year has been the birth of 'Messy Church' at All Saints. This began in May 2015 and meets monthly - normally on the second Sunday of the month - from 3pm to 5pm. There are various themed activities for children and their parents/carers to take part in, drifting between them at their own pace, before a time with Bible-based story and song. The time together concludes with tea. Over the first ten sessions, a total of 86 different children have attended, with a range of attendance from 13 (when we clashed with two birthday parties) to 38. We have gathered a good group of leaders and helpers who put a lot of energy into planning and organising each month's activities. We are grateful to Kate Murphy for the initial energy and enthusiasm which got us going. Kate has had to step down during recent months, but Lyndsay Wager has kept the planning group going and most recently this coordination role has been taken on by Jackie Lee.

Another highlight has been the conclusion of the Bells Restoration Project and the September celebration led by Bishop Christopher was a fitting culmination to this. I witnessed first-hand the skill and enthusiasm of Mark Sayers and his team of volunteers - together with the 'professional' from Taylors of Loughborough - as they firstly dismantled and removed the bells and then, on their return, fitted them once more. The time-shift videos which are still on the website homepage give a flavour of this work, but to see it happening was an amazing experience. We now enjoy the fruits of their labours with the tuneful ringing that takes place each week, still enjoy the sound every hour of the ancient bell which has watched over village life for around 650 years, and we have hopefully ensured that the next few generations of villagers can do the same.

A third highlight has been the results of the second NCD Church Survey which showed such an encouraging perception by the congregation of the improving quality of all aspects of our church life. As we have focussed on the qualities of 'Inspiring Worship' and 'Gift-based Ministry' over the past 18 months, so we have witnessed the way that all these 'Eight Essential Qualities' are interlinked. The greatest increase in quality was measured in our two target areas, but the other six also showed very favourable increases. Now, we would expect the surveys to be an annual event and for the rest of 2016 and into 2017 our major focus will be the quality of 'Passionate Spirituality'. Thank you to those who took part in the survey in February - about 70% of whom had also taken part in May 2014 thus adding considerable weight to the evidence that the change is genuine rather than just perceived.

We have seen comings and goings among our congregation this year, with particular sadness at having to commend Dorothy Sykes, Simon Kermode and Audrey Gillitt into God's eternal care. We will miss them very much. We will also miss Mike & Sue Nicholls who moved to Knowle in the autumn and Lynette Johnson who was finding the early morning journey from Leamington more of a strain and so decided to transfer to a closer fellowship earlier in 2015. Regular attendance is not one of the strengths of the fellowship at Leek Wootton, but all these dear friends were or had been among our most committed worshippers.

The major Sermon Series over the past year was a 17-talk series on the Kings of Israel and Judah, which was given through the Trinity season from May to October.

During 2015, seven young children were baptised at All Saints', and two older children were admitted to Holy Communion. There were four couples married. Four funerals took place in church and three at the crematorium.

In addition to my part-time parish duties (40% stipend), I continue to serve as a member of the Diocesan Synod and as vice-chair (currently acting-chair) of Churches Together in Kenilworth & District. I also work part-time as Seasonal Mission Manager for the Intercontinental Church

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Society, based in Coventry and am grateful for the understanding shown where my responsibilities for guiding mission in other parts of Europe may lead to my absence from the Parish for short periods. 2016 will see me absent for three months as I undertake a Sabbatical from the end of May to late August. I am grateful to the Bishop for authorising this and hope to return in the autumn refreshed spiritually and physically and ready to continue serving the parish and community to the best of my ability for the coming years. I am HUGELY grateful to Audrey Rowberry, Nicola Perryman, the Churchwardens (Jonathan Kingston, Jonathan Cox) and the Stallard gentlemen (Nigel and Tim) for taking on extra responsibilities during this time and to the clergy from St James, Fletchamsted and St John, Kenilworth - together with Rev Roy Greenland who will be providing considerable support for Sunday and Wednesday services.

Cancer Research UK, Leek Wootton Committee

Written report submitted by Shirley Calvert

We have had another busy and successful year from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016. During this period we raised the sum of £6,491.78 which has been sent to Cancer Research UK.

During 2015 we held our Summer Supper in July and a Skittles Evening in November. Our Winter Supper in February of this year was a Black Tie and Pie Night, which everyone seemed to enjoy. In March there was Jim and Jean's Big Breakfast which once again attracted the crowds. We have been told by Cancer Research UK that our Big Breakfast this year was the most successful in the whole Region, which encompasses from Bedfordshire up to Derbyshire. It is due to Jim and Jean's generosity that we are able to have this success and enabled us to make £2,089.64.

Our next function is to be held on 2 July 2016 and is still in the planning stages, but it will be discussed and finalised at our next Committee meeting later this month.

At our AGM held in April, Belinda Ellwood stepped down as Chairman, but is remaining on the Committee. Unfortunately no one was willing to take on this role or that of the Vice Chairman. Our Fundraising Manager from Cancer Research UK, who was present at the meeting, is not concerned about this as we are all experienced in organizing fundraising functions. Lorraine Davis remains as our Treasurer and myself as Secretary.

We have a fantastic group of loyal supporters who attend our functions and the Committee appreciates having the support of village residents and their friends from around the area. Without this support we would not be able to raise the money we do.

Leek Wootton & District Horticultural Society

Written report submitted by Brian Melling


It was with great sadness that we had to report the death of our President, Audrey Gillitt. Audrey had been a pillar of support for the Society in her role as President and will be greatly missed by all involved.

Our well-developed programme of events has again proven popular with yet another successful year and we continue to enjoy splendid support from the local community.

The Annual Outing, on 6 June 2015 to Rodmarton Manor, organized as usual by Tom and Margaret Powell was deemed to be another success. Our visit to Hill Close Gardens in Warwick on 1 September, which we undertook along with the History Group, was most enlightening and I would commend it to you all.

The Show, on 22 August, attracted the usual splendid entries. Ron Guest took the Banksian medal, Jim Perkins Salver, The D W Mitchell and the T K Meredith awards. Income was at a very healthy level with all the stalls providing good contributions, enhancing an already strong financial position. Strong support continues from local businesses in the form of prizes for the raffle and we are grateful for that support. The end of show arrangements were handled expertly in my absence.

The Christmas buffet took place on 12 December in the Village Hall. The event was a huge success and confirms its place in our calendar of events although we will have to scale down the content of the Buffet as there is too much wastage.

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In financial terms our strong position provides opportunities to provide support to our community and we have been able to support the History Group in the acquisition of the late Sir Wathen Arthur Waller's photograph album.

The Annual General Meeting of the Society unanimously elected Dennis Eassom to be the new President.

So, looking forward with notes for your diary in 2016:

- The Outing this year will be at on Sunday 5 June taking in Hampton Court Castle and Gardens in the morning moving on to Stockton Bury Gardens in the afternoon where there will be an opportunity to have lunch. The lunch will be optional and a selection will be taken from the menu to provide choices. Ticket prices will be £22.50 for the coach and entry fees. For those wishing to take lunch the cost will be £13 per person. The outing has again been organized by our resident travel agents Tom and Margaret Powell and Secretary Mary Murdoch is managing the bookings.
- The Annual Show will be held on Saturday 20 August. There will as usual be entertainment for the children and young at heart. Photographic categories will be 'Our garden' and 'High Street' as chosen at the social evening. Angela Guest will be orchestrating the event, as she has successfully achieved over many years.
- The December Social will be on Saturday 10th.

My thanks to all who have supported the Society over the past 12 months especially the members of the Committee who have given unstinting support. Special thanks are due to our Secretary Mary Murdoch for her boundless energy, Christine Hurcomb as Treasurer, Angela Guest as reported above, Tom and Margaret as our very able tour guides and to Steph Jones who has assisted with meeting minute taking and production. Steph and Rob Jones have been researching the introduction of a Society website which will be an exciting new venture. You can access the web site at www.leekwoottonhorticulturalsociety.co.uk. The Society can also be contacted via lwhsociety@gmail.com.

Whilst it obviously gives me great pleasure to report the successes achieved over the year, again it is also necessary to advise of my desire to recruit new members, particularly from the younger members of the community, to strengthen the Committee and cement the Society's future. Our constitution provides for a committee of 16 members, including the Officers, and we are currently at 14 members. Anyone interested in joining should contact Mary Murdoch or me and we will be pleased to talk them.

Leek Wootton History Group


Written report submitted by Lesley Eldridge

Representatives of the Group continue to meet with the Friends of the Anti-Aircraft Battery at Goodrest Farm (FAAB@GRF) and in late 2015 decided to mount a joint Open Day in April 2016 to mark the 75th Anniversary of the development of the batteries, months after the Coventry Blitz. As the organisation with a constitution, the History Group was able to roll over a grant of £1,250 from Warwick Rural West Community Forum that was un-used in November 2015. The grant was used to create a more stimulating attraction than in the past, in order to raise funds to assist with preservation on the site; the sun shone and some 200 people attended on the day!

In January 2016 the Group was alerted to the existence of a personal photograph album, gifted to Wathen Arthur Waller (later the 5th Baronet) at Christmas 1893. The album had been purchased by dealers who planned to break it up and, in order to achieve the best possible financial return, offer individual pages for sale. A price for the album to be purchased by the History Group and placed into the Warwickshire County Record Office for safe keeping was agreed and the asking price has now been achieved.

The Group continues to receive and respond to both family and local history enquiries online, with specific and repeated enquiries about Blacklow Hill and Gaveston's Cross and the lack of a footpath or footpaths to the site.

LWHG has become a Local History Society Member of the Warwickshire Local History Society, an umbrella organisation which exists to promote the advancement of public education in local history in Warwickshire.

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Leek Wootton Scout Group

Written report submitted by Lesley Knott

Leek Wootton Scout group has had another exciting year which included County Camp at Ragley Hall attended by 3,000 people, guarding the bells overnight at All Saints' Church, and sleeping on HMS Belfast.

Some Beavers camped at the Alfrey Centre, Meriden ahead of the Beaver County Activity Day while half-a-dozen Beavers earned their Space badge at a recent sleepover which included sending a message to Tim Peake. Both the Beaver colony and Cub pack earned their Air Activities badges at Wellesbourne (courtesy of Take Flight). We learned the phonic alphabet in the air control tower, chatted to the chief instructor and saw inside the Vulcan Bomber.

We have also had our annual den building evening in the arboretum thanks to the generosity of the Warwickshire and discovered all about our food at Tesco. Now the Beavers are gradually working towards their Chef's badge and towards their Community and Gardening badges by growing plants for the church fête.

As well as the Remembrance Day Parade in Leek Wootton, we joined with other Kenilworth District Scouts and Guides to march from Abbey Fields to St Nicholas church for the St George's Day Service, during which we combined to re-enact the siege of Kenilworth.

The Cubs competed in a swimming gala and are undertaking 100 challenges before September for the Cub Centenary. This will culminate on 7.16 on 16th December 2016 at Kenilworth Castle which Cubs of all ages are invited to attend.

6. Reports from County & District Councillors

Warwickshire County Council: Leek Wootton Division

Councillor Mrs José Compton

The past year has unfortunately been dominated by cuts to the Budget. A cut of £92 million was handed out to take us to 2017 with a further £10 million reduction, now reduced to £7 million, to reflect the differences in Government Grant between the urban and rural population.

This has meant a very difficult time with an increase in the ageing population and paying the National Living Wage to providers of social care. At the other end of the scale we have to provide extra school places to cope with the additional number of children coming to live in Warwickshire - the vexed question of academies is still under discussion, however WCC is still responsible for ensuring that there is sufficient capacity to provide education for all children.

Unfortunately this has meant that we have had to increase the Council Tax this year by 3.99% of which 2% has been directed to Adult Social Care.

Turning to transport we have a new Railway Station coming along at Kenilworth and the opening of a station at Bermuda Park Nuneaton which should make rail travel easier. Road improvements along the M40 at Gaydon are on schedule in conjunction with JLR. Nearer to home the changes to the road network around Stanks Island on the Birmingham Road/A46 will be outlined at the Warwick West Community Forum on 19 May as this will have a knock effect on all surrounding roads.

Other items of interest include the forming of an arm's length in-house company to take over the running of the Old Shire Hall. This has been under discussion since the Crown Courts moved to Leamington some years ago and it has now been decided to proceed with this as an entertainment/ conference/hospitality venue. We have the exciting prospect of the Aviva Women's Cycle Race coming through Leek Wootton on 16 June on their race through Warwickshire.

Less exciting is the ongoing discussion re the West Midlands Combined Authority, Devolution and Unitary Authority - I reported this last year but matters still not finalised.

With my Delegated Transport Budget I have allocated £10,000 towards improvements to the access to the Village Hall. This is long overdue and I am hopeful that with other grant funding in place work can commence shortly!

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We also have funding from Warwick Rural West Community Forum to be applied for and I would urge residents to attend these meetings as the Police, Warwick District Council plus Warwickshire County Council officers always attend and matters of general concern can be raised.

I always attend Parish Council meetings and thank the Councillors and Clerk for their co-operation in helping me fulfil my role as County Councillor.

Cllr Mrs Compton also brought the following to the attention of the meeting:

- *Warwickshire County Council and partners have announced the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will open its doors by May 2016 from its base in Warwick. Safeguarding children and adults is a priority for all agencies in Warwickshire. The issues and challenges it poses span far beyond the remit of any single organisation. In Warwickshire, it has been decided to form a MASH or Multiagency Safeguarding Hub, which will bring together practitioners from a range of backgrounds including Children and Adult Safeguarding Services, the Police, Health services and other partners involved in safeguarding, in order to respond to the challenges posed by safeguarding our most vulnerable residents.*
- *WCC would like to know the views of local people on what they like and don't like about living in Warwickshire, what things need improving, and some questions on health and well-being issues. Results from the survey will highlight key issues experienced by you, the local people, on a day-to-day basis, including information on needs and challenges. This will inform council work programmes to address these local needs and shape services for the future. The survey is available at <http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/survey>*

Cllr Smith expressed the Council's thanks to Cllr Mrs Compton for her support throughout the year.

Warwick District Council: Arden Ward


Councillors Mrs Susan Gallagher and Mr Peter Whiting

This year effectively began with the elections in May in which voters returned two councillors for the newly-formed Arden Ward (previously the separate wards of Leek Wootton and Lapworth). The two of us were elected, and shortly thereafter took up roles on the eight-person Executive, the body that steers the decision-making of Warwick District Council; Sue retained her responsibility for the Leisure portfolio, with Peter being given first-time responsibility for the Finance portfolio.

Perhaps the most significant issue affecting the Council in the subsequent period has been the Local Plan. The Inspector raised concerns in June about the Plan as initially submitted, specifically that the detail of dealing with Coventry's unmet need was insufficiently developed; and that the Plan included too great a reliance on windfall sites, and too little by way of contingency. Following representations by the Council, the Inspector stated in August that a suspension (rather than a withdrawal) of the plan might be appropriate, and in October agreed to suspend the plan until May. Following the amended Local Plan being passed at the February meeting of the Council, the Leader recently updated the Inspector with a view to the Examination being reopened as soon as possible.

The financial environment remains very challenging. The Revenue Support Grant (money received from central government by the Council) has declined from some £12 million five years ago, and is likely to fall to zero in three years' time. The council has therefore had to work extremely hard to protect services while cutting costs wherever possible. After five years of no increase in Warwick District's share of Council Tax, this year the Council has agreed an increase of £5 (some 3.4%) on a Band D house. The Executive strongly believes that such an increase is necessary given the need to preserve services wherever possible, and the multiple demands on Council resources that are not yet fully factored into our financial plans - the pressing need to repair or replace several of our multi-storey car parks provides one relevant example.

Other major projects are underway that will require the attention of both Sue and Peter in their Executive roles. An exciting redevelopment of the Council's leisure centres in Leamington and Warwick is getting underway. This will see the investment of some £12 million in the sites at St

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Nicholas Park and Newbold Comyn, together with the award of a contract for the ongoing management of both centres. This should deliver both much-improved facilities and programmes, and significant financial savings compared with the current costs of in-house operation.

Other major savings are planned from the relocation of the Council's offices from their current home at Riverside House to a new development planned on the current Covent Garden car park. The Riverside House site is likely to be redeveloped for housing, with various Council activities currently undertaken at the Town Hall also being consolidated onto the new site.

Many of our Parishes have benefited from the Warwick District Council RUCIS (Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Scheme) grants. As we write this update, a report is due to go to the Executive that will see the scheme maintained, despite the financial climate, and make it easier for smaller projects to receive a higher proportion of support. We will update you with the progress of these changes, but continue to encourage you to make use of this facility.

Thanks to all of our Parish Councils for their help and support during the year - we both look forward to working together successfully into 2017.

Cllr Smith expressed the Council's thanks to Cllr Mrs Gallagher and Cllr Mr Whiting for their support throughout the year.

7. Issues of particular local importance to the community

Neighbourhood Development Plan and WDC Local Plan

Cllr Smith referred back to his Chairman's Report. Whilst the Council understands residents' concerns about the scale of development within the parish, the number of homes in the NDP must be within the same ball-park figure as the Local Plan, or the Neighbourhood Plan will be rejected and the Parish Council will not have any influence over the future planning for the community. The number of houses that the NDP proposes is lower than Place Partnership (125) and WDC (115).

The Local Plan is now with the Inspector and WDC is receiving representations for the Inspector. The Parish Council has made its representation to the inspector. WDC is in a similar position to the Parish Council, in that if the number of proposed homes that it puts forward in the revised local plan is not satisfactory to the Inspector, the Local Plan can be similarly rejected, leaving the District Council vulnerable to developers applying for planning permission anywhere.

8. Any other business

Cllr Moore expressed the Council's thanks to Cllr Smith for his leadership throughout the year.

Refreshments were served.

Signed: 

Date: 17/05/17

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