



Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 20th May 2024 at 6pm in the Lecture Room at The Rothley Centre, 12 Mountsorrel Lane, Rothley.

In attendance: Cllrs Hartshorn, Gross, Simons, Hall, Watts, Ferguson, Mitchell, Feeley and Brettle
Cllr Leon Hadji-Nikolaou, Charles Poole, Cllr Mark Charles
PCSO Shaheen Abdulla
Gail Newcombe – Clerk to the Parish Council
Sue Wyles – Snr Administrator

Minutes

1) Chairman's welcome

2) To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 11th April 2022

Resolved to accept as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman

3) Chairman's report

Chairman's report for Annual Parish Meeting 2024.

Over the past 12 months the council met every third Monday of the month. Except for July. These meetings are open to all members of the public and press.

Following the election in May we had 1 vacancy. We co-opted Cllr Vaitha. To make a full complement of Councillors throughout the rest of the year.

This year there have been 71 planning applications mostly for small extensions. Plus, The School extension & 70 houses

- Rothley Centre, CBC are trying to impose a new lease with terms we are not happy with. The matter is now with our solicitors to resolve.
- We have refurbished toilets in the Village Hall to include baby changing and Disabled toilet.
- The open spaces committee have made improvements to the Cycle track on Fowke St play area. Thanks to Tarmac for the donation of material.
- Taken over another area of LCC grass verge and planted wildflowers.
- We have repointed cemetery gate pillars and repainted gates to include original RPC sign.
- Replaced missing posts and chains around Town green and repainted all this area.
- Replaced post on Town Green St to protect grass verges.
- Repainted safety railings on Mountsorrel Lane & North St.

- We have had a meeting with planning officers at CBC to try to resolve the section 106 re the bridge. This was signed in 2014. We are now looking to make an alternative safe route to School. This is to divert children from North St which we consider dangerous. This will be done with funds from Persimmon instead of the bridge.
- We have set a precept which has increased our part of council tax by 2 % This was necessary due to the increases in utility prices.
- We have agreed to give a grant to the Rothley Community Library once LCC funding stops.
- We took the lead again with the Christmas lights switch on.

I would like to thank all councillors for their support this year, also the group of volunteers who look after Cross green and other village areas to keep the village looking tidy.

It has been a busy year for our clerk and office staff with numerous new regulations, but they have coped very well and I thank them for their efforts.

Percy Hartshorn.

4) Police report

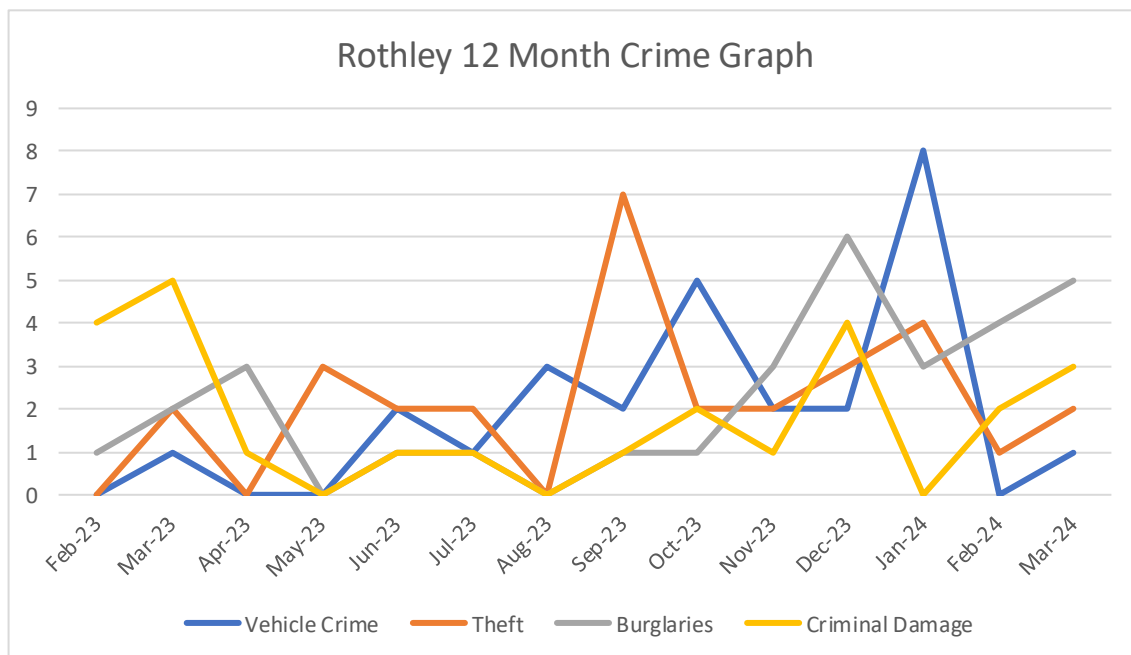
PCSO Abdulla informed the meeting that the police are monitoring reports of anti-social behaviour on Kinchley Lane. Rothley Parish Council were not invited to a recent meeting with representatives from Quorn Parish Council as the area near the reservoir falls within Quorn boundary. The speed limit on Kinchley Lane is 60mph therefore the police are unable to issue speeding fines. RPC to contact LCC Highways to see if the speed limit can be reduced. The parish council were asked to consider erecting bins in the area however they believe this would not resolve the issue of littering and could be subject to vandalism.

Rothley

01/02/2023 – 31/03/2024 Crime Figures:

	March 2022 – February 2023	February 2023 – March 2024
Vehicle Crime	22	27
Theft	28	30
Burglaries	16	31
Criminal Damage	7	25

This does not include other crimes such as domestic incidents, violence and public order offences that have been investigated by Leicestershire Police in the last 12 months. Further information on these reports can be found on the Police.uk website.



What have the beat team been up to the last 12 months?

- Held monthly beat surgeries in Rothley and surrounding villages, engaged with members of the public to discuss their neighbourhood concerns.
- This year the beat team have held several speed ops on Loughborough Road, Kinchley Lane, Gypsy Lane and Swithland Lane, Rothley where we collated speeding data, stopped and advised drivers and sent out advisory letters to those caught speeding. We have been communicating with Charnwood Borough Council and the Highways Department at Leicestershire Police about our speeding concerns in the village.
- Carried out residential and school parking patrols and liaised with council traffic wardens areas of concern.
- Attended local events such as the Rothley Christmas light switch on and the Rothley Court Hotel Fair, school, nursery and scout visits.
- Regularly patrolling Rothley and the surrounding villages and “hot spot areas”.
- Remained a presence and kept working relationships with local businesses and assisted with investigations when these businesses have been targeted.
- Working with partnership agencies and developing intelligence to help tackle ASB and crime in Rothley.
- Visited victims of crime offering reassurance and crime prevention advice whilst carrying out investigation enquiries

This is just a selection of what the beat team have been doing in Rothley. The beat team also cover surrounding villages and we assist with operational demand across Charnwood.

Anti-Social Behaviour:

In the last 60 days reported ASB in Rothley:

Youths playing music and being noisy in the Church ground on School Street

Upcoming Beat Surgeries:

Sunday 12th May Rothley Co-op 1-2pm

Saturday 20th July Rothley Library 1-2pm

5) Borough Councillor's Report

It has been another challenging year within the parish and borough with the ongoing war in Ukraine, the problems in Gaza, the cost of living crisis, high inflation and high energy costs.

All of these factors have added to increasing pressures on council budgets and the many issues faced by not only the council but by all the residents of the borough. The council has set out to do everything it can to support residents whilst balancing the books and maintaining current services.

The budget was recently approved by council and owing to higher interest rates on invested monies and the ability to use business rates, pool income, the council finds itself in a stronger financial position than was expected, whilst many councils are struggling financially, it is good to see that Charnwood will be able to budget with a limited use of reserves that have been built up over many years of shrewd fiscal management.

There are potential risks on the horizon, particularly with the housing benefits subsidy and we wait to see what changes can be made to assist the general fund through additional income or reduction in expenditure.

In respect of the local plan, the council have received a letter from the independent inspectors setting out the next steps, we will move forward to consultation on the main modifications that are required to make the local plan sound. It is considered that the council will be looking to adopt the local plan towards the end of 2024.

It is worth noting that this year, Charnwood will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary. The borough was created in 1972. To celebrate its golden anniversary, Charnwood will be highlighting everything that is great about the borough including its landmarks, open spaces, businesses and its residents.

And finally, I would like to personally thank the residents of the Parish and borough for their support over the past year.

Cllr. Mark Charles

6) County Councilor's Report

I would like to thank all members of the Parish Council for their excellent work. I also would like to thank all members of the community for their unwavering support for improvements in the village. The County Council has been working hard for the improvement of the conditions in the villages and the wider region. I present some examples.

Cash boost for buses in county

Leicestershire County Council has been given a further £1.79m in Government funding to continue shaping the future of public transport in the county. Back in June 2023 the county council was given the same figure from the Bus Service Improvement Plan

Plus (BSIP Plus) fund as part of Department for Transport (DfT) settlements to more than 60 local transport authorities in England. It will not, however, mean the council will re-instate bus services which have been recently withdrawn, or fund poor value bus services.

Organisations sign up for free mental health training

Organisations in Leicestershire have signed up enthusiastically to help people with their mental health. As part of World Mental Health Day (10 October 2023), the county council highlighted the early success of its Mental Health Friendly Places scheme along with the support it offers to Leicestershire residents. More than 15 organisations in Leicestershire and Rutland have already signed up to become mental health friendly places, including both businesses and charities. The NHS England-funded partnership initiative with Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council was created to help support and encourage local people to start or support conversations about mental health. Residents of Leicestershire can also play their part in learning more about mental health and suicide prevention through Start a Conversation online course.

County tops table as smokers stub out habit

Leicestershire has topped the table for the lowest rate of smoking in adults in the East Midlands. As smokers across the county are being encouraged to stop smoking for Stoptober, new figures show that just 9.4% of the county now smoke, compared with 11.2% in 2021. The County Council's Quit Ready service has helped over 11,000 people to quit smoking for good since 2017 and is on hand to offer support for anyone ready to stop smoking through tailored programmes. The County Council has provided the Members' Highways Funds and the Borough Council the Members' Grants, both of which have become available for projects and improvements in the village.

Of course, there are ongoing local challenges:

crime and antisocial behaviour

flooding

pressures on the Primary School due to the Broadnook Development

On going challenges with safe access to the Primary School

Congestion and Parking issues around the school

Congestion issues with the works in A6 connected with the Broadnook development

We are working together with council authorities, developers' representatives and local people to address these issues and provide sustainable solutions. I am committed to fight against further massive developments within the village, to maintain its character and further improve the amenities for local people.

Cllr Leon Hadji-Nikolaou, MD, FRCS

County Councillor, Rothley and Mountsorrel Division

Mobile: 07913490763

7) Rothley Library Report

[Rothley Community Library: Annual Report March 23 – March 24](#)

Objectives of the Library as agreed in 2015 when the library was set up.

1. The provision of a public library in Rothley and surrounding area.
2. To advance education of the public in Rothley by operating and managing a lending library.

3. To promote for the benefit of the residents of Rothley and the surrounding area the provision of a public library for recreation and / or other leisure time

The library only operates on the huge contribution of volunteers from the community. Currently there are 34 active volunteers. Twenty-eight of whom work on the public counter in the library on a rota basis and the others work 'behind the scenes' offering support such under 5 sessions, auditing, graphic design, IT services, clubs, Health and Safety advice, gardening. 12 of those have been with the library for over 5 years. We are fortunate to have had 10 new volunteers during the year who have been trained and are all now working on the rota. Cover for the rota is now more secure than it has been since 2020.

From 1st March 23 – 1st March 24

There were: 3280 borrowers 8883 books issued 203 New joiners

(Figures collected by Leicestershire Library)

The library had **10,152 visitors** (including approx. 1150 during Scarecrow Trail weekend.)

2 students have completed their bronze awards with the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and we currently have one person from the local community working on a Saturday morning. We have made the decision to only accept young people who live in Rothley to work with us as we were getting requests from people who live outside the area and we only have the capacity to have one student at a time. There is another young person on the waiting list.

We have confirmed with the Library Service to reduce to our original hours (16) to the current 14 hours per week.

We have continued to have regular groups in the library and each has increased the number of participants over the year.

Under 5s runs twice per week. Yarn Craft 2 x per month, monthly Book Group, weekly Chess Group and Lego club running once per month.

We also host outside groups The Writers' Group monthly, 'Adopters' group monthly, Dementia support group

The Leicestershire Libraries Summer Reading Challenge ran during July and August. 104 children registered from 17 different schools. 47% of those children completed and got their certificate and medal.

The Community Book boxes which were popular and well used during the summer months, were emptied in October 23 and were refilled in March 24.

The Yarncraft group have created some fantastic yarn bombs on the top of the village letter box by the chemist's shop. These have been really well received and scored lots of hits on social media. They have also sold some of their 'creations' to raise library funds.

We have joined the 'warm spaces' initiative and now offer hot drinks to those who want them.

Finances 2022-23

The various sources of income are listed on the attached accounts amounting to £5,983. This income was generated by ourselves and we continue to explore new income generating ideas. There were no grants received in the year.

Expenditure 2022-23 Total revenue expenditure reported was £12,000. The significant expenses were unavoidable running costs of £7195 (i.e., electricity, water, insurance, cleaning and maintenance contracts). IT contract expenditure was £1,770.

Consumables (printing, stationery, newspapers) were £1720

In December 2022 £10,000 was transferred to a 12-month fixed interest bond with Cambridge and Counties bank. In addition, at 31st March 2023 the library had further cash reserves remaining of £19,537, thus giving total cash reserves of £29,537. This compares with £35,554 in total at the start of the financial year.

All accounts were independently audited and filed with the Charity Commission by the due date.

The financial position at March 2024 is that we are in the process of running down our cash reserves as we are no longer in receipt of any revenue grant funding. The current cash reserve at February 2024 stands at £25,289. This is now spread over a NatWest Liquidity manager account (generating interest) and a business current account.

The library's running costs are forecast to be in the order of £13,000 for the year to March 2024. The largest cost by far is electricity. The 3-year fixed rate deal that we had expired at the end of April 2023. We have a new one-year fixed deal until April 2024 and are forecasting our electricity cost to be circa £4,000. This is double the amount for 2022-2023 and 30% of our total running costs. We are introducing energy saving measures where feasible, for example having the front blinds open in the morning to capture the heat from the sun.

In conclusion, we are using our accumulated cash reserves to part fund the library over the next few years. By 2025-26 our running costs are forecast to be in the region of £14,000, our generated income circa £7,000. An annual grant of £6,500 from Rothley Parish Council leaves us with a small shortfall of about £500 each year.

Fund raising events:

We had a very successful Film Night event in September which was attended by over 250 people. This raised nearly £300. The Scouts, PFA and Raphael's Pizza also supported the event.

The Scarecrow trail on 22nd/23rd September attracted 65 scarecrow entries, with 1175 people visiting the library and raised just over £750 for library funds. Most of the food stalls who were invited to come along did well and enjoyed the event.

The sale of ice creams during the summer proved popular. Tea, coffee, biscuits and squash are now provided free of charge to us from the Co-op on Loughborough Road. These are currently provided to library visitors on a 'donation' basis.

We are holding regular sales of donated books and toys. Up until February 2024 book sales had raised £1100. This includes books traded online and those sold to a specialist book seller.

18 volunteers with partners and friends enjoyed a Quiz night in November.

A second quiz night was held in February with 27 people attending.

The village Christmas lights switch on was enjoyed by all, even though it was a freezing night and the book stall, yarn craft sale and bottle raffle raised about £300 for the library funds.

The outside of the library has been spruced up, with the hedge being reduced in size, the meter cupboard door being replaced and some of the paving slabs outside being re-laid to make the path more even. A volunteer maintains the flower boxes for us.

Inside the library, we have had the entrance floor repaired and levelled, purchased new matting and the exasperating front door has been temporarily fixed. One of the Trustees continues to monitor and maintain all the services required to keep the library safe and warm.

Sandra Newman joined the Trustee team during the year. The rest of the team remains the same. Sandra W (treasurer), Jill Williams, (secretary), Michelle Stephenson (communications), Steve Mitchell (premises), Sue Barnes, (volunteer team) Claire Cole, Grace Henry- Wake. Trustee meetings take place regularly every 4- 6 weeks. Minutes for these are available in the library going forward.

SEB

8) Rothley Good Neighbours Scheme Report

The Rothley Good Neighbours Scheme has been operating for five and half years and since November 2018 the organisation has carried out the following tasks

- 200 trips to hospitals
- 75 trips to doctor's surgeries
- 550 prescription collections & deliveries
- 52 trips to shops
- 18 gardening make overs
- 22 D I Y tasks
- 32 domestic tasks
- 71 befriending sessions

During this time, it has come to the aid of 140 local residents across Rothley & Mountsorrel.

The scheme, run by a small number of volunteers, helps and supports the elderly, vulnerable or those who are need of temporary assistance due to illness injury or bereavement. Since the end of the national pandemic the calls for collection of prescriptions has apart from a few exceptions stopped as both pharmacies in Mountsorrel & Rothley now have delivery services.

The scheme's running costs (phone contract & insurance cover) are now met by income from the monthly film club, held on the first Friday of each month at the Rothley Centre. The film club, which is almost exclusively for senior citizens, is organized by the Good Neighbours Scheme with the generous support of Rothley Parish Council who waive the room hire fees. Without this support both the Film Club and Good Neighbours Scheme would struggle to survive.

Future plans for the scheme involve the purchase of a new phone as this is key to contact with clients and an attempt to get volunteers from Mountsorrel to assist with demand from their residents as Mountsorrel do not have a scheme such as ours.

Steve Mitchell Chair RGNS

9) Reports from Charities

a) Harry Hames Cottage Charity

Harry Hames Cottage Charity. Year ended 31/3/2024.

During the year sadly one of our residents passed away. We have since let this property to a new tenant. All of the cottages are now let.

All Gas appliances have been checked and landlords certificates are held. We have had electrical inspection of all cottages carried out.

Trustees have inspected all cottages and we have carried out any work required on all cottages. We had to add an additional radiator to one cottage and replace the central heating boiler in another cottage.

The trustees are looking to make some other improvements to the cottages in the next financial year.

We were reminded by our Auditor that we needed to look at cottage rents these have not been increased since 2015. The trustees have agreed to make a small increase of 5% from April this year.

We have given a grant to Rothley Parish Council towards the refurbishment of the Village Hall toilets.
We gave a grant to Rothley Parish Church towards the repairs to the Church Clock.
The Charity remains in a healthy financial position.

Report complete:- Percy Hartshorn. Chairman of the Trustees.

b) Combined Rothley Charities

REPORT OF MISCELLANEOUS CHARITIES

The Rothley Bartholomew Hickling Educational Foundation normally use their funds to assist those children from Rothley Primary School whose parents / carers cannot afford the full costs, to attend school trips, including residentials, and to assist with school clothing. During the last year three such pupils in Year 5 have been supported, all to attend the Residential Trip to Sheringham, Norfolk.

The effects of the cost of living increases has also magnified the financial difficulties experienced by some residents. The Soar Valley Community Food Bank Project (a separate charity) continues to do excellent work supporting numerous villagers, notably through the Food Bank. There have, however, also been two applications to the Rothley Consolidated Charities where families, in particular, have been facing urgent or exceptional needs, whilst also struggling financially. As a consequence, the Charity has given two grants, both relating to particular needs associated with older children and young people. One related to the need for school uniforms and the other assisted a University entrant whose course required significant outlay on course literature and material at the start of the course.

Charles Poole
(Hon Clerk to Trustees)

10)Local issues brought to the meeting by electors

No issues raised

11)Any other business

On behalf of Rothley Parish Council, we send our best wishes to Jerry Jackson and thank him so much for all his hard work. Folk in Rothley really look forward to the Post coming out and they will miss them coming through their letterboxes. Good luck for the future.

Meeting closed at 6.25pm

Signed.....Date.....