

**KEMERTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT THE VICTORIA HALL ON TUESDAY
17th MARCH 2015 at 7.00PM.**

Present

Cllr's Mrs K Cartwright, Mr A Darby OBE (District), Mrs C Ford (Chair), Sir D Logan, Dr and Mrs Phillip, Mr N Coleman, Mr P Truscott, Lady Logan, Mrs D Attwell, Mr B Ford, Mr R Workman, Mr G Long, Mr J Kelly, PCSO J Pardoe and Ms J Shields (Parish Clerk).

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Cllr's Mr S Papacostantinou, Mr R Withnall, Dr C Renfrew and Mr A Hardman (County). Mrs Long, Mrs J Workman and Mr M Walker.

2. Minutes Of Annual Parish Meeting Held 18th March 2014.

The minutes, having been circulated, were signed as a true record.

3. Report From CSO J Pardoe, West Mercia Police.

Burglaries have increased in 2014-2015 compared with 2013-2014, due to the vicinity and easy access to main routes, however four people have been arrested and it is hoped this will decrease again.

Criminal damage and anti social behaviour are on the decrease for the same period. There are two new members to the team, PC Paul Acastier and PCSO Steve Tinkler, the team will only attend meetings if there is a problem in the parish or if asked to come if there is an issue.

PACT is to be resurrected via e mail, volunteers are required. Please contact the safer neighbourhood team at pershorerural.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

4. County Councillor's Report.

This report was received after the meeting, as it had been sent to the wrong E mail address.

Dear Parishioners and Parish Councillors

I am sorry not to be with you tonight due to a clash of meetings since tonight the Executive at Wychavon are discussing the designation of Bredon and its surrounding Hamlets designation of local plan and this is followed by Wychavon's Council meeting to discuss the restructuring of its senior management.

This year has been a challenging year for the County and its County Council. As we see the frost of Austerity still continuing to burn into the soul of the County Council and we have had to turn down the offer of a Council Tax Freeze Grant and raise Council Tax by some 1.9% to deal with the pressure that we are facing in our Looked after Children's service budget and as we prepare for the implementation of the new Care Act from 2015 which will be a milestone in the provision of care for the Elderly looking forward. This has meant that the County Council has had to concentrate on its absolute core priorities which are care of the elderly, looking after the condition of local roads and making provision for children that we have to take into our care.

Moving onto more local Kemerton matters, I am glad to be able to tell the Parish that my attendance at your Parish Council meetings has slightly improved on the year before but is still somewhat hit and miss and there are 3 issues that I would wish you to note. It is still our intention as the County Council to try and make as much progress as we can with the issue of flooding on the highway but I would remind Parishioners that this is a very wide issue since the cause of the flooding on the highway is a land management issue because the majority of water does not arise on the highway and I do hope that our Officers, working in conjunction with the District Council Land Drainage Officers, will be able to come up with a sustainable and long term plan, but as I said before, I do think that the Parish Council will need to be prepared to tackle some of the more tricky issues that are very local to the Parish.

I have asked our Highways Liaison Officer to price up the cost of 2 minor footway repair jobs in Kemerton to improve the access to the Village Hall up to a national standard, which would involve widening the footpath on the stream side and getting it to be disabled access compliant and at the same time it makes sense to us to see if we could improve the surrounds of the shop and resurface that particular area at this location.

I have also been out with the Highways Officers comparatively recently up to the top of Hill Lane to examine the water leak that has been plaguing the residents at the top there particularly in icy weather. What we have now decided to do having consulted with a couple of the neighbours, is that it would appear that there is a drainage system that must run along that side of the road, and so we have a feeling that the water is possibly arising from there and rather than starting at the bottom of the system we are going to see if we can stop the leak by excavating and digging it.

Lastly, I know the Parish Council have invested a considerable amount of money to look at traffic calming or shared space arrangement for the middle of the village and I will do my best to have a good look at this plan when it becomes available and see how the County Council will be able to facilitate its delivery, bearing in mind that one of the primary roles of the County Council is to ensure usage of the Highway for all. Please do get in touch with me if there is anything you think I can do for you.

Yours obedient servant!

Thank you

Adrian Hardman

5. District Councillor's Report.

Last year I reported on two major issues.

Finance

Wychavon published its business plan Grow, Save, Charge. This was its proposal to cope with a reduction of £4m of central government funding between 2010/11 and 2017/18, which represents 59% of our budget.

Of this gap we aimed to save £2.1m in 2013-15 and a further £1m in 2015-18. There was still a further £1.2m to be identified for the second half of the plan period. We have in fact achieved £2.4m in 2013-2015 with further reductions of £.7m in 2015-18.

Once again the council tax is due to rise by just under 2%.

It is not certain that a new government will continue the New Homes Bonus in future years. This being the case, Wychavon has agreed not to make any further allocations to parish councils from 1 April 2015 until the situation has been clarified.

Planning

The South Worcestershire Development Plan Examination has now resumed. Last year I reported that the inspector had rejected the three councils' estimate of the housing required which they had submitted in May 2013. The inspector published his interim conclusions in April 2014 which established the objectively assessed housing need for each council as follows: Malvern Hills 8590, Worcester City 9830, Wychavon 9950. Because the original version of the plan had not allocated enough sites there was a call for additional sites last spring. The resulting proposals were put forward for consultation in October and November 2014. The inspector has now considered objections to the overall direction of the plan and its general policies as well as the strategic housing allocations. He will be looking at objections to individual sites in towns and villages in May and June this year. It is hoped that he will submit his report in the autumn and that the plan will be adopted in December although another period has to be allowed for a possible judicial review after that.

Because the plan is not now going to be in place until next year and because there is a risk that at least one of the three councils may not accept it, I have decided to stand again as a District Councillor. I have been much involved in the gestation of this plan and I am determined to see it through.

The reason that it is so important to have a plan is that, without one, developers can claim that the council is obliged to pass any application for housing that is deemed to be sustainable. So far we have been able to claim that the saved policies, such as those restricting development to within settlement boundaries, in our previous Wychavon Local Plan which came to an end in 2011, are still in force. This has been challenged by developers on the grounds that we cannot show a five year supply of housing land. (There is a provision in the governments National Planning Policy Framework that if a council does not have a five year housing land supply its housing policies are deemed no longer applicable.) While we were unable to show enough land allocated for housing at times during the past two years, we have been able to show that we meet this test since last July. This has been confirmed by three recent planning appeals, at Bredon, Broadway and Evesham. I appeared as a witness for Wychavon at the Bredon (Cheltenham Road) Appeal, speaking on the refusal reason that the applicants had not provided sufficient evidence that there would be no harm to biodiversity, which was part of the argument. However it was the five year housing land supply which I consider to have been crucial. I am currently due to speak at a further Bredon appeal for 98 houses at Tewkesbury Road which is being opposed by the English Heritage, the National Trust and Bredon Parish Council. As Wychavon's Heritage Champion, I always speak up about threats to the heritage, which in this case involves two Grade One listed buildings. Again I hope that our secure five year supply will suffice to win the appeal.

Adrian Darby

16 March 2015

Q. Is there a balance between need and development?

A. In 2009 only 103 houses were built in Wychavon due to the slump of

*2008-2010, and builders did not build on all the permissions given.
In 2014, 890 houses were built.*

Q. *Will the three aces by Ashbury Farm be built on?*

A. *Not in the current plan which will last until 2030.*

6. Parish Council Report.,

- **Flooding Issues**

There have been a few meetings over the last year with representatives from the Highways Department and the Flood Risk Team from Worcestershire County Council and Wychavon District Council to further discuss the flooding and related issues at Kemerton.

It was intimated grant funding was likely to be available to meet the costs of having a survey of the whole drainage system of the village carried out – this has not happened. However the Highways Department has undertaken some in-house surveying of the drainage system.

Our next meeting with the representatives shall be after Easter. We shall then learn the scope and extent of the survey undertaken and other steps carried out by the representatives. It should prove an opportunity to move matters along with a view to at last seeing some improvements on the ground in the near future.

A short while ago the District Council requested two property owners in Hill Road to clear obstructed pipes under their drives. The necessary works have been carried out.

Having regard to the total number of properties affected by past flooding Adrian Hardman expressed concern, at the last Parish Council meeting, that matters had not moved on more swiftly. He promised his support and would check the current position.

- **Lengthsman**

What would Kemerton do without Andy Hull? The work he does to keep the drainage system flowing (reporting incidents when he cannot), siding out the footpath to Overbury and then clearing it a couple of weeks later as a result of excessive hedge cutting debris - I could go on – is invaluable. The footpath to Westmancote has also been sided out by a lengthsman team from Worcestershire County Council. However the availability of this team is not great. We are informed the team currently has enough work to keep it busy for about a year!

- **Grass Cutting**

We are very fortunate to have Tony & Richard Jones and their team carrying out the grass cutting for another year. The benefit of the Jones' is that they will carry out a cut as and when necessary (ie unlike other contractors who will undertake a monthly cut in the growing season whether or not the grass is actually growing).

- Overhead Electricity Lines

An undergrounding scheme was designed by Western Power for the overhead lines in the vicinity of Hill Road and at the rear of the properties in Bayliss Road. The likelihood of raising £50,000, the estimated charge for the works, from the owners of the properties benefiting from the scheme was thought unrealistic. In addition, those owners would be responsible for all new meter boxes and internal wiring alteration costs.

Grant funding does not appear to be an option. Western Power has been asked to re-consider and reduce the estimated charge. If there is a fairly substantial reduction it may improve the viability of the scheme.

- Dog Waste Bins

Dog fouling spoils the environment, upsets residents and can cause serious health risks particularly to children. It is also an offence. Last year the dog waste bin in Jobs Lane was re-sited to the Church Lane end junction and a new bin sited on Kinsham Lane. However dog fouling remains a problem and complaints received. Please encourage your family and friends to be responsible, it will help us keep Kemerton clean.

- The Cotswold Conservation Plaque

We are pleased the plaque has been painted and re-attached after its long absence in Jackie's garage for safe keeping.

- Planning

Eleven applications for development within the village were received and the Parish Council submitted representations on a few of these. The decision of one application is marked as "unknown" and it is suspected this may be because planning permission was not required for the building work proposed. Otherwise there was one withdrawn application and the remaining applications granted, apart from one which is pending consideration.

Representations and objections were submitted to a few other planning applications that would have had some an impact on Kemerton, for example, to large residential development in Bredon, 120,000 solar panels at Defford Airdrome and for additional and larger replacement telecom equipment to be attached to Parsons Folly on Bredon Hill.

- War Memorial

Some of the stone plinths of the war memorial are damaged. Quotes for the repair, repointing, cleaning and re-lettering of the war memorial have been obtained.

An application for a grant has been submitted to the War Memorials Trust for 75% of the costs. If a grant is awarded the balance of costs will be paid from the "new homes bonus" fund and the contractors asked to start the works as soon as possible.

- Traffic Calming & Safety in Kemerton

Thank you to all those who completed a questionnaire: 56 questionnaires were completed and 2 letters received about the project. Thank you also to the volunteers who took part in the traffic count. Everyone's input was much appreciated.

This project eventually had to proceed without Overbury Parish Council for a number of reasons.

The finalised brochure is at the printers and should be available in the next couple of weeks. The Parish Council will send a copy of the brochure to Adrian Hardman and the County Council seeking their support and endorsement for the proposals put forward. Discussions will no doubt follow.

The brochure will be found online on the Parish Councils website. There will be several hardcopies at Kemerton Stores which can be borrowed for those without a computer facility.

In brief the proposals are:

- Community Speed Watch
- Decorative entrance / exit gates
- 20mph speed signs
- Speed humps / vertical shifts
- Modification of road surfaces
- 7.5 Ton weight limit
- Ribbon style parking facility on village green

The items listed above (save for the first one) will need to be approved by Worcestershire County Council. To the extent approval is given for an item but not implemented by the County Council funding will be raised and sought by the Parish Council, where possible by way of third party funding (ie grants).

Six volunteers completed the Community Speed Watch training yesterday. They will be out on the High Street from time to time to monitor the speed of vehicles with a RADAR unit and details of speeding vehicles will be passed to the police. Please support the team – they are giving up their time to make Kemerton a safer place for you. Further volunteers would be most welcome and if you are interested in joining the team please let me know.

Q. Can the VAS be in Bredon Road all the time and can further signs be purchased by the council.

A. The sign cannot stay in one place for more than six weeks at a time as it becomes ineffective.

Q The speed of vehicles living Kemerton on Kinsham Lane is a problem.

A. Hopefully the Community Speed Watch may have an effect on this.

- Q *Cyclist are a problem.*
A. *Unfortunately no action can be taken.*

Educating road users is a key component in road safety.

- Q. *Can the Black and white sign at the junction of High Street and Kinsham Lane be painted.*
A. *Parish clerk to investigate.*
- Q. *The Bayliss Road sign needs replacing.*
A. *Parish clerk to investigate.*

7. Chairman of Victoria Hall Report.

The membership of the Trustees of Kemerton Victoria Hall (KVH) was unchanged during the year. Di Atwell, vice-chairman, has given notice of her intention to resign from the committee at year-end. On behalf of my colleagues and the community, I would like to pay tribute to her many years of wonderful service. She has filled several roles including chairman of the fete committee and booking secretary. Her selfless contribution will be sorely missed.

The financial health of KVH is sound; all three accounts show healthy balances. However, in the event that KVH is extended and refurbished our financial resources will be severely impacted.

The Trustees retained Keith Chandler, an architect of considerable relevant experience, to advise them on the extension and refurbishment of the hall. A draft plan was agreed and submitted to Wychavon Planning Authority. It would provide the Pre-school with dedicated space and access and separate it entirely from functions in the main hall and committee room. The size of the kitchen would be more than doubled. The plan was endorsed in principle and the Trustees were invited to submit a formal planning application. Before doing so, it is the intention of the Trustees to submit the draft plan to the community for comment and endorsement. It has been estimated that the extension and refurbishment would cost approximately £200,000, of which 90% would be sourced from granting organisations and 10% would be raised by the community. The Trustees are grateful to the Parish Council for endorsing and supporting the initiative.

During the year, several improvements were made to the hall. The path giving access to the rear of the hall was widened and a gate was installed at the southwest corner. A retractable awning was attached to the rear of the building at the sole expense of the Pre-school. It will provide shade and shelter to children playing in the courtyard. An engraved Cotswold stone was kindly donated by a parent in order to replace a spalled portion of one of the front pillars. The internal lighting was significantly improved and the stage lighting was serviced and certified as compliant.

In September the Village Fete, organised in collaboration with the Friends of St Nicholas Church, raised £3646. In 2015, the fete will take place on August 29th. The 200 Club raised £900.

It has been a great pleasure to serve as chairman of the Trustees. Their enthusiasm and hard work in support of the wellbeing of KVH has been exemplary.

John Phillip

Chairman.

Q. Why not build a new hall.

A. Nowhere to build one.

8. Questions from the Floor.

As Above.

9. Footpath Wardens Report.

Most of the footpaths in the parish are in good condition.

Two bridges have been replaced at the Squitterbrook, however this really nice walk is marred for two reasons.

There is an awful smell coming from one side, County Council Footpaths Officers will be looking into this.

The area is very boggy, hopefully a solution can be found. Perhaps the parish council could pay for the two ditches either side to be dug out.