

BITTERLEY

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at Bitterley Village Hall On Wednesday 8th March 2017

PRESENT

Mr RJ Osborne (Chairman)

Other members of the Parish Council: Mrs AM Holman (Vice Chairman), Mr C Chillingworth, Mr DT Price, Mr J Gatehouse, Mrs K. Wheeler and Mr DW Rogers, Mr HCH Chance; Mrs S Jones (Clerk); Richard Huffer (Shropshire Councillor) and 30 members of the Public

- 1. To confirm the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held 9th March 2016.** The minutes were **APPROVED** and it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be signed and **ADOPTED** as a true record. Proposed by Mrs A. Holman and seconded by Mr DT Price, Minutes **signed by the Chairman**

- 2. Annual Report of the Parish Council by the Chairman of Bitterley Parish Council**

Welcome to all and thanks to the Parish Councillors who have served over the past year.

Regular topics have been state of roads, reporting to Shropshire Council to get repairs done. The Flood Committee has looked into locations that have been at risk of flooding and continues to work with local land owners, farmers and Shropshire Council to look at what can be done to reduce flood risk. Parish Council has been seeking funding from Shropshire Council for a Lengthsman to help look after signs, road gulleys, and drainage ditches etc. The Parish Council owns the Village Hall and has supported grant applications by the Village Hall Committee that have recently been successful so that new windows will be going in early April. The Parish Council provides a small sum of money to Cleeton St Mary and Bitterley Churches to help their upkeep.

Planning role: Consultee role to Shropshire Council. Importance of local input but rules are set by national Government and Shropshire Council. Examples. Middleton application, Parish along with many residents objected, Shropshire Council listened and refused, the appeal was unsuccessful. Solar Farm objection by parish, refusal by Shropshire Council but appeal was successful.

Many individual applications for conversions, extensions etc. where we have sought to add local knowledge to help good development happen in context of the Shropshire Council policies.

Shropshire Council consultation on planning strategic direction currently going on, please look into it. The consultation is on to establish how much development in total should happen across Shropshire and how much should happen in Shrewsbury, the main towns and the other centres of growth identified. There are options given for people to give their opinion on. Ludlow is one of the main 5 Market Towns and so will have criteria for development according to that category. Clee Hill is currently a Community Hub as it meets criteria such as having main transport links, primary school, shop etc and being over a certain size. It comes under the Rural Policy. It does not affect the Policy on areas like Bitterley that currently are in the 'Open Countryside' policy CS5 that limits any possible development to exceptional one plot affordable homes, conversions, agricultural workers dwellings and similar. Even if in due course Bitterley became a community cluster or Hub, the next step up in the policy, any development that came forward would have to meet a number of criteria, including being of a scale appropriate to the settlement. So for example, Bitterley having about 45 houses would not have a development of more than say 5 houses happen. Those 5 houses would have to demonstrate meeting community needs and affordability. So for those of you who have come in response to posters advertising a meeting about 14 houses happening, that would be very unlikely. Even if Bitterley became a community cluster then if a development came forward for planning, Shropshire Council would almost certainly limit it to about 5 houses, assuming it passed tests on affordability and local need. Some development has in recent years got permission in Shropshire due to Shropshire Council not being able to demonstrate it had land supply for houses for the next 5 years. There have been 2 appeals very recently refused however as Shropshire Council can now demonstrate it has sufficient land supply. The consultation runs to 20th March. It will not affect the policy on very limited exceptional development in open countryside areas that Bitterley is in at present. It will affect the total number of houses in the County for the next 20 years and the proportion of those houses in Shrewsbury, Ludlow and other key market towns and community hubs like Clee Hill.

Parish and Unitary elections, 4th May. The notice of election for all areas is due to be published on Monday 13 March, and nomination papers can be submitted to the returning officer, Claire Porter, from the following day onwards. Nomination papers for town/parish candidates are now available from the Elections Team at Shropshire Council. Existing town and parish councilors should obtain their nomination pack from their council's clerk from 6 March onwards, but all other candidates are invited to contact Shropshire Council e-mail at elections@shropshire.gov.uk or by phone on **0345 678 9015**, to request a nomination pack. When requesting a pack, please let them know whether you wish to stand as a **unitary candidate** or a **town/parish candidate** (or both!), so that they can send you the correct paperwork. The law states that nomination papers may only be delivered to the returning officer in person, and can't be received through the post. To assist candidates, Shropshire Council will be setting up nomination submission points at the locations: Ludlow, Helena Lane Day Care Centre, Thursday 16th March 8.45 – 4 pm, Wednesday 22nd March 8.45 – 4 pm, Tuesday 28th March 8.45 – 3.45 pm Or they can be taken to Shirehall. All nomination papers must be received by the returning officer by 4pm on Tuesday 4 April 2017. If you wish to find out further information, we recommend that you visit the Shropshire Council and Electoral Commission's websites

Finance Officer's end of year report: The Clerk produced an Income and expenditure account for the year which showed Income of £6,838 and Expenditure of £4,423 giving a brief summary of spend of the year, showing a projected year-end balance of £9,045. The Parish Council has reserves of: General Fund: £3,085, Election expenses £500, Street lighting repairs £2,000, Village Hall Support Grant £1,080, Parish Plan Funding £1,000 and Transparency funding £1,380.

3. Parish Plan Review

Thanks to the team of local volunteers who have worked on the steering committee to revise the questionnaire it will soon to be going out to all adults on the electoral role. That's about 700 people in total. It's a survey to find out more about the parish and can be used to inform the Parish, local community groups and Shropshire Council on issues. For example, should the Village Hall continue to provide a play area, should we try to get investment for improving broadband, what is important to people about their community and the activities that happen. What is the role of the churches in the parish? The School are also undertaking a survey of the pupils at the same time as a project. We are keeping costs to a minimum given the limited money Shropshire Council have provided. We could still use some volunteers for delivering the questionnaires out that should be happening in the next few weeks. Please get hold of Lynn or myself, Bridget Cherry, Tony Millard, Dave Rogers, Towy Price or Sue Jones to let us know if you can help. Please do fill the questionnaires in and they can be returned in a pre-paid envelope or, to save money you can drop them off at my house, 1 Orchard Lea. Once we have the results back we plan to have a get together to share the results with whatever refreshments the remaining budget will allow.

4. To invite Parish Representatives (including the Shropshire Councillor for Clew) to address the Meeting.

Mr Richard Huffer (Shropshire Councillor): Shropshire Council will face further challenges, Schools will also face further challenges too. RO asked about the delegation of Services eg. Leisure Services, Youth Services and Libraries. Shropshire Council feel that the outlying parishes should contribute to the running of the services, but this has had a reprieve but will come back to the table at some point. RH said the major problems in the area is speeding and the state of the roads. Middleton is still having issues but budgets are tight, so not sure how much more will be done.

5. Matters of Public Interest

a) **Speeding at Middleton:** Have the lorry signs made any difference? The signs have been put at the end of the Bridgnorth road, but as they are not on the A49 it is too late by the time the lorries have got there. The traffic calming is still in progress, and thanks was given to residents for all the efforts that have been given.

b) Houses in Bitterley

Signs have appeared in Bitterley saying that houses are coming to Bitterley. RO explained that James Wheeler brought a plan to the last Parish council meeting with his ideas for some houses, a shop and a car park.

MoP said that they are not opposed to affordable housing and the car park but was concerned about the impact on the volume of traffic 14 houses would have.

MoP asked about the sewerage plans as when the plant was installed in Orchard Lea by

Severn Trent they said that it was at capacity. **RO** raised the issue of surface water on Clee Stanton Road and the impact more houses may have.

JW said that the plan arose due to difficulties with parking at the school, has alternatives had been gone through for example, parking at the village hall. The best solution seemed to be parking in the field next to the school. Congestion is also a problem. A permanent road in the field would be expensive but building the houses would fund the project. Potentially there could be affordable, 1 shop and 6 open market in a 6 acre field. This would increase the houses along Clee Stanton Road by a 1/3.

MoP concerned that the shop would not be viable.

MoP asked what the minimum amount of housing would cover the cost of the road? **JW** does not know.

PM is concerned about the flow of traffic if the traffic went out at the bottom onto the small lane.

HC said that it would have to be agreed by Shropshire Council anyway. Also that **JW** had at least brought his plans for consultation unlike the Middleton application that was just submitted. The object is to find the best solution. A number of ideas have been put forward but none of them have been suitable, and it is hoped that one is found. There have been 2 fields earmarked for housing in the parish for many years.

MoP asked the question that if the status of the village to a community hub from an Open Countryside would be the decision of the Parish council, but it would be after a consultation with residents.

MoP pointed out that the access to the village is bad enough in every direction without having more houses, which would create more problems.

HC said the best solution could be to move the school, and that it wasn't a threat just an option, it's time to bring solutions not problems.

MoP said they had worked in schools in the past and that the problems were only for 10 minutes each end of the day.

RO pointed out that more children have been using the bus, which has helped.

MoP agreed that houses should be for local peoples, could it be investigated if the Housing Association could provide the local need.

RH: Open Market Housing would contribute through CiL for the infrastructure in the village. Most planning that is accepted is for Exception sites. Could additional land be given to the school to allow the front playground to be parking and playing field to be at the back?

RO Invited residents to attend Parish council meetings to give their views about any issues or give solutions.

JW has brought an option to the table and is trying to sort the problem. **LO/BC** from the parking committee requested that people came forward and give their suggestions.

KM asked if there was a plan to look at but at the moment there were none but **JW** said the road would go from one end to the other with parking on the school side, the housing is needed to fund the road.

DR We have moved forward in the last 12 months, at least there is a solution. This will actually get traffic off the road. It has been suggested by governors that the school could be moved, if it was moved the site could be potentially be built on anyway.

MoP said could there be a system used where parents drop children off into the care of a teacher without having to get out of the car to improve the traffic flow.

The Annual Parish Council Meeting is on the 10th May at **8.00 p.m.**