

Bredon, Bredon's Norton and Westmancote Parish Council

The minutes of Bredon's Annual Parish Meeting held at Bredon Village Hall on **Monday 29th April 2019** at 7.00 pm.

Present:

Cllrs Mr Nick Bradley (Chairman), Mr Adrian Darby (District), Mr Matt Darby, Mr Phil Handy, Mr Adrian Hardman (County and District), Mr Andrew Rhodes, Mr Declan Shiels, and Mr Rob Sly. Also, Mr Tim Drew (Clerk).

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Mr Richard Coghlan, Mr Kevin Falvey, Mr Mike Johns and Mr Brod Whiting. Also, PCSO Julie Pardoe and PC 3509 Daren Riley.

2. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting Held 16th April 2018.

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

3. Parish Council Chairman's Report.

Good evening ladies & gentlemen, welcome and thank you for attending Bredon's Annual Parish meeting.

I find myself before you making this presentation, due to our previous Chairman, Ian Rowland-Hill, stepping down from the Council, due to issues with his health. This led to me assume the role of acting Chairman. During the year, we also lost another Parish Councillor, Diane Kemple, who left due to work commitments.

Going into next year, I am sad to say we will also be without the services of Councillor Mike Johns, who has decided not to stand for re-election and will be sorely missed. I place on record my thanks and those of the Parish Council for the time and effort each of these three Councillors put into serving the Parish, during their time as Parish Councillors.

It is heartening to see and welcome back Richard Coghlan to the Parish Council, following his spell of ill health. As it is to be joined by our District Councillor, Adrian Darby, this evening.

It continues to be the case, as was reported last year by our then Chairman, that Planning continues to be one of the major issues this Parish Council faces.

During the last year, we have seen a major planning application submitted for 500 homes to cover the southern half the land under the control of developers, at the site known as "Land at Mitton" or Mitton Bank. With it expected that the site will be subject to further planning application(s), which would look to see the number of dwellings increase to potentially 1,100 homes. This would nearly double the number of homes within the 5 villages which make up this Parish.

When such major planning applications come forward, we continue to be heartened by the response and support we receive from residents, in attending public meetings, as well as submitting comments as part of the consultation process, as this can be an influential factor when the planning application is being considered and decided by Wychavon District Council's Planning Officers.

Continuing, on the planning front, we find ourselves facing the prospect of further major development in the neighbouring Borough of Tewkesbury. As Tewkesbury Borough Council has

recently received approval and funding, to progress their plans of creating a garden town, through the re-development of the Parish of Ashchurch. The proposals for the Garden Town would see the delivery of circa 10,500 homes, along with other commercial, industrial and municipal buildings. The Parish Council has attended and made representations, at various events hosted by Tewkesbury Borough Council relating to this scheme; something we will continue to do, to campaign to limit the implications that the proposed Garden Town, will have on our Parish.

Given the time and effort that the Council puts in to addressing Planning matters, which can be contentious on occasions, I wish to place on record my thanks to the members of the Planning Working Party, for their time and commitment as members of this group.

In recent times, traffic related issues have come to prominence, whether road and pedestrian safety, traffic volume, speeding, or parking. In the light of the earlier noted major planning applications for the development of the Land at Mitton Bank and the increase in residential development as part of the proposed Tewkesbury Garden Town, leads us to believe that highway and road safety issues are only likely to increase. Consequently, the Parish Council decided to form a Highways Working Group to respond to this mounting issue. This Working Group has attended a meeting at County Hall with key representatives of Worcestershire County Council, kindly co-ordinated and attended by our County & District Councillor, Mr Adrian Hardman. The purpose was to highlight to the County Council, existing issues and perceived future issues resulting from the future development relating to the major planning applications previously mentioned. We were pleased by the hearing we received and the attendee's commitment to assisting the Parish Council moving forward with proposed initiatives and campaigning in relation to proposed major developments.

During the year, the Parish Council has been responsible for introducing some welcome additions to the Parish. A new bus shelter was located opposite the Glebe Field, adjacent to the mile marker, which also benefitted from a refurbishment.

Four new dog bins have been installed along known regularly frequented dog walking routes.

The Parish Council has adopted four telephone kiosks around the Parish, three of which are now home to defibrillators, as are a number of other locations around the Parish. The telephone kiosks are to be re-painted and receive floor tiles designed and made by the pupils of Bredon Hancock's School.

The Parish Council has purchased eight new defibrillators, ensuring that each village is served by at least one defibrillator. The location of the defibrillators are:

- Telephone boxes at Kinsham, Westmancote & Queensmead;
- Drapers store;
- Bredon Cricket Club;
- Bredon's Norton Village Hall, and
- Cross Keys, Bredon's Hardwick.

The Bredon Village Hall defibrillator is soon to be upgraded to match the other defibrillators installed.

Funding is also in place, for the purchase and installation of a further defibrillator, for a yet to be decided location. The Parish Council will be arranging training courses in CPR and use of the defibrillators in due course, for Parishioners who wish to attend.

The Parish Council has also purchased 860 SmartWater kits for free issue to Parishioners, with the assistance of a financial contribution from our District & County Councillor. The Parish Council has convened four events within the Parish to distribute the SmartWater kits. To date, over 500 kits have been issued free of charge to Parishioners, with SmartWater signage also soon to be installed around the Parish at key locations; to act as a further crime prevention measure.

A Crime Prevention Neighbourhood Watch and SmartWater event was planned for tomorrow (30th April 2019) within the Village Hall. Unfortunately, this has had to be postponed, but will be re-arranged for an alternative date which will be communicated in due course. We hope that Parishioners will take the time to attend and meet our local Policing team to receive advice, as well as register for and collect a free SmartWater kit if they have not already done so.

I cannot mention the defibrillators and the SmartWater, without extending gratitude to Councillor Kevin Falvey, for the hard work he has put into managing and delivering these two initiatives. Our thoughts are with Kevin and his family at this difficult time for them.

During the year the Village Hall has benefitted from a face lift, having been decorated externally, and new external doors fitted. The Village Hall will also soon to be the recipient of some new signage, as well as some internal re-modelling to the Parish Council offices, following the approval of a New Homes Bonus application for this work. It is anticipated that the works to the Parish offices will offer more versatile accommodation, that will facilitate greater and alternative usage of the Village Hall.

Other beneficiaries of New Homes Bonus monies during the year have been Bredon's Norton Village Hall, Bredon Tennis Club and the Brownies.

We are currently awaiting the outcome of a Section 106 application, which would see improvements being made to the entrances to the Playing Fields and the car parks that serve the Playing Fields, if successful.

Throughout the year we have continued to benefit from the support and assistance of our County and District Councillor Adrian Hardman. I would like to express my personal thanks for his assistance in my time as acting Chairman, but further express my continued thanks on behalf of the Parish Council as a whole. We wish you well in the district elections to be held on the 2nd May 2019.

I would also like to thank our other District Councillor, Adrian Darby, for the help and support he provides to the Parish.

I must of course place on record the Parish Council's thanks to Tim our Clerk, as well as my own personal and sincere thanks for Tim's assistance in the many challenges the Parish Council faces day to day. He discharges the role of Clerk with consummate professionalism and is a constant source of support, so thank you Tim.

I consider myself to be very privileged to live in such a beautiful area and community. It is a real honour and privilege to serve on the Parish Council and represent the community. I am very fortunate to work with a group of dedicated and committed Parish Councillors who I am grateful and pleased to work with. I appreciate the assistance and words of encouragement they have shown to me since joining the Council and during the period I have been fulfilling the role of Chairman. My thanks go out to you all for the time and effort you put in as Parish Councillors and I look forward to working with you moving forward.

Thank you for your time.

4. County and District Councillor, Mr Adrian Hardman's Report.

I will start with a brief note on the County Council. While it is a fashionable idea to worry about the finance at the County; it will end up with a small over spend of less than 1%. The first out turn figure is £2.4M; and next year we will see our budget rise for the first time in 10 years. Whether it will rise fast enough to deal with the pressure and needs in the Social services budget remains to be seen. But even here at the end of the food chain we are starting to see scorching austerity start to fade a little and we return to just austerity.

Even with this; a lot is going on. On a clear day from here you might be able to see that work on the new Worcestershire Parkway Railway Station is continuing apace with external steelworks and glazing substantially completed on the station building. Currently work is concentrated on platform installation and paving the car park and the landscaping and planting around the site. The station is set for an opening at the end of this year.

Worcestershire has been successful in its bid for Government funding to test and explore 5G connectivity. 5G is the next generation of mobile technology. When it becomes available in the UK, 5G is expected to have a profound impact on the way people live their lives. As many as 1.4 billion 5G connections are predicted by 2025, as well as a host of new technologies not yet imagined. The Worcestershire 5G consortium, led by the County Council and Worcestershire LEP launched the first-ever British 5G factory trials at the Worcester Bosch factory earlier this year.

Works are now underway on the final phase (4) of the Worcester Southern Link Road scheme. A security fence has been erected and vegetation is being removed on the southern side of Temeside Way between the Carrington Bridge and Powick Roundabout. The Ketch viewpoint is now temporarily closed.

The latest monitoring visit by Ofsted Inspectors has found that the Council has made progress in improving its services for children and young people who are at risk from sexual exploitation and those who go missing. The Council's more effective approach, said the report, had reduced the numbers of children and young people going missing. WCC's Cabinet approved recommendations for the development of a Wholly Owned Council Company as the alternative delivery model to deliver Children's Social Care. The company name is 'Worcestershire Children First'. A phased shadow period commenced on 1 April enabling the Company Board to begin working as a team, and with representatives from the Council, to help prepare for Worcestershire Children First to go live on 1 October 2019.

Adult Social Care turned 70 in 2018 and we were happy to celebrate this milestone. We shared videos, stories and interesting facts about the history of social care and how adult social care is improving vulnerable adults' lives. A 70th birthday card signed by members from across the Council was handed over to the Health Secretary in December. I, as the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, and Richard Keble, the Assistant Director of Adult Services travelled down to London to personally hand the card over to Matt Hancock MP at the Department of Health and Social Care offices. The aim of the trip was to highlight that more needs to be done by Central Government to better fund adult social care in Worcestershire and across the country. This led to a debate over the performance of the Acute Hospital in Worcester, and it's far from satisfactory performance.

We have avoided any significant snowfall in the county this winter. We are also seeing much higher than expected temperatures for this time of year. Our gritting teams have been stood down for the

year, having gritted from Bredon to the equator. We continue to think that the climate is changing, and so we invest in mitigation schemes for flooding. This year has seen significant investment in two schemes designed to alleviate flooding and keep key roads open. New Road, Worcester was raised last year and will allow the road to be operated two-way if necessary, keeping a key east-west route across the city open at times of significant flooding of the River Severn. Similarly, works are set to be completed this spring at Upton-upon-Severn, where the A4104 which links the town with the strategic A38 is being raised and straightened to ensure business continuity and avoid lengthy diversions when the river is in flood.

Just to end on a local note, we did carry out a small length of footway improvement in the centre of the village off Blenheim Drive and put a new culvert in at the Bredon / Kemerton border. I am still working on the idea of upgrading the Eckington Bridge, and I am sure in time this will happen, but no news as yet. Our schools remain in good heart, but Steve Charlton is retiring at the end of term; after a long time as Head of the Middle School. He has been a good head and kept standards up. It was an honour to attend the 400 years celebrations of Bredon Hancocks and see the Head and Bishop of Worcester in such good form. The school and our community will miss our Rector, Mathew Baines who passed on this year.

At District level, my time has been spent in two areas. I am chair of the Audit Committee, which this year has been very busy looking at the risks to future for the Council. Wychavon continues to have a significant cash investment portfolio of around £56M, which it uses to keep Council Tax low, and due to the new waste collection contract was able to freeze Council Tax again. The other is planning and the threat to village from Mitton Bank and its 500 houses. This is on hold at the request of the Highways Agency till the end of June. I am marshalling my arguments! I remain very worried by the new idea of a Garden Town being created on the Army Camp at Ashchurch and the impact this would have on the Bredon Hill villages and the AONB; mainly of course with traffic impact being the worst feature.

I would just like to thank the Parish Council and Clerk for all their work. It is the most dynamic around the hill, and has its eyes on the future, as well as delivering day to day for Bredon.

As always, please call or email if you have something to take up with me.

5. District Councillor, Mr Adrian Darby's Report.

Since my ward includes Westmancote, I am submitting this report to the A.P.M.

Last April I suffered an attack of temporal arteritis which has left me blind in one eye and under treatment with steroids to safeguard the other eye. I am happy to say that this has been successful, and I am now able to function normally, but it did result in my missing the meetings of council and the planning committee last April. At the Annual Wychavon Council meeting I was re-elected to the planning committee and the Joint Advisory Panel overseeing the revision of the South Worcestershire Development Plan. I also continued to act as the council's heritage champion, concerned with both the built and the natural environment. Since May I have attended nearly every planning meeting and have tried to comment on all cases where there are heritage issues involved.

As always most of my time has been spent in dealing with planning issues.

You may remember the long-drawn out process which led to the production of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) in 2016, which was meant to determine the pattern of development of Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Wychavon over the period to 2030. This set out proposals to deliver 28,400 new homes and 300 hectares of employment land by 2030.

However, the Government now requires all planning authorities to review their local plans every five years to ensure they are keeping up with the latest housing requirements. Failure to do so could mean councils losing control over where development takes place. We now have to carry out a revision of the SWDP and project it forward to cover the period to 2041. In the extra time a further 14,000 new homes and additional employment land will be required. As a first stage of this process a consultation on Issues and Options was held last autumn. There were two other surveys as preliminaries to this Revision, one into Village Facilities and Rural Transport and the other into Open Space and Development Boundary methodology. Landowners have also been advised to submit proposed sites to the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA), but these sites have not yet been assessed by officers.

The other major planning issue which threatens Westmancote as well as the rest of Bredon parish is the large scale development of Tewkesbury both at Ashchurch and Mitton, which as well as severely impacting on the views from Bredon Hill would generate a lot of additional traffic through the centre of Bredon as motorists attempt to avoid the congestion on the A46. It will also be likely to increase the numbers of visitors accessing Bredon Hill through Westmancote.

So far as Ashchurch is concerned, acting as a member of Kemerton P.C. I attended a workshop on a proposed Ashchurch masterplan held at Tewkesbury Borough Offices in November. Bredon P.C. was also represented, and the two villages obviously have a common interest in this matter. This plan was a supporting paper to the Gloucester, Cheltenham, Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and I urged both Parish Council to respond to the consultation on the next phase of the JCS in January. Since then Tewkesbury Borough Council have been given a substantial grant to prepare for a Tewkesbury Ashchurch Garden Town.

The first phase of this JCS had recommended that Wychavon should provide additional housing at Mitton to meet Tewkesbury's needs, under the 'Duty to co-operate' imposed on a neighbouring council by government legislation. In accordance with this a planning application for 500 houses at Bredon's Hardwick has been submitted to Wychavon. Bredon Parish Council believes that this application is contrary to its neighbourhood plan unless it is allocated in the revised SWDP. However, it is being held up at present by Highways England until the road situation is sorted out, so this matter has not been tested.

I was also involved in the appeal by Allen's Caravans against refusal of the siting of 81 static holiday caravans at Great Comberton Golf Club because of the effect of this development on the view from the summit of Bredon Hill which lies in my ward. Unfortunately, Wychavon lost this appeal.

So far as individual planning applications in Westmancote are concerned, I make sure that the case officer takes note of the P.C.'s views when deciding whether to ask for them to go to full committee.

My focus on what I have been doing myself, chiefly in planning, has led me to overlook some important developments in Wychavon as a whole. However, I am assuming that Adrian Hardman keeps you fully informed about these. In case he has not I could add the following

There was a change of leader and executive board in November. Cllr Bradley Thomas took over from Cllr Linda Robinson who had held the post since May 2015. The new team brought forward the budget for the 2019/2020 year and so set the pattern of activity for the new council which is to be elected in May. There were two principle elements. Firstly, a freeze on the Wychavon element of council tax and secondly eleven new promises of extra activity/expenditure. This will result in a deficit if all the forecasts prove accurate, but the deficit may not materialise as the council's financial

performance is usually better than budget. Since this sometimes results from a delay or failure to replace vacant posts, and hence a worsening of service, it is not necessarily a good thing. As heritage champion I have been agitating for more posts in the heritage team and I am glad to say that I have succeeded in getting a new dedicated officer to make good the backlog in conservation area appraisals, from which I am happy to say both Beckford and Kemerton are benefitting. I supported the new promises, in particular one relating to improving social mobility through spending money on free school meal children and their families. As you might expect, I was also in favour of support for the Worcestershire Pollinator Strategy.

Lastly, I should say that I have been re-elected unopposed as district councillor for South Bredon Hill which includes Westmancote. I had hoped that the major planning issues which have so exercised me during the past eight years would have been settled for the next ten years or so. However, the government keeps changing the goalposts. It has revised the National Planning Policy Framework twice in the last year and has now insisted that the South Worcestershire Development Plan be revised. At the same time the plans for Tewkesbury have not been finalised and two of the parishes in my ward are engaged in neighbourhood plans. I therefore feel that the planning expertise, which I have built up over the last twenty-one years, is still needed, and that I can continue to make a contribution to safeguarding a very special piece of Worcestershire.

6. Police Report.

In PCSO Julie Pardoe and PC Daren Riley's absence, the Clerk read the following report on behalf of the Pershore Rural North and South Local Policing Team:

The last 12 months has continued to be busy throughout our ever-increasing local policing area.

This report is based using the recorded crime figures between 26/04/2018 and 26/04/2019. Overall the police recorded 74 recordable crimes (incidents where a specific offence has occurred) this was in comparison to 85 recordable crimes the previous year.

The breakdown of offences is as follows:

	2017/18	2018/19
Burglary Residential (Includes garages and sheds)	14	19
Burglary Business	6	2
Theft of Vehicle	8	2
Theft from vehicle	6	5
Theft other	5	6
Criminal Damage	7	3
Deception/Fraud	0	0
Motor Vehicle Interference	2	1
Other Offences	37	36
(Includes mostly concerns for welfare or domestic related incidents and assaults)		

This year has unfortunately seen a slight increase in residential burglaries in Bredon. We have continued with increased patrols in the area and have issued security advice to residents but the main contributing factor in all the burglaries throughout the year is that the properties are left without lights during the hours of darkness. We would strongly advise residents to use a lamp/s on a timer switch to give the impression that someone is present inside the property.

The 'other offences' incidents are increasing throughout the West Mercia area as police are dealing more often with vulnerable people.

On behalf of the team 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.

7. Questions from The Floor.

There were no questions raised from the floor.