

Bredon, Bredon's Norton and Westmancote Parish Council

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at Bredon Village Hall on Monday 18th April 2016 at 7.30 pm.

Present.

Cllrs Mrs Di Kemple, Mrs Alison Palmer, Mr Matt Darby, Mr Phil Handy (Chairman), Mr Mike Johns, Mr Andrew Rhodes, Mr Ian Rowland-Hill, Mr Declan Shiels, Mr Rob Sly, Mr Adrian Darby (District) and Mr Adrian Hardman (County and District). Ms J Shields (Clerk), Mr Allen Frampton, Mr Mike Hodgson, Mr Mark Farey and Mr and Mrs Marchment.

1. Apologies For Absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr's Mr Brod Whiting, and Mr and Mrs Onions.

2. Minutes Of Annual Parish Meeting Held 20th April 2015.

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

3. Parish Council Chairman's Report.

Good Evening lady's gentlemen and welcome to the Annual parish meeting.

This time last year I think the council only had 8 members since then we have welcomed Di, Richard, Mike, Brod and Ian - now we have a full compliment of 12 which has been very helpful with the challenges of the last 12 months and for the year to come.

As ever planning seems to be the main issue and for that I will hand over to Andrew to give us a planning report.

Thanks to Andrew, Matt & Alison and the entire planning group

The Neighbourhood plan is at the consultation stage this has been the result of the NP group which consists of councillors and parishioners who have had many meetings and submitted a plan for consultation – this gives everyone the right to comment prior to going to an inspector for hopefully approval the result of which should benefit our villages for years to come. Again, thanks to Matt and Alison for being the driving forces behind that.

Also, thanks go to:

Parish Mag – Dec

Maintenance – Kevin.

Grasscutting – Rob

Bredon's Norton – Richard and Brod.

BPCR – Rob

Jo for looking after the Village hall.

New homes bonus

The council has supported and approved applications for Kemerton trust, football club, Alms houses, outward bound church rooms and the luncheon club.

I would also like to thank all councillors who are on a working party / group for their ongoing work with such issues as contracts, village hall, tennis club to name a just a few.

We have also benefitted once again from continued support from our county and district councillor Adrian Hardman who as ever has represented us at district and county level. Also, we have benefitted from the sport of our other district councillor Adrian Darby who has also supported us especially with his expert evidence at the Gladmans enquiry.

Jackie, thank you for supporting me through this year and Andrew a huge thank you for your advice and generally just being there and keeping it all ticking along you have been a very supportive vice chairman.

It has been an honour and I'm very proud to have been your chairman. We are lucky enough to **live** in a beautiful area and with your efforts long may that continue. So, thank you all.

4. County And District Councillor Mr A Hardman's Report.

5. District Councillor Mr A Darby Report.

For the last two years I have reported on two major issues. These themes recur once more.

Finance

We're facing one of the biggest challenges we've ever had to deal with. Between 2010/11 and 2017/18, we estimate that we will see a 59% reduction in our funding from central government.

This means we have to close a financial gap of over £4 million in our budget by 2017/18.

Of this gap we aimed to save £2.1m between 2013-15 and a further £1m between 2015-18. We now expect to have raised £3.157m towards this shortfall by the end of 2016/17 out of a combination of savings and additional income, and we are a year ahead of target. The council tax was raised by £4.99 which was what the government assumed we would do.

Planning

South Worcestershire Development Plan

The South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) was adopted on 25th February 2016. It is a great relief to have it in place at last. Because of its need to take overspill from the other two authorities, Wychavon is now required to provide 10,600 dwellings, rather than its own objectively assessed need of 9950. However the sites approved in the plan plus those already given planning consent ensure that this number will be met.

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 as Westmancote is concerned the village remains as a Category 4b settlement as it was in the original version of the plan. There are no sites allocated under the plan and residential development will only be allowed if it is in accordance with the plan policies, i.e. it is within the settlement boundary, or is a rural exception site on the edge of the development boundary to provide affordable housing, or is an addition to an existing dwelling, or conversion of an agricultural building.

Now that the SWDP has been adopted all the supplementary planning documents that were part of the old Wychavon Local Plan have now been cancelled and a new set of these will have to be produced. This process has already begun with consultation taking place up to 25 April on two items, which I would urge the Parish Council and any other interested party to comment on:

1. Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations DPD – Preferred Options 2016
2. Draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2016.

Having been so much involved in the gestation of this plan and I was determined to see it through. However, this will be my last term as councillor.

Other planning matters

I reported last year on various appeals, with which I had been involved in. I am happy to say that the battle, to which I referred last year, to prevent 98 houses at Tewkesbury Road in Bredon was won, thanks to the great efforts of the Parish Council.

However Bredon does not need only to pay attention to the SWDP (and its emerging Neighbourhood Plan), but also should watch carefully the situation in the adjoining county of Gloucestershire. Here the Gloucester, Cheltenham, Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (GCT-JCS) is intending to allocate a very large area of housing land within half a mile of the parish boundary. It has identified the Ashchurch MOD site and some green field land to the north west of it as a strategic allocation for 2,725 dwellings and 20 ha of employment land.

I have been urging Wychavon to object to this unless various safeguards can be achieved. In particular, there needs to be control of traffic to prevent rat-running through the Bredon Hill

villages when there are blockages on the A46, and adequate landscape screening from Bredon Hill, along with proper protection of the sensitive biodiversity of the Carrant Valley. To make this case, I have been attending sessions of the Examination in Public of the JCS which is now nearing its end. I spoke on the 30th March at session dealing with Green Infrastructure and on the 31st on transport.

Robert Hitchins Ltd submitted a planning application for 550 houses on a part of this allocated site which is still farmland, lying east of the railway and south of Aston Fields Lane. They appealed against Tewkesbury Borough Council's failure to determine their application and the appeal was heard last month. Both Councillor Hardman and I attended the public inquiry to put forward the arguments cited in the previous paragraph. I concentrated on biodiversity and landscape issues, and he on traffic.

At the moment, the emerging JCS has not asked Wychavon to allow development in Bredon parish to enable the extension of Tewkesbury northwards, and the SWDP makes no provision for such expansion. However neighbouring councils have a duty to cooperate and there is a risk that such an expansion might be sought in a future revision of the SWDP. This has a particular bearing on Mitton Bank in Bredon's Hardwick.

6. Police Report.

Annual Police Report 2015-16

The last 12 months has continued to be busy throughout our policing area which extends from Whittington, Upton Snodsbury and Dormston in the north to Bredon and Beckford in the south. We have carried out active engagement within our policing area in the form of monthly police surgeries and local parish events. The whole team remain committed to tackling all levels of crime throughout the area including rural crime and poaching and providing security advice and support to victims and vulnerable residents.

This report is based using the recorded crime figures between 16/04/2015 and 18/04/2016 the comparison is relating to the corresponding dates in 2014/15.

Overall the police recorded 219 incidents that were reported by members of the public this is compared to 193 incidents reported the previous year.

Of the 219 incidents the Parish had 52 recordable crimes (incidents where a specific offence has occurred) this was in comparison to 46 recordable crimes the previous year.

The breakdown of offences is as follows:

	2015/16	2014/15
Burglary Dwellings	13	5
Burglary other (mainly sheds/outbuildings)	5	6
Theft from vehicle	2	3
Theft Other	5	9
Criminal Damage	3	8
Other Offences	24	15

(Includes mostly domestic related incidents/concern for safety/malicious communications)

Overall the figures show a steady but low crime rate for the past few years however the area has seen an increase in burglaries in the last 12 months. We have continued with increased patrols in the area and have issued security advice at the coffee morning surgeries. We also completed a leaflet drop of the whole village which started prior to the spate of burglaries in Oct/Nov and targeted previous victimised areas. The Parish Council were also approached by Wychavon District Council Rural Safety Team to consider creating a Smartwater village.

The majority of the burglaries occurred after the clocks had changed in October and the common link to all of them was that they were unattended premises which were not lit during the hours of darkness and did not have any intruder alarms or similar security measures.

The figures clearly present the picture that Bredon and the surrounding area is still a safe place to both live and work, however we all have a responsibility to ensure we maintain this. Residents are encouraged to reassess their security needs. Advice is available from the West Mercia website www.westmercia.police.uk or contact can be made with the local team for security marking advice at pershorerural.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

On behalf of the team and myself I should like to offer my thanks to the Parish Council for all its help over the last 12 months. I would also like to say thank you to the Parish as a whole for its continued support of the local policing team and for the numerous calls we have received relating to suspicious activity, all we ask is that you continue to do this.

Pershore Rural North and South Local Policing Team

Non-emergency phone number: 101

7. Questions From The Floor.

Cllr Darby explained to Mrs Marchmont what housing is termed as 'windfall'.

Mr Sly asked the County and District Councillors if they were aware of the position of the Tewkesbury Joint Corer strategy.