

**The Minutes of Abberley Parish Council**  
**Held at Abberley Village Committee Meeting Room at 7:30pm on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2017**

**Present:** Cllrs Mr T Nott (Chairman), Mrs C Knight (Vice Chairman), Ms K Andrew, Mr G Crompton, Mr T Eden, Mr J Gibson, Mr R Goodman, Mr A Jukes.

**In Attendance:** Clerk and District Cllr Mr P Cumming

1. **Apologies.** Mrs N Kedwards, Cllr K Pollock

2. **Declarations of Interest**

- a. Register of Interests: Councillors were reminded of the need to update their register of interests.
- b. Disclosure Pecuniary Interests: No pecuniary interests were declared.
- c. Other Disclosable Interests: No other disclosable interests were declared.

3. **Public Question Time.**

Parishioner Mr Ron Thomas raised his concerns about the Neighbourhood Plan project. An aide memoire of the discussion is attached to this Minutes (see Appendix 1).

4. **Minutes.** The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2016 were approved.

5. **Progress reports:** for information

- a. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (Cllr Andrew)  
Regular monthly meetings are now running.
- b. Website (Cllr Crompton)  
No further progress at this time, but the new website may be available from Mid-February, 2017.
- c. Audit Appointments (Cllr Eden)  
Cllr Eden tabled his report on his finds. A copy of this is attached to the Minutes (see Appendix 2).
- d. Invite to Chair of the Board of Governors, Abberley Parochial V C Primary School (Clerk)  
An invite had been issued to Mr Jim Hill Chair of the Board of Governors, Abberley Parochial V C Primary School (9.iii 13/12/2016). It was **agreed** that action on the issue of the zig-zags outside of the school (both sides of the road), would be put on hold until hearing back from the Board of Governors.
- e. BT Withdrawal of Public Phone Box WR6 6AA (Clerk)  
The Clerk confirmed that an objection to the removal of the public phone box has been lodged with MHDC who are the co-ordinating authority responsible for presenting all Parishes views to BT. The Clerk will inform the Council as soon as the outcome of the objection is known.

Signed .....

Date 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2017

6. **Planning.**

- a. Report from the Planning sub-committee
  - i. Holyacre Farm, Suffolk Lane, Abberley WR6 6BE (16/01537/HOU). Proposal, Single Storey extension. Applicant, Mr Peter Jack. **Approved.**
- b. To **note** advice received from Malvern Hills District Council, Planning Department.
  - i. Five Ways, Stockton Road WR6 6AS (16/01532/CLE) Lawful Development Certificated, **Granted.**

7. **Highways Report Update.**

a.

Highways Report ID	Brief Description	Status
238649	Shrubbery obstructing footpath (Abberley Park downhill to village shop/up to junction B4202 Clows Top Road)	Open.
247475 and BT Openreach ID WM1ERB49	Flooding, Brickyard Corner/B4202 → Pensax  Land Drainage Officer visited site requested Highways be notified.  BT = Exposed cable ducting on opposite side of road.	Open  Highways notified  BT Openreach has inspected cable ducting, advising they will take no action at present to re-bury cable, because of the ongoing problem opposite.
248515	Flooding, Jacobs Well, Suffolk Lane.	Open Land drainage officer has inspected entire area, advising that existing drainage insufficient. Requested that matter be referred to Highways.  Matter referred to Highways.
250909	Abberley Common Potholes	Open / Updated. Clerk has received notification that the work is scheduled for the February Half Term, weather permitting.  Additionally, the Clerk has also received a copy of the Public Notice Temporary Closure Order , detailing the planned closure of 2 days duration commencing 20 <sup>th</sup> February, 2017, ahead of its publication.  Cllr Nott and Cllr Andrew highlighted the problem of the ill fitting drain cover (Severn Trent Water).

Signed .....

Date 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2017

**8. District and County Councillors' reports;**

District Cllr Cummings reported on budgetary constraints that signal a potential deficit in funding. Any potential deficit may result in reduction of services. The phasing out of the Revenue Support Grant has unexpectedly been timetabled for a far quicker withdrawal than originally understood, invalidating what had been a four year funding agreement. There will be no immediate savings coming soon from the remodelling of the Council Chamber due to delays. Waste services tenders are due to be received by Malvern Hills District Council.

County Councillor Dr Ken Pollock had send apologies to the Clerk and provided a written report for circulation at the meeting. Important points included; seeking endorsement for plans to increase council tax by 0.94% on top of the 2% rise in tax to provide money for adult social care. A third of the planned increase will go to the normal local services, while the rest seeks to cover the large demands of the ageing population. The work to Eastham Bridge continues largely on schedule as the new Tesco's store in Tenbury. During January 2017 it is planned that work on resurfacing the road linking Bayton and Beach Hay will commence, subject to Severn Trent completing the replacement of the water main on the B4202 north of Clows Top.

**9. Finance**

a. The following payments were confirmed as having been made during December 2016-January 2017

Minutes	Item	Description	Payee	Amount
13.12.2016	12.b.2	Lengthsman Claim November 2016	Chris Jones	£204.00
13.12.2016	12.b.3	Parish Clerks Salary 05.12.2016 to 05.01.2017	Kym Wild	£287.60
13.12.2016	12.b.4	Parish Clerks Expenses – 1 <sup>st</sup> November to 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2016	Kym Wild	£64.02

b. The following payments were **agreed**

Minutes	Item	Description	Payee	Amount
18.01.2017	9.b.1	Hire of Village Hall by Parish Council (September 2016 to January 2017 inc.)	Abberley Village Hall	£38.00
18.01.2017	9.b.2	Hire of Village Hall by Neighbourhood Plan Committee (November 2016 to January 2017 inc.)	Abberley Village Hall	£28.50
18.01.2017	9.b.3	Lengthsman Claim December 2016 (11 hours)	Chris Jones	£132.00
18.01.2017	9.b.4	Parish Clerks Salary 06.01.2017 to 05.02.2017	Kym Wild	£277.86
18.01.2017	9.b.5	Parish Clerks Expenses – January 2017	Kym Wild	£41.64
18.01.2017	9.b.6	Parish Clerk Reimbursement for electronic payment to HMRC in respect of PAYE Quarter Day as at January 2017 (Tax deductions for October, November, December 2016).	Kym Wild	£69.60

Signed .....

Date 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2017

- c. Report from the Precept Sub Committee and recommendations for the 2017-18 Precept (Cllr Goodman). The proposed budget for 2017-18 was debated and the question of grants was reviewed. Cllr Eden offered to review with the Clerk the figures relating to expenditure during the current financial year (2016-2017). Councillors agreed the proposed Precept in principle and confirmed delegated powers were given back to the Precept Sub Committee to set the Precept for the year 2017-18 once the review was complete. The budget proposed raised the current precept by £200.00 across the village.

**10. Councillors' reports and items for future agenda:**

Cllrs asked that the Clerk inform Highways of the following issues;

- flooding around the Suffolk Lane / Beehive / Bank Lane and Brickyard
- the danger presented by the metal pole that juts out at the end of the road safety barricade, junction of B4202/A443
- Millers Green / B4202 / outside of Abberley Village School the pavement needs mending

- 11. Date of next meeting:** To confirm the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2017 7.30pm, Abberley Village Hall

Signed .....

Date 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2017

CHAIRMAN

**Appendix 1**

**Public Question Time (Aide Memoire for the meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2017**

Parishioner Mr Ron Thomas raised his concerns about the effectiveness of any UK Neighbourhood Plan in halting development in the Parish in which it applies. To support his claim he citing articles drawn from the national newspaper The Telegraph which adopt the stance that generally Neighbourhood Plans are ineffective tools for ceasing developments. He expressed additional concerns that the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan in Abberley would effectively act as an attractor for external Developers/property speculators by raising the profile of Abberley and that time was being wasted on such a project.

Vice-Chairman Cllr Knight, Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee Leader Cllr Andrew and District Cllr Paul Cummings discussed with Mr Thomas some of their views on Neighbourhood Plans; that a District Plan cannot be overridden by a Neighbourhood Plan, that a Neighbourhood Plan is not a block on developments, a village referendum on the Abberley Neighbourhood Plan will be held and that any adopted Neighbourhood Plan relating to Abberley would, once adopted, have a legal and therefore an influential status providing evidence that could be used to defend a position on development.

Cllr Nott called for the end of this debate within this meeting

**Appendix 2**

**Agenda item 5.c. – Audit Appointment Update (Meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2017)**

1. This note related to the council's external audit arrangements for the year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.
2. Following the cessation of the Audit commission arrangements (Audit Commission ceased to exist on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015), a new company – Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd. (SAAA) – has been created to take over the appointment of External Auditors and the setting of audit fees for smaller authorities from 2017.

This company was set up on behalf of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) by the national Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), and the Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA). SAAA is an independent sector led body and is a company limited by guarantee.

3. In February 2016 SAAA wrote to all smaller councils informing them that if they did not “opt-out” of the SAAA arrangements referred to in para.2 above by the 31 March 2016 then the council would by law be regarded as “opted-in” to the arrangements for a five-year period beginning on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and ending on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, with no other opportunity to opt-out.
4. I believe that Abberley Parish Council did not “opt-out” by 31.03.2016 and is therefore an “opted-in” council. This needs to be confirmed by Parish Clerk.
5. Opted-in councils with neither income or expenditure exceeding £25k, as is the case with Abberley Parish Council at the present time, will still need to complete and publish an annual return in accordance with the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities as it does at present. It will also need to complete an annual exemption form (which SAAA will provide) and submit this to SAAA or an auditor specified by SAAA by an agreed date. In this event the Council will not be required to undergo a limited assurance audit review or to pay an external audit fee.

A council will not be able to issue an exemption form if local electors raise objections to the accounts.

Note:- If the council wish to have a limited assurance audit review, despite not being required to do so, the council will need to inform SAAA by the end of the financial year in question. SAAA will then appoint an auditor to undertake the review, for which a fee of £200.00 will be payable.

6. SAAA announced on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016 that it has successfully concluded the procurement process and has awarded contracts for the supply of limited assurance audit reviews for smaller authorities for a five year period commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to PFK Littlejohn, Mazars and Moore Stephens. Further details of the audit appointment areas to be covered by the three firms will be communicated in due course.

Cll Tony Eden 17.01.2017