

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
Held at Kington & Dormston Village Hall
Monday 12th May 2025 at 7:00pm

Present: Cllr P. Collins (Chair) Cllr V. Longmore
 Cllr T. Richards Cllr S. Richins
 Cllr I. Bull Cllr R. Drake
 District Cllr N. Dawkes

In Attendance: Clerk & 1 member of the Public were present

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – No questions

1. APOLOGIES – Cllr E. Faizey & County Cllr L. Robinson sent their apologies.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the Annual Parish Meeting held on 13th May 2024 were approved as true and correct and signed by the Chair.

3. ANNUAL REPORT FROM CHAIRMAN- CLLR COLLINS

Cllr Collins stated that they started the year one councillor short, reached a full complement and now are finishing the year one councillor short, as today Cllr E.Faizey tendered her resignation.

Similarly- the first and last meeting of the year were both about the A422 with neighbouring villages regarding excessive speeding and road safety, which still remains a strong concern for the Parish.

There has been very few planning consultations over the past year to consider, but those that have been received have been dealt with swiftly.

This year we have recruited a new lengthsman, Paul Brewer who has settled in well and keeping the village tidy. Thank you also to Cllr Richards and her army of litter pickers who have carried out regular litter picks throughout the year and also helped to organise extra bins for the Parish which have helped with the issue.

Also, thanks to our Clerk Lisa Cope who helps keep the Parish Council on track and compliant.

4. PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS

The Clerk reported that the end of year accounts had been completed and sent to Mrs Powell who had undertaken an internal audit as well as approval from all Cllrs. Annual gross income for 2024/25 was £9,636.26 and the annual gross expenditure was £10,686.94, being under £25,000 this meant that the Parish Council can claim exemption from an intermediate review.

5. ANNUAL REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR- NICK DAWKES

Homes for Ukraine

Recently, two new support groups have been launched for our Ukrainian Guests in Wychavon. The English-Speaking Club is a friendly, casual group that meets every Wednesday in Evesham Library to practice speaking English. There are two groups, beginners and intermediate, and attendance has been fantastic.

The Ukrainian Women's Empowerment Network was created to support women's health, well-being, and professional development. Our guests have experienced loss and trauma because of fleeing a war zone and resettling in the UK. Some have struggled to secure meaningful employment in line with their Ukrainian professional qualifications, and confidence has been reduced because of rejection or working in low-paid jobs. These sessions are held at St Andrew's Centre in Pershore and have already had a positive impact by empowering the participants. A safe, supportive space has been created for Ukrainian women to share their experiences and stories and to learn from each other.

VE Day 80

On Thursday we proudly raised the VE Day 80 Flag outside the Civic Centre as a sign of our nation's courage and resilience and a reminder of the sacrifices made to make freedom possible. We were delighted to be joined by representatives from Armed Forces organisations across the district, the Mayor of Pershore, local police and the Deputy Lieutenant of Worcestershire, Major General Mark Armstrong JP DL.

Other events were held across the district and are being held this weekend. We gave about £19,000 to parish and town councils to support VE Day 80 events.

Parks update - Lido Park Droitwich

Work has started on the new water play installation in Lido Park, which is expected to be completed in August. The design has many accessible features and reflects Droitwich's salt extraction history and wildlife.

Planning

A backlog of applications has started to form due to the planning application fee increase on 1 April which resulted in a large increase of planning applications prior to the fee increase. The fee increase, combined with Easter annual leave, Bank Holiday and other unavoidable absences have had an impact but the team continue to work extremely hard to process as many planning applications as possible, alongside completing all other duties.

6. ANNUAL REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR- LINDA ROBINSON

Recent County Council Election Results.

Firstly my apologies for not being able to join you this evening as I am tied up with County business concerning appointments to various Committees.

I am delighted to have been re-elected as your County Cllr. and look forward to representing you at what may be a very different political arrangement. Whilst nothing has been finalised yet currently no political party has overall control. Reform whist having the highest number of Councillors do

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currently not have enough for the required majority so we shall have to see how this pans out over the coming weeks.

Local Authority Reorganisation Update

Scrapping Worcestershire's seven councils and replacing them with a single authority could save more than £20m a year, according to a report commissioned by WCC.

The external study by consultants PwC, also suggested an alternative option of splitting the county into two new unitary councils – north and south - could save £4.3m a year.

Politicians are currently divided over the two options, after the government asked council leaders to produce proposals to merge the county's two-tier system.

Councils are required to produce a business case for changes by the end of November. Any new local authorities could be up and running as early as April 2028, following elections in May 2027.

At present, Worcestershire has one county council, responsible for services including roads and social care, sitting above six district councils that run services such as bin collections and housing.

"One Worcestershire council would be more effective and efficient," said Simon Geraghty, the Conservative leader of the county council, at a scrutiny meeting on Tuesday, external.

Following the publication of Labour's devolution white paper, his administration commissioned consultants PwC to provide an independent review of the options.

Its work, the Future Worcestershire Proposal, suggested moving to a single "unitary" authority could cost £11.9m in one-off costs, but save £20.6m a year.

PwC estimated another option, of splitting the historic county in two, would cost £16.9m, and save only £4.3m a year.

Its consultants also said the proposed north and south councils would both face further financial challenges.

A northern council, formed from Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest would take a smaller share of council tax, but a higher proportion of deprived communities, for instance.

In addition, demand for expensive services such as home-to-school transport and special educational needs provision would "disproportionately impact" a southern council formed of Worcester, Wychavon and Malvern Hills, consultants found.

Worcester's new school and hospital multi-storey latest

PLANS for a new secondary school and a multi-storey car park next to Worcestershire Royal Hospital have been approved by Worcestershire County Council.

The new school and car park were approved by the county council's planning and regulatory committee.

The secondary school is expected to welcome its first cohort in 202

"This marks a significant step forward in meeting the demand for school places in a growing city."

The multi-storey car park would be built to address long-running issues with the availability of parking at the nearby hospital, by offering 850 more spaces for staff, patients and visitors. Guy Kippen, associate development director at Prime, commented: "Securing planning approval is a major milestone in delivering a sustainable solution for parking and access to Worcestershire Royal Hospital.

"By working collaboratively with Worcestershire County Council and local stakeholders, we will ensure that parking and access improvements reduce congestion for all users. A new blue light route is to be created onto the dual track for ambulances and critical care doctors which will save time and possibly lives and help ease congestion to and from the main hospital.

Secondary School Places

County Council received 6,592 applications this year and everyone who made an application for a secondary school place has received an offer of a place.

9 in 10 of Worcestershire's children will be starting secondary school in their first-choice preference in September.

Parents are also being reminded to apply for school transport for their child/children as early as possible for the September 2025 school term. For more information, please visit the apply for school and college travel assistance pages of the county council website

7. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH- Report sent from Claire Hughes

Summary of Activity for 2024/25

During the year of 2024, we held 4 formal meetings including an AGM. We have had one formal meeting So far in 2025. I would like to thank the coordinators for their continued support. The committee still stands as:

Claire Hughes – Chairperson

Debbie Stanley – Secretary

Adam Lancaster – Vice Chair

Vivienne Heenan – Treasurer

Our other Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator is Adam Lazenbury. It would be great if we could recruit additional coordinators, as Debbie is looking to step down later in 2025.

Treasurer's Report

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The balance held at 28 February 2025 was £10.51 held in cash. There have been no expenses this year.

Crime and incidents in the Area

No reports have been uploaded onto the Our Watch platform in 2025, other than the warnings about Nottingham Knockers.

Smartwater

We have now achieved 50% of properties in the Kington & Dormston parishes who have confirmed that they would like to register for Smart Water. Therefore, the Neighbourhood Watch Committee are now proposing that subject to support from the Parish Council, we look to start the roll-out to the residents of Kington and Dormston who have registered interest, with a view to getting some more 'on-board' during the roll-out. The police have confirmed that they would be willing to assist with the roll-out, and advised that this may help to get additional residents signed up due to the presence of uniformed officers / PCSO.

Councillor Linda Robinson has advised that she would be happy to offer some financial assistance for the rollout, subject to the Parish Council support and contribution towards the scheme.

Our next Quarterly Meeting is Monday 23rd June, 7.30pm at The Flyford.

8. ANNUAL REPORT OF VILLAGE TRUST - HANNAH FORRESTER

Bookings are steady with our regular users being WI, Seniors, Parish Council, craft days and an Art Group. We have had a regular Pilates class but this will finish at the end of May.

The new Village Hall sign has been very useful but blew down in a gale – it will shortly be put back up.

A smart meter has been installed and we are waiting to see if this reduces the electricity bill. The person installing the meter advised that we should combine the two meters we have into one, thus saving one standing charge. He advised this could be done by an electrician and then the Electricity Supplier notified.

Festival Players are performing As You Like It on Thursday 5th June – this is our main event of the year now as quizzes and bingo nights have been poorly supported over the last year or two. The Village Hall is being well maintained and cleaned regularly.

Any suggestions for new events and bookings at the Village Hall will be gratefully received.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

Signed Chairman.....

Date.....

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