

LITTLE WITLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of Little Witley Annual Parish Meeting

held on Tuesday 2nd May 2017 in Little Witley Village Hall at 7.50pm.

Councillors Present

Mr P Cumming (Chairman), Mrs P Cumming , Mr D Lowe, Mr P Owen, Mrs F Wilson and Mrs K Wilson.

In Attendance

Mrs A Watson (Clerk), Mr D Buggins (Retired Councillor), Mr C Bunn (Parish Lengthsman) and 7 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from;

County Councillor Dr K Pollock, Mr P Hill, Mrs J Mills, Mrs V Ashley and Mrs S Owen.

2. Chairman's report

The Chairman paid tribute to Mr Des Buggins, who had retired from the Parish Council at the last meeting, and presented Des with a gift and thanked him for 25 years of service as a Councillor and all the work he has done for the parish. The Chairman also paid tribute to Mr Chris Jones who has retired as Parish Lengthsman and welcomed Mr Chris Bunn, who has taken over this role. The Chairman reported on work done by the Parish Council during the year, dealing with a large number of planning applications, the reconstruction of the parish website, the broadband service in the village that should include a new BT cabinet in Well Lane by the end of June, maintenance of village assets including bus shelters and the continuing work to reduce speeding through the village.

3. Policing and security

No one from the local policing team was available to attend the meeting. Mr M Lamb raised the issue of how Neighbourhood Watch messages could be filtered and the recent problems with the system and registering to get updates. The Chairman agreed that this would be looked at and the possibility of local reports being put on the parish website. The Chairman took the opportunity to thank Mr Lamb for litter picking in the village and Councillors agreed to put litter on the agenda for the next meeting.

At this point, Cllr. Lowe raised the issue of Mr & Mrs J Chaplin wanting to adopt the lay-by outside their property on the A443. Mrs Chaplin, who attended the meeting, explained the frustration of trying to get a response from the Highways department. The road has been adopted by the County Council but is not being taken care of and frequently lorries are using it as a pull in and blocking driveways. The Chairman agreed to contact County Cllr. Pollock on their behalf to see what can be done.

Queries were also raised regarding the disrepair of the bus shelters and the concrete bench in the village. The Chairman stated that these are on the Parish Council's 'to do' list and will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

4. County Councillor's report

Cllr. Pollock was unable to attend the meeting but sent a brief summary for the year that was read out by the Clerk which included; a great improvement in economic performance of the County, a number of major infrastructure projects in progress, extending broadband and mobile coverage across the County and 90% of our schools are rated good or outstanding. Children's Services which have been rated unsatisfactory will shortly have an Ofsted approved senior management team. The financial situation continues to cause concern and adult social care will continue to be difficult, as our ageing population require more care from the state. Improvements have been seen on our minor roads and pavements. Tesco's have provided a large section of the Public Realm improvement of Tenbury and their store has now opened but its impact on trade in the town is still to be discovered.

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5. District Councillors Report

Cllr. Mr P Cumming reported on the current financial situation and that all employees were moving to a single site which would allow the council to rent out Brunel House and knock down the Council Chamber and rebuild it with a much needed reception area. The Council continues to share services with Wychavon including the Chief Executive and planning staff. From April 2018 recyclable and landfill waste will be collected on alternate weeks. There is a budget of £500 per councillor to spend on local worthwhile activities and Cllr. Cumming welcomes suggestions from any community organisation.

6. Reports from local organisations

- **Village Hall Committee** – Cllr. Owen reported that the hall had been very busy with numerous groups, activities and the regular opening of the Bar on a Thursday night and social nights once a month. A lot of work has been done recently including new electrics and technology being installed, repainting, a new fire door and work is due to begin on sanding and sealing the floor. Cllr. Owen stated 'a big thank you' was owed to all the Committee and reminded everyone about a special Jazz concert evening on Saturday 7th October.
- **Little Witley Women's Institute** – A report, kindly provided by Mrs S Owen, was read out by Cllr. Mrs P Cumming. 42 members have enjoyed a variety of events during the year and raised money for a number of charities. Planning for 2018 is well underway for the Worcestershire WI Centenary and the 70th Birthday of Little Witley WI. New members are always very welcome.
- **Friends of St Michael's & All Angels Church** – Chairman, John Gorton kindly reported on a busy year and once again paid tribute to the 100% effort given by every member of the Friends small committee. This year the Best Kept Churchyard competition has been entered again although maintenance of the Church continues to be hard work and a financial challenge. Reverend Ted Whittaker has settled in and the meet and greet of the congregation is much appreciated together with after service refreshments. Fundraising activities continue and the Parish Council and Village Hall are thanked for their generous donations.
- **Great Witley School** – The Clerk read out a report from Head Teacher Mrs K Banford which included information on the first year as an academy and plans to increase the number of classrooms. The school continues to be oversubscribed with 160 pupils on roll and Reception places are likely to be oversubscribed for a fourth year in a row. Reading volunteers are always welcome, anyone interested is encouraged to contact Mrs Banford on 01299 896246.
- **Nora Parsons Day Centre** – The Clerk read out a report and newsletter kindly sent by Mrs E Richmond, Treasurer. The Centre continues to provide a warm welcome to new members that may benefit from some company and a chat over coffee or lunch. This year the Centre celebrates its 40th anniversary so watch out for details in parish magazines or call 01886 888374. Suggestions for fund raising and volunteers are always very welcome and everyone is invited to attend the AGM, which is on Monday 10th July at 7pm at the Centre. Cllr. Mrs P Cumming stated that one local resident was enjoying all the benefits the centre has to offer.

7. Any other business

- The Chairman reminded those in attendance that there is a vacancy for a Parish Councillor and that he would be happy to hear from anyone who was interested in the role. There is also a new notice board outside the Village Hall where agenda and minutes will be displayed, or for those who would like to receive them by email please provide the Chairman with your details.
- A brief discussion took place regarding the proposed Birmingham 'Velo' bike ride due to take place on Sunday 24th September. The County Council are still in negotiations with the organisers regarding safety measures and road closures.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.50pm.