

## **Bredon, Bredon's Norton and Westmancote Parish Council**

The minutes of Bredon's Annual Parish Meeting held at Bredon Village Hall on **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018** at 7.00 pm.

### **Present:**

Cllrs Mr Nick Bradley, Mr Richard Coghlan, Mr Kevin Falvey, Mr Phil Handy (Chairman), Mr Mike Johns, Mr Andrew Rhodes, Mr Ian Rowland-Hill, Mr Declan Shiels, and Mr Adrian Hardman (County and District).

Mr Tim Drew (Clerk) & Mrs Benedicta Coghlan.

### **1. Apologies for Absence.**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Mr Adrian Darby (District), Mr Matt Darby, Mr Rob Sly and Mr Brod Whiting.

### **2. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting Held 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017.**

The minutes having been circulated were **agreed** and signed as a true record.

### **3. Parish Council Chairman's Report.**

Good evening ladies & gentlemen and welcome to the Annual Parish Meeting. 2018.

On the 8th June last year, the Neighbourhood plan went to Referendum and I am delighted that it has now been adopted with a very high turnout, in fact I believe a record in this country. The Neighbourhood Plan group consisted of residents and councillors all of which contributed to a great result. My thanks to Matt and Alison for being the driving forces behind this and to all the neighbourhood plan group.

As ever, planning seems to be one of the main issues - unfortunately we've had several disgruntled residents who have chosen to express their frustration either through social media or pointing the finger towards individuals. In fact, several comments were in my opinion less than welcome, shall we say, and totally unfounded.

Moving on we still have the threat of development of Mitton Bank lurking in the background. This has the potential to alter village life as we know it and as a council we must be very mindful of this. Putting this to one side, I feel that the planning group has performed well over the last 12 months with not too many contentious issues. So, to sum up planning, my thanks go to Andrew, Matt & Richard who together with myself, have made up the planning group.

I would also like to thank all councillors who are on a working party / group for their ongoing work with such issues as contracts, village hall, leases and insurance, to name a just a few. My thanks go to Dec for the Parish Mag, Maintenance to Kevin, Grass cutting to Rob, Bredon's Norton – to Richard and Brod. BCPR – Rob, Ian & Kevin, Staffing Group – Dec, Di & Ian, Village Hall Mike – also Jo for looking after the Village hall and also to everyone who has contributed.

I'm delighted to report that through New Homes Bonus the Eckington Road footway is now finished. We have a storage shed for the Rugby, Football & BPCR use, a new boiler for Bredon's Norton Village Hall and other organisations have benefited either from New Homes Bonus or from a donation from the PC.

We currently have significant funds available as a legacy project and that's something that, moving forward we need to explore with some urgency.

We have also benefitted once again from continued support from our County and District Councillor, Adrian Hardman, who as ever has represented us at district and county level. Adrian has given me support and advice as and when needed. Also, we have benefitted from the ongoing support of our other District Councillor, Adrian Darby, who again has provided help and support, so thank you to you both.

This time last year was Jackie's last meeting as Clerk and it was with great pleasure that we welcomed Tim, who has taken over the role of Clerk. Tim has supported me in my role as chairman and helped with the challenges that we as a council face. So, thank you Tim.

I would also like to thank Andrew, whose role as Vice Chairman can go un-noticed, but he is a source of constant help to us all and keeping it all ticking along. When Andrew became Vice Chairman he made me promise to never miss a meeting as he didn't want to chair one (something I have been fortunate enough to be able to fulfil). However, I'm sad to report that Andrew has now decided to step down as Vice Chairman, so we will not get to sample his chairing skills! I would just like to thank Andrew personally for his support – he has been a very supportive Vice Chairman, especially with advice and generally just being there. So, Andrew a huge thank you.

I have served as Vice Chairman for 4 years and Chairman for the last 3 years and during this period we have met many challenges as a Parish Council – however, I feel that the PC would benefit from some fresh impetus and it's with that in mind and in the best interests of the council, that I have decided to step aside and not seek re-election as Chairman. I'm very proud to have been your Chairman and I thank you for your support. I shall remain as a parish councillor and continue to contribute as before.

We are lucky enough to live in a beautiful area and with your efforts long may that continue. I would like to say that for me it's been an honour and a privilege. Thank you.

#### **4. County and District Councillor, Mr Adrian Hardman's Report.**

Dear Residents,

Some years seem to pass quicker than others and this has certainly been one of those, Following the County Council elections on the 4th of May I was returned as your member for the next 4 years and thanks to those who voted for me. I am now Deputy Leader of the County Council, and member with responsibility for Adult Social care, which has been a considerable challenge.

It has been a year of three main themes at County Hall, coping with the financial pressure of the 8th year of budget reductions, the demand pressures in Adult Social Care & the future of Children's Social Care.

This year has been the most challenging year for budget reductions, with the budget reducing by some £32M, and this is starting to have clear effects on the frontline services in the need to reform them. But to quote the Chancellor "There is light at the end of the tunnel", and our budget is starting to rise by some £5M next year mainly due to the Social Care precept section on your Council tax bill. I have in the past talked about the pressure on Adult Social Care for some years now and will only quote on fact that dementia is forecast to rise by some 40% by 2025. I await Government reform with interest.

Following an OFSTED inspection in May the Children's Social Care was found to be inadequate, and this led to the Minister appointing a commissioner to oversee the service, and this is leading to a change in system since he is determined we set up an arm's length company to run these services, but the numbers of Children in care has continued to rise, as has the budget over spend.

On a more local front your concerns have been focused on 3 main issues; the question of footways in the village, speeding, congestion and parking. I am able to confirm the Council will be doing some more works footway resurfacing in the village this year. On the question of speeding I have a meeting with highways officer booked to see if there are any other ideas we can use, and hope to get the idea of a pedestrian crossing close to the village hall considered. I hope that you thought the two snow falls were dealt with effectively. The schools around the hill remain in good health and close to being full. It is Bredon Handcocks 400th anniversary in June. I urge you to use the bus service.

On the District Council front, Wychavon continues to deliver excellent value for money. As normal the main issue has been the future of Mitton Bank, and a developers desire to build along it. But we have not had an application yet. Cllr Adrian Darby is much more knowledgeable on planning than I am has written in more detail in his report, so I won't burden you with more on the topic. Wychavon was able to freeze the Council tax this year due to retender the waste collection service. I would like to thank the Parish Council, and my fellow Councillor for all their work over the year.

#### **5. District Councillor, Mr Adrian Darby Report.**

As usual my principal preoccupation has been with planning.

#### **Wychavon:**

Since the adoption of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) in February 2016, things have been fairly quiet on the Wychavon front. We had hoped that since we have a housing land supply comfortably over our requirement for the next five years, we could look forward to several years of peace in which we merely implemented the plan. However, once again the government has changed the rules and has just published a consultation draft of a revised National Planning Policy Framework. When the new framework is adopted it is likely to propose a new way of calculating a planning authority's housing need, which in Wychavon's case will require a considerable upward revision. We are therefore having to prepare a revision of the SWDP which will take account of the new numbers required after 2021 and which will extend the plan forward. Preparatory work has already started with a view to producing a consultation draft by October 2019. Last May I was re-elected to the joint advisory panel of the three South Worcestershire Councils which is overseeing this process, and I expect to continue in the role up to May 2019, when the next Wychavon elections take place.

A number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are in various stages of approval. It will be remembered that when the SWDP replaced the old Wychavon Local Plan, all the SPDs associated with that plan came to an end and new ones have had to be prepared. From a village point of view, I consider the Design Guide SPD to be the most important. This was approved by the planning committee on 14 Dec and recommended to the Executive Board for ratification. At my suggestion a clause was inserted to pay attention to long distance views of major buildings, in particular when seen from the AONB, and to ensure their colouring was appropriate.

Two other SPDs are still at the Draft Stage and were approved for public consultation. These deal with Developer Contributions and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy. There is currently a consultation going on about the Gypsy and Traveller sites SPD. I don't know whether the P.C. wishes to comment. The site for three pitches originally proposed next to Westmancote Nurseries at Bredon

has been taken out of the latest version. This was due to the fact that this site was protected in the Bredon Neighbourhood Plan and illustrates the value of having such a plan.

### **Tewkesbury:**

However, as I have been reporting regularly to the Parish Council, the major threat to Bredon is housing development on this side of Tewkesbury, both at Mitton and at Ashchurch. Tewkesbury Borough is required to find a lot of extra housing under the Gloucester, Cheltenham, Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (GCT-JCS). It had been intended to meet this need largely by 2400 houses at and next to the MoD site at Ashchurch, but last year it became clear that the Ministry would not release the site in the appropriate time frame and the inspector removed this allocation and suggested that some of the shortfall should be made up by allowing 500 houses at Mitton in Bredon Parish. Wychavon is now awaiting a planning application for this site and it has written to Tewkesbury Borough agreeing that it has a duty to consider providing houses to meet Tewkesbury's needs, under its 'legal duty to cooperate'. However, this application would be contrary to the Bredon Neighbourhood Plan which was adopted last year, unless this site is allocated in the South Worcestershire Development Plan. This will only happen once the revised plan has gone through all its stages which is likely to take at least another three years. Whether the developers will wait this long or whether Wychavon would try to override the Bredon Neighbourhood Plan is unclear.

While the MoD site at Ashchurch has been put on hold, there was a greenfield part of the larger allocation which belongs to Robert Hitchins and for which there was a planning application for 550 houses. The appeal against refusal was lost last year, essentially on the lack of proper access along Aston Fields Lane. Parishioners may have seen that there has been an announcement of a £8.1 million grant for a railway bridge at Northway. This may open up this development. The danger from Bredon's point of view is that it would result in a big increase in rat-running traffic through the village as commuters going north east attempt to bypass blockages on the A46. I will continue to press Wychavon to lobby Tewkesbury to prevent this happening.

### **Other matters:**

Wychavon has decided not to increase its council tax at all. The Lib Dem group had suggested a small increase of less than 1% which would have provided funds for some desirable activity, but we were outvoted.

I attended a peer review by members from other councils, last month at Wychavon. On balance they were very complimentary about us.

### **6. Police Report (from Julie Pardoe).**

The last 12 months has continued to be busy throughout our ever-increasing local policing area which extends from Whittington, Upton Snodsbury and Dormston in the north to Bredon and Beckford in the south. With targeted patrols, attendance at village surgeries and numerous parish events, messaging via Twitter and the Community Messaging Service (CMS) the team have continued to be actively involved in the community. The whole team remain committed to tackling all levels of crime throughout the area including rural crime and poaching and providing security advice and support to victims and vulnerable residents.

This report is based using the recorded crime figures between 14/04/2017 and 14/04/2018 the comparison is relating to the corresponding dates in 2016/17.

Overall the police recorded 251 incidents that were reported by members of the public this is compared to 254 incidents reported the previous year.

Of the 251 incidents the Parish had 84 recordable crimes (incidents where a specific offence has occurred) this was in comparison to 58 recordable crimes the previous year.

The breakdown of offences is as follows:

	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Burglary Dwellings	12	8
Burglary other (sheds)	0	10
Burglary business	6	0
Theft of vehicle	8	2
Theft from vehicle	6	4
Vehicle crime/damage	7	1
Arson	0	1
Theft other	5	11
Criminal Damage	2	0
Deception/fraud	0	1
Other Offences	38	20

(Includes mostly domestic related incidents/concerns for safety)

This year has unfortunately seen an increase in residential burglaries in Bredon but thefts from sheds has diminished completely.

The recording of burglary business has also changed, and this is why there are no figures from previous years.

Rural business crime is on the increase throughout South Worcestershire and surrounding areas, especially around thefts of quads and Landrovers as well as tools from farms and businesses. We are working closely with the Rural Business Crime Officer to try and promote awareness and reduce thefts. There was recently a property marking session held at Overbury for the local businesses and farms.

We have continued with increased patrols in the area and have issued security advice to residents but the main contributing factor in all of the burglaries throughout the year is that the properties are left without lights during the hours of darkness (evenings). The campaign 'Leave a Light on' is applicable throughout the year and we would strongly advise residents to use a lamp/s on a timer switch to give the impression that someone is present inside the property. Personally, I use them all year round whether I am at home or not.

The number of 'other' crimes has increased on all areas. This could be put down to increased social and economic pressures.

The number of crimes and recordable incidents has increased but we have openly encouraged residents to report incidents as this is the only way that any crime trend can be addressed by ourselves.

Bredon is still a safe place to both live and work, however we all have a responsibility to ensure we maintain this.

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.

#### **7. Questions from The Floor.**

Referring to the Police Report, Cllr Falvey commented that a comparison of the 2017-18 figures compared to 2015-16 shows an increase in crime of 66% over the two years. He confirmed he will be writing to the Police & Crime Commissioner who attended the parish council meeting in February 2018. Cllr Bradley called for more police liaison.

Mrs Benedicta Coghlan thanked the parish council for their support on behalf on the Bredon's Norton Village Hall Committee.

Cllr Shiels thanked Cllr Handy and Cllr Rhodes for serving as Chairman and Vice Chairman and stated they would be greatly missed in their respective roles.