

# MINUTES OF THE SHERIFFHALES ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON THE 9<sup>th</sup> MAY 2019 AT SHERIFFHALES VILLAGE HALL

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**Present:** Councillors: Dr Alan MacWhannell (Chairman); Mr Gordon Tonkinson; Mr Nicholas Edwards; Mr Kevin Turley; Mr James Bubb, Miss Sarah Barratt and Mr Stewart Edmondson.

In attendance Clerk to the Council – Miss Jennifer Cree, Mr Norman Jones, Mrs Mary Jones, Mr Jeremy Rubin, Mrs Margaret Himsworth, Mr Peter Young and Ms Lorraine Neal.

**Apologies:** Councillor Mr Neil Pulker (Vice Chairman);

## 1. Chairman's welcome and announcements

Councillor Alan MacWhannell welcomed everyone present and informed the public present that this is their meeting to ask any questions and raise any issues they would like to.

## 2. Community presentations

Councillor K Turley gave a brief summary relating to matters of interest in Shropshire Council:-

- Shropshire Council like all other local authorities are having funding reduced dramatically, and are having to use their reserve funds just to meet a normal budget, with no extra development. The funding has been cut by £60 million a year by Central Government, and £5 million from the Highways budget, but costs are increasing as is the work load,
- Grass cutting has been a major problem with the current contractors, they do not have an in-house department for grass cutting, so this is sub contracted out to a fourth party to undertake. This is a matter of discussion at the moment to try to improve the service.
- Greenbelt reviews are still ongoing and for the projected period 2019 – 2036 there are proposed a further 1500-2000 houses in Shifnal and 3500 in Tong. Including commercial units. Whilst support is always there for encouraging businesses, they must be the right location. There are added concerns over the infrastructure not being able to cope with the additional properties, such as Doctors, Police etc.
- The Shrewsbury North relief road is still a current project, Central Government is part funding the £94 million project, but Shropshire have to find £17 million, and at this time the funds have not been identified.
- Children's and vulnerable adults services are being cut, due to the lack of funding and concern is being expressed that rather than building a new road, funds should be channelled back into essential services.
- Shropshire Council are looking to set up a Housing initiative similar to the Wrekin Housing Trust, to utilise land that they own for helping people to buy their first property and letting properties.
- They are working on a Transitional Care facility for young people that have been in the care system to help them move into their own flats and become independent ready for their adult lives to start.

- The recycling bins are being removed from the car park in Shifnal, and Shropshire Council have held back a decision on charging for green waste bins to be emptied due to possible changes in legislation.

Members thanked Councillor K Turley for his presentation.

### **Montessori Preschool report from Jenny Collins**

I would like to thank the Parish Council for giving me the opportunity to explain a little about our Pre-School, and what we do.

8 years ago, I was renting the Old School House at Blymhill to run our Preschool. When that property was sold, I was lucky enough to be able to transfer the Preschool including the families, my staff team and resources to the new Village Hall here at Sheriffhales. Our first Ofsted inspection here was judged as “outstanding” which gave me reassurance that the move was positive. We have continued at this level and I am grateful to the families that bring their children in our care. I could only manage this with the support from the community who allow us to occupy the Hall and allow me to provide an environment for young children to socialise, play and progress in safety and in beautiful environment.

The children who attend the Preschool are from this parish and also from surrounding counties. We are a small intimate place for children who are aged from 2 years to flourish and become independent as we follow a traditional method of teaching called Montessori which has been going for each child to follow their own path of learning and development.

As well of Ofsted, we are also accountable to Shropshire Council and whilst we would like to grow in numbers of families that use us, we are also dictated by the funding that the Government provides to families which gives me plenty of challenges to seek opportunities to make the most of the resources we have available!

If you see us when we are out and about exploring the wonderful surroundings of the village on our weekly Outdoor Adventure sessions if you see us please say hello!

### **Sheriffhales Village Hall**

The Chairman reported on behalf of the Village Hall meeting, that they have confirmed that they will be starting the extension to the Hall in the 6 weeks school holidays. He congratulated the Chairman of the Village Hall and its officers for their running of the premises.

### **Sheriffhales Parish Magazine**

The Parish Magazine, have raised enough funds from the sale of the cards to replace / repair the hand rail from the stone steps up towards the chair.

They thanked the school for their support in printing the magazine and the Parish Council.

Members thanked the Editors of the magazine and the supporters that deliver it for free every month.

3. To confirm the Minutes of the Sheriffhales APM held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> May 18.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2018, having been circulated in advance of the current meeting, were approved and signed as a true record of the proceedings at that meeting.

4. Matters Arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising.

5. Parish Council Report

Chairman's report is detailed below:-

The issues are again similar to last years...

- The local Government are funded by a precept from the parishioners of the Parish, the Parish Council have specific powers on what they are responsible for, but their main role is to facilitate and identify issues within the Parish and communicate these to the higher Government body, such as Highways or Shropshire Council.

- Money continues to be reduced at the higher levels and more and more pressure is being put on the services that are delivered to the Parish. The Evergreens is an example of this, this has been in need of being re tarmaced for many years now, but it is classed as a low priority due to the type of traffic that uses the road. The Parish Council are frustrated with the lack of clarification and Communication is not acceptable.

- The Pinfold Road safety review took place last year, the report was produced, identifying minor changes to the area, but no action has been undertaken to date.

- Government policies increasingly require local authorities to show standards of transparency, smaller Parish Council's struggle to catch up as they do not have the infrastructure to deal with it.

- Relationships with the planning department are sometimes difficult, as there is a lack of response to emails and being able to speak to the Officers. There are still outstanding issues relating to Woodcote Quarry access which are unresolved.

- Rural Communities are facing new challenges with increased need for houses in the Parish and must be sensitive to any requests.

- As the Parish Council have started the process of a Neighbourhood plan, and have asked Shropshire Council if they will undertake a Housing Needs Survey. The deadline for this has been extended to gather more responses.

- To increase Parish powers, the Parish Council are looking at undertaking a General Power of Competence, members agreed that this should be looked into in more detail and discussed at a future Council meeting.
- Heath Hill has been cut back and cleared following funds been given from the Environmental Maintenance Grant along with works to the play area and the centre of the village.

## 6. Civic Service

Everyone is welcome to attend the Civic Service to be held 29<sup>th</sup> September 2019 time to be confirmed at St. Mary's church, Sheriffhales.

## 7. Questions arising from the public relevant to the reports or with regards to the parish.

Members of the public raised the following issues of concern:-

- Crackley Bank – the road has been closed due to culvert damage for a long time, Councillor K Turley and the Chairman have been trying to progress the reopening of the road, as with it being shut off , there is fly tipping also taking place. This is currently being discussed at Highways and it is likely that they are going to recommend reopening and repair of the culvert.
- Traffic Lights on the A5 / B4379 junction are required and this is a long awaited request.
- With regard to the Safety Audit, there has been no further updates on this work, and the members present expressed their concerns over the lack of action as the “improvements” do not seem to be right or working as they should. It was agreed to put this report into the Parish Magazine and ask for comments from the public.

Councillor K Turley reported that he had recently had the Highways Manager come to the area, and he had shown him the issues in the Parish.

## 8. Close

The Chairman thanked the members of the Parish Council and the public for attending the meeting, meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

It was noted that for next year's meeting a speaker should be invited as has happened in past years.

A special meeting will be arranged in the near future and invite the Peter Nutting, Clive Wright and James Walton to a local Parish meeting.