# Annual parish meeting

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 8 April 2024at

## 7.00 pm at the Village Hall, Main Street, Swannington

### present : Cllr A Stafford (in the chair) and 1 member of public.

**1AP/2024. Welcome from the Chairman of the Council**

#### Cllr Stafford welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2AP/2024. Confirm the Minutes of the Last Meeting.**

#### RESOLVED: To confirm the minutes of the Annual Meeting 2023.

**3ap/2024. Report by the Chairman of the Parish Council**

Welcome to the annual parish meeting of Swannington parish, hosted by the parish council.

The council as you know exists to serve the community and welcomes input from its parishioners. It may seem at times that there is little or slow progression or even that we are not able to action requests. The council, being first tier of Government, is regulated in many ways that are not always understood or accepted by some members of the parish but it is in the interests of the parishioners that we adhere to rules and regulations and ultimately make what we hope are the right decisions for the parish.

Swannington is very lucky to be supported by very worthy community groups. Members of the Swannington Heritage Trust – all volunteers - work incredibly hard to maintain various historical sites around the parish and keep them open and available to visitors from far and wide. The events held throughout the year – Easter at the Mill, Strawberry Fayre, Take Teddy to the Mill etc. are always well attended and enjoyed by both parishioners and visitors from further afield.

Swannington Open Gardens / Friends of Swannington community group hosts an annual plant sale and a biennial Open Gardens event although this year they may be trialling something quite new to raise funds for charity so watch out for more details! Again the group is made up entirely of volunteers, mainly from Swannington village. During the course of the last year, the group decided to plant an ornamental willow tree on the village hall garden to honour and remember Brian Duncombe, parish clerk for many, many years and a genuine community minded resident. The parish council erected a plaque at the tree in commemoration.

Swannington parishioners should be proud of the achievements of the heritage trust and open gardens community group and their many endeavours and I hope they will both be supported for many years to come.

The parish council has this past year spent a lot of time and energy supporting the village with planning applications which may not be appropriate. This activity, communicating with the LPA, discussing with parishioners, understanding complexities of planning applications consumes a great deal of time and energy but it is important the council does its bit to prevent the over development of Swannington.

**RESOLVED:** To receive the report.

**4ap/2024. Report by the Police**

No report received and not in attendance.

**5ap/2024. Report by the District Councillor – Russel Boam**

No report received and not in attendance.

**6ap/2024. Report by the County Councillor – Nick Rushton**

**Budget update**

Without doubt, this has been the most challenging budget we’ve ever faced. Increasing demand pressures in children’s and adult social care, rising costs including inflation and increases in the National Living Wage, has put more pressures on our £567m annual revenue budget. Balancing this, the county council precept rose by 5%, including an element for adult social care. We’ve also provided an extra £129m mainly to support people with physical and learning difficulties and for mental health. There’s £19m extra funding for fixing potholes and highways maintenance, plus £100k to keep most of our household wate and recycling centres open. Whilst other councils such as Birmingham and Nottingham have declared effective bankruptcy, the County Council remains in a better position, being nationally recognised as the most efficient and productive county council in the country, despite our low funding.

**Devolution update**

We are still working with Government for a level 2 devolution deal which will see a new Combined Authority involving the County, City and Rutland councils. Whilst not a mayoral authority, not attracting the same level of devolved funding and powers from Government, it will nonetheless set us on the right track to bid for future powers, whilst working more collaboratively over planning, housing, local transport, infrastructure funding, economic development and adult skills. With a general election looming, it remains to be seen if there will be legislative time to enact any agreement reached with Government.

**Meetings with MPs and Government**

Over the last year, I have continued my regular meetings with MPs and with their help, have met several Government ministers to discuss our funding position, including Jacob Young MP, Richard Holden MP and with Simon Hoare MP, the current Minister for Local Government. We have certainly made progress, with the funding pots outlined below mainly to support roads and transport, we continue to lobby for a better future funding settlement and reform to the outdated system of national funding allocations.

**Network North Funding**

Following the Government’s decision to scrap the northern route of HS2 and reallocate that funding to every region, Leicestershire has received an indicative award of £126m (between 2025/26-2033/34) from the Roads Resurfacing Fund and £238m Local Transport Funding (between 2025/26-2031/32). We still await the detailed guidelines and conditions to be confirmed from Government. Once we have this in pace, then we can properly plan the projects and schemes the County Council will support across Leicestershire.

**Environment Matters**

We recently passed the halfway mark in our mission to plant 700,000 trees across the county- that’s a tree for every person. Not only does this help reduce carbon, clean the air, it also assists with flooding, which has seriously affected communities cross the county this year. LCC is the lead local flood authority, coordinating the response of other agencies to issues of flooding as well as providing help and advice to those affected by flooding.

**Support for Ukraine**

February 2024 marked the second anniversary of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. More than 500 families have opened their homes to Ukrainians fleeing the war since then- a remarkable show of support. Leicestershire remains a safe space for many families and we’re still looking for new hosts, as the war shows no sign of abating anytime soon.

**RESOLVED:** To receive the report.

**7ap/2024. Report from representative of the Swannington Heritage Trust**

No report received and not in attendance.

**8ap/2024. Report from representative of the Swannington Open Gardens**

**RESOLVED:** To receive the report.

**9ap/2024. To receive the Audited Accounts for the year ended March 2023**

#### RESOLVED: To adopt the audited accounts for March 2023. Copy filed on the Parish Council website.

**10ap/2024. Items of business that concern the Parish of Swannington may be raised by any Elector of the Parish**

No questions.

Meeting closed 7.01pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_