

Whittington Parish Council



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Minutes of The Annual Meeting Held on 26 May 2015 at 19.30 At Whittington Village Hall

2015.1 Welcome. The Chairman welcomed all guest and parishioners to the meeting

2015.2 Apologies. Apologies were received from Cllr Guy, Cllr M Baker, Mr D Hallmark, Mr G Richards, PCSO Julie Pardoe.

2015.3 Attendance. 14 Parishioners and 4 guest

2015.4 Minutes of the Annual Meeting Held on 29th April 2014. The minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 29th April 2014 was moved, seconded and adopted as a true record of the meeting.

2015.5 Matters arising from the meeting held on 29 April 2014. None.

2015.6 Whittington Parish Council - Chairman's Report.

Cllr S Brooker - Chairman from May 2014 to November 2014. During my time as Chairman of the Whittington Parish Council I endeavoured to pursue and address the concerns expressed to me both by Parish Councillors and Parishioners in respect of fear of crime, local policing issue, matters concerning highways and road safety, planning and development within the Parish and adjacent to the Parish. In this regard, I consulted, sometimes personally, with a fellow councillor or councillors and through the Parish Council with the Planning Authorities, our District and County Councillor, Mr. Rob Adams, The Police and Crime Commissioner, Roads Safety Partnership, District Council and potential Developers. We contributed to the consultation process for the new Parkway train station at Norton, opposed the bid for development of a business park on land immediately north of the Spetchley road, adjacent to Swinesherd village on Warden Parish and the planning authority seeking to remove a public right of way from Whittington Parish into Warndon Parish – to make way for the business park. A local land owner put forward an interesting and exciting proposal for development within Whittington Village that I believe, and a belief shared by a number of parishioners although I accept not all, a development that would bring enormous benefit for the parish as a whole. This included affordable homes that would benefit a younger generation within the village, open spaces, much needed upgrade of the village hall and car park facilities for our local church. However, whilst a fellow Parish Councillor agreed with my sentiments the majority of the Parish Councillors did not. I therefore found myself in a minority on the Council a position I considered not appropriate to remain as Chairman. On the 14th of November 2014, I stood down from my position as Chairman. I understand the land owner is to submit a revised application for development which will still bring benefits in the way of community facilities to the Parish. I shall urge the Parish Council to look at this revised application positively and favourably.

A further application for some 300 new homes is being perused for developing the land between Swinesherd Village and Whittington Village. Under my Chairmanship, the Parish Council, seeking to preserve our rural identity and open space opposed in principle the development of this land. Should building on this land become inevitable and particularly if the revised application for development within the village does not materialise then I would urge the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee to consider exploring with the Developers of this land between Swinesherd and Whittington what they have to offer in respect of community facilities and infrastructure. In conclusion, my thanks to Carol Chambers for her support, advice and hard work and my thanks to Councillor Rob Adams for his guidance and support particularly during my time as Chairman.

Cllr S Macleod - Current Chairman from December 2014 to May 2015. Life Liberty and Property

I have been on the Parish Council for some years now, and it was, with some trepidation about the amount of work that it would involve, that I took on the role as Chair at the beginning of December. I want to thank our former Chair Steve Booker for the time he has given leading this council. For his expertise, ideas and the direction - it has been much appreciated – and even more so now that I am doing the role! In a couple of weeks the country will celebrates the 800th Anniversary of Magna Carta. The Great Charter was agreed and sealed by King ohn.....reluctantly! He as you may know is buried in the Cathedral just a few miles away. Magna Carta is seen worldwide as the document that was the start of **liberty and democracy for the people**. Only three of the Clauses still remain on statue in England and Wales. Two of which are relevant to us here today – the freedom of the English Church and the right to due legal process. We gather here annually as a parish and send an invitation to all parishoners to come and hear reports of what has been going on locally. Thank you for joining us, for your interest and for being an active part of our community. I also want to thank the Church and our County Councillor Rob Adams for coming here tonight and to give us their reports in person. We on the parish council care about the area that we live in and volunteer our time to try to represent a cross section of views within the parish - as part of the democracy we have. We don't always agree on all matters, but we feel this is part of a healthy democracy. We welcome you to come and put your views forward at a parish council meeting, or to approach one of the councillors to bring an issue or concern to the councils notice. It has been said, that what Magna Carta means to us today, concerns - our life, our liberty and our property. These are the things that are relevant to the work of the Parish Council. Life, Liberty and Property are at the fore of what we meet and discuss and make decisions and recommendations on: - The quality of life here in the parish, the quality of our surroundings and facilities and how they impact on our lives – safety of our property and highways, traffic speed, the state of the roads - flooding, potholes, the bus routes, the hedges and ditches, the muddy paths, our trees and green space and right of access, for example up the Tump. We make representation, to the city and County council, to the government, to other bodies and within our own community. Property is a hot topic - we all have concerns about the amount of planning that is going on around the parish. Back in January we had a meeting with Jack Hegarty from Wychavon District Council, following on from that we invited Andrew Ford to come to our forth coming July meeting to give us advice concerning the way forward with a Neighbourhood plan. All of these things are central to what we care about on the Parish council and what we represent you about. Going forward over the next year, the themes of Magna Carta are so relevant for us - Life, Liberty and Property. The planning issues will continue, but I am keen that we remain positive and also look for and encourage new ideas on how we can enhance our life in this village and parish. How we can foster a greater community spirit, encourage more people to get involved, to have an interest in where we live and to care more about what is going on around us. I have found by being on the parish council that you can actually help to make a difference. Maybe we don't always get our way, but we have had our say. If you have ideas that you would like to put forward,

please do approach us. We do still have a vacancy for one Parish Councillor, so if you are interested to join us, speak to Carol Chambers our clerk or to one of the Councillors.

Finally, we have brought along this evening our parish copy of another historic document - The Domesday book, or Great Survey of England and parts of Wales. It was completed in 1086 by William the Conqueror. The surveys main purpose was to determine what taxes had been owed during the reign of Edward Confessor and was a reckoning of a man's holdings and their values. Fortunately we don't have to carry out such a survey now! Do feel free to have a look at the document whilst we have our refreshments.

2015.7 Annual Police Report for Whittington 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 along side 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 25/4/14 and 25/4/15 the comparison is relating to the corresponding dates in 2013/14. Overall the police recorded 603 incidents that were reported by members of the public this is compared to 473 incidents reported the previous year. The vast majority of these incidents are related to the motorway network but unfortunately still get recorded against the beat code for Whittington and therefore show up on our local policing page. Of the 603 incidents the Parish had 22 recordable crimes (incidents where a specific offence has occurred) this was in comparison to 26 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)	1	1
Attempt Burglary	0	1
Theft from vehicle	3	2
Theft	3	2
Criminal Damage	4	6
Assault	4	2
Other Offences	7	11

(Includes mostly domestic related incidents)

Overall the figures show a steady but low crime rate for the past few years. The figures clearly present the picture that Whittington 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.

2015.8 Village Charities Accounts - The Fanny Clifton and Elizabeth Stephens Charities. (report as 2014) As reported in previous years, these village charities have been dormant for a number of years. The Elizabeth Stephens Charity dates back to 1668, and was a legacy of £50 with which three cottages were built in Swinesherd. These were liquidated in 1880 and the interest used to provide grocery parcels for the poor and needy of the parish. The Fanny Clifton Charity was founded by Miss Clifton's will in 1888. Her legacy of £900 was to be used to provide coal at

Christmas for the poor of the parish. The accounts show that no payments have been made and only a small amount of income in the form of interest has been received.

2015.9 Village Hall Report - Whittington Village Hall Chairman's Annual Report 2015.

5 years have now passed since I was elected Chairman and most of this time has been spent, with the support of the Committee, in ensuring our Hall continues to play an essential role in the Whittington community and local area. During the year we have taken continuing steps to keep the Hall in one piece and these efforts are helping to maintain the fabric in the near future. A new window and curtains have been replaced and we plan to re-decorate during the summer months. Externally, the local authority were persuaded to renew the car park entrance and we have recently appointed a new gardener. Our plans to replace the Hall continue to be frustrated by planning issues beyond our control but we hope there more clarity before the end of this year. Financially, I am pleased to report an excess of income over expenditure for several years in a row. Only the hard work of the Committee ensures that our costs are kept within control so any excess income may be added to our Building Fund. In closing, may I thank our loyal team of cleaners, Ron & Elaine, who reliably keep the Hall spick & span. Roger Phillips

2015.10 Whittington School Report Report for the Parish Council Meeting May 2015

Submitted on behalf of Whittington Church of England Primary School by Gary Richards – Head Teacher. Whittington Church of England Primary School draws its children from the village of Whittington and the immediate area, so we see ourselves as a village school. As a Church of England school we have close links with the Church of St. Philip and St. James, located in the village. This is a very positive relationship and we base much of our work in school around our 'Core Christian Values' which are: friendship, courage, forgiveness, thankfulness, responsibility and respect. Our aim is to instil in our pupils the importance of developing positive values which will inform their conduct throughout their lives. We also strive for academic excellence in all areas of the curriculum and our 2014 results in reading, writing and maths continued to be strong. This on-going success is due to hard working pupils, committed staff and governors, and supportive parents. As well as children doing well in their tests we encourage all pupils to participate in a range of activities. In the last year we have fielded a boys' football team a girls' football team and a girls' netball team. All three have teams have shown real commitment and as we approach the end of the season all the teams are towards the top of their leagues. Music is a real strength and from the age of seven all pupils learn a musical instrument. We also have a school choir who perform in a variety of regional events. French is taught across Key Stage Two and our teaching has been described as exemplary. Drama is also a strength, with two full scale performances each academic year. A current issue for many schools within Worcester is the pressure on pupil numbers. The new development along Swinesherd Way is within our catchment so this will have an impact on our pupil numbers. We are working with the local authority to ensure that children who move into this development can be offered a school place. However, there are no plans to increase the size of the school. My staff, governors and I are very proud of Whittington Church of England Primary School and we all work very hard to make it the best school possible. Children enjoy attending the school and we deliver a challenging, engaging and varied curriculum where all pupils are apply themselves and persevere in order to achieve their best.

2015.11 Whittington Church Report - We are pleased to say that the Church was granted Grade II listed status by English Heritage early in the year and later NADFAS (The National Association of Decoration and Fine Arts) began making a detailed record of the church contents in the Autumn which will take up to two years to complete. Once again the major preoccupation during the year has been the need to replace the Jubilee Room with a permanent building as planning permission is due to expire in November of this year. Thankfully Planning Permission has just been granted by

Wychavon District Council for an extension from the north-west corner of the church near to the ancient yew tree and we are grateful for the support of the Parish Council in this regard. The major task of taking this project forward now begins and we have been supported by consultants towards getting the greater involvement with the community and seeking ways of raising the all-important finance. To that end the Great Yew Brew takes place in the Church every Saturday morning and some afternoons in the summer. There were 22 baptisms during the year: 13 were under a year old, 7 children were between 1 and 4 years old and there were 2 adult baptisms. There was just one wedding during last year, which is unusually low and three funerals in church with a number of burials and interments in the churchyard. In view of the small number of attendees at Evensong it has been decided by the DCC to reduce this service to once a month. In May Phillip and Frances Jones joined us for the dedication of Benedict's bench and tree in the Churchyard. The Memorial Service was held as usual in July and the Harvest Festival in October was followed by lunch in the Village Hall. Lunch also followed the Remembrance Sunday service on 9 November. The Grafton Consort once again joined us for Evensong in November. The Christmas services were well supported and it was good to welcome so many children to the Crib Service. To commemorate the beginning of World War 1 the church was open on 4 August and in October a lecture by Professor Maggie Andrews on *How Women's Everyday Life was Changed when Men went to War* was well supported. Involvement with the local C of E School has continued with each year group visiting the church for morning workshops and services are held for the whole school each term. Year 6 Leavers are each given a Bible from the church on the last day of term. The Vicar, David Chestney and Bob Saunders are the three Foundation Governors. Our Churchyard forms a significant part of the Conservation area and the Parish. We have a very small dedicated team of (ageing) volunteers who continue to maintain this pleasant and peaceful part of the Village and we will always welcome more help in doing so. Jayne Rayer, Churchwarden.

2015.12 County & District Councillors Report - Cllr Rob Adams.

Cllr Adams was elected in May to serve 4 years as Wychavon DC Councillor and has 2 years left as a Worcestershire County Councillor. He reported that the southern link road would continue to the next stage at Norton and the Ketch roundabout the agencies were working together to get a better road structure, he noted that the footpath to St Peters was not finished and that there was little protection for pedestrians as the speed of the road had not been reduced and in places were forced to walk in the road, he continued to express concern about the Swinesherd roundabout barriers and is looking at getting a slip road at the entrances to the village to help parishioners get out of the village safely. He confirmed that the Lengthsman Scheme would continue for another year. He added that the works on the drainage in Narrow Walk would start in June and that he continued to work with the Highways Department to answer questions that the WPC had put to them. He thanked Cllr Steve Brooker for his work as Chairman.

2015.13 - Any Other Business. None

2015.14 - Date of Next Annual Parish Meeting - Will be advised in early 2016.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

**Susan Macleod
Chairman**