

Defford and Besford Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Tuesday 26th May 2015 at Defford Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Clive Woods (Chairman), Ron Davis, Ian Spiers and Patricia Steel.

Absent: Cllr Hazel Wakefield.

Also present: Linda Blake (Clerk); Tony Kent, Village Hall Management Committee; Mike Sparrow, Defford Short Mat Bowling Club; Mary Woods, Spring Bank Quilters, 6 members of the public

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllr Hazel Wakefield and PC Julie Pardoe.

2. Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 13th May 2014

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the 13th May 2014 should be accepted and signed as a true record.

3. Report from West Mercia Police Local Policing Team

PC Julie Pardoe had sent her apologies and therefore the Parish Clerk read out the Annual Police Report as submitted for Defford and Besford, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

Those present at the meeting expressed their appreciation for the continued support from West Mercia Local Policing Team.

4. Chairman's Annual Report

a) Report from previous Chairman, Robert Bemand

The Parish Clerk read out the report from the previous Chairman, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

b) Comments from new Chairman, Councillor Clive Woods

The new Parish Council Chairman Clive Woods read out a brief statement which included the following points;

The first matter to be raised is that you as Parishioners are not being properly represented in that we have too few Councillors. We have only six Councillors instead of the nine. There should be six Councillors representing Defford not FOUR, and three Councillors for Besford, not two! So we do need THREE more members of the Parish that we can co-opt onto the PC. We need a wide consensus of information and opinion about your

parish and how it can be improved for everyone's benefit. So please volunteer to work with us to achieve more success and enable us to do a good job as your Parish Council.

Looking forward your Council plans include;

- Consideration of a Parish web-site, so we will be evaluating the pros and cons during the coming months;
- Seeking an improvement to the procedure of processing planning applications;
- Also there needs to be an improvement of the Millennium Green maintenance as this area has shown signs of neglect;
- A permanent public display of the Railway memorabilia that you have seen displayed here this evening.

Finally we would wish to record our appreciation for the sterling work and contribution that Bob Bemand has made to the Parish Council as Chairman during the last 4 years. His experience and guidance was of considerable benefit to us all.

Also, I wish to thank all of the Councillors that have served the Parish during the last term, Roy Shepherd has already been mentioned, but also Sonja Lee and David Robinson have now stepped down. Not to forget the ongoing commitment from Hazel Wakefield, Patricia Steel, Jane Thompson and Ian Spiers who have agreed to continue as Councillors and our reliable and expert Parish Clerk Linda Blake. Thank you all on behalf of the Parish.

It was AGREED that a letter would be sent to Sonja Lee to express thanks for all of the hard work she had undertaken on behalf of the Parish Council and in particular the work on the Parish Plan.

5. District Councillor's Annual Report – Cllr Ron Davis

Cllr Davis reported that the previous year had been a difficult one for planning, but that now there was a robust 5 year land supply within the Wychavon District and that this would assist when dealing with large planning applications. Planning approval had been given for 23 properties in Defford during the period and this reflected the fact that the village does have to grow in some way to keep its economics going.

Cllr Davis also commented that £271 million was being invested in the Wychavon economy and that the NHB programme is still on course.

6. County Councillor's Annual Report – Cllr Adrian Hardman

County Cllr Hardman was not present at the meeting and had not submitted a report for this year.

7. Report from the Village Hall Management Committee

Tony Kent, the Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee submitted a report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

8. Reports from Village Organisations

Spring Bank Quilters

Mary Woods reported that the Spring Bank Quilters were a club of 25 members who meet once a month. They have a widespread membership and as part of their activities make quilts for charity and invite guest speakers along to their meetings. The group are very pleased to use the Village Hall as a great facility within the village and as an ideal location for some of their events to take place.

Short Mat Bowling Club

Mike Sparrow reported that the Bowls Club had continued to see an increase in membership in 2014-15 and that it now has 50 members who can bowl on 4 sessions held per week.

Last year, the club's first "bowlathon" raised £1,300 for the Air Ambulance which was a great achievement. This year's "bowlathon" will take place from 8am on Saturday 8 August to 8am the next day. Please come along and support it if you can.

The Bowls club will also be holding a Burns Night supper, which last year had raised £350 for the Air Ambulance. Their annual break had been held Oakhampton and Mike was pleased to report that the club was now playing in both the summer and winter bowling leagues. New members are always welcome; All you need to take part is £5 per session and some enthusiasm!

10. Parishioners Open Forum

- i. Comments were made about the Millennium Green which now required some maintenance to improve its condition.
- ii. Further to the display of Railway Memorabilia and Village photographs displayed at the meeting, a parishioner suggested that an advert could be placed in the Parish News to invite those within the village who have old photographs to allow them to be copied for a village archive. It was agreed that this could be looked at alongside the development of the display within the village hall.

The meeting AGREED that District Councillor Ron Davis should be thanked for his 39 years of service to the Parish Council.

The meeting ended at 9:05pm

Signed by the Chairman

Annual Police Report for Defford Parish 2014-15

The last 12 months has seen significant change within the team and the police as a whole. We lost our long serving PC Sean Woods to the Pershore Town team after the local PC retired. This has allowed a new PC called Paul Acaster to join the team back in November and he is still working his way around the area, so I'm sure you will bump into him soon. Paul is working alongside the long serving PCSO Julie Pardoe who is committed to serving your community. Last June also saw a new addition to the team, PCSO Steven Tinkler. Steven is enjoying his new role and is also showing a high level of commitment to helping the community.

This report is based using the recorded crime figures between 23/5/14 and 23/5/15 the comparison is relating to the corresponding dates in 2013/14.

Overall the police recorded 61 incidents that were reported by members of the public this is compared to 67 incidents reported the previous year.

Of the 61 incidents the Parish had 16 recordable crimes (incidents where a specific offence has occurred) this was in comparison to 20 recordable crimes the previous year.

The breakdown of offences is as follows:

	2014/15	2013/14
Burglary Dwellings	0	1
Burglary Other (i.e. sheds)	2	3
Attempt Burglary	1	1
Theft of vehicle	0	2
Theft	3	3
Criminal Damage	2	3
Assault	3	0
Other Offences	5	7

(Includes mostly domestic related incidents)

Overall the figures show a steady but low crime rate for the past few years. The area has seen a reduction in some offences, which could be contributed to the Police presence that operates in Defford and the surrounding villages but also better security advice that has been given. The figures clearly present the picture that Defford and the surrounding area is a safe place to both live and work, however we all have responsibility to ensure we maintain that.

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.

Julie Pardoe C6427

Safer Neighbourhood PCSO

Pershore Rural North and South

Non-emergency phone number: 101

Defford-cum-Besford Parish Council Chairman's Report to the 2015 Annual Parish Meeting

With great regret the Council received the resignation of Ciir Roy Shepherd in September. I would like to thank Roy for all of his hard work and contribution to the Parish Council over the years. His experience and wise Council will be missed.

In fulfilment of the consequent vacant Council position, Mrs Jane Thompson was co-opted on to Council as a Councillor for Defford Ward. Mrs Thompson is warmly welcomed in her new role.

The budget requirement for Defford and Besford in 2015/16 was set at £9,010. This was an increase in £150 from 2014/15, but due to the increase in the tax-base within the Parish, an overall Band D property council tax charge would fall 4 pence to £20.42 per annum.

Applications for New Homes Bonus funding for various community projects were put forward and duly considered to:

- Landscape a site of approximately 400 sq. m at the railway end of the Village Hall,
- Provide two notice boards in the village at the entrance to the Village Hall car park and by the Church in the centre of the village
- Purchase and install a swing on the Millennium Green

On application, a grant of up to £2,200 has been made available by County Cllr Hardman from his Community Fund to clear and make good the footpath on Spring Bank.

Council agreed to spend £240 on the electrical testing of the Council's 8 street lights and £50 on a blanking plate for the street light in Crown Lane. Whilst this work was being undertaken, the contractor was requested look at several lights which had been reported as not working properly to maintain security within Defford village.

Further to a planning application for the proposed Solar Farm at Defford Aerodrome, the Parish Clerk and myself met with representatives of Solar Planning Ltd to discuss possible projects of community benefit that could be supported by SunEdison. Subsequently, a section 106 grant of up to £100,000 maybe forth-coming to benefit community projects in the Parish.

The Council registered its objection to 'large scale' planning applications for housing in and around Defford village for the following reasons:

- 1) The scale of the developments is too great for the sites proposed. The density and overall visual impact of the developments is not in keeping with the remainder of the village.
- 2) The transport infrastructure of the area is unsuitable and the Parish Council have concerns about Highways access and road safety.

- 3) The sites propose a scale of development well in access of the housing allocation set out in the emerging South Worcestershire Development Plan.
- 4) Wychavon District Council is able to demonstrate a robust 5 year land supply position and therefore there is no urgent need to secure additional housing.
- 5) The proposed sites are outside of the village boundaries and therefore are outside of Planning Policy.

Finally, I would like to thank all Councillors who have helped and contributed to a most challenging year, and maintained a stable and sustainable Council.

Bob Bemand, Defford-cum-Besford Parish Council Chairman

April 2015

DRAFT

DEFFORD-cum-BESFORD VILLAGE HALL TRUST

Chairman's Report to the Annual Parish Meeting 26th May 2015

The year ending 31st March 2015 showed yet further increase in revenues due to more regular users and more "one off" events such as weddings, parties, funeral wakes, and fundraising events for other organisations.

In January this year we commissioned a "Village Hall Health Check" from Community First. The process was both helpful and positive with the following final comments from Richard Timmy, who carried out the health check;

Defford Cum Besford Village hall is a first class, modern, venue in a beautiful location. The Management Committee of Defford Cum Besford Village Hall run the hall extremely well with many best practice procedures and policies in place."

This excellent report was due to the hard work and dedication of the previous Chairman and both previous and current trustees.

Moving forward the trustees have embarked on a number of projects to ensure the continuing success of the village hall and to open up new opportunities for the use of Parishioners;

Ongoing Projects

1. **Website;** www.deffordvillagehall.org this is now up and running and we will endeavour to continue to improve and develop. The biggest plus so far is that the website has its own calendar built in to allow potential users to see availability and then email to reserve and download terms & conditions, booking forms etc.
2. **Entrance Drive;** Due to the drive surface being "washed away" by rain over the past 4 years we were left with pot holes and very uneven surface which caused serious potential danger for pedestrians entering the site. This has now been completed to a very good standard.
3. **Landscaping;** Thanks to the £3,000 funding from the New Homes bonus we are now about to start on an exciting project to create a new area between the existing lawn and the boundary with the railway line. We hope to have the works completed by the summer of this year.
4. **Commercial Dishwasher;** Installed specifically for large events to allow catering companies to cater for the ever growing number of large events.

New projects

New Hall Users; The trustees have discussed a number of potential user groups for which there are currently none or few opportunities within the Parish;

- a. **Babies & Toddlers;** mother & toddler group, gymnastics, dance classes, music etc.
- b. **Young People,** youth club, discos, table tennis, pool. etc.
- c. **Elderly People,** coffee mornings, bingo sessions, exercise, etc.

The trustees would welcome input from any of the parishioners on the above opportunities.