

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on March 22nd 2022 in Kemerton Village Hall

Present were Councillors C Barber, C Kulukundis (Chair), C Carver, A Darby (Parish and District), A Hardman (County), John Harvey (Chair Village Hall Committee), Jake Freestone (Overbury Estate) and six parishioners: Tim Ashley, Michael Gillman, Judy Woodman, Roger Workman, Dee Clayton and Di Atwell.

1) Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Parish Clerk Jackie Shields, Councillors L Croft, J Wenham and G Stacey, Julie Pardoe (West Mercia Police) and parishioner N Coleman.

2) Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held 20th April 2021

Minutes were approved and will be signed when appropriate

3) Report from West Mercia Police

In Julie Pardoe's absence, the Chair read out her report

4) County Councillors report sent by email by Cllr Hardman

5) District Councillors report sent by email by Cllr Darby

Concern was expressed by parishioners about the proposed Tewkesbury Garden Town and the lack of infrastructure to serve it, particularly road links to the M5 and no sign of any plans for improvements to J9 itself. This is a very long term project and still awaits planning permission.

6) Parish Council Report sent by email to Jackie

7) Chairman of Victoria Hall Report sent by email to Jackie

8) Changes in Farming Practices-Jake Freestone

Jake was invited to speak at this meeting following complaints arising from parishioners in Kemerton at the strong smell produced at certain times last year after fields were fertilised with human waste. Jake explained about the regenerative system of farming practised by Overbury Estate now, which allows a sustainable system of farming and food production. This is much better for the environment/bird and wildlife and soil is never left bare so locks carbon into the soil. The farm is less reliant on manufactured fertilisers (and hence fossil fuels) and operates a no tilling/ploughing policy with emphasis on organic matter being used which is incorporated into the soil as quickly as possible. The use of cover crops to support this system was also explained. The spreading of treated-human waste is monitored by Severn Trent as cannot be done close to water courses but is no legislation to say how close it can be done to houses. As regards the incident last year, it was agreed that villagers could have been forewarned about what was happening but basically it will smell as the organic matter has to be applied. If rain falls soon after spreading, the impact on residents is reduced. Jake said they will look at ways to try to keep the muck off the footpaths more effectively, and told the meeting that the fields are worked on a rotational basis every 3-4 years meaning the problem should not arise in that same location for a while.

9) Questions from the floor

Concerns expressed about the police response to the dog theft and attempted burglaries in the village. There is a great deal of confusion between police areas as Kemerton is on the boundary between West Mercia and Gloucestershire but this should not happen and is very frustrating. Several villagers and A Darby wrote to the Crime Commissioner and our MPs at the time but there has been a very limited response. It is likely that nothing will change.

Di Atwell reported that a group is getting together to organise a village celebration for the Queen's Jubilee in June and they hope to buy a flagpole to erect outside the village hall. They plan to seek initial permission

to do so from the Trustees of the Village Hall. Also mentioned that Overbury will be organising a beacon to be lit on Bredon Hill as part of the celebrations. To be confirmed.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and contributing to such an interesting evening and the meeting closed at 8.15pm