

Newdigate Parish Council

The Annual Meeting of Newdigate Parish Council took place on Monday 13 April 2019. A warm welcome was given to John Sage who is one of two newly elected Councillors joining those Councillors who had been re-elected on 2 May. Robin Gardner was also newly elected but unable to attend this meeting. Before the meeting commenced, all Councillors present signed their Acceptance of Office forms and completed Declarations of Interest forms. There was a unanimous decision to re-elect Bill Kear as Chairman and Phill Crutcher as Vice Chairman.

Following several other procedural items on the agenda, PC Sue Gargini updated the meeting on current police staffing levels and community involvement events, followed by a question and answer session. Replies in support of the Parish Council's letter regarding local earthquakes have been received. The Council for Protection of Rural England (CPRE) has published an article on oil drilling in their spring edition of Surrey Voice. Suitable replacements for the village noticeboards were discussed and a decision needs to be made at the next Parish Council meeting about whether to replace them with traditional locally produced noticeboards, or man-made ones which are more expensive but longer lasting. Newdigate will not take part in the Villages in Bloom event this year; however, given early planning and community involvement, it may be possible to take part next year.

The huge disruption and dangerous driving conditions caused by hundreds of cyclists using Newdigate's narrow rural roads over the weekend was discussed at length. The Parish Council had not been informed about the event by the event organisers, or the Police, or the District Council. A notice placed in a local pub by the organisers had been the first indication that the event, involving up to 2000 cyclists, was taking place. The Parish Council then placed warning notices with a map of the area affected on its noticeboards. There was no apparent control or supervision of the numbers of cyclists riding in large groups impeding the progress of motorists for significant periods of time. The Parish Council will be writing letters of complaint to the event organisers and others.

The meeting ended with a unanimous vote of thanks to Bob Bettsworth and Neil Austin for all their many long years of work on the Council.

The next Meeting of the Parish Council is on Monday 10 June at 8pm
Public attendance at our meetings is very welcome

Lesley Bignell
Clerk to the Council
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