

Rous Lench and Radford Parish.

Draft minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 4th April 2016 at 7.35 pm in Rous Lench Village Hall.

Present: Mr. G. White (Chairman of the Parish Council), County Cllr. Mr. Holt, Dist. Cllr. Mrs. Steel, Mrs. N. Holland (Clerk to the Parish Council), and 8 parishioners.

1. Welcome – the Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting,

2. Apologies: Dist. Cllr. Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. J. Whitfield and Mr. D. Knight (Footpath Warden).

3. Minutes: of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 23rd March 2015 were signed as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters arising: Nil.

5. Parish Council: Cllr. Mr. White, Chairman of the Parish Council, gave the following report:

The Parish Council holds 6 scheduled meetings each year for general business and additional meetings for planning applications. Planning applications are generally straight forward, with the Parish Council passing on comments and supporting concerns of the village. The granting of a mobile home on a site in Radford Road continues to cause concern for the village.

The Village Green continues to be kept mowed by a group of village volunteers and I would like to thank David Knight for the organisation of the rotas. I would also like to thank John Whitfield, as Tree Warden for ensuring the trees on the Green are maintained and do not present any Health and Safety issues.

I would like to offer my thanks to the parish councillors for all the hard work that each of them put into the village. We are lucky to have a group of people who feel passionate about their village.

Finally my thanks to Nicky our clerk who is a real asset to the Parish Council and does an excellent job of organising us and keeping on top of the finances.

6. County & dist. Cllr. reports.

County Cllr. Mr. Holt

Budget approved - New infrastructure improvement programme underway called 'Driving Home'. £24 million allocated to improve 'C', unclassified roads and footways raised from £12 million capital expenditure, £2 million unallocated New Homes Bonus, and £10 million to borrow. Spending has been reduced over the past 5 years. The Council has disposed of 33 leases and sold 99 freehold properties. Over the past 3 years 75,000 potholes repaired in Worcestershire at a cost of £2.2 million.

Education Secretary is to introduce new plans for school funding.

Dist. Cllr. Mrs. Steel - Neil Pearce, who was a Senior Planner at Wychavon District Council is now practicing full time as an independent planning consultant principally for the public sector. He will be attending Inkberrow Parish Council meeting at 7.30pm on the 20th April 2016 in the Sports Pavilion in Inkberrow.

South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) has now been adopted.

7. Police report: no report received.

8. Superfast Broadband: no report received.

9. Village Hall Committee report:

The past year has been one of both transition and continuity at Rous Lench Village Hall.

There was transition in regard to the management committee with four longstanding members deciding to retire and three new members joining. Unfortunately due to a change in personal circumstances one of the new members has since moved away from the community and left the team.

The current committee has been dedicated to continuing the tradition of accomplishment at, and stewardship of

Rous Lench and Radford Parish.

the Hall. This is a tradition set by many hardworking members of the community over many years. A number of non-committee residents from the community have also got involved in specific projects, roles and tasks over the last year. These have included the organisation of successful pub nights, musical jam sessions, a Lenches wide giant pumpkin growing contest (to benefit the Hall and St. Peter's Church) and assistance in the kitchen refurbishment project.

Last June the Hall received confirmation that it had been awarded a £10,000 grant from The Big Lottery fund to completely refurbish its inadequate kitchen facility. A huge concerted effort by many volunteers' generously contributing their time and expertise, with the paid support of local tradesmen, has resulted in the Hall becoming an even more attractive place for public events and private hire. The completely new and modern kitchen is now in full working use, with a few small details remaining to be completed.

The next major projects envisioned by the current committee, funds permitting and in order of priority are:

1. External storage building. Thank you very much to the Parish Council for its support in obtaining a grant of £1500 from Wychavon District Council towards the purchase of an insulated storage shed. We will be shortly finalising the details of what is to be purchased and expect to have an insulated shed in place in the next 2-3 months.
2. New landscaping of front garden area to make the Hall more attractive, inviting and engaging part of the community. A member of the community who happens to be an award winning garden and landscape designer has offered to put forward a proposed design for the hall's consideration.
3. Migration of the bar area to a position in the Hall where it can benefit from running water and drains, as well as secure closure when not in use at public events.
4. Improvements to stage, lighting, sound and projection systems.

The management committee has an ambitious calendar of high quality events planned through to the end of 2016. Planning for 2017 will start after the hall's AGM in May. Our main considerations in deciding to put on any public event are whether:

- It is wholesome and suitable for families
- It is in the community's best interest
- It makes good use of the hall's strengths as an entertainment venue
- It is likely to make a reasonable financial contribution to the hall's sustainability
- It is a good use of the valuable and limited time that volunteers have available to dedicate to staging the event.

Live & Local (shindig) and GLADS remain core partners in bringing major events to Rous Lench. The hall also attracts the attention and interest of acts who wish to perform here thanks to its reputation. These include the Roving Crows and Ginny Davis, both of whom will come to the hall this spring (April/May respectively). Well known and popular musician Mike Genders will be performing with his band at a Ceilidh in November, and there will be a New Year's Eve Party at the hall on December 31st 2016.

The hall has also recently established a reputation as an ideal venue for wedding receptions, and has received a record number of such enquiries over the last year. Following market research carried out in the autumn of 2015, the committee decided to increase the wedding package hire charge from £300 to £400. These private events are a great source of vital revenue for the hall without straining our volunteer resources to the same degree as public events. We have, however, limited the use of the hall for weddings so that the community use isn't excessively restricted.

The hall's website (www.rouslench.com) and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/RousLench>) are used by many members of the community to keep informed about news and events at the hall. The website is generally seen by around 200 unique visitors per week, and the Facebook page regularly receives contributions and "likes" from members of the community. The Rous Lench Pictorial History book which is always quite popular when made publicly available every year at the pig roast has been digitised and made publicly available year round via an album in the Facebook page.

The Chair wishes to express a sincere thank you to all on the village hall management committee and in the community who do so much to ensure the hall remains an asset we can enjoy and of which we can be proud.

10. Parish Paths Warden: Mr. Knight submitted a written report which was read out:

Rous Lench and Radford Parish.

Paths and bridleways in the parishes have continued to be much used even during the winter months and this has entailed some wear and tear. Most of the work has been simple clearance of growth from stiles and gateways. Specific problems arising during the year have been:

Path 500 Thorn to Kington Brake – In June the path became blocked by head high growth of giant hog-weed and teasel. It has been cleared but was not sure whether there was a need to post a notice of warning as the sap can cause blistering. Will enquire with the Countryside Access Team.

Path 507 Gooms Hill to Abbots Morton – plank bridge over the ditch at Abbots Morton boundary is showing signs of decay and requires replacing.

Path 509 Radford to Inkberrow – Complaints received of an obstruction near the rear of the garden of “Two Ashes”. There has been considerable groundwork here in relation to a proposed building site but the contractor has taped the right of way and a new gate has been installed.

Path 518 Rous Lench to Gooms Hill – a stile on this section had become insecure, now attended to. A new stile will be needed.

Path 524 Crossing park field Rous Lench Court – Notices placed stating that dogs must be kept on a lead and negotiated with the gardener that ponies be moved to a smaller paddock when a large group of walkers are expected on the path.

Path 532 Bishampton Road to Ab Lench bottom – roadside finger post re-erected.

Path 535 Ab Lench Road to Yeald Wood – damaged gate replaced.

11. Parochial Church Council: no report received.

12. Tree Warden: no report received.

13. Matters raised by Parishioners:

a) Amount of fly tipping and litter increasing on road verges.

b) Speeding – complaint of lorries driving through the village at speed. Dist.Cllr. Mrs. Steel advised residents to take note of the registration number and details of the name on the vehicles and report to the Police.

The Chairman thanked all the speakers and parishioners' for attending.

Meeting declared closed at 8.15 pm.