

# ***BITTERLEY***

## **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at Bitterley Village Hall On Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

### **PRESENT**

Other members of the Parish Council: Mr C Chillingworth, (Acting Chairman)  
Mr HWJ Watkins, Mr J Gatehouse, Mrs K. Wheeler, Mr P. Martin, Mr R. Watkins and Mr DW Rogers,  
Mrs S Jones (Clerk); Richard Huffer (Shropshire Councillor) and 2 members of the Public

- 1. To confirm the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017.** The minutes were **APPROVED** and it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be signed and **ADOPTED** as a true record. Proposed by Mr C Chillingworth and seconded by Mr HWJ Watkins, Minutes **signed by the Chairman**
- 2. Annual Report of the Parish Council by the Chairman of Bitterley Parish Council**

During the past year, Shropshire Council have been reviewing their planning policies. Bitterley parish is still classed as open countryside for their policies. This means only one-off single housing in-fill and affordable homes can be considered. If the Council ever looked to change our status the next level up is called community cluster and would only allow for a few houses in any location and would again have to meet some strict criteria. So there have been quite a few planning applications consulted upon over the course of the year but all typically single property or extensions. We have been able to give Shropshire Planning team some useful local comments and supported or suggested amendments where appropriate. The parish has also been able to confirm local connection for people who are looking to build a one-off affordable home.

School Parking issues. All possible locations for additional parking were not found to be not practical or did not meet Highways requirements. Also there has been no progress on the potential for an alternative traffic route and parking through the field rear of the school, the proposed possible development put forward for consultation by James Wheeler being beyond the scope of what planning will allow in Bitterley. It remains an issue of concern for the parish and the issues of managing staff parking has been put back to the school for a response.

The Village Hall has received funding for replacement windows and will be putting in for a grant to update the play area this year.

Community Building Fund received from the Henley Solar Farm. This is £10,000 that is being held in consideration of possible solar panels on the village hall or contribution to a community project.

The local parish plan, being a questionnaire of local people's thoughts about the parish and local services will be updated this year through a survey to each household. This is planned for when the warmer weather comes.

Regular issues at parish council meetings have included the state of roads and we have been regularly putting in requests to Shropshire Council for works. Thanks must go to all local people who help look after their area, whether it is tidying up litter, clearing out gully's, moving snow from the lanes, looking after the village hall and local churches.

Bitterley Parish Council provides a grant to Bitterley and Cleeton St Mary churches each year towards their upkeep. The Parish Council also liaises with the village hall committee to support funding bids where needed.

The Parish funds a handful of streetlights and employs the parish clerk, Sue Jones, to help respond to the demands of Shropshire council for regular consultations and new legal requirements.

Over the next year we anticipate as part of Shropshire Council's cost reductions, local to Ludlow area services, such as the library, will face possible significant cuts or closure. Shropshire Council is hoping that parishes and towns will pick up some of the costs. We anticipate needing to be in talks with Ludlow town council and others about whether local precepts should contribute. For now we have kept the parish precept steady and will have to consider carefully any proposals that would affect local residents.

Representatives from the parish council regularly attend the Ludlow area Joint Committee. The LJC meets regularly to discuss area issues and represent the area to Shropshire Council. The LJC has channelled local funding to youth services for example.

**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. To invite Parish Representatives (including the Shropshire Councillor for Cleve) 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. There is a 50% reduction in the Highway maintenance budget for the next financial year. Which will have an impact on Capital provision works. There is a consultation on the Maternity Unit "Save Shropshire NHS". There has been planning permission granted for 75 houses at Rocks Green. R & B have taken on the Diamond route to Kidderminster. Parking Charges are being reviewed.

**4. Matters of Public Interest**

**Speeding at Middleton:** The results of the recently revised 30 limit now comply with the DfT criteria in terms of 85 percentile and mean speeds. Accordingly Glyn Shaw from Shropshire Council has supplied the Police with copies of the results and they will now advise the locally based officer that enforcement action can be taken at his discretion, This amounts to the support that we have been striving for over the last few years and Glyn Shaw feels this vindicates the agreed action plan to concentrate the 30 limit element settlement area. This now opens the door for the Parish council to approach the Safer Roads Partnership with a view to establishing Middleton as a "site of Community Concern" with a view to mobile camera enforcement on a periodic basis.

Environment Agency is working with STWA on how to reduce the flow of water into the streams

The Annual Parish Council Meeting is on the 9<sup>th</sup> May at **7.30 p.m.**