



**Minutes of Kemerton Annual Parish Meeting Held on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025  
at 7.00pm**

**Those Present:**

**Kemerton Parish Council**

Cllr Lisa Croft (Chairman),  
Cllr Clive Carver (Vice Chairman),  
Cllr Christina Kulukundis  
Cllr J Wenham.

**Worcestershire County Council & Wychavon District Council Councillor**

Cllr A Hardman (County)

**Path Warden**

Tim Ashby

**Parishioners Present**

8

**Parish Clerk**

Carol Chambers

**1. Chairmans Welcome**

The Chairman Cllr Lisa Croft opened the meeting and welcomed parishioners and guest to the Annual Parish Meeting and thanked everyone for coming.

**2 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted by Cllr Adrian Darby and Cllr O Alexander

**3. Declaration of Interests**

No Declarations were made.

**4. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Clerk had circulated with the agenda the draft minutes of the previous Annual Parish meeting which was held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024. It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 be adopted as a true record.

**5. Report from West Mercia Police.**

No Police Report had been submitted

**6. County Councillor's and Wychavon District Councillors Report**

The Chairman welcomed C & D Councillor Adrian Harman to the meeting. Cllr Hardman's Report as listed below.

This has been the most challenging year for the County Council as it continues to face relentless financial pressures due to increasing demand and rising costs in key service areas.

- **Children's social care placements**
- **Home-to-school transport**
- **Adult social care**
- **Dealing with inflation**



**The net budget of the Council is now just shy of £0.5 billion for the coming financial year.** These pressures are not unique to Worcestershire but are widespread across county

councils and upper-tier authorities nationwide, who are responsible for Social care services. Despite ongoing efforts to manage spending and demand, the council's forecasted financial position remains challenging, with **£7.9 million in reserves being used to cover in year costs.**

**Key Budget Challenges are complex, and mainly due to the demographics, National legislation that did not anticipate the ongoing effects of Covid 19 on mental health, and the increasing numbers of special education needs provision, which also causes a much higher bill in home to school transport to deliver this service.** The council's budget is **essentially fixed in cash terms**, limiting its ability to raise income.

National restrictions on **council tax and business rates** further constrain funding. It is very difficult for the County Council to engage in Income generation from trading activities. The **cost of service delivery continues to outpace income growth**, exacerbated by factors such as:

- **National Living Wage increases**
- **Changes to employer National Insurance contributions**
- **Rising costs faced by suppliers, partners, and contractors**

## **Budget Deficit & Exceptional Financial Support (EFS)**

At the final budget stage, the **council faced a £48.6 million budget gap.** This was reduced by:

**£12.5 million in cost efficiency and the use of £15 million in one-off reserves.**

This left a **remaining gap of £33.6 million.** Given the severity of the situation, Worcestershire County Council, in line with many other councils, approached the government for **Exceptional Financial Support (EFS)**—the request that was granted but this is not a long term solution and as we await Baroness Cassey's report on Social Care, a review of special educational needs and I believe it is important that the funding formula for Local Government finance is looked at as a matter of urgency.

## **Worcestershire Unitary Discussions & Devolution**

A key development in local government reform being driven by the new Government is the discussion around **unitarization** as part of the national devolution agenda. This is being delivered in a top-down approach from Whitehall.

- Worcestershire applied for inclusion in the **accelerated unitary program**, but this Shire was not accepted on to the programme at this stage. As a result, **County Council elections will proceed as scheduled on 1st May 2025.**
- Government policy indicates that **all areas will transition to a unitary model before the end of this parliamentary term.** This will require:
  - Each area will be required to have a **Parish Council**



- Consideration of **unitary structures** based on local demographics and needs

## Potential Unitary Models for Worcestershire

1. **A single Worcestershire-wide unitary**
2. **A North/South Worcestershire split**

The government's guideline is that unitary authorities should ideally serve a **population of 500,000+**. This does not simplify the governance of the County since following the abolishing of all Councils in the County. The Government wants to create a **strategic authority with a population of 1.5 million or more**, which will include the **election of a regional mayor**.

## Conclusion

Despite financial pressures, the County Council remains committed to:

- **Promoting health and well-being**
- **Delivering a good standard of adult social care**
- **Helping children and families**
- **Protecting the environment**
- **Supporting businesses**

While significant challenges remain, we continue to work towards sustainable solutions and strategic partnerships that will ensure Worcestershire remains a thriving and well-supported community.

Just to dwell for a moment longer local issues. I continue to work with all the agencies to resolve flooding issues, and chase Highways to deliver the standard of roads I believe you

deserve. As well as a vast range of other issues from Broadband poles, ambulance waiting times, mobile phone signals, just to name a few problems I have been helping residents with. I am delighted to be able to tell you at long last we are in August going to do more footway works in Kemerton.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Parish Council for all they do for this Community, and I would like to thank you the resident for your support.

It is an honour and privilege to represent the Bredon Division, and I look forward to continuing in this role.

C/Cllr Adrian Hardman'

## 7. **Parish Council Report.**

The Chairman, Cllr Lisa Croft reported on the Councils business since the previous Annual Parish Meeting.

## Lengthsman

On behalf of the Parish Council and the wider community, we would like to thank Mr. Mark Farey for his excellent work and diligence in caring for our village. Mark has dealt with any



issues that have arisen promptly. Mark continues to maintain the bus shelter and monitors the Vehicle Activation Signs (VAS). We are most grateful for his assistance.

### **Path Warden**

We would also like to thank the Path Warden Tim Ashley for his extensive work on keeping the Pathways in Kemerton clear. He has worked with the public rights of way officer and Worcestershire County Council officers.

The Council had notified Worcestershire County Councils Pathways Department and County Councillor Adrian Hardman regarding replacement of the Pathway Signage.

### **Glow Worms**

The Council would also like to thank Sally King for her report on the Glow Worms in Kemerton, she concluded that overall, the numbers are down on the previous year. Sally's volunteer work is essential for the local environment.

**Vehicle Activation Sign (VAS)** Following the successful bid to the Police Commissioner's Community - Safer Roads Fund. Kemerton Council received a grant for £2,250, for a new VAS sign. The sign has been installed on the approach to the village on Kemerton Road by the Lengthsman, Mark Farey and volunteer, Steve Chambers.

The sign uses the latest solar powered technology, which would advise drivers of the speed limit and warns drivers if they were speeding. It also counts the number of vehicles that use the Kemerton Road.

### **Garages in Bayliss Road**

The Council has continued to raise the issue with Rooftop, regarding the state of the garages in Bayliss Road.

### **Planning Applications**

The Council by law, have to be consulted on any new planning applications although we have no authority we can and will support the local interest. The Council has commented 9 planning applications.

### **NPPF**

Kemerton Parish Council has replied to the Governments Consultation/questionnaire in respect of the planning reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which is available to read on Kemerton PC Web site.

### **Conservation Area Review**

Following on from the new planning framework the Council has been liaising with the Council regarding the conservation area review which we hope will be implemented in due course.

### **M5 junction 9 and A46 – Public Consultation**

There has been consultation in relation to a new M5 Junction 9a south of Tewkesbury with a section of the A46 re routed between the M5 and Teddington Hands roundabout. Various options are under discussion. Cllr Croft and Cllr Kulukundis have attended the Parish and Community Liaison Groups meetings both at Tewkesbury Borough Council Offices and on line. We will keep you informed with any developments.

**The Chairman on behalf of the Parish Council thanked all residents that have kept the water course in front of their properties clear throughout the year.**



## **8. Chairman of Victoria Hall Report.**

Cllr Lisa Croft readout the following report from the Chairman of the Village Hall Committee.

### **Chairman's Report**

AGM Kemerton Village Hall Committee – 07/04/2025

#### **1) Committee Membership & status of the Charity**

- The village hall has had a rotating chair throughout the year 2024/25.
- Current membership comprises Andrew Millington, Di Atwell, Margaret Gillman, Tom Ryder-Smith, Jo Wenham, Rowan Hull, Claire Barber & Judy Woodman.
- Tom Ryder-Smith has agreed to Chair for 2025/26 year with Andrew Millington acting as Vice Chair.
- Some additional interest has been confirmed with at least one new member keen to join (a Kemerton resident).
- Most roles are covered well with regular meetings scheduled & full attendance.
- A strong focus on compliance with the Charity Commission and the regulatory framework, which has been worked on in 2024/25 and there are no outstanding compliance issues.
- Thanks to those contributing to the regulatory framework & mandatory compliance work.

#### **2) Work in progress**

- The committee have successfully re-let the former playgroup space for the remainder of 2025, and this is seen as key income.
- This has secured another annual figure £5,400 (inc. VAT) of income for the Hall, which was agreed as being vital.
- Additional events continue to take place, with wine tasting, quiz nights & village events adding to the regular daytime & evening users, including the gardening club, yoga meetings, WI and other social groups.
- The general financial position is that the Hall is still running a modest annual underlying deficit before one-off fund raising events and moves to negate this are now the immediate priority of the committee into the next 2025/26 year.
- The Open Gardens in 2024 was a big success, with c. £12,000 raised and banked and our thanks extend to many local volunteer & local businesses for sponsorship.
- This has been beneficial in two ways – firstly to fund a new website and secondly to manage the deficit until efforts to grow revenue bear fruit.
- The new website, [www.kemertonvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.kemertonvillagehall.co.uk), will hopefully generate more private bookings and be significantly more user friendly.
- This has been a very significant undertaking of time, and has been headed by Andrew Millington, who has invested several months of time to the project - and we appreciate the efforts for this vital part of future viability of the Hall. Thank you, Andrew.
- There will be a period of “bedding in”, as the Hall Manager (Richard Pasco) takes on the responsibility for dealing with bookings and consults with the inevitable hand over to the new platform for existing repeat customers.
- Nevertheless, the long-term user-friendly functionality is good, and aspirations are that the website helps the hall turn the corner from deficit to surplus.
- The Hall Manager is seen as a key appointment, and we welcome the enthusiasm and promotion of events that has taken place over the last 12 months. Thank you, Richard.





### 3) Future projects

- There is no Open Gardens planned for 2025, which was seen as too much to ask from the volunteers. A bi-annual event is seen as a more feasible.
- Continue promotion of the 200 club, which is actively supported.

Chairman's Report

AGM Kemerton Village Hall Committee – 07/04/2025

- There is a Village Fete planned; however, the Village Hall will not be a major beneficiary of any profits.

- Use of the stage area for Drama / Theatre / Live music events is an opportunity, as this is an underused asset.

- We continue to explore various proposals.

- Overall, the financial obligations of the Hall are substantial and ensuring a continued viability of the asset remains a challenge.

Chairman's Report

AGM Kemerton Village Hall Committee – 07/04/2025

### 4) Current financial status (Year End 31/12/2024)

Balance C/A on 31/12/23 £14,731

#### RECEIPTS

Hire of Hall (other)	£2,022
Hire of Equipment	£400
Pilates	£2,015
Yoga	£195
Kemerton Parish Council - KPC	£84
Women's Institute	£556
Friday Flicks	£285
Parochial Church Council - PCC	£24
Gardening club	£318
Evening Classes	£512
Fund Raisers other	£635
Wayleave	£3
Donations (general)	£485
Gift Aid £0	
VAT	£119
Fete / Open gardens	£12,911 incl £250 for 2025 fete
Elizabeth Room Letting	£5,400
200 club	£816

**Total £26,780**

#### PAYMENTS

Utilities (gas,elec, water,telecoms )	£3,279
Cleaner	£1,890
Maintenance	£1,392
Insurance	£1,067
ACRE Loan	£2,063
Gardening & waste	£53
Equipment purchased	£143
Consumables /Cleaning materials	£301



Miscellaneous	£2,574
Fete/KOG expenses	£3,040
Hall Manager	£1,440
VAT	£957
Other fundraiser expenses	£295
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£18,493</b>
Moved to savings account	£15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£33,493</b>
Surplus (deficit) for year	-£6,713
Business Savings account	£15,000
Bus Savings Acc Interest etc	£6
Total in Business savings	£15,006
Current account balance 31/12/24	£8,018
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>£23,024</b>

## Chairman's Report

AGM Kemerton Village Hall Committee – 07/04/2025

We approve these accounts & confirm we have made available all records & information for their preparation

Chair (Print & Sign) .....

Honorary treasurer (Print & Sign) .....

## 5) Closing

- I look forward to working with the committee of the next 12 months and enjoying many events at the Hall into the future

## 9. Path Warden Report

Christina Kulukundis readout the following report from Mr Tim Ashby, Path Warden.

The role involves the maintenance of the public rights of way, i.e. Public Footpaths and Bridleways in the parish. Small tasks and routine clearing work are done personally, whilst larger tasks are achieved in collaboration with Worcestershire County Council officers. A new bridge has been installed across the ditch on path 518, replacing the previous one that had rotted and was unsafe. An additional step has also been added to the east side of the bridge on path 510, making access to and from the bridge much easier for those of us who are not gymnasts. Both of these tasks were done by contractors, following liaison between myself and the WCC Senior Area Public Rights of Way Officer, Fiona Argyle. In addition, it was noted more recently that two of the planks on this bridge had rotted and failed. Fiona personally delivered two new planks to me within a few days, which I was able to fit almost immediately – so the bridge was safe to use again within a week of the problem being reported. There have been several trees / branches that have fallen across the paths over the last year. I would like to thank the relevant landowners for their very quick responses in dealing with these when I have contacted them. Currently, all paths within the parish are believed to be clear of any significant obstructing vegetation and there are no major issues outstanding that I am aware of. A survey of the state of signage for the paths and bridleway from public roads was



conducted during 2024. Several signs are in a poor state of repair or are non-existent. It is hoped that the Parish Council and WCC will be able to arrange remedial action. H&S limitations, associated with proximity to public roads, mean that these tasks can't be done by volunteers. Confirmatory signs on paths are being replaced as required and it is hoped that a couple of new posts to clarify routes can be added by volunteers over the next year. As always, if anyone spots any issues with the public rights of way, I can be contacted by e-mail on [kemertonppw@btinternet.com](mailto:kemertonppw@btinternet.com) or via personal message from the village WhatsApp group.

## 10. Questions from the Floor.

Parishioners questioned Cllr Hardman on what services would be effected by WCC deficit of £33.6 million, he assured Parishioners that the core services such as Promoting health and well-being, Delivering a good standard of adult social care, Helping children and families, Protecting the environment and Supporting businesses as it continued with financial pressures due to increasing demand and rising costs in key service areas. He confirmed that Worcestershire had applied for inclusion in the accelerated unitary program, but this Shire was not accepted on to the programme and that County Council elections would be held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025. He also confirmed that Government policy indicated that all areas would transition to a unitary model before the end of this parliamentary term, and each area would be required to have a Parish Council. This would mean the Councils would unfortunately lose current local key Members. Cllr Hardman also thanked the Council in their support of objection to previous large planning applications.

Parishioners also highlighted to Members their concerns with regards to the Applegarth planning application. Parishioners thanked The Chairman of Kemerton Parish, Cllr L Croft who had written to the authorities to express the Councils concerns with regards to the Applegarth Site specifically the Construction & Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) report. The owner of The Hermitage, on Hill Road, had written further objections (including photos) of the CEMP report which the Council had forwarded to Malvern Hill/Wychavon DC. The Chairman added that Carl Brace at Wychavon DC as of 20th February 2025 had confirmed that the CEMP conditions had not been discharged due to outstanding issues raised by Highways and residents, he also confirmed the comments had been relayed to the agent, of which he confirmed that he would forward to all parties involved as it did provide helpful information.

Cllr Hardman reiterated that he would support the replacement of Kemerton's pathway signage.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.00pm

Chairman of the meeting

Cllr L Croft