

Minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Parish Of Abberley  
7.30pm Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2018

Present: Members of the Parish Council, Guest Speakers, Members of the Public  
In attendance: Parish Clerk

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor Trevor Nott opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Parish of Abberley before inviting the guest speakers to give their presentations.

**Abberley Parochial (VC) Primary School                      Guest Speaker                      Mrs Anne Wylie, Headteacher**

Mrs Wylie, who joined the school in 2011, shared with the audience her ethos for heading a school that aims to nurture the whole child, rather than exclusively focussing on academic attainments which has led to the development of a broad curriculum for the current level of 103 student

The broad curriculum approach includes outdoor activities and a recent Eisteddfod. Themed learning, such as using the prompts gained from selecting famous artworks as central source material. (<http://www.abberley.worcs.sch.uk/our-school/latest-news/166-videos>)

The school has recent welcomed the Ofsted inspectors to the school and the results will be published at the end of the month.

**Abberley Young Farmers Association    Guest Speakers Chloe and team**

A team, led by their current Chairperson, Chloe presented a lively and interesting group report that detailed not only the many successes that the AYFA have experienced over the past year, but also an insight into just how active the AYFA are. Currently there are some 30 members of which 25 are under 18. These members are involved in activities such as stock judging, competitive sheep shearing, hedge laying and cooking/baking contents, rallies, litter picking, fundraising (£1000+ over the last months) and, perhaps most unexpectedly a Disco Dancing competition in Blackpool.

At the end of the teams presentation the audience were left in no doubt that Abberley Young Farmers Association is a lively group who work hard and enjoy a great and varied social life.

Chairman ..... Date 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Parish Of Abberley  
7.30pm Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2018

**Nora Parsons Day Centre**

**Guest Speakers Mrs Pamela Morgan and Colleagues**

Mrs Pamela Morgan, Secretary of the NP Day Centre Charity, introduced her colleagues to the meeting and drew the audience's attention to their display board which showed a variety of service users involved in the various activities of the Day Centre. The Nora Parsons Day Centre, which commemorates a former District Nurse serves 21 parishes in the area and faces the familiar challenge of trying to attract new and younger volunteers and committee members. The centre frequently caters for 15 people but sometimes this can increase to 20-24 service users. Opening Monday and Thursdays (9.30am to 3pm) the unit welcomes all to use their facilities.

Volunteers to assist with driving and running the centre are needed, as are specialist knowledge/skill sets in the Committee. The centre is also looking for ideas for using the facility during the "closed" times.

**Abberley Village Green Trust**

**Guest Speaker Mrs Sue Coley**

Report appended.

**Abberley Parochial Church Council**

**Guest Speaker Mr Trevor Nott, Lay Chair**

Report appended.

**Abberley Village Hall**

**Guest Speaker Mr Richard Goodman**

Report appended

**West Mercia Police**

**Guest Speaker Vanessa Snape  
Police Community Support Officer**

Based at Tenbury Wells Police Station, Vanessa Snape and her colleagues covered 27 parishes with the Safer Neighbourhood Team.

Shed Brake ins remain a regular feature of the area, as did Quad Bike thefts. Trackers fitted to Quad Bikes were on the increase which had helped recovery rates. To help deter the theft of garden shed items the audience was encouraged to use permanent markers to denote possession in visible places such as handles etc. For indoor property, SMART Water was advised (forensic marking kits).

Scams/confidence tricks are on the increase, with phone calls being one of the most regular ways in which individuals are duped into giving over personal information and access to bank accounts/debit cards/PIN Numbers. Door knocking scams often presaged burglaries. True Peddlers were required to carry licences.

Chairman ..... Date 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Parish Of Abberley  
7.30pm Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2018

**West Mercia Police (Continued)**

**Guest Speaker Vanessa Snape  
Police Community Support Officer**

Vanessa Snape advised that if it seemed too good to be true – then it most likely was too good to be true. Members of the public were urged to think very carefully before giving out their information and to ensure that their neighbours, especially the elderly, were supported to help avoid crime.

**Parish Path Warden**

**Delivered on behalf of Cllr Jim Gibson**

Report appended

**County Councillors Report**

**Dr Ken Pollock**

Report appended

**District Councillors Report**

**Mr Paul Cumming**

Efficiencies within Malvern Hills District Council had been achieved by sharing resources with Wychavon District Council. The recent blending of Planning Departments had allowed for the deployment of staff to address peak application times and backlogs.

Currently the South Worcestershire Development Plan was due to be revised and a call for sites for housing would likely be made.

The Northern Area Planning Committee would remain in operation despite attempts to have its function handed over to the Southern Area Planning Committee. This meant that Abberley would still be covered by a committee with personal knowledge of the area.

Many audience members asked District Councillor Cumming for more information about recycling Do's and Don'ts.

**Annual Report, Annual Parish Council Mr Trevor Nott**

Report appended

**Thanks and Close**

**Mr Trevor Nott**

Parish Council Chairman (2017-18), Trevor Nott thanked the speakers and the audience for their excellent commitment to their individual community activities. The meeting was closed and everyone was invited to enjoy the refreshments provided ahead of the Annual Meeting of the Abberley Parish Council which would take place later in the evening.

Chairman ..... Date 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018

## APPENDICIES

### **Report from Abberley Village Green Trust**

I'm sure that any of you that use the Village Green will agree how lucky we are to have such a wonderful space and how lovely it always looks, this is down to a handful of Trustees, especially John Coley for all the hours he spends mowing and also Charles Whitaker without who's help with his digger and dumper we wouldn't be able to do many things.

We have just put in a new path linking the main gate with the woodland, this is thanks to 3 of our Trustees and a generous donation from a parishioner to pay for the materials.

Last year I applied to the National Lottery Awards for All for a grant to buy a new Quad Bike which I'm pleased to say was successful and i have just applied again for £6,000 for a new mower which I'm hoping will be successful again.

The path through the centre of the green linking the main gate with the village gate was cleaned off and widened back to its original width to help wheelchair users and families with pushchairs.

The Oak tree has been pollarded this spring, which I hope you will have noticed, this is a very important tree as it's believed to be the oldest tree in Abberley, dating back to the 1300s, we think, so I sincerely hope it will always be taken care of.

I would like to say how grateful we are to the Parish Council for paying the insurance for us, we don't have many ways of generating any income so it is much appreciated.

On Easter Monday along with the Garden Club and the Young Farmers we worked at Red Marley again this year, when we got to the hill climb at 7am it was snowing and you couldn't see the top of Woodbury Hill and the mud was something to behold, but none the less we were lucky enough to get £400 each, so needless to say we shall be doing it again next year. This, some donations and the tea party that John and I have in the summer is our only income so it has to pay the gardener, the fuel for the bike and the mower and the servicing of both and any other expenses that may occur during the year.

We, like all other organisations in the village are desperate for younger trustees but while they enjoy using the green are not prepared to make that commitment.

### **R Nott P.C.C. Report for Abberley Annual Parish Meeting.**

This year marks a milestone in Abberley Church History with the death of John Wright, who was Churchwarden for several years, and Treasurer for some 25 years. Also we have the retirement of Muriel Nott as Churchwarden after nearly 30 years' service. Fortunately, Marc Manning has taken on the role of Churchwarden and Kevin Gittins joined the P.C.C. last year and has also agreed to join Abberley Churches' Restoration

Committee. Kevin acts as choirmaster and his wife, Janet, plays the organ for us at least once per month. Philip Ward still plays for at least 1 evening Service per month as does Mary Holloway, but organists are becoming very scarce nationally, as are hen's teeth!!

Attendance at Services continues to be generally good, particularly at Christmas and Easter.

We continue maintaining the Churches in accordance with our architect's quinquennial report, which will shortly include some groundworks to alleviate damp, and some repairs to the original stonework. The general appearance of the Churches and Churchyards are preserved, partly with the help of the Parish Council, for which we are very grateful.

### **Village Hall Committee report to the annual Abberley Parish meeting**

The hall is managed by a small and dedicated team, efforts have been made to encourage more user organisations to send representatives, but as yet without success. Apart from the Y FC rep, age is not on the side of regular attendees!

Acknowledgement and huge thanks must go to Sue and John Coley, Sheena Murray and Jan Osborne for their tireless work on our behalf.

The new constitution has been adopted with the exception of one clause which is subject to consultation with the Parish Council.

A key safe has been installed to facilitate easier access for users. Currently the committee is in the process of acquiring new chairs. Finance: The committee seeks to maintain a healthy balance should any urgent major works become necessary. Our thanks to Julie Mills, our treasurer, for keeping our books straight. I am pleased to report that bookings remain good. The hall is very well used during week days. A Face-book page has been set up with a view to promote more week-end booking.

This year the main hall has had new LED lights fitted and a new screen. The sound system is running well, we hope more users will make good use of it.

### **The Parish Footpath Wardens Report**

I have responded to a couple of villagers request in the last year, which include a new footbridge on path 513 Grid ref 374400 x 268400 courtesy of Worcester CC.

The Abberley Circular Footpath Sign opposite the Manor Arms is due to be replaced, there may be a delay as this wooden sign will need to be engraved,

One of the key things that has changed for me in the last 12 months is my availability to walk the routes to do work and family commitments, as such I would like to ask for help from any parishioners that walk the paths in Abberley.

If you can let me know of damage to stiles, blocked paths whether fallen trees/ branches or overgrown shrubs. Any fields where a path crosses that needs spraying. or anything that could be dangerous please let me know and I can investigate further and work with the parishioners and Worcester CC to keep the paths and stiles/ bridges in a usable state.

I can be contacted via the Parish council website regards Jim Gibson

### **Chairman's Report Annual Meeting of Abberley Parish Council 2018**

This year has been a quieter one with regards to planning matters, but I thank all members of that sub committee for their important work.

We have seen excellent progress with the Neighbourhood Plan, which is on course to be completed this calendar year. I thank all Councillors, and other Parishioners, for their work in this role, particularly Cllrs. Knight and Andrew who have headed up this department.

I thank Cllr. Crompton for setting up a new Parish Council website, also Cllr. Jukes for his continuing efforts in the problems with Bank Lane, in which he has produced measurable success.

I thank Cllr. Kedwards for taking on the Neighbourhood Watch, making such a good job of it and for her work with the A433 Cross Parish Group.

I am very pleased that Cllr. Gibson has taken on the post of Parish Pathwarden, because it is a job which has been neglected for many years - in fact for decades. There is quite a lot which needs to be done.

Cllr. Goodman represented us very eloquently at Malvern Hills speaking against the proposed planning application at The Walshes. Thank you

I particularly thank Cllr Knight for her loyalty as vice chairman.

I thank District Cllr Cumming and County Cllr. Dr. Pollock for their monthly reports, attendance and advice at meetings.

I also thank all Parish Councillors for their regular and prompt attendance and polite contributions at meeting (It has also been good to have the attendance of the public at several meetings and I thank them for their contributions to Parish life,

Our Clerk has asked me to thank all Cllrs. who have supported her work, particularly those on the Finance Committee.

Last, and by no means least, I thank our Clerk who, if I may say so, has settled into the job, is extremely efficient, continually goes the extra mile and is an absolute delight with whom to work. Thank you.

### **County Councillor's Report 16-05.18**

#### 1. County Council Affairs – personnel

We now have a new team running the County Councillor, led by the Chief Executive, Paul Robinson, fresh from running Derby City Council. He is joined by Michael Hudson, the new Chief Finance Officer, Andrew Spice, the new Director of Commissioning, and Avril Wilson, the interim Director of Adult Services.

All four are replacing officers who have gone on to bigger and better jobs elsewhere, and we wish the new team well as they seek to lead the Council and the county on to greater prosperity, stability and improvement. Despite the financial difficulties that all councils are facing, Worcestershire has set a budget for the coming year, based on a 1.94% increase in council tax, supplemented by a 3% increase to be devoted to Adult Social Care.

Roughly 70% of all our income is dedicated to Children's Services and Adult Social Care, work that is concentrated on about 7,000 of the County's 560,000 residents. Essential work, but it means that most spending makes little impact on the majority of residents.

#### 2. County Council Affairs — council tax

In the middle of February, the full council approved a county council tax rise of 4.94%, comprising 1.94% for the main council tax and a 3% rise in funds for Adult Social Care, as prescribed by central government.

It is worth noting that while the Liberal Democrats and Green councillors wished us to raise the council tax by the maximum permitted, (an extra 1%), the Labour group wanted no increase at all, as with last year. This is strange in the context of their continual criticism of austerity, resulting in cuts in services.

Minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Parish Of Abberley  
7.30pm Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2018

Just as an aside, (and thinking of our national finances) many people seem to be confused about the difference between deficit and debt. If we spend more in any period than we receive in income, the difference is a deficit. If we continue to do so, the deficits add up and are referred to as our debt.

In consequence, as long as we spend more than we receive, our debt will go up — as it has since 2010, now standing at around €2 trillion. As a consequence, our interest payment on that debt is now around E50 billion a year, a similar sum to that we spend on defence.

### 3. Council County Affairs — expenditure

The County Council's budget runs to about 2330 million pounds. The greater proportion of this sum is spent on Adult and Children's Services, where it must be noted that a small number of individuals attract most of the cost. Thus we have about 750 children in care, and, through past failings, are going to be required to set up a separate company to run the services needed by such children and various ancillary needs. This will result in an extra E 10 million being spent on children's service in the coming year.

Adult services are for the elderly and vulnerable adults, again a total amounting to about 7,000 people. This from a population in the County of 560,000.

All other services are paid for out of the balance, including all money spent on roads and pavements, as well as libraries, education services, regulatory services, waste disposal and the like. Our roads are generally in good condition compared with our neighbours and we are in process of spending an extra E 12 million on bringing them up to the top quartile of roads in the country.

We have a number of major infrastructure projects in progress or planned. The new Battenhall rail bridge will be installed starting at the end of next week, allowing dualling of the Southern Link Road from the M5 to the Ketch roundabout. Then the new project to dual the Carrington Bridge and the causeway to Powick has been approved and will be starting soon.

The new railway station, Worcestershire Parkway at Norton, is under construction and will be open by this time next year. In addition there are plans for a new station at Kidderminster and improvements to the A38 through Bromsgrove.

### 4. SWDP Revisions

Following its publication in 2016, the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) has been the basis for deciding the pattern of house building across south Worcestershire. Recently, the three councils involved have been considering revising the plan in the light of the recent publication of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

While this concerns the County Council more from the infrastructure viewpoint, I have been keen to take part in the discussions. My impression is that while organic small scale growth of communities is desirable, it could be that larger new settlements may be necessary. Should one or two "new towns" of around 5,000 dwellings be required, the location of such developments is crucial. Any strong feelings on such plans would be welcomed by your local district councillors and the planning departments.

Under our newly revised Local Transport Plan, (LTP4), we would seek to encourage developments in places where there is excess capacity on our road and rail network. We also recognise the importance of facilities for walking and cycling, as part of our active travel strategy. In addition, we need to make provision for public transport, where possible and appropriate.

Recently Tenbury has seen a successful application to build around 70 houses opposite the High School. It is to be hoped that many of those buying such houses will have children that can then go to the local primary and secondary schools. In addition, it is unrealistic to suppose that homes should only be allowed close to where there is an unmet need for employees. Minimising travel distance to work is desirable, but often unrealistic, and could be seen as a reason for allowing rural areas to become depopulated.

Minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Parish Of Abberley  
7.30pm Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2018

In general, I suggest we should be prepared for organic growth of our villages and hamlets, as well as a growth in jobs in rural areas. Another aspect is the need for better broadband and I have to report steady, if slow, progress at reaching the last 5% or so of premises not yet served by Superfast Broadband. This becomes increasingly important as more people work from home and the internet is used for a greater amount of our social and educational needs.

In that regard, it is worth noting that Worcestershire has been chosen as a testbed for 5G, the next generation of mobile phone coverage that promises much higher speed and capacity. This is in conjunction with the LEP, Malvern Hills Science Park, QinetiQ, the Heart of Worcestershire College and two large employers in the county, Mazak and Worcester Bosch. We are one of six such testbeds and the only one that comprises a single county.

#### 5. Public Realm work

We are approaching the end of the long and drawn out process of improving the Public Realm in Tenbury. There is no need to rehearse here the detail of this project. Suffice to say that virtually all of the work to be conducted by the County council is now complete, with the new red tarmac in place on the raised tables.

There has been general approval for the new paving slabs on the footways, and the 20 mph limit on the central shopping area. What remains is some work that was to be paid for by Tesco's under a section 278 agreement. That is the reason for the raised table outside their entrance not having been completed yet, and also for the absence of a couple of items of street furniture in their section.

While the overall development has been very satisfactory, it is disappointing that this last commitment has been shirked, leading to the need for legal action, to recover the cost from the Tesco bond lodged at the start of the process.

I can only hope that trade will pick up over the coming months, particularly attracting holiday visitors to what is now even more a very attractive rural town, with great retailers, services and public spaces.

#### 6. Local problems

School Lane should be reclassified as a primary gritting route, following concern about safety near the primary school, and Bank Lane has now been repaired. The next main project will be Suffolk Lane, which is in a poor condition in several places.

Two representatives of the five parishes on the A443 held a meeting with a County officer on May 9<sup>th</sup> and discussed approaches for reducing speeding in villages. They will have reported back to your parish council, but it is fair to say that there were no easy solutions to the perceived problem.

I am keen to hear of any incidents or accidents along the A443, as the police record only contains serious problems, probably resulting in injury, and we would like to base any change on firm foundations of statistics of significant occurrences.

Minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Parish Of Abberley  
7.30pm Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2018

7. Divisional Fund

It is a privilege to be able to allocate some £10,000 of council taxpayers' money to good causes across the division. In the past year, Abberley residents have made few claims upon the fund, with the exception of the WI. Other monies have helped organisations and good causes across the division, in particular in Clifton and Pensax.

I am always keen to hear of new good destinations for this small amount of money that can nevertheless make a big difference to the organisations so favoured. It is your money and it can be spent for the benefit of the community as a whole.

Cllr Ken Pollock,  
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire  
16-05.18