

# WINWICK

*Best Kept Village  
in Cheshire – 2000*

C/o Winwick Leisure Centre  
Myddleton Lane  
Winwick  
Warrington  
WA2 8LQ



# PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council:  
Julian Joinson  
Tel/Fax: 07818 066549

Email: [jjoinson.winwickclerk@outlook.com](mailto:jjoinson.winwickclerk@outlook.com)  
Web site: [www.winwickparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.winwickparishcouncil.org.uk)

19 April 2021

To all Members of Winwick Parish Council and Local Electors

Dear Councillor/Elector

The **Annual Parish Assembly** (meeting of Electors) will be a virtual meeting held on **Tuesday 27 April 2021 at 7.00 pm**. The meeting will be held using the Zoom meeting and conference platform and joining instructions will be sent to councillors under separate cover.

Registered Electors in the Winwick area may register to speak at this meeting by e-mailing the Clerk to the Council [jjoinson.winwickclerk@outlook.com](mailto:jjoinson.winwickclerk@outlook.com) and providing details of their Name and Address, by no later than 5.00pm on Sunday 25 April 2021.

*(Personal information supplied during the registration process will be used only for the following purposes:-*

- a) verifying eligibility to participate in the meeting as a local Elector;*
- b) providing joining instructions to participate in the meeting;*
- c) contacting individuals after the meeting to provide any written response, as appropriate.*
- d) as a deterrent against mischievous or malicious behaviour during the meeting and, if necessary, to enable inappropriate behaviour to be reported to the appropriate authorities.*

*Except in the case of (c) and (d) above, personal information will be deleted within 7 days of the meeting. Information retained for the purposes described at (c) and (d) will be retained only for as long as may be necessary.)*

**Members of the public may view the meeting on You Tube (but not participate in proceedings) using the following link:-**

<https://youtu.be/Y00I-vbO4hU>

The next Parish Council meeting will commence on the rising of the Annual Parish Assembly, but not before 7.30pm.

Julian Joinson  
Clerk to the Parish Council

## **ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Code of Conduct - Declarations of Interest  
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare and disclosable pecuniary or non pecuniary interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when the item is reached.

The Clerk is available prior to the meeting to advise and/or to receive details of the interest and the item to which it relates.

Declarations are a personal matter for each Member to decide. Whilst the Clerk will advise on the Code and its interpretation, the decision to declare, or not, is the responsibility of the Member based on the particular circumstances.

3. Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 28 May 2019.

Note: There was no Parish Assembly Meeting in 2020 due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The requirement to hold an annual Parish assembly was disapplied by the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/808).

4. Chairman's Report
5. Questions / Comments from the Public

# Winwick Parish Council

Annual Parish Assembly held on 28 May 2019

**Present:** Councillors M Matthews (Deputy Chair - in the Chair), A Iddon, C Mitchell (Chair – not present at the commencement of the meeting), and C Vobe

**Residents:** There were three residents of Winwick Parish present.

**Also in Attendance:** Ms C Jones, Interim Finance Officer and Mr J Joinson, Clerk

## **WPCPA.1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Gordon and P Gosney.

## **WPCPA.2 Code of Conduct – Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

## **WPCPA.3 Minutes**

Decision – That the minutes of the meeting of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 22 May 2018 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

With the agreement of the meeting the following item was taken next on the Agenda.

## **WPCPA.4 Questions / Comments from the Public**

Members of the public raised the following matters:-

- The 2016 Election leaflets by the controlling political group had pointed out that it would require £25k per annum to keep open the Leisure Centre and had expressed a desire to run the Centre better. However, the deficit for the current year was around £35k. In effect, the recent rises in the Precept had been used to fund the Leisure Centre deficit. This situation created an on-going dilemma. The operating deficit of the Centre also required a disproportionate amount of management time and effort by the Finance Officer, Clerk and Councillors, making it a major cost to the Council. Other aspects of the Leisure Centre were difficult to justify, such as the cost of BT Sports, the fact that the Centre was only used by a minority of residents and the point raised by Councillor G Friend at last year's Assembly about the Centre's relevance to residents south of the M62. It was also understood that a significant structural overhaul of the Centre would be required soon, on top of the high cost operating model. It was as yet unclear what the business model was for the Leisure Centre, as had been mentioned on previous occasions. Given the changing environment and consumer behaviour it was suggested that the approach to the Leisure Centre needed a radical rethink, perhaps based upon a zero-based budget approach.

*Response:* The Deputy Chair commented that sometimes there was a sense that the Leisure Centre ran the Parish Council, rather than the other way around. Newly elected Members had taken some time to appreciate the amount of time and effort required to manage the Leisure Centre. At the time of the change of political administration in 2016, the Leisure Centre Manager had been allowed more scope to manage the Centre and also attended the Management Committee meeting to discuss ideas with the wider management body. However, there was a feeling that the same ideas had emerged time and time again. The Management Committee and officers were now looking at different models for the business and these were being discussed in Part 2 of relevant meetings. A dilemma was that if one area of the business was closed that would take away any value added to the whole enterprise. It was not unusual in any business to have loss making items at the margins in order to add overall value to the core product/service. A business model for the Leisure Centre was currently being developed, although it required further refining. In particular, some goals and performance targets needed to be added. There was a good deal of consensus between Members of all political persuasions on the Management Committee about what was needed for the Leisure Centre.

- It was noted that the previous strategy for the Leisure Centre had focused on providing numerous events, but that now appeared to have been abandoned.

*Response:* The Management Committee had looked carefully at this approach, but had ascertained that events such as tribute acts were not in fact making any money, whereas private functions such as birthdays did return a profit. Irresponsible financial management had now been eradicated and the Management Committee now had access to accurate figures and a more robust reporting format. (The current tightening of financial management arrangements was acknowledged by the resident). Unlike programmed events, birthday parties, wedding anniversaries and other such functions did not lose money. Other financial measures, such as charging a modest uplift for the provision of DJs and food were helping. In fact, the business was genuinely starting to 'take off'. For example, the Centre was expecting to be busy for the UEFA Champions League football final featuring Liverpool and Tottenham Hotspur, on Saturday 1 June 2019, shown on BT Sports.

- How many occasions would be required to justify the BT Sports subscription?

*Response:* Detailed figures were not available at the meeting, but the Finance Officer would discuss the matter with the Centre Manager. The issue of sports subscriptions, including Sky Sports, was being considered in the Business Plan. The Finance Officer had sought more information, particularly in light of the fact that the Rugby Club might be interested in Rugby League matches on Sky Sports.

- A general approach to the Centre should be that any service provided should be able to 'wipe its face'. It was acknowledged that these were difficult financial times, but the answer was not to keep raising the Precept.

*Response:* The Deputy Chair reiterated that the Council did now have a settled business model and would consider the question of whether a subscription to BT Sport was viable in due course. The Centre had some experience of providing Sky Sports in the past, so would ensure that it was certain about its likely levels of return. There was evidence to suggest that subscription sports channels attracted sufficient additional customers. Councillor Iddon added that the original Sky Sports subscription had been taken out at a time when that provider had a monopoly, but BT Sport provided reasonable competition at a cheaper price. Notwithstanding that, there were still numerous free-to-air sporting events, such as the FIFA World Cup in the summer of 2018. A view would be taken once the Centre Manager had provided the necessary figures.

- A resident referred to the idea of the *Tyranny of the Majority*, as considered by John Stuart Mill in his 1859 book *On Liberty*. He urged the Council to keep in mind the interests of the minority, and to be cautious when listening to the popular voice.

*Response:* Members enquired whether the resident had a specific decision in mind or was talking in general terms. Councillors considered that the argument could be applied to a number of issues. As a general point, it could refer to any political group, such as the controlling Labour Group, not listening to the voice of Independent councillors on the Council. However, it was noted that the Management Committee currently comprised two Labour and two Independent Members and was believed to be operating fairly. The phrase could also refer to specific decisions, such as the current Hermitage Green issue, where a number of residents, but not all, wanted a notice board sited in the area. The Council would endeavour to balance carefully what was right, with what was popular. In general, decisions taken at parish level were not taken simply along party political lines. However, the party political system did allow Members to discuss issues from the perspective of similar values and provided a mechanism for high standards of individual behaviour to be maintained.

Councillor Mitchell summarised by reiterating that the Council tried to listen to the views of everyone and to make the best decisions it could. The minority view was listened to, but doing that could sometimes lead to unexpected and adverse consequences. Councillors sought a broad cross-section of views by door knocking. For example, Labour candidates still campaigned and listed to voters in the Winwick Park area, which was not necessarily a traditional Labour heartland. Overall the Council would not intentionally favour one group over another, but would try to make the best decisions possible based on the evidence presented.

Decision – To note the questions and comments raised by members of the public and the responses given.

#### **WPCPA.5 Chair's Report**

Councillor Mitchell reported the following key achievements in 2018/19 and aspirations for the future:-

- The Council's new website was now up and running;
- The Leisure Centre was starting to make good progress; and
- The Council would continue to listen to all residents and Members would do their best to make appropriate decisions.

Decision – To note the Chair's annual report.