

WHITBOURNE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

MINUTES of the Annual Parish Meeting Held on Wednesday 2nd May 2018 at 7.00pm in Whitbourne Village Hall

Present: Cllr R James (Chairman), Cllr M Williams (Vice-Chairman), Cllrs P Wood, N Knight, G Cupper, A Evans, J Walker

In attendance: Cllr N Shaw (Ward Councillor) and Mr K Phillips (Clerk). No members of the public present.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs J Bromley and J Cummins

2 Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council

See attached report given by Cllr James

3 Public Discussion of any matters relating to Whitbourne

It was determined that the current insurance covered the bus stop. This was to be reviewed if/when the new bus shelter is in place.

The insurance for the war memorial needed to be clarified.

Meeting Closed at 19:28

Signed Cllr James (Chairman)

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Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council

I had hoped that this last year would be a quieter one for the Parish Council and fortunately that has proved to be the case, mainly due to the fact that we have had a competent clerk in post for the full twelve months. Kevin Phillips has quickly settled into his post and has changed some of the practices so that the agenda's, minutes and financial reports are easier to read as well as been accurate. He has also got to know some of the personalities at Herefordshire Council who the Parish Council have regular dealings with. One of the new responsibilities that the PC and Kevin in particular have got to get to grips with are the new Data Protection Rules. Fortunately as a PC we hold very few personal details except for those of the Parish Councillors themselves who's details have to be in the public domain anyway. These rules could be more of a problem for our satellite committees (the village hall and the playing field committees) who will probably hold the details of people booking their facilities.

During the year we said goodbye to Colin White who moved away from the village to be nearer his family. Colin with his IT expertise worked very hard to help produce the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The PC wished Colin and Elizabeth the very best wishes for their future life in Dorset. To fill Colin's vacancy we co-opted John Walker on to the PC. John has served on the PC before and with his knowledge of the area and of local agricultural I am sure he will be a big asset to the council.

We have set up a working party under the lead of Peter Wood to supervise the spending of the 106 monies. This is the money that was allocated to the Parish from the developers of Ardley Meadows to be used for projects that will benefit the community. There are only certain categories within which we can use these funds. So we are hoping to put in some speed restriction measures on the main route into the village from the A44, improve the footpaths in the area of the village shop and renew the bus shelter on the village green.

With regard to the PC finances we have unfortunately had to increase the parish precept for this coming year, this is mainly due to the fact that we have had to dip into our reserves mainly to cover the extra costs incurred when we were without a permanent clerk. Also we anticipate that we will probably need extra monies to cover training and contributions towards the refurbishment of the war memorial. Because we are only a small parish we have to spend a bigger percentage of our budget on administrative expenses compared to larger parishes. We do now have one new dispensation in that because our turnover is less than £25,000 we do not now have to pay to have our accounts externally audited with an internal auditor being sufficient. The PC agreed to continue the grant that we give to the DCC to go towards their costs of maintaining the cemetery and the church clock which facilities benefit the whole of the parish. We also gave a grant to Bringsty Common to help with the cost of mowing the old football pitch.

We are required to review the Neighbourhood Development Plan annually and this we did in November. It has proved to be an excellent guide when the PC is considering what comments to make on planning applications, also HC have used it when making their decisions and in many cases they have quoted the section of the NDP used to confirm their decision.

The problem that is concerning a large number of residents of the parish is the continuing structural deterioration of the Wheatsheaf Inn. We as a PC are aware of how depressing this building looks as you enter the centre of the village but because it is privately owned there is very little we can do. Our ward councillor Nigel Shaw has been working hard trying to get the present owner to come forward with a sensible solution that would be acceptable to the planners and the village. We are hopeful that there may be a resolution to this problem in the near future.

We are hoping to have the war memorial on the village green refurbished during the next twelve months. This would mean just cleaning and repainting the lettering that has become almost illegible. The vice chairman Maureen Williams is busy applying for a grant that if successful will go some way towards the costs. We may also ask if anyone would like to donate towards this project as there are quite a few of us who live locally who's relatives names are on the memorial and would wish their memory to be kept alive.

Pot holes on the minor village roads are a constant problem which we realise are not unique to this parish and we are aware that HC are constantly looking at quicker and more affective ways of dealing with the task

Finally I would like to thank all the Parish Councillors for their support over the past twelve months and also for their work on all the various committees and working parties that keep this village the attractive and welcoming place that it is.

Ron James Chairman Whitbourne Parish Council