

# IDRIDGEHAY ALTON AND ASHLEYHAY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

## Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 21 April 2021 remotely on Zoom Meetings

Chair: Councillor Robert Tatler  
Clerk: Mrs Ros Hallam (Responsible Financial Officer)  
Present: 7 members of the public  
No apologies received

### 1. Chair's Overview of the Year

Cllr Tatler welcomed those present to the Annual Parish Meeting and presented his annual report.

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, 2020's Annual Parish Meeting was cancelled so this report covers the last two years.

The composition of the council remains as before: with two members representing Ashleyhay (Dudley Ibbett and Jane Smith) and five members Idridgehay and Alton (Carl Hempshall, Eric Matkin, Jill Matthews, Robert Tatler and Mike Westwood). The council has followed its customary pattern of meeting bi-monthly on the second Wednesday, normally at the village Corn Store and our last face-to-face meeting was held on 11 March 2020. Since then, meetings have been held using Zoom which I think has worked quite well in spite of the occasional technical hiccup. Members of the public are very welcome to attend to observe and there is fifteen minutes available for public speaking at the start of each meeting. Councillor David Taylor has often attended in his capacity as our District and County Councillor.

Again this year, planning matters have figured largely on our agenda. Amber Valley District Council notifies our parish clerk of all planning applications in the parishes and the council then considers each one on its merits, and if necessary, comments appropriately. Without going into the details of individual applications, I think it would be fair to say that we often disagree very strongly with some of the decisions Amber Valley reach, and it is quite apparent that whilst we are most anxious to uphold and protect the integrity of the Special Landscape Area, which covers most of the parishes, and likewise the Conservation Area in Idridgehay, the same cannot always be said for Amber Valley. We are attempting to monitor how Amber Valley implements our Neighbourhood Plan and it has been referred to by them in some of their decisions and apparently ignored in others. Of particular concern is the long running saga of the multiple applications for the pig farm off Wirksworth Road where the non-implementation of various landscaping schemes and AVBC's obvious reluctance to enforce any of the agreed planning conditions make a mockery of the whole process. The farmer appears to be successfully running rings round them. A number of Ashleyhay residents are so frustrated by this farrago that they have referred the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman. We all await his eventual decision with great interest.

As was noted in the 2019 Annual Report, after a number of quite successful sessions, our Community Speed Watch scheme was suspended in the summer of 2019, due to irregularities elsewhere. It restarted in July 2020 but then fell foul of increased Covid-19 restrictions in November and is still suspended. In the meantime, the council has jointly purchased a radar gun and two warning signs with Hazelwood Parish Council and share the use with them on a rota basis. There is much concern in the village about speeding on the main road and it was encouraging early this year when a real speed trap opposite the pub was seen on at least three occasions. Emily Chard, our enthusiastic Speed Watch Co-Ordinator, is working on ways and means to help us to obtain permission to install a pair of flashing speed signs which other villages have successfully utilised. Hopefully, this will be achieved in the reasonably near future.

During 2019 two parish newsletters were produced and distributed but with everything shut down there were no newsletters in 2020 as there was very little to report and even less to advertise. But as the Covid restrictions lift and life begins to resume some normality, we can look forward to a resumption of some of our parish activities. We are very grateful to Councillor Ibbett for editing and creating the newsletters and for the work he does in tending the website. The snow warden scheme remains in operation, many thanks to Hazel and Michael Haslam who again volunteered as wardens, and the free supply of grit was once more received. Luckily both winters were virtually free of snow.

With sadness I note the passing in late autumn of two individuals who were involved with the Parish Council. Alan Merigold was a long-term resident of Idridgehay and served as a parish councillor for some years, whilst Dick Parkin retired here after a career spent at sea and became our well-liked and popular parish clerk.

I must, as always, thank our current parish clerk, Ros Hallam, for the highly efficient and enthusiastic way she does her job! We are very fortunate to have her, and she is a real asset to the council and the whole community.

## IDRIDGEHAY ALTON AND ASHLEYHAY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

It is always nice to finish on an optimistic note and whilst there were no social or fund-raising events in 2020 because of Covid, 2019 had been a very successful year with good levels of support for everything that had been organised by and run mainly in aid of the Church. I am sure everyone will join me in looking forward to a resumption of both church services and the social and fund-raising events where we can once again gather together and support our community.

### 2. Finance Report for the year ended 31 March 2021

Mrs Hallam, as Responsible Financial Officer, presented the annual financial report:

The council bank accounts started the year at £10,599 including £1,040 held on behalf of the Idridgehay Defibrillator Fund. At the end of March total funds amounted to £12,096. After making provision for potential election costs, contingency funding, and other potential costs, as well as IDF funds, the year ended with reserves of £6,000.

The council's main source of income remains the Parish Precept - having no rental income that other parishes have from say a village hall or allotments. This precept is collected by Amber Valley as part of the local Council Tax, and for the year ending 31 March 2021 was £5,392 which is approximately £30 per household.

As usual, half of all expenditure consisted of the clerk's salary and costs associated with parish upkeep. Due to the COVID epidemic, other expenditure was lower than budgeted as there were no community forum events, training, newsletter publication, etc. The only significant and unforeseen expenditure was the replacement for the stolen defibrillator, but this was covered by the council's insurance. As a result, income exceeded expenditure for the year by £1,496 – far more than usual.

This is why, in January the parish council decided to keep the precept the same for the coming financial year.

The Internal Audit for the year to 31 March 2021 has been successfully completed. The completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return will be presented at the Annual Parish Council meeting on 5 May for council's approval. It will then be published on the council's website together with Statutory Notice showing when the council's accounts are available for public inspection.

### 3. Community Speed Watch Update

Emily Chard as Speed Watch Co-Ordinator gave a summary of the group's activities over the past year. The volunteers did 10 surveys – 3 before the first lock down and 7 in the autumn - all for around an hour on various days at varying times. This resulted in 66 letters being sent to speeding motorists – the highest speed recorded being 50mph. The CREST team had done a further 3 surveys in the winter. Data produced by the area's speed watch admin team for Quarndon, Weston Underwood, Idridgehay and Hazelwood, showed that Idridgehay had the highest volume of traffic, even more than the Hazelwood surveys conducted on the A517. The group would be starting up again soon and would like to recruit more volunteers in order to increase the number of possible surveys. The group is considering conducting its own independent traffic and speed survey to provide evidence as well as a petition to urge DCC to allow the installation of vehicle activated signs at both entrances to the village along the B5023. Emily asked for IAA PC to lend its support to the Derbyshire '20's Plenty' campaign. She concluded that making drivers more aware that they are entering a village with some sort of visual impact, could help reduce speeding too.

John Popika said he supported the idea of having some visual impact on entering the village – gates on either side of the road for example, and maybe making a feature of the triangle at the top of Rood Lane. He understands that there should be 2 30mph signs on either side of the road at both ends of the village which need to be kept free of overgrowth from trees and hedges. As his kitchen is less than 1.5m from the main road, he testified that there is a noticeable difference in the noise produced at 30mph and 40mph – even more so at 50mph. He underlined the need to produce data to convince DCC to take action and highlighted the threat from speeding traffic to walkers – especially those with children or dogs - along the narrow pavement from South Sitch to Rood Lane where the overgrown hedge needs attention.

Jill Matthews thanked Emily for her work as coordinator for the group and said that the hedge and overgrown vegetation from South Sitch to Rood Lane is regularly reported but urged people to report any problems with the roads and pavements directly to DCC on their website at [Do it now \(derbyshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk) once logged DCC have to act.

# IDRIDGEHAY ALTON AND ASHLEYHAY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

There was then a discussion about how to collect the data needed to persuade DCC of the extent of the speeding problem in the village and it was agreed that Emily would research the cost of an independent traffic and speed survey for the next IAA PC meeting and the group would restart its surveys as soon as possible.

#### 4. Re-establishing the Community Forum

Jill Matthews reported that although the Community Forum had started the Speed Watch group there were not many people involved. As part of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Community Forum was set up to look at village issues and make suggestions to the parish council. She asked how could more people be recruited to help reinvigorate it?

Jane Smith said that for the Neighbourhood Plan they had started with a social event.

Jill Matthews said that now things are opening up after COVID then this should be possible. The only positive news to report about COVID was Sophie Snell setting up the COVID Support Group with the parish council's backing.

Mike Westbrooke suggested a garden party instead of the village fete for local residents only to celebrate the end of COVID. Then hopefully, the fete can be resurrected next year for much needed fund raising for the church spire. He said that less time would be needed to set up this smaller event and a decision could be made at the next parish council meeting on 5 May.

#### 5. Open Forum

Jill Matthews said that Idridgehay Facebook page had asked the PC to report the antisocial behaviour at the layby up on Windley Lane and asked for links to give for residents to report any issues as they arise. [These are included on the IAA PC website but for fly tipping email [landscapeservices@ambervalley.gov.uk](mailto:landscapeservices@ambervalley.gov.uk), any antisocial behaviour should be reported to AVBC on their website at [Anti-social behaviour \(ambervalley.gov.uk\)](https://www.ambervalley.gov.uk/anti-social-behaviour).]

6. As there were no further comments from the members of the public, Councillor Tatler thanked those members of the public for their attendance and contributions closing the meeting at 7.40pm.

Signed ..... Chair ..... Date`