

## Stottesdon and Sidbury Parish Council

### **Annual Parish meeting held in Chorley Village Hall on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 7.30pm.**

Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the guest speaker Mr Chris Edwards, Head of Infrastructure and Communities at Shropshire Council who will speak about the Highway changes and new Economic Growth Strategy.

#### **00. Guest Speaker - Mr Chris Edwards:**

Chris thanked the Chairman for inviting him to the meeting and gave a brief report on the following:

- New Local Plan and commented that the Flaxmill at Shrewsbury funding is now in place – this is an historic building.
- Ironbridge Power Station – site proposed to be used for housing and employment

Highways:

- New contractor, Kier, taken over from Ringway. This went out to tender and Kier were appointed, they were not the cheapest (20% more than Ringway). It is felt that Kier is much better organised than Ringway – staff from Ringway retained but the Management has changed. The contract is for 6 years with an option to extend to 10 years.
- SC decided to take £5million out of the highways budget to balance the books!
- Disappointed with the state of the roads and the poor performance of Ringway to get repairs carried out but on Friday there will be 28 gangs carrying out pothole repairs/defects in the County which will probably take 6-8 weeks to bring up to date.
- 'A' road not too bad but the 'B' roads (Highley and Ludlow and rural roads are beyond pothole sin some places as they are down to base stone.
- It is planned that there will be 1 gang out of the 28 in the area working.
- Concern expressed to Chris that the roads are dangerous for cyclists who use these roads a lot.
- Claims – 92% are repudiated.

Chris answered questions from the floor.

Shropshire Cllr Shingleton confirmed that she had been to the Kier briefing and thinks that they have grasped what Cllrs are complaining about and are keen to work with Parish Councils.

Chairman thanked Chris for attending and everyone looked forward to seeing road repairs.

#### **01. Apologies:**

Sally Crawford, Alan Shelley, Katie Jones

**02. Minutes of last meeting - April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017:** These had been circulated with the agenda and it was **RESOLVED to accept these as a true record and Chairman signed these accordingly.**

#### **03. Matters arising from minutes:**

Nothing.

#### **04. Chairman's Annual Report:**

Acting Chairman, David Young, is the Parish Council Vice Chairman but due to Chairman, Cllr Hazel Barratt's accident he was standing in as Chairman, David took his report from the newsletter which had been circulated and reported the following:

- Cllr Hazel Barratt was slowly improving following her accident and everyone wished her well.
- Old Fox and Hounds car park was taking longer than anticipated due to disputes, but Surveyors are working on this and will progress as soon as possible.
- Broadband updated for many areas of the parish.

- Precept 10% lower than last year.
- Thanked Clerk for her hard work and Cllrs for their support.

#### **05. Shropshire Councillor's report:**

Cllr Shineton gave the following report:

Another busy changeable year. Elections on May produced little change in the political groups Conservatives remain as the Administration.

The continuation of changes to many policies from Central Government has required Shropshire Council to review many of their own policies these have included: -

#### **The ECONOMY**

always important, has taken on a higher profile with the possibility of the withdrawal of government grant to be replaced by councils retaining the Business Rates ( Non Domestic Rate) Unfortunately the amount collected across the County would not match current Government grants to cover the Councils mandatory responsibilities, action is being taken to encourage larger businesses into the County and close the gap. We are fortunate to have many local businesses who are thriving and providing a wide range of jobs.

#### **HIGHWAYS**

Ringway contract has come to an end and the The Kier company has been appointed and has already started. To say they have a daunting task in front of them is an understatement as the condition of our hundreds of miles of roads many unclassified but equally important to enable access to work, schools and services, are as damaged as I can remember. Please tell your Parish Clarks or Unitary Councillors when you see faults of any kind. There is a new website 'Elgin' which will give you up to date information about road closures and diversions. Shropshire Council Highways also gives you space to report road faults.

#### **SCHOOLS**

Shropshire Gateway Educational Trust with the four schools working together has helped to secure the education for our up to 16 year olds in our large rural area and facilitates many out of hours activities as well as providing transport in many ways.

Farlow and Kinlet Schools continue to be feeder schools for Lacon Childe but are not part of the Gateway Trust.

#### **PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

21 Diamond Route has continued to be unreliable and Worcestershire County Council who hold the contract for this route have not renewed Diamonds contract which will finish on April 15<sup>th</sup>.

Unfortunately, they did not put an effective alternative in place of the early morning and late afternoon/early evening times which has required Shropshire Council repeated efforts liaising with Worcester to resolve this shambles. The current mixture of R&B and Diamond will need monitoring over the next 2/3 months to see how effective it is for our area's needs. Timetables are available in the Library, Market Hall and Shops near the Bus Stop.

We still have the Bridgnorth Community Bus who come in to Cleobury on Saturday mornings and travel around the area back to Bridgnorth with a return journey lunch time. 01746 768539 to book a place.

#### **HEALTH**

There are major changes across all sections of the Health Service which hopefully should make systems more straight forward for patients and carers when you need help.

For the last four years wide discussion has taken place across Shropshire Telford and Powys with Doctors, Nurses, Patients Groups, Health Watch, Patients Groups Health Watch and Councillors from across the National Health Service, Government has given the Shropshire & Telford Acute Trust £312 million to enlarge and improve care in our Hospitals in Shrewsbury and Telford. The proposal is to

upgrade the Emergency Care Accident Dept at either the Princess Royal in Telford or the Royal Shrewsbury where all Blue light Ambulances will go to. There will be an A&E/Urgent care centre remaining at both Hospitals. All planned operations and care will be developed at the alternative Hospital.

The Consultant Obstetric Unit and in-patient Children's Unit will go onto the same site as the Emergency Care and Accident Unit. Both Hospitals will have a Midwife Led Unit Both Hospitals will continue to have an Outpatient Department

There now has to be a public Consultations which will hopefully start in May and will last for 12 weeks. During that time there will be many public meetings and opportunities to put forward your views on line or a paper copy. I urge you to take part in this Consultation it is for all our future health care. We have seen one Nursing Home sadly close but a new one Cleobury Hills is being currently built in Cleobury Mortimer, there will be a wide range of jobs needed to run the Home and a recruiting session was held at Cleobury Country on April 12<sup>th</sup> which was very successful, if you missed it, they will have contact details.

#### HOUSING

Cleobury has seen considerable housebuilding over the last few years yet there is still a shortage in the area especially to rent. All our Parishes through their Parish Plans recognise their local needs. Cleobury are compiling a Neighbourhood Plan which will be a blue print for the future development mainly in Cleobury Parish but also recognising they are a Hub for services for the wider area. This plan will be a blue print for Cleobury Mortimer Parish up to 2036, please take part.

We are fortunate to have a wide range of Clubs and Groups in the area of all subjects and interests often in our local Village Halls.

The Sports and Social club in Cleobury is a venue of many events and with the transfer of ownership of the Cleobury Park area to the Town Council is well placed to be used especially for all the sports groups over a wide age range.

#### CLEOBURY AREA YOUTH PARTNERSHIP

The Partnership has representatives from Scouts, Guides, St Mary Youth, South Shropshire Forum, Housing Associations, Police, Schools, Town Council, Youth Champions, Sports and Social Club and welcomes all who are interested in Youth provision.

We have had another successful and varied year with an Awards for All grant for £9,642 which Mark from St Mary Youth Project and Richard from South Shropshire Youth Forum used with the children for the Garden Project. The Current Bushes they planted outside the Library are looking very good this year.

Our thanks to a number of the surrounding Parishes who contribute to the Partnership and to Steve Todd who Audits our accounts and Sports and Social Club for allowing us to meet there, our next meeting is April 23<sup>rd</sup> 10.30am.

#### FOX AND HOUNDS CAR PARK

Congratulations to the Parish Council for the foresight to register this area as a 'Community Asset' with the possible changes where we will be able to access routine health care in the future there may well be extended use of the Surgery which makes this car park primarily for the Patients use.

#### Cllr Butler gave the following report:

Following the local elections last May a new Administration was formed with a mandate to maintain a balanced budget in a period of severe grant cut backs ,but also take up the challenge from central government to become more financially self-sufficient and have less reliance on funding from central government which is being withdrawn.(education funding being exempt from withdrawal)

To do this the council has had to become far more economically savvy because our future funding outside education will be based on business rates payable within the county and council tax paid. Therefore, if we can increase our economic base it will take the pressure of increases in council tax which at present are necessary to deliver a balanced budget.

To this end we have created a new economic development team who are leading on major projects to enable big business to come to Shropshire create better paid jobs and increase the revenue base of the council which will help us all.

To date the site of the Ironbridge power station is under way towards development with a major contractor appointed to design an appropriate scheme for employment land and housing. The council with its new initiatives has secured £9.7 million from government to open up the Mile End roundabout at Oswestry both for a new large industrial estate on the A5 trunk link and to also access further housing development. An application for 600 houses has subsequently been approved. This cements the need for councils to become the enablers for developments whether Economic or housing and the recognition by Government of the way we are changing to up our game in providing central funding for projects.

We are awaiting outcome on funding of the North West Relief road at Shrewsbury which would be the final piece of an overall by pass and which again would open up land for diversification, tourism, employment and housing.

The council has also purchased the two shopping centres in central Shrewsbury and the old riverside centre. Shrewsbury is a vibrant town, with a new university and great population growth, but there is a disconnect between one half of the town and the vibrant part, by the council consolidating ownership it will be able to re generate the area and develop it with partners in a long term sustainable joint up approach.

The subjects mentioned above are just a taste of major projects being undertaken, with other projects being done in various market towns around the county. But the drive for increased revenue wherever it is in the county will help us all.

I have taken on a new role as Chair of Place Overview and Scrutiny which will scrutinise the above projects and be a critical friend to officers , portfolio holders and partners who are involved on their development .It is an exciting role one of which I am taking a great interest .I will oversee subjects relating to Planning, Economic Development, Highways , and Place infrastructure.

The money the council takes when allowing housing development commonly known as CIL (community infrastructure levy ) is being debated by a new task and finish group which I sit on with an ambition to get the funds spent sooner rather than later as long as they do fall in line with government guidance in enabling and enhancing economic and residential development . The councils also receive Neighbourhood funding which can be spent on local aspirational projects, playgrounds, open spaces and other things the community may aspire.

In the financial year 2016/17 Shropshire delivered 1910 houses which is the most in a year since the second world war! The majority of the houses were in Shrewsbury area and subsequently Shrewsbury town council has received £275,000 this year in neighbourhood funding for local aspirational projects. This just shows how communities can have direction in how funds are spent when housing is delivered. Out of the total over 440 affordable houses were delivered which is also good news.

One problem we face is when smaller parishes receive small amounts of CIL and neighbourhood funding which cannot be big enough to deliver any major infrastructure needs for economic development or residential development. I think it needs to be recognised especially with the CIL where those parishes access their major services, or where people work and CIL monies need to be pooled in an area for the wider delivery of projects for the benefit of several parishes and their residents and not to look in isolation.

I know so far, I have talked about big projects county wide and I do get a lot of people saying we are forgotten in the south.

Recently it was proposed to take away the Lengthsman scheme from Town and Parish councils and funding for Youth services in the rural areas. Both Madge and I fought and lobbied hard against this and I am pleased to report an element of funding has been returned to the rural areas. It is also new that the council now is open to all ideas for development both residential and economic in any market town or hub and if anyone wishes to discuss as such please let me know and we can invite officers to come and talk to us.

Roads and pot holes are a major issue as they are everywhere in the whole country. We currently have 23 teams working on pot holes under our new supplier of maintenance Kier who took over this April. Shropshire has also been awarded further £1.86 million for tackling pot holes this financial year. We are lobbying the government that it just cannot keep given scraps of money each year for pot holes but must come up with a major plan for our existing infrastructure and not just concentrate on new projects such as HS2 and Cross rail in London.

As I have reported in previous years the governments over the past two decades have concentrated on the Metropolitan and City areas and have forgotten about the rural areas and are seen as not relevant. It was interesting to see recently that DEFRA has been slated for only concentrating on Agriculture and nothing for rural life, communities, welfare and employment. Not recognising rural poverty, deprivation, and need which when scaled up is worse than urban areas.

I sit as Shropshire representative on a lobbying organisation known as RSN (rural services network) Sparse. This is an organisation which lobbies both the LGA (Local Government Association) and MPs and government direct. We currently are looking at two major issues amongst many more, Future funding settlement from government and Adult social care.

To date government has always used the word density in its formula which has had a huge effect on rural sparse counties in funding. After much lobbying and working with rural councils the current proposal on funding from 2021 takes out the word density and should have a positive impact on funding we get from government to help deliver statutory services. Presently Shropshire is in the bottom quartile for all funding from government yet has to set higher council tax, whereas those in the built-up areas have more funding and lower council tax. This unfair way of funding has to be addressed and we are working hard to try and move the balance.

We have recently enabled a new working group of MPS and Lords to look at the rural issues with RSN and this will now be chaired by Philip Dunne MP.

Adult Social care is the Elephant in the room. With an ageing population all councils will be under severe pressure to deliver basic services and we have already seen some councils been taken over by government as they cannot balance the books. We have seen some attempts to bring the issue to the front of government only to be used as a political ploy for party fighting which is disappointing. We are lobbying that there needs to be a form of centralised funding for Adult social care like there is with education and this will bring some uniformity into delivery otherwise it will become more of a postcode lottery dependent on where you live. I was pleased to see Adult social care moved from the Minister for Communities into the minister for Health and am hopeful when we have the grown-up debate about how we fund our health care we also include Adult social care. Watch this space.

If we can achieve a policy that is fair and centrally funded, this will leave our Local Government to be able to concentrate on their communities and partners Town and Parish and Voluntary Sector to work together for all our benefits.

I am pleased to report that even in the current austere environment in which we are in Shropshire council received a Good overall result from a recent Ofsted on Children's Services and I commend

the staff for their work. There is still work to be done and to maintain the service and I am confident all is in place to achieve that.

In our area we are fortunate to have good Town and Parish councils who are actively involved with their communities and the issues we face. I particularly commend Cleobury Mortimer Town Council for bringing forward their Neighbourhood Plan and await with interest the results and referendum. I also commend the crime reduction group which has undertaken some excellent projects.

I would also like to thank all councillors who volunteer on all our councils, we may not always agree but we are all here for the good of our communities and residents.

I am also lucky to have Cllr Madge Shingleton who shares the Council division with me. I have not mentioned local health issues or transport as Madge specialises in those and I on the matters mentioned above. Do be reassured we do discuss all the issues together and work together across the division.

**06. Update re: Fox and Hounds car park:**

Already covered in Chairman's report.

**07. Organisation reports:**

a) Stottesdon School Governors:

Report received from Head teacher:

Stottesdon CofE Primary continues to be a thriving, over subscribed school (125 pupils including Nursery). The school has expanded its age range from 5 - 11 to 2 - 11 in order to formally integrate Chorley Family Playgroup into Stottesdon School and the Shropshire Gateway Educational Trust. Chorley Family Playgroup is now renamed as Stottesdon Gateway Nursery and continues to provide the valuable 'wrap around' service to parents (before and after school care and holiday club). As a school, we continue to run four classes (R/Y1; Y2/3; Y4/5; Y5/6). We continue to problem solve the severe lack of appropriate facilities (hall, kitchen, appropriate classrooms and additional teaching spaces). This continues to be urgent and the Shropshire Gateway Educational Trust and Diocese are seeking solutions as soon as possible.

The curriculum is exciting and, although a small school, we provide a huge breadth of opportunity e.g. range of music lessons; ensemble playing; sports participation; academic success; wide ranging enrichment; dramatic productions/concerts.

Standards continue to be high and we pride ourselves in supporting and challenging every child.

We value our place in the community and enjoy our strong links with the church with celebrations at Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day, Ash Wednesday, summer leavers celebration and of course our joint Fete (6<sup>th</sup> July). We have recently had a successful Statutory Inspections of Anglican and Methodist Schools and our report will be out shortly.

Our development plan prioritises continuing to meet children's individual needs with a particular focus on continuing to maintain our high standards and integrating the Nursery into our Early Years Provision.

b) WI: report received from Helena Hale:

We have a full and varied programme for members and visitors during 2018.

We currently have 19 members and our membership is open to all women in the district.

We meet on the third Wednesday of each month at Chorley Village Hall or Farlow Village Hall. We have attached a copy of our scheduled programme for 2018 and information about monthly events is posted on noticeboards around the district.

Our primary aim is to provide a network for local women to meet and share knowledge and skills and conversation in a friendly and informal group. We have a monthly craft and chat group that meets at a member's home on the first Monday of the month from 10.30 – 12.30. We support national campaigns of public interest, and members are balloted annually to decide on which issue the WI puts its influence. We send a delegate to the County Annual Meeting to keep abreast of county wide developments and along with other WIs in South Shropshire, take a turn to send a delegate to the National Conference. Members are involved in other clubs and voluntary groups in the District on an individual basis and share their experiences as they wish.

We have a committee that organises the business and running of our local group, governed by WI constitutional rules with a President, Secretary, Treasurer and Programme Co ordinator. In practice, we overlap and support each other in these tasks so that our WI functions smoothly for the benefit of our members.

Over the years we have contributed to the Village Fetes and entered the WI Craft competition at Burwarton Show. These are highlights of our year. As there are three village Fetes in our District, the Committee relies on the efforts of individual members getting involved and supporting these community events.

We warmly welcome enquiries from prospective members and visitors to our meetings.

c) Playgroup – no report but mentioned in School report.

d) Chorley Village Hall:

Dave Rix reported on a reasonably good year and confirmed that the Committee hoped to refurb the village hall – painting, damp causing problems as there is no background heat. Will upgrade furniture but as this is the last community facility in the village parishioners need to get behind it. Recent events have not attracted new faces. Volunteers are also needed for the Committee.

e) Parish Watch – nothing to report. Chairman urged everyone to be vigilant and report any suspicious vehicles etc.

f) South Wheatland Archive Group (SWAG):

Rosemary Abbiss reported that there was still about £1000 in the kitty and will be used for the parish when it is decided what it is best donated to. It would be good if the book (Stud on the Hill) could be put on the website. There are no further copies available. All materials are in the archives which is kept in the Church.

g) Stotty Strolls/P3 Group – nothing to report. Group not active.

h) Nightingale Nurses:

Rosemary Abbiss, Chairman, reported that this fund is for nursing help when there is a crisis in the family. It is organised through an agency, for insurance purposes. It is being used quite extensively at present – mostly in and around the Cleobury Mortimer area. Our thoughts are that many families move away and therefore there is very little family support. The fund covers Ditton Priors, Cleobury Mortimer and Tenbury Doctor's surgeries. All requests for help are confidential and is accessed through the Doctors.

i) Stottesdon/Sidbury Church:

Rev Daborn gave the following report:

It has been a busy and positive year in our two churches. Bishop Richard's visit to St Mary's to celebrate a group service at Pentecost was well-received – even his requirement that the congregation sit in the front pews not the back ones. He was greatly taken by the notion that even in this rural diocese this benefice is distinguished in having no A or B roads anywhere in its boundaries!

We have continued to host outside events in the churches: a second poetry evening at Holy Trinity, together with the 'Traces' sound installation; a second GR8 concert at St Mary's, and a welcome return of the Journeyman Theatre Company reflecting on the journey of a refugee. A theatrical production is planned this year at Holy Trinity instead of the Poetry Evening!

Relations with the primary school are strong and positive, the school using St Mary's church for its end-of-term celebrations as well as its Harvest Festival; the school also came to the church for an Ash Wednesday service. Children have contributed to Sunday services at both churches and at the Harvest Festival and Carol services at Holy Trinity. This church is also trialling a sequence of 'Worship for All' services through the year in the regular third-Sunday service to include further involvement for families in the parish.

The positive feeling in the benefice as a whole has been recognised by the diocesan authorities with the decision to lift the suspension that has been in place for the last ten years. This recognises that our churches form a viable unit and need no longer be considered for pastoral reorganisation. Accordingly, Bishop Alistair of Ludlow came to St Mary's to conduct a collation service: it had originally been planned for December 2017, but the snow made that impossible, so the service took place on April 8<sup>th</sup>. I am thus able to submit this report not as priest-in-charge, but as your Rector.

There have also been occasions for celebration for individuals in our congregations: Alex Daborn has been approved for training for ministry as a Reader and began that training on the part-time course in Ludlow in September 2017; and Lucy Henderson has been approved for ordination training and will be starting full-time training at Theological College in the autumn of this year.

The regular pattern of services is securely in place now, with a mixture of styles available in the two churches from the traditional language of the Book of Common Prayer Evensong to the lighter touch informal and worship for all services. We have included services aimed at fundraising for charities: Remembrance Day had a collection for the Earl Haig Fund; the Christingle for the Children's society; and the very successful Songs of Praise to celebrate our community raised funds for the popularly-nominated Air Ambulance.

The Wardens and PCCs have continued to be a great support to all initiatives in the churches, and a great source of new ideas. My thanks go to them and to all who have contributed so much in the churches over the year.

j) Chorley Chapel – no report

k) Chorley Show:

Show due to take place on 18<sup>th</sup> August at 11am and any offers help would be greatly appreciated. Attractions will be the Dog Agility, Hobby Horse Gymkhana, Traders and stalls from local groups. Local Charities have been supported from the funds raised which include Hope House, Rupert's Revenge and Willowdene as well as the village hall.

l) Lengthsman Scheme:

Mark Pearce reported that the last couple of months he had spent trying to get water off the roads and clearing visibility splays at junctions/bends etc. Chairman thanked Mark for the work carried out.

**08. Parish problems:**

Residents in Bakehouse Lane, Chorley had received letters from Veolia saying that if the surface of the lane was not upgraded then they would not collect their ins etc as vehicles are likely to get damaged.

The lane is actually a Bridleway and SC has a duty to maintain the surface to bridleway standard and resident are in contact with ROW at present who have promised to help with some funding in the new financial year. Clerk had given maps to the residents of the drainage system in the lane and residents thanked the PC for their support.

**09. Chairman's closing comments:**

Chairman thanked everyone for attending and giving their reports. He also pointed out that there are still 2 vacancies on the PC – 1 for Stottesdon and 1 for Sidbury if anyone was interested.

**10. Date of next meeting – April 23<sup>rd</sup> (Parish Council meeting)**

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

**Signed: Chairman**

**Date:**

DRAFT