

PINVIN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual Pinvin Parish Meeting

Tuesday 14th May 2024 at 7.00pm

Present

D. Boatright- Greene (Chairman), T. O'Dell, R. Coates, S. Boyden, K. Boyden

WDC District Cllr L. Tucker; WCC Cllr. D Boatright. 0 Members of the public

L. Cope (Clerk)

0 Members of the Public

1. Apologies for absence.- Cllr P. Greene & Cllr D. Biddle sent their apologies.

2. Chairman's Annual Report (Cllr. D. Boatright- Greene)

It has been a very busy year for the council with a mixture of successes and challenges. Our first issue was the grass cutting. The change of the contract proved difficult given it ended during the election cycle and some land had been on the parish contract despite not being our land to manage. Rooftop requested to take back the operation of grass cutting in Spion Kop (in part because they need to manage all gardening upkeep on the shared spaces and we do not provide tree pruning etc) and the churchyard, with legal advice making it clear that we are not to operate within religious grounds. With the law being clarified this year we have been able to make a donation to the church. Big thank you to the council for focusing on getting this sorted and special thank you to Cllr Scott Boyden for leading on getting issues ironed out with the new contractor.

There has been a significant movement forward with the hall, with funding being sought from companies, charities and Wychavon District Council. The team have done a fantastic job so far and the potential changes with the new changing facilities are both realistic and ambitious. Big thank you to Cllrs Karen Boyden, Cllr Tiffany O'Dell, Grahame Bostock and Jeff Clayton for their hard work on this project.

We are also making progress with the management of the playing fields. The charity that once ran the fields is no longer operating and the council has started to clarify our position. A meeting with solicitors has given us a way forward and will enable the council to ensure the fields are managed in the coming years.

The planning system is continuing to be a huge drain on our resources. More applications have been coming through in recent months. We have had some successes, with attempts to build off Terrace Road and Upton Snodsbury Road being refused. We have also had some serious disappointments, including the situation off the A44 where Wychavon failed to complete the application in the appropriate time. This has now gone to appeal, leaving the parish with no way to argue our case in a local planning committee. There is also the site off Upton Snodsbury Road for 185 new homes. This is currently with the planning team at Wychavon and the parish will continue to fight the plan. It will increase the population of the parish by 50% and change the way the village looks forever.

There is also the mushroom factory application that shows that a larger facility is being prepared. There are ongoing speeding and traffic issues in the village, especially around the school. The council applied for funding for traffic signs for the school (thank you to Tiffany O'Dell for doing this) and the speed van continues to visit the parish. It is very clear from the complaints from residents that poor

behaviour on the roads continues and it is disappointing to receive responses from the police suggesting the parish can do more. With three VAS signs and a road too fast to enable a community speed watch to be undertaken, you have to wonder what they expect us to do next.

Finally a huge thank you to our clerk, Lisa who has joined the team this year and really helped us get on a clear path. And a big thank you to all our parish councillors who add to the team in their own way. Congratulations to Cllr Karen Boyden and Cllr Paul Boatright-Greene for completing their first years as parish councillors.

3. Cllr. Tucker WDC Annual Report

The year went by fast! It always takes a month or two for a newly elected council to settle in, but it has been a busy year especially in regard to Planning.

Our new head of planning, Ian Macleod from Birmingham City Council, is now in place. He is experienced in major planning projects which will help with the SWDPR. Wychavon continues to have difficulty in retaining and recruiting planning officers – gaps are filled in with contracted planners but this is costly.

SWDPR This Review was started end of 2017 and covered Wychavon, Worcester City and Malvern Hills. Covid didn't help nor did the blanket of secrecy. Eventually the proposed plan was passed by councils and the final Regulation 19 consultation for the Bristol Inspectorate in the run up to Christmas 2022. Wychavon officers then had the task of organising submissions prior to sending everything on to the Inspectorate in September 2023. They were predicting that the Examination in Public could start as early as February this year but the appointed Inspectors have asked for further evidence and updated work which won't be complete to send off before August. If the Inspectors are happy then the Examination could take place January 2025 or at a pinch December 2024 – at least 7 years after the work began. These reviews are supposed to take place every 5 years, now to be shortened to every 4 years! I asked a formal question to Council on how they plan to learn from this experience but was told they wanted to look forward not back.

Obviously the biggest issue for this area is the proposal for a new sustainable town of 2,000 dwellings by 2040, increasing to 5,000 dwellings in the next Review, roughly based on Throckmorton airfield. There are a host of serious flaws in this proposal including hugely costly archaeology, polluted land, and lack of local road capacity and the local parish councils are working together to make sure that these are recognised. My fear is that we could end up with urban sprawl from Pershore through the villages up to Bishampton, town or no town, because of the failure of the planners to ensure protected “significant gaps” between the settlements. There are current planning applications for 185 and 44 dwellings in Pinvin, and 111 at the top end of Wyre Road opposite the KeyTec7 roundabout, as well as many smaller applications that all add up.

Because the Review has been going on so long and housing sites in Wychavon have been built out quickly because the area is attractive to buyers, we no longer have a Five Year land supply and therefore planners are required to give more weight to the “benefits” of extra housing versus implementing our normal planning policies, and so approve applications they would otherwise have refused.

Back to Wychavon, there has been a change of Leader of the Council. Bradley Thomas stood down to take up the role of parliamentary candidate for Bromsgrove and the role had been filled by Chris Day of Ombersley. The local government settlement was tight for all councils this year but Wychavon has a good record of income generation. Nevertheless they increased their council tax by 2 % this year after 6 years of nil increase. Wychavon has a shared Senior Management Team of 6 with Malvern Hills which has saved a lot of money although I feel it has lost the individual focus and originality that Wychavon had before.

The weekend Emergency out of hours contact number has changed to 01527 912966 but it is only for real emergencies such as traveller encampments on council owned land, emergency homelessness or dangerous faults on council play equipment.

Wychavon has been working on reducing its own carbon emissions, replacing the windows at the civic centre. It has recently been awarded £2m+ to provide air heat pumps for Pershore Leisure Centre (and Evesham) reducing its electricity costs by 80-90% as we already benefit from the hydropower unit on the Avon installed by Charles Hudson of Wick.

50 years ago Wychavon was created on 1st April in 1974. During the Chairman's 50th Anniversary Tour, Cllr Raphael vowed to visit every parish in the District Council, highlighting the work of local organisations, meeting with volunteers, catching up on projects Wychavon has funded over the years and checking out some of the district's natural and historic sites. In Hill and Moor parish council he visited the Landfill Site where we had a long and muddy walk through the nature restoration areas. The anniversary tour ended with the Chairman's Civic Ceremony at Pershore Abbey on 21 April 2024, which was a celebration of Wychavon's role in the district, following its formation.

4. Cllr. Boatright- Greene WCC Annual Report

Highways and drainage: It is still wet! The past 18 months have just been wet. Every report I have written in the past year has referred to records being broken. Just this week we had rainfall that resulted in water back on the roads from fields. Life continues to centre around drains, ditches and flooding. The county council are reviewing the response to the recent floods and this is going to a committee this week. There is a lot of issues around communication that need ironing out. This is always a complex process as several agencies have to work together, including the Environment Agency. The current plan is to work through the issues and work with the Environment Agency and the different council departments to ensure we can get to trouble spots more quickly and ease pressures where we can. This is very much an ongoing process and it went to a scrutiny committee today (14th May) for initial review.

The easiest thing we can do is keep the drains clear. There is a dedicated team who are out clearing the drains and gullies. If you know of any drains that need clearing please report on:

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/travel-and-highways/report-road-or-path-issue/drainage-and-flooding-highway>

And let me know so I can chase it up. If you have already reported an area that isn't draining and there hasn't been any action, please email me.

Roads and potholes: Back in November 2023 Rishi Sunak announced £8 billion for improving potholes in the country. In December 2023 local MPs informed us we would get £139 million for Worcestershire over 8 years. We have currently received £2.6 million and I will pursue for every penny! There has also been an announcement of £209 million of redirected HS2 money for the county but no rules on how it can be spent are yet available. Some people are getting excited about raising roads to limit damage caused by flooding. Others have suggested dualling the railway. We shall see what comes to pass.

Fire service: The fire service has completed its spending review and the proposals included changing some of the on call fire service. The document can be read here:

[Consultation | Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service](#)

The review has already changed, with Malvern's vehicle being kept on. This has caused some arguments about the validity of the consultation. This is likely to be discussed at length in the coming months.

Council Tax 2024-25: The county council have increased the council tax for next year by 4.99%. Much of the pressure is on adult social care and children’s services. The council is currently undergoing a restructuring of the management structure of the council, which will result in some savings for the coming year.

Education: New school in Worcester and new school in Malvern for those with Autism are taking hold. Still a long way to go and there is still a shortage of SEND places so a lot of work to do. There is recognition that the lack of places is having an impact but there is yet to be a full explanation by the council on how this will be resolved. National problem or not, this is our problem- it needs fixing.

The change from three tier to two tier in Pershore remains stalled- meetings being held with various stakeholders. Timetable should be seen in the summer. There was a consultation by Pinvin Federation about remaining Middle School age range so the situation is fluid.

New head of children’s services from June as current one moves to Herefordshire. Children’s services being brought in house and WCF disbanded.

County Hall: RAAC at county hall... the saga continues! Still no sign of what is happening and awaiting report on what needs to be done. I ask every time I am in the building.

Landfill liaison committee: we have requested further information on fly tipping as it seems to have doubled in tonnage in the last 12 months.

Highways contributions to planning meetings: I have concerns after previous planning meetings when the Highways contribution was poor. I have spoken to Wychavon planning about the issue and solutions are being looked at as this has been flagged repeatedly.

I have sent a request an update on the progress of scheduling Throckmorton as a monument.

5. Pinvin Playing Fields Committee Annual Report

As the Playing Fields Committee has dissolved there is no annual report.

6. Pinvin Memorial Hall Annual Report- Cllr K. Boyden

The end of year accounts have been finalized and show that the Memorial Hall has not made a profit this year due to the large gas bill which is four times more than last year, if not for this it would have made a profit.

Going forward the pricing strategy for bookings will need to be re-evaluated accordingly to compensate for the higher energy costs, however the aim is not to out price the market and the planned Hall renovations should make the Hall more economical to run in the future.

Looking to re-establish the Memorial Hall committee and we are always looking for more help and members to join.

The Pre-School no longer operates from the Hall but there are more new enquiries coming through for bookings.

7. Any Other Business

None

Signed.....

Date.....

Cllr. Dan Boatright- Greene – Chair Pinvin