**KIMBOLTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Kimbolton Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 24th April 2018 at 7.30pm at Kimbolton Village Hall.**

**Present:** Cllrs Will Mears, Doug Underwood, Graham Watkins, Henry Beaumont,

Grenville Rollings and Geoff Jones.

**In Attendance**: Cllr John Stone, Mr John Wood, the Clerk Mrs Angela Ellis and one member of public.

1. **Apologies for Absence:**  Cllr Kevin Rowsell
2. **Adopt & Sign Minutes of previous meeting- 9th May 2017.**
3. **Chaiman’s Report 2017/18 -** The Chairman began by thanking all of the Parish Councillors and the Clerk for their help and support throughout a very busy year for both Kimbolton and Hamnish Parishes. There had been the usual routine meetings as well as a number of additional extraordinary meetings, all being well attended. He also thanked Councillor John Stone for all his help and support behind the scenes. Both John Wood and Ian Culley were thanked for all their hard work in drawing up the Neighbourhood Plan which was now completed pending a referendum to be held on the 10th May. He went on to thank Mr Brian Tonks for another years hard work as Lengthsman, also for the maintenance he had done at the village hall, and Cllr Rowsell for his work as footpaths officer.

He went on to say that the Stockton Field development has continued positively despite an initial U turn in suitability for the area. Twenty one homes with the option of 25 homes offers the opportunity to welcome new occupants and families into the community (final approval yet to be decided). This process has been guided tirelessly by Mr Andrew Banks of Herefordshire Council.

A number of improvements have been undertaken to include drainage projects, village planters and forward 2018 budgets for church yard maintenance/donations covering both Kimbolton and Hamnish. Even the grit marker posts make a difference. It is great to see the current investment in the Stockton Cross pub and we look forward to the grand re-opening later this week.

At this stage it is extremely disappointing that our recently purchased SID unit arrived faulty and the subsequent manufacturer administration. We continue to assess potential repair options, both in house and with Balfour Beatty.

Finally, our Lengthsman and P3 Footpath grants have been cut drastically forcing a precept increase last year of £1915.50 making a total of £8451.50. We have agreed not to increase the precept for the current year with a review due during December 2018. Whil our precept is one of the lowest in the county, we are very aware of any future increases and the effects on the wider tax payer, and indeed local rate payers. As everyone will be aware, austerity cuts continue to pressure on public services is increasing countrywide.

1. **Report from Councillor John Stone –**Councillor Stone started by handing out leaflets detailing how Council Tax was spent. This year sees a rise of 4.9% of which 2.0% was ring fenced to help pay for Adult Social Care and the remaining 2.9% would be used to fund Social Care and other services. By 2020 government funding will stop completely and the Council will depend on business rates and council tax to pay for all the services the Council delivers. With a small population in Herefordshire of only 186,000 this would be no mean feat. He went on to say that all the schools in the County were doing well and as a governor of Kimbolton School he was pleased to see the new hall had been completed after a long journey in obtaining it. This would be a great asset to the school and would mean the children would not have to walk down the narrow footpath to go to the village hall for PE, drama and assemblies. He congratulated all who had campaigned to achieve this.

He continued by saying what an important day for Kimbolton it would be with the Referendum for the Neighbourhood Development Plan. He said that John Wood and his steering group, assisted by Ian Culley, had done a great job in reaching this point and it would now be up to the residents to vote on the 10th May. If the plan is approved it will provide the village with protection from unwanted development and more local control over planning decisions, a resounding “yes” vote will make all the hard work of the past 3 years worthwhile.

Finally Councillor Stone thanked Mr Brian Tonks for his untiring efforts as Parish Lengthsman, shown again this afternoon in the pouring rain, and all the Parish Councillors, the Clerk and especially the Chairman for their service to the community and look forward to working together for the future year ahead.

1. **Community Report –** Nothing to report.
2. **Open Discussion –** A question was asked as to who was now responsible for the maintenance of the planters. The Chairman said as the Stockton Cross pub had been doing this previously, he would approach the new management to find out if they were willing to carry on doing so.

The meeting closed at 7.55pm.