



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 20 MAY 2024

Those present :

Chair : Cllr S Clough

Vice-Chair : Cllr K Wood

Councillors : Cllr C Curzon, Cllr D Drabble, Cllr C Eggington, Cllr T Lacey, Cllr C Lacey, Cllr H Laws, Cllr S Reed, Cllr W Tinley, Cllr J Windle

Officers : Mrs G Blank, Mrs J France

1 Chairmans opening statement

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Apologies received from Parish Councillors

Apologies were received from Councillors Fletcher, Morris, Rice and Sherman.

3 Approval of the previous meeting minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting held on 15th May 2023 are a true and accurate record.

4 Annual Parish Council Report

The Chair presented his report and read out the executive summary. Cllr Laws stated that the Parish Council should be proud of what has been achieved for the community over the past year and he also thanked the staff for their hard work.

Killamarsh Parish Council Chair's Annual Report 2024

Executive Summary

Following the local elections and small change in Council administration in May 2023, the past year has seen further progress with Council objectives and activities. The challenges of the cost-of-living crisis have continued to test all of us, including the Council too. Despite those challenges, we were pleased to have continued to deliver on some key targets and make some further key cost savings. We are now starting to see inflation return towards its original 2% level and a return to a pace that is more manageable going forward.

During the past 12 months the Council has refurbished the Parish Suite, making this available to the public for larger events and activities to deliver the primary purpose of these facilities. The Parish office was also relocated to the Killamarsh Community Hub to provide a more effective service to the community and provide greater accessibility. The Community Hub has been brought back up to a suitable condition for community use and provides multifunctional space for community activities and groups, increasing in the operational activities of the building and the self-sustainability of the Parish Council.

The Council is continuing its approach to improve some of the park spaces in the community both in East and West, with conversations ongoing with North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC) to look at ways the Parish Council can work with them to improve some of their park areas in the West ward of Killamarsh.

We continue to seek additional grants and funding sources to assist in improving community facilities and have also focused on carbon reduction by implementing solar technology at the community hub which also assists in energy cost reduction. We have also continued to focus on investment in some of the Parish owned parks and play areas, benches, and financial support for conservation work. Additionally, the Council has moved forward on improving village safety with support from grant funding towards the ANPR and CCTV systems which will be installed across the village in the next couple of months.

The Council continues to look positively toward activities for the younger generation with Extreme Wheels having delivered both Winter indoor and Summer outdoor activities. The Council maintains its focus on extending activities for a variety of age groups not covered by Extreme Wheels, alongside opportunities for employment and skills development for older age groups, working with various agencies and charity groups. In addition, we are pleased to see the delivery of a fully refurbished skate park at no financial cost to the Parish, thanks to grant funding.

During the last year the Council has improved Council operations through the development of a stronger team structure and the team are now well placed to take the Council forward and do more for Killamarsh residents through increasing accessibility, communications and other activities that engage and support residents. The council has aimed to remain fiscally responsible and manage finances effectively to meet the needs of residents as far as possible, without burdening the community with additional unnecessary costs covered through taxation.

Our Council

Having temporarily moved our office base from the Sports Centre to the old Area Housing Office on a temporary lease, the Parish team are now well established in their permanent home in the Killamarsh Community Hub. A crucial element in delivering Council objectives, this now makes us far more accessible.

The Parish Council objectives and vision continues to flourish, helping the team to capitalise on opportunities for greater community engagement, with more events continuing to be placed in the diary and the use of Council facilities continues to provide better value for money for residents. The Parish Council continues to implement some of its ambitious plans to move the village forward and focus more on the environmental aspects of the village.

Our Precept for 2023-24

In the last financial year 2023/2024 we were able to support a prudent reduction of 6% in our Parish precept (the parish part of the council tax bill), this came after a reduction of 10% in 2022/2023 and a reduction of 2% in 2021/2022, following the freeze during the previous year.

Whilst it is not always possible to deliver a reduction in precept, it is essential that residents receive value for money from the Parish Council and the needs of the community are met appropriately through controlled spending and effective fundraising. This has been aided during the past financial year by continuing to gain additional funding from other organisations to support our activities, buffering some those financial challenges.

Budgets remain allocated with contingency allowances to minimise any unexpected financial challenges that could arise during this current financial year. The sustained inflation has impacted upon the Council's costs over the past year, however continued prudent financial management has allowed the Council to remain within overall budget while delivering more for the community.

We have now reached the end of our agreed 3 year upfront fixed subsidy part of our lease agreement with NEDDC for the handover of the sports centre from Parish to District and have crossed over to the second subsidy phase of the lease. This second phase of subsidy is based on the performance of the Sports Centre and any losses it makes, which will subject the Parish Council up to a maximum payment risk of £100k per year for the next two years based on any annual financial deficit. The total subsidy cost to the Parish Council for the last 3 years has been £525k, yet we have still managed to deliver on all projects agreed and reduce the precept by 18%. This is a far cry from our previous direct financial liabilities of the sports centre losing over £300k per year and now it is now aligned with all other sports centres across the district who are funded and managed directly by NEDDC through collective district taxation, with a smaller short-term contribution from the Parish Council. Once this period of subsidy is complete, the balance of equity across the district will be as it should be instead of Killamarsh paying solely for its own Sports Centre, as well funding everyone else's in addition, which it has done for decades at detriment to Killamarsh and its residents.

Although we have managed to bring the Council reserves back within legal parameters, we remain cautious in committing financial expenditure as risks remain somewhat volatile and need to be managed carefully to ensure we don't fall back to pre-2020 reserve levels.

The Council's operational team remains stable and endeavour to continue building revenue from facilities to deliver more for Killamarsh and to minimise the financial burden of services on the community.

Killamarsh Active

We are reliably informed that the Sports Centre continues to go from strength to strength, with memberships rising and the new facilities such as the children's play area, the café and the integrated library, all continuing to see an increase in visitors to the centre. Killamarsh Active continues to build on its plan to increase usage and patronage as well as drawing additional visitors to Killamarsh to meet its ambitious business plan over the coming years. The Cost-of-Living crisis and rising energy costs have had a detrimental effect, leading to the Sports Centre still being behind on its projections.

In the meantime, the Parish Council continues to support the District Council financially on the agreed 5-year plan, while NEDDC continues to manage the Centre's financial projections and enable the facilities to become a sustainable going concern. We encourage residents to visit Killamarsh Active to see what they have to offer and take advantage of the facilities wherever possible.

Skate Park

During the last year Parish and District Councillors continued to work closely with NEDDC on the development of the Skate Park which saw the full refurbishment and reopening of the park in early 2024. The park has been received extremely well in the community and is now utilised a great deal more across many sections of our community, providing a much better equipped site. This has come at no direct cost to the residents of Killamarsh with the project being fully funded from other external sources, the majority of which came from the national Safer Street Funds scheme.

Parish Suite

The last year has seen your Parish Suite refurbished at a cost of £158,524, which was under budget and considerably less than when the consultation took place in late 2022/early 2023. The Parish Council always promised to deliver a project with best value in mind and it has delivered on this promise. This has included £99,410 grant funding from the FCC Community Foundation, Community Projects, with the remainder being provided by the Council's Parish Suite earmarked reserves, which was built from claimed back overpayments in utility costs. The new disability friendly accessible entrance door was also fully funded from grant funding.

The Council is pleased to have achieved the refurbishment without any form of financial borrowing, eradicating any ongoing financial impact and risk to the community. The Council has worked hard to ensure costs were managed well and to avoid any unnecessary additional cost implications, delivering the project under budget.

It's important to acknowledge and give thanks to our Parish Team for the effort and dedication in ensuring the refurbishment was completed prior to the new year, to the agreed specification, and for sourcing additional external funding for the project.

Killamarsh Community Hub (formerly known as the CLOC building/Tardis)

The Killamarsh Community Hub has now received some significant refurbishment to allow the Parish Council to relocate its office permanently to the building. The relocation went well, and modifications made to the main entrance area ensures it is managed much more effectively. It is now the intended village focal point for community and Council contact, and whenever the Parish Office is open, it is fully accessible to residents as promised. As a key part of the refurbishment, the building is now fully equipped with solar panels which should ensure we limit our climate impact and carbon reduction objectives while reducing energy costs for this building alone.

Community user interest in the building is continuing to grow steadily, with several groups continuing to use the space. All Parish Council Committee meetings and other meetings are now held in the hub, with Full Parish Council meetings now resumed in the refurbished Parish Suite.

The Council have approved further work to be undertaken to allow the Killamarsh Heritage Group space to operate from an aspect of the building, which will hopefully encourage greater use of the building moving forward.

Allotments

Again, this year, I would like to thank Judy France our Deputy Clerk for the continued hard work that has gone in to carry out the continued monitoring of our allotments and for ensuring concerns are continually dealt with in a timely and efficient manner. More allotments have now been brought up to the required standard that is set in the policy and the waiting list continues to slowly fall.

The Environment Committee is continuing to review pieces of land owned by the Council and by the District Council, to identify if any existing spaces that could be converted into further allotments, to ease the still high level of residents on the waiting list. This work is ongoing.

Cemetery

Due to previous concerns raised a new grounds maintenance supplier has been appointed to undertake work in our community, especially the new cemetery. Early signs are that this is a great improvement to its previous upkeep and the new supplier activities are being received well.

Christmas Lights & Seasonal Fixtures

During December 2023 we decided to revert to the original Christmas one-dimensional lamppost trees, however we were unable to provide the decorated trees as we saw in 2022, as the supplier had already reached its market reach on decorations. Although we did invest more, the outcome was not as anticipated. We have already started to look at the options available to us for Christmas 2024 and will be deciding in due course on the best approach so we can achieve a better outcome this year. The Council has taken note of the feedback provided around previous issues and will continue to work towards a positive resolution.

The Council have continued to invest in the additional aspects of lamp post hanging baskets or additional planters in the village for flowers, as this adds visual appeal to the main areas of the village.

Remembrance Day

Remembrance Day 2023 took place as per the previous year, and thankfully working closely with residents managed to secure a marching band, after previously been unable to do so, since many had disbanded during the pandemic. The afternoon tea took place at the Community Hub, which was attended by many residents. This was part funded by Derbyshire County Council Leadership Fund and donations.

D Day 80th Anniversary

This year on 5 and 6 June, sees the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings, with many events taking place across the country, the Parish Council will be marking this, led by the Killamarsh Branch of The British Legion, and an event involving the Killamarsh Heritage Society at the Killamarsh Community Hub on 8th June 2024. Killamarsh Heritage Society have also arranged their annual coach trip to the National Memorial Arboretum on 28th June as part of the D-Day 80th Anniversary Events also.

Summer Festival

2023 saw the first time in several years, that the Council has sought to provide a Summer Festival and was planned to take place during July, and unfortunately due to severe weather warnings at the time the event had to be cancelled at the last minute. The plan is to hold this year's event in June this year, with a date of June 22nd, 11am to 4pm with hopefully no cancellation this time. This will be held at the Community Campus facilities, on the rear field and around the leisure centre area. This is aimed to provide some summer entertainment for residents and bring the community together.

Community Awards

This year sees the Parish Council embark on something a little different but shines a light on the remarkable contributions that a wealth of community champions has brought to our village.

On the 5th of June 2024 Nominations for the Pride of Killamarsh Community Awards will open, and we encourage all Killamarsh residents to take this opportunity to recognise and celebrate the remarkable contributions of their fellow community champions.

There will be 3 categories:

- Group Award
- Individual (18 and over) Award
- Individual (17 and below) Award

Nominations will close on 5th August 2024.

Killamarsh Parish Council to commemorate R.A.S.P.

A plaque placing ceremony is to take place imminently (dates to be confirmed), at Killamarsh Parish Suite to commemorate the important actions of Killamarsh's *Residents Against Sarp Pollution* that took place between 1998-2000. It celebrates residents who relentlessly took their voices to the streets and press fighting against severe pollution and illegal activities undertaken at the former SARP UK site in Killamarsh, that seriously affected the health and wellbeing of Killamarsh residents and surrounding areas.

Beacon

The Parish Council are currently investigating the option to install a Beacon in the village, this is in the planning stage and more information will follow as the forthcoming Council year progresses.

Environment & Outdoor Fixtures

Norwood Park was renovated and refurbished last summer, replacing the original play equipment that had fallen into severe disrepair. This now serves the younger children living around the park.

Work is in progress to investigate the way forward for the planned King Charles III Park at High Moor to bring back a decent play area for the locally based children and expanding housing provision. It is currently going through the stages of consultation, costing and funding investigation. This will go some way towards assisting High Moor residents to feel more included as part of the Killamarsh Community in which they reside.

New equipment has been installed at Birchlands Park, with more to follow including a 5-a-side football pitch and a basketball net area.

The village has again seen several new benches replaced as part of our ongoing plan to maintain key public spaces.

Further tree inspections have identified risks posed by trees and their current states in various locations around the village. Work has been carried out by NEDDC to rectify some of those that affect residential properties, and it continues to be a focus of the Parish Council to have others addressed appropriately.

Work has been agreed to rejuvenate the Village Green and some new flower boxes will be installed shortly.

I would like to recognise the dedication and hard work of the Conservation Group in our community this past year through the upkeep of the wildflower areas and creation of further flowering green spaces across Killamarsh and look forward to seeing more in bloom as time progresses.

It's also important to acknowledge another year of fantastic upkeep from the Killamarsh Wombles as they continue to graft over keeping our community clean and tidy through rain and shine. Their efforts are relentless and should never go unrecognised, and I thank them for continuing to inspire having some pride in where we live.

Community CCTV

The CCTV and ANPR cameras have now been approved and permission granted by Derbyshire County Council and lampposts tested ready for installation by the Parish Council appointed supplier. These will be at set locations across the whole village. Having worked closely with Derbyshire Police and the Safer Neighbourhoods Team the installation of CCTV and ANPR cameras should help assist in identifying and reducing areas of crime and anti-social behaviour and help police in undertaken their duties to keep our community and our residents safer.

Speed Indicator Devices and Road Safety

Three Speed Indicator devices and three alternatively positioned brackets have now been installed around the village. Early usage of the system has identified that some more work needs to be undertaken to bring it up to optimum standard, and this is being looked at by our Environment Committee. The Parish Council is working through this to deliver the best operating solution.

We have been looking at ways we could assist our Schools in Killamarsh and have initially enquired with Derbyshire County Council to reduce the speed limit around our schools to 20mph, which unfortunately has been turned down as the roads around the schools do not meet the policy requirements for this. Other aspects have been investigated and are ongoing.

Extreme Wheels and Activities for Young People

Extreme Wheels have commenced their summer outdoor youth activity delivery program, after delivering a successful winter season of indoor events at the Community Hub. These continue to be well attended, providing our younger residents with activities that fill some of the recreational gaps outside of school and brings youngsters together in safe, secure environments.

The Council continues to look at ways of delivering events for all young age groups and welcomes ideas from the wider community in suggesting future activities. The Council also remains keen to support the inclusion of young people in some decision-making processes around events, activities and facilities aimed at their age

groups as key stakeholders in the future of the village.

Work has now started to look at the options available to the Parish Council, to deliver on the Youth Council aspect we have promised. This is in the early stages and work is progressing.

Police Station

After receiving news late last year that Killamarsh was earmarked for a new Police Station, the Parish Council has welcomed the news that work has now started on its development, and we look forward to a new facility arriving over the coming months. It's been long overdue that we have Policing facilities that have the capacity and capability to deliver a modern-day policing function in our village, and one that delivers for our residents effectively.

Westthorpe Development

The Parish Council along with RAGE are monitoring work as preparations are put in place to start the building of the houses at the Westthorpe site and aim to keep the community informed as far as possible with key significant issues around the development. The Parish Council will continue its efforts to minimise any negative impacts on the community and hold both the developers and NEDDC accountable for any challenges that the community faces out of this huge development.

The Future

The Parish Council's focus will remain on our community, and we will continue to deliver as promised, on improving many aspects across our village while ensuring budgets are well managed. Killamarsh is your village, and we will always listen and welcome feedback, so should you feel there is something we could potentially deliver better for you, then please let us know. Ideas are always welcome.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for your patience, it takes time to deliver on projects, but we will continue towards better community facilities and services for all residents.

5 Annual Finance Report

The Clerk presented the annual report and informed the meeting that the internal audit had been completed and the report would go to the next meeting of the Full Council in June for approval. Cllr Laws asked the Chair if overall the Parish Council was in a good financial state and the Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council was in a good position financially.

Annual Finance Report 2024

Introduction

The Parish Council year end accounts have been prepared and as of the 2nd of May 2024 are with the independent internal auditor for scrutiny and verification.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2023/24 will be put forward to the Parish Council for approval at the Full Council to be held on the 20th of June 2024. Once approved the return will be submitted to the external auditor, PKF Littlejohn LLP.

The unaudited accounts will be available for inspection between the 3rd of June 2024 and 12th July 2024, more information on this can be obtained from the Clerk. The fully audited accounts will be available later in the year and this will be advertised in the normal way.

Income

The Parish Council received income of £597,761, most of which was from the precept of £440,314.

Category	Amount (£)
Precept	440,314
Grants	145,188
Parks & Open Spaces	1,420
Parish Suite Income	5,676 Since December 2023
Community Hub Income	1,535

Events	2,895
Misc. Income	733

Expenditure

The Parish Council spent £709,480.

Category	Amount (£)	Comments
Staff Costs	174,857	
Administration Costs	37,859	
Grants to organisations spend £4,470	4,322	Grant from 22/23 returned actual
Leisure Centre Subsidy	75,000	
Leisure Centre contribution to heating system	20,000	Last payment
Parish Suite Refurbishment & new doors	176,556	Partially Grant Funded
Parks & Open Spaces	42,890	
Cemetery & Churchyards	4,563	
Street Furniture Shelters	1,982	Benches, Bins, Noticeboards & Bus
Neighbourhood plan	2,150	Grant Funded
Speed Indicator Devices	10,723	Partially Grant Funded
Norwood Play Area	51,441	Partially Grant Funded
Cemetery Gates Automation	7,123	
Killamarsh Community Hub	31,511	
Parish Suite	49,575	Includes sub lease & shared costs
Extreme Wheels project	8,265	
Events & Activities	10,663	

Reserves

General Reserves

It is recommended that a Parish Council should typically hold between 3- and 12-months expenditure as a general reserve. The Parish Council currently has a general reserve pot of £138,014.35 a small decrease on the 22/23 figure.

Ear Marked / Ring Fenced Reserves

The purpose of an earmarked / ring fenced reserve is to allocate funds for a specific purpose or project which will be spent in future years. Killamarsh Parish Council at the end of financial year 23/24 has the following earmarked reserves totalling £183,399 a decrease of £102,279 from 22/23.

Reserve Name	Amount (£)
EMR Parish Suite Reserve	25,000.00
Rolling Capital Fund	100,000.00
EMR Environment Reserve	51,382.70
EMR Community Events	5,000.00
EMR Election Costs	8,000.00
EMR Speed watch	16.26
EMR Community Hub Property Repairs	15,000.00
EMR IT Refresh	3,000.00
EMR Vehicle & Equipment renewal	5,000.00

The ear marked reserves were reviewed by the Finance Committee and approved by Full Council in April 2024.

Grants to organisations – Section 137

The Parish Council has the power to make donations or grants to local organisations each year

either using the General Power of Competence or the statutory Section 137 power. During 23/24 the Parish Council made the following payments:

Organisation	Amount
Killamarsh Heritage Society	500.00
Killamarsh Conservation Group	500.00
Killamarsh Bears	500.00
Killamarsh Dynamos	500.00
Killamarsh Heritage Society	500.00
Killamarsh Royal British Legion	500.00
Killamarsh Methodist Church	500.00
Killamarsh Wombles	500.00

Conclusion

The Parish Council ends 23/24 in a good financial position. The internal auditor will highlight any areas of concern in a report to Council and make recommendations on how these can be addressed where applicable. This report will be discussed at Full Council once the report is received.

6 Public Participation

A member of the public mentioned that the road surfacing at Valley Road has recently been improved after she had complained about in several times. She asked the Chair who was responsible for roads and footpaths in Killamarsh as there was another path she was aware of that was in a very bad state. The Chair said that roads and public rights of way were normally the responsibility of Derbyshire County Council. Cllr Tinley said she would speak to the member of the public after the meeting to see whether there is anything she could help with.

A member of the public asked who was responsible for hanging baskets and planters and the Chair confirmed that the Parish Council provided these. The Deputy Clerk said that summer planting would be done in late May or early June.

The meeting closed at 6.20pm.