

# WHITTINGTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015 held in The Senior Citizen's Hall Whittington at 7.00 pm

**PRESENT:** Mr Gregg Hickman, Chairman of Whittington Parish Council, Mr A Cawthray, Mr Frank Davis, Mr S Charmley, Mr P Jones, Mr P Thomson-Lawrence, Mrs Jenny Jones, Mrs Pat Raine, Mrs Jill Whitby, PC Daniel Firth, plus 18 members of public.

## **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**Rev Sarah Burton, Mr Rupert Harvey, Mr Romer Hoseason, and Mr Sean Sibley**

## **2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

It was proposed by Mr Frank Davis, seconded by Mrs Pat Raine, all agreed, that the minutes of the last Annual Parish meeting held on Tuesday, 29th April, 2014 be approved, these were duly signed by the chairman of Parish Council as a true record.

## **3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were none.

## **4 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr Gregg Hickman, gave a report on the activities that took place during the last twelve months.

The cemetery extension is now complete and work finished on the fencing and pathways. A voluntary working group has been set up by the Church proving an asset to the community.

Planning continues to place a significant burden on the council, Parish Councils do not have the power to grant or refuse planning applications and it is frustrating that comments made by this Council are not always taken into consideration by the planning officers. As a policy, the Parish Council is in favour of development in Whittington and Park Hall, however, development in the smaller hamlets is not favoured as there is a real risk that they could lose their identities

The affordable housing in Park Hall has come to a successful conclusion and the development has been officially opened. The houses have been built to an excellent standard and are very energy efficient; the Parish Council had a significant input into the selection of residents working hard with the housing trust to ensure a vibrant mix of residents.

The Parish Plan is well underway and a questionnaire has been sent out to all residents, the more that are returned the better the plan will be. The plan will be feed into Shropshire Council's plans and will be used in planning application determinations as well as allocation of funding.

The Council has started a project on street lighting; an initial survey has shown there are a number of concrete columns that will require replacing. Discussions with other local parishes outlined the fact that Whittington has excessive street lights for a rural parish, Whittington has 197 lights under Parish Council control, similar rural parishes in the area have less than 100 lights. Future CIL funding, and the Community Led

grant for the affordable homes in Park Hall, will be used for lighting improvement features, including the installation of LED lighting, however, the project will be expensive and will take a number of years to complete.

In conclusion, the Chairman thanked all the councillors and volunteers for all the work they put in every year, many are on sub-committees and this is all done on a voluntary basis. He thanked the Clerk Mrs Sue Cowley for her commitment and dedicated service to the Council; Councillor Hickman also thanked everyone who had attended this meeting.

## **5 WHITTINGTON ORGANISATIONS**

Various organisations gave reports to those present. These included a written report from Whittington Cricket and Bowling Club, the Rugby Club, Whittington School and reports from other organisations, including the Community Centre, Senior Citizen's Hall, the Castle and the Parish Plan Steering Group. PC Daniel Firth gave a report on behalf of the police and Councillor Steve Charmley; spoke about his role as a Shropshire Councillor. The Chairman thanked all the organisations for their reports.

## **6. 'MEN IN SHEDS' PROJECT**

A talk and presentation was given by Mr Ken Baker, Chairman of Oswestry Men's Shed together with other members of the group. He explained the history of the Men in Sheds movement, this started in Australia with over 1000 sheds, this then spread abroad to Ireland and the first shed opened in Cheshire on 2009 and there are now 200 across the country. The purpose of the movement is about giving men of all ages, but predominantly older men, somewhere to meet and make new friends, pursue hobbies, learn new, or pass on skills, or just talk. Statistics show that social isolation is a significant factor in the impairment of physical and mental health in older people, and the impact of social isolation on older men is very much greater than women due to various factors.

The group meet twice a week 10 am to 4 pm at Park Hall in a portakabin donated by Richard Smithson, formerly of A to Z Engineering. The group would welcome any donations of tools, timber offcuts, paint etc., to help progress the scheme. A public meeting at Centre North West, Oak Street, is to be held at the end of May to generate interest and, hopefully, more members.

## **7. OPEN FORUM**

Questions were raised from the floor these included issues such as planning decisions, the SAMdev plan, a forthcoming Volunteer Day in the parish and other related matters.

Councillor Gregg Hickman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and closed the meeting at 8.30 pm.

**SIGNED** \_\_\_\_\_ *Chairman of Parish Council*

*Tuesday, 10th May 2016*