

FLADBURY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 2011/12

The 2012 Annual Parish Meeting was held in the Village Hall on Monday 23rd April 2012 at 7.30pm

Present:	Chair I Southcott	36+ Parishioners
	V/Chair G Mills	
	Cllr B Carter	Laura Synnuck Pershore Volunteer Centre
	Cllr S Insall	
	Cllr D Day	WCC Cllr E Eyre
	Cllr M Anderson	WDC Cllr T McDonald
	Cllr N Manser	Parish Clerk Mr R J Coles
	Cllr W P Llewellyn	

1 Apologies for Absence – Cllr A Stephens & EVG.

2 Special Topics

- a) **Pershore Volunteer Centre** – Laura Synnuck advised the meeting that the Centre ran an outreach programme for various villages in Wychavon. They act as a clearing centre, advertising for community volunteers and trying to find positions to use their talents. The centre itself runs an over 70's club in Pershore and can provide initial office requirements. The Community Transport Scheme provides volunteer drivers for clients, minibus shopping and dial-a-ride. There is a new people carrier that can be borrowed with driver. European Leader is helping to fund rural transport in the Pershore Area in order to promote outreach and tackle rural isolation. They are trying to create a network of drivers so that 'dead miles' can be minimised. The cost is no longer subsidised and clients have to pay. Drivers are covered for the extra insurance implications with a driver age limit of 80.
- b) **Evesham Vale Growers (EVG)** – Apologies for absence were received from Andrew Bille and Matt Powell. Information supplied included technical approval for the A44 roundabout due in 4/5 weeks with 278 agreements in 6 weeks. Construction will start in mid-August with around 18 weeks to completion. The anaerobic digester will produce 500KWh exported to the local grid. Green gas equivalent to 405m³/hr will also be exported to the local area. Soil movements for the clamp will start Monday 30th April followed by construction to approved conditions. The greenhouse is going well with production peaking in May as last year with lorry movements managed to a minimum along Salters Lane awaiting the new roundabout opening for next season. Cllr Southcott added that a liaison group had been formed, was working well and was due a meeting imminently.
- c) **New Homes Bonus** - Chair Southcott and the clerk attended a recent briefing on this initiative which is aimed at rewarding communities that provide additional housing. WDC uniquely offer 32% of the central government grant (20% to WCC, 80% to WDC of which 40% to Parish Councils) back to the qualifying parishes for their control. Expenditure is expected to be of a sustainable nature for the longer term benefits of the community. Examples are being monitored and ideas welcomed by the Parish Council. This is a yearly award with the first being worth £1842/yr for 6 years totalling £11052 which can be brought forward if the project(s) are suitable, this representing just an additional 3 dwellings.
- d) **Street Lighting** – Cllr Carter is responsible for the Parish lights and can also report the WCC lights in Woodward Parks. WCC is investigating a scheme to reduce power consumption; however, as switching off lights at night coincides with the cheapest tariffs, the savings may not be there. A project to hand over day to day running of the parish lights is complicated by outdated equipment and even asbestos problems but is still being investigated in order that all lights meet WCC compliance. The costs can be considerable from £300 to remove, £600 for simplest replacement, £1000-£2000 for a new pole light through to £7000 at one light due to no nearby underground power source. About 5 lights at least are the cause of the problems.

- e) **Traffic Calming** – The speed awareness sign is having some impact but the speeding problem through the village is still an issue. The Parish Council is consulting with WCC on every possible measure available but are being given all the reasons why not and not what can be done. It is recognised that WCC spend is audited by central government on a cost/benefit analysis and are penalised if not diligent. Alternative funding may have to be sought and the topic is well discussed by councillors. The 2013 10-week bridge closure in Evesham is causing local concern but every effort at all three tiers of government is trying to address but in the end it may be down to short term monitoring and actions as experienced during the six month closure of the B4084 at ‘Crophorne Canyon’. It was explained that many of the large vehicles and especially the agricultural vehicles have a right to operate in the three Jubilee bridge villages whether it was liked or not. Any vehicle known to have ‘rat run’ through in excess of the 7.5 tonne limit should be reported to the police. A recent ‘sat nav’ problem in Farm Street has been addressed by EVG. By a show of hands the meeting favoured continued efforts to try to do something to reduce the speed of traffic in the village.
- f) **Trees** – The recent removal of a tree at the bus stop has highlighted the need to protect our tree population but it was recognised that the condition and age of many were of cause for concern.
- g) **Bus Shelter** – The Pound has been ruled out after objections from the school and also WCC officers on safety grounds. If a shelter is to be provided there is some local feeling that it should be at the Butcher’s shop siting but would have to be sympathetic to the Monastery and the Church. It would not be cheap and has to be funded by the Parish Council in any case.
- h) **WCC Cllr Liz Eyre** – Her constituency covers 9 parishes, 80 miles in distance and 8,000 voters. WCC has a budget of £300m with a further £150m of joint health funds. The great majority is spent on the elderly and the ever expanding health in the home schemes which is a growth industry especially in a village like Fladbury. Substantial sums are also spent on people with learning difficulties and physical disabilities. These all take up 75% of monies. Assisted technologies are being adopted to remotely monitor conditions in homes of those requiring services in order to improve cost effectiveness. A large portion of the remainder is used to help promote economic development in the County which leaves a small amount available for highways, footways and footpaths. The Jubilee Bridge is due a repaint in the next year, there was concern in the meeting that there was a lot of corrosion taking place which could mean hidden problems in due course.
- i) **WDC Cllr Tom McDonald** – Wychavon has met its savings targets early and is in fact been resized at 1974 staffing levels with little effect noticed by the populace apart from toilets closing in Evesham at 6pm. Local planning is being rewritten by the coalition government with 1000 pages of guidance being replaced by 50 with a presumption in favour of sustainable development being a key issue. It is all about growing for better lives now and also for future generations. Generation of jobs especially for the young remains a priority. Investment in high tech agriculture should not be ignored and this sector was beginning to offer better employment prospects again. He appealed to people not to say Evesham is dying but is being transformed and attitudes of visitors and potential investors should be nurtured. A £200k fund had been set up by WCC 150k, WDC £34k and Evesham Market Town Partnership £16k to invest in marketing, grants, training and discounted parking to help promote the town. WDC had provided grants for play facilities in all three local villages and it should also be noted that Wychavon came top in a Halifax Insurance survey for being the best place to live.
- j) **Friends of Fladbury (FoF), formerly Friends of Pool Garden (FoPG)** – Julie Cross reported that the New Year Festive Five run had again been a success and raised funds which would go together with grants from Walkabout and Parish Council to support four days of Jubilee events over the relevant weekend and two bank holidays as well as future community projects. Full details are due via a special Fladbury Flyer insert in the May edition of Five Alive delivered to every household. Further to the run EVG have indicated that they are in agreement to grant permissive rights to help form a circular

Jubilee path taking in the river round the bend to return via Broadway Lane. Chair Southcott and V/chair Mills will be meeting to finalise details in due course.

3 Approval of the Minutes of the 2010 Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes had been distributed to all Councillors and copies were made available to those at the meeting. Bill North proposed, Neil Richardson seconded and it was AGREED that these be signed by the Chair as a true record.

4 Matters Arising from the Minutes - none

The issue of the glasshouse not removing the excess soil from the site was raised. This was now thought to be covered by the new planning application. V/chair Southcott agreed to follow up.

5 Approval of the Receipts and Payments Account for the Year Ended 31st March 2011(P)

Copies had been distributed to all Councillors and were made available to those at the meeting. Diane Brown proposed, Cllr Llewellyn seconded and it was AGREED that the Receipts and Payments account be approved and were duly signed off by the Chair and RFO.

6. Chair's Report on the Past Year

- 1) I would first like to thank all my fellow parish councillors for all their hard work over the past 12 months in particular and their support for me since I became chair last May. As you know I succeeded Bill Llewellyn who had been the longest serving PC chair in Fladbury's history. Bill presented this chain of office, which for the record I forgot to pick up tonight in my usual rush, to the council when he stood down.
- 2) I would like also to welcome Sandy Insall (who replaced Dr Ounsted who did not stand for re-election last May) and Neil Manser (who replaced WDC Cllr McDonald who stood down to concentrate on his WDC duties), both of whom joined the council during the year.
- 3) I would also like to thank WCC Cllr Liz Eyre and WDC Cllr Tom McDonald for all the work they both do for residents of Fladbury and the wider community in Wychavon and Worcestershire.
- 4) Last, but not least, I would like to thank our clerk, Richard Coles, for all the work he does keeping us on the straight and narrow.
- 5) Councillor attendance over the last twelve months stands at 93%. This is slightly down on the previous year's figure of 95%.
- 6) For your information, each councillor has a specific area of responsibility – Brian Carter (lighting, policing & NW), Geoff Mills (footpaths & CPRE), David Day (planning), Anne Stephens (trees), Mark Anderson (sports clubs & legal), Bill Llewellyn (mowing, village hall, lengthsman), Neil Manser (insurance), Sandy Insall (Jubilee, village events) and myself (localism, neighbourhood plans, publicity, communications).
- 7) Your council has maintained the precept for the financial year 2012/13 at £15,000 – for the sixth year running and this represents a real term decline of about 15% over this period – which we believe is the right thing to do in these straitened times.
- 8) We have resolved to embark upon a Housing Needs Survey – this is designed to identify if there is a need for 'affordable' housing in the village for people with close family and

village connections. We have decided to do this to endeavour to be in control of the process as opposed to having it thrust upon us.

- 9) A few key issues and events have marked the year – your council strenuously opposed the development of moorings on the far side of the river opposite the Millennium Wood for a wide variety of reasons; the application has been withdrawn again but I think we must remain vigilant if we are to ensure that this application doesn't return and get permission. Amongst the statutory consultees, the Highways authority and the EA were opposed.
- 10) As you have heard, EVG have secured permission for an anaerobic digester and a roundabout on the A44.
- 11) Last September saw the opening of the newly refurbished Pool Garden play area. The Friends of Pool Garden led by Louise Bugg should be heartily congratulated on this fantastic achievement. The council supported this project with a grant and now takes on the maintenance of this greatly enhanced facility.
- 12) Again as you have heard, the Friends of Pool Garden has now become the Friends of Fladbury with the aim of promoting and supporting community projects in the village – the first being this year's Diamond Jubilee celebrations in June.
- 13) Once again thank you all for your support.

7. Strategic Issues – Parish/Neighbourhood Plan

November 2011 saw the Royal Assent of the Localism Bill which gives the potential for increased local powers covering a variety of activities including rights to buy, develop etc. Neighbourhood plans are meant to help development provide growth and manage positive changes to prosper and survive. They need to reflect local vision appropriate to the village, guiding development, not preventing it. DCLG estimate that the average cost of preparing a plan would be £17,000 indicating that it will not be cheap or without time consuming activities if progressed. WDC are offering support in explanation and training.

8. Any Other Business

It was highlighted from the floor that democracy required participation and that unlike many other countries this appeared to be lacking in Britain today.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 09.05pm