

**MINUTES OF THE 2024 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
and ANNUAL PARISH GATHERING HELD ON TUESDAY 21st MAY 2024
at Kington Langley Stud, The Stables, Ashes Lane, Kington Langley SN15 5NP
COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM**

Present: Cllr A Lawer (Chair), Cllr. C Armor, Cllr. S Pattemore, Cllr. L Reynolds, Cllr. Sealy, Cllr. G Tayler, Cllr. G Watson, Mrs. Sue Hart (Clerk), Peter Giles (RFO), County Councillor Greenman and between 70 and 80 members of the public.

MINUTES

1.024	Welcome from the Chair – Cllr Lawer Cllr Lawer introduced himself as the new Chair of Kington Langley Parish Council. He said that the format for the evening’s meeting was a departure from previous Annual Parish meetings and whilst the Parish Council is required to hold an annual meeting, councillors wanted to keep the formal part of the meeting to a minimum and provide villagers with an opportunity to find out more about what goes on in the village in a more engaging and informative way. He then reviewed the streamlined agenda and explained that at the end of the meeting Cllr Sealy would explain the format of the ‘Parish Gathering’ which comprised the remainder of the evening. On behalf of the Parish Council, he thanked Bob Livock and Olivia Sealy for allowing use of the Stud Barn for the evening and for giving up their time at one of the busiest periods of their year. Cllr Lawer then said that many villagers would have learned by now of the very sad sudden death of Graham Trickey, the previous Chair. At the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on Tuesday 7th May 2024 councillors and County Cllr Greenman paid tribute to Graham and it was only fitting for those present at the Annual Parish Meeting to do so as well. Graham passed away very unexpectedly in the early hours of 20th April 2024. It was news that saddened everyone involved with the Parish Council. Graham had been a parish councillor since September 2006 and had been Chair since May 2021. He was always a very engaging and passionate Chair of the Council and applied himself selflessly to many activities in support of the village and community. He played a key role in getting the Speed Indicator Device up and running and in improving the school’s parking. Both projects have brought big benefits and improved safety. His insights and considered views will be sorely missed. Cllr Lawer said that both he and his fellow councillors, along with others who support the workings of the Parish Council, felt it had been a privilege knowing and working with Graham and that everyone’s thoughts and prayers were with his family.
2.024	Apologies for Absence There were no apologies for absence.
3.024	Approval of Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on 16 May 2023 The 2023 Annual Parish Meeting minutes had been posted onto the Parish Council website at kingtonlangley.org so were not read out at the meeting. Subsequent to the meeting the Chair, Cllr. Lawer, signed the Minutes as a true record.
4.024	Chair’s Report and Summary of the Parish Council’s activities during 2023/24 – Cllr Lawer Cllr Lawer started by saying that he wanted to mention some of the various activities the Parish Council had pursued over the last year. He said the Parish Council has very little authority over planning decisions, however the Planning Authority, Wiltshire Council, is obliged to seek the Parish Council’s opinion as a consultee concerning all the planning proposals affecting the parish.

	Over the past twelve months, as well as sixteen proposals for work on trees (that arise because much of the village is in a conservation area) nineteen applications for new buildings, extensions and other planning requests were reviewed. Cllr Lawer is the councillor who has primary responsibility for looking at planning matters. One major planning application has been the 40MW Red Barn solar farm, affecting land in the parish as well as the neighbouring parish of Kington St Michael as it covers both sides of the A350 dual carriageway. The applicant, Eden Renewables, has recently resubmitted planning details and Cllr Lawer recommended that parishioners take a look at the changes they have made. One concern previously raised was battery storage and their revised proposal now says that they no longer intend to install batteries on the site. The deadline for commenting to the planning authority is 6 June 2024. The Planning Application number is PL/2023/08481. Some of the other things the Parish Council is involved with (with individual councillors responsible for each) are: • Footpaths and rights of way. (Cllr. Max Sealy) • Grass cutting of the commons and liaising with the Parish Steward to carry out repairs, including potholes. (Cllr Sue Pattemore) • Maintaining the village pond. (Cllr Geoff Tayler) • The environment, KClimate Change initiatives and identifying 'no mow' areas. (Cllr Graham Watson) • Bulb planting, defibrillator management and village magazine reports. (Cllr Lindi Reynolds) • Liaising with the village school (Cllr Charlie Armor) Cllr Lawer said a lot also goes on behind the scenes and he would like to say a few thank you's. He was very grateful to all councillors, to the clerk, Sue Hart, and the Responsible Financial Officer, Peter Giles, for their support and all that they do. They are all dedicated and do a great job and it was a privilege working with them. He felt sure all would agree how very fortunate everyone was to live in such a beautiful village and hoped that villagers could see that the Parish Council does its best to support the quality of life for everyone in the parish. Cllr Lawer said the Parish Council really valued parishioners' ideas and are always pleased to see people from the village community at the monthly Parish Council meetings. People come occasionally just to observe but sometimes to say something about a planning application or to alert councillors to something that needs attention. He said the good news is, if people do attend, they don't have to sit through the whole meeting. Finally, he said that there are currently two vacancies on the Parish Council and the Council would be pleased to hear from anyone who is interested in becoming a parish councillor.
5.024	Your Wiltshire Councillor. Cllr Howard Greenman. The Annual Report produced by Cllr Greenman was on display at the meeting. The full report is given at the end of the minutes.
6.024	Close In closing the formal part of the evening, Cllr Lawer said he hoped everyone would find the new format for the Annual Parish Meeting both enjoyable and informative. The Parish Council would really value everyone's feedback plus suggestions for any improvements. On behalf the Parish Council he thanked everyone for coming and hoped they would have a great evening. THE FORMAL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING CLOSED AT 19:55 PM

ANNUAL PARISH GATHERING

A Summary of Village Organisations Attending and Plan for the Evening – Cllr Max Sealy

Cllr Lawer then handed over to Max Sealy who he thanked for having done such a lot of work organising the evening, getting organisations to participate and making the event happen.

Max said that he was really pleased to see the large number of organisations and activities represented at the evening.

He thanked those who had given financial donations and / or had provided food and wine for everyone, specifically Kington Langley Stud (venue and hosting), Kin House (food and wine), Church Farm Coffee Shop (food and wine), DH and BJ Sealy (donation), Orderflow (donation), Pineapple Fitness (donation) and Langley Chase (donation)

Groups, societies and individuals in the village also participating included St Peter's Church, The Village Magazine, Langley Fitzurse School, WI, Film Society, Croquet, Tennis, Board Games, Kington Langley Scarecrow Festival, KClimate Change, KIA Quilts, Speed Watch, Supper on the Run and The Bringing Back the Hit or Miss Campaign Organisers.

He thanked CrowZone Radio for providing the music.

Kington Langley Stud

Olivia Sealy, who manages the Kington Langley Stud, then gave a very interesting overview of some of the different aspects of their business, from having stallions at stud to taking mares into stud right through to foaling. This was a good time of the year as mares were currently foaling (a young foal was in a nearest paddock). They also ran livery including breaking in, as well as Bob Livock's ongoing work as a professional equine dentist. She offered to show villagers around the site to see the facilities and some of the horses and foals.

Your Wiltshire Councillor. Cllr Howard Greenman.

I write to you on what is my 15th Annual Parish Report. It's interesting to note the changes there have been over the years.

There is no doubt that there have been both political and economic challenges over the last year which have taken some imaginative managing. I am pleased to report though that unlike many surrounding authorities Wiltshire Council have reported an underspend of £634k which correspondingly enables us to enhance our spending commitment in local services. One can always argue that it is never enough, but I think given the cost pressures all local authorities are under the level of spend is both prudent and necessary.

The net budget therefore for 2024/25 stands at £485.772m with a further Capital budget of £255.667m. That together with our Housing Revenue account (our Council Housing south of the county) gives Wiltshire Council a total budget of £1.1bn. There have been a few additions too such as being able to benefit from the extra £500m given by central government nationally to underpin Social Care, and closer to home Wiltshire Council have also received a further and my view very necessary £10m for highways maintenance with a particular focus on pothole repairs etc. An additional £1m has also been secured specifically for highways flood preventative work.

For every £100 of our revenue budget spent therefore the picture looks something like this:

£38 on caring for vulnerable adults,
£9 on managing waste,
£9 on Wiltshire Highways and bus services,
£4 on maintaining our property assets,
£1 on leisure and libraries,
£21 on supporting and safeguarding children and young people,
£8 on investment on schools, roads and housing,
£6 on running the council including environment,
£3 on online and digital services, and
£1 on improving Wiltshire's economy.

On this last point it's worth noting that this money is being well spent on helping revitalise our town centres including supporting local businesses and the re-use of empty shops.

On other news, and for the first time since Wiltshire became a Unitary authority we have received an "Outstanding" rating for Children's social care, which is a huge testament to all involved.

I continue to sit on the Northern Area Planning Committee as deputy chair, Health Select committee and since my last annual parish report, Audit and Governance committee too. My particular specialism if you like though is as chair of the Wiltshire Strategic Planning Committee, which has seen a few changes over the last year.

You may recall my remarks within my last report when I complained that I was in correspondence with Michael Gove MP reference the unfair Five-Year-Housing- Land supply (5YHLS) which I believed to be forcing unsuitable development in unsuitable locations. Planning was becoming more developer driven than plan-led which I was resisting. I am very pleased to report that this unfair metric was abolished on the 19th December 2023, and that we now work to a Four-Year-Housing-Land supply (4YHLS). The 5% buffer has been removed too, and maximum weight given to Neighbourhood Plans to five years instead of the current two. Those of you in the process of Neighbourhood Plans then still have everything to play for! The huge benefit of this 4YHLS is that Wiltshire Council have already met or planned the housing requirement which means that once again new planning applications can be plan-led rather than developer driven.

In closing I often reflect on how much easier my task is in representing the parishes I do due to the hard work and commitment of their parish councils. They are a delightful bunch to work with, and I haven't always been so able to say that. Certainly I both hear and experience some real horror stories across the county so I need to give my thanks and appreciation to our parish councils, their chairs and clerks too.

As always, if you have any need to contact me over any issue, and I've had some interesting ones over the last year, please do contact me on my Wiltshire Council email address. (Councillor Howard Greenman)

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