**KIMBOLTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Kimbolton Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 7th May 2019 at 7.30pm at Kimbolton Village Hall.**

**Present:** Cllrs Will Mears, Doug Underwood, Henry Beaumont, Brian Morris, Jo Read,

Edward Rollings and Becky Beaumont.

**In Attendance**: Cllr John Stone, the Clerk Mrs Angela Ellis and three members of the public.

1. **Apologies for Absence:**  Kevin Rowsell, Grenville Rollings
2. **Adopt & Sign Minutes of previous meeting- 24th April 2018.** These minutes were adopted and signed.

**Chaiman’s Report 2018/19 -**

The Chairman started by thanking everyone for their valued support during the past year. He gave a special thank you to the outgoing councillors, Jeff Jones, Graham Watkins, Grenville Rollings and Kevin Rowsell. He also thanked John Stone, Brian Tonks and of course Ang Ellis. He added that Ang’s role was highly valued and that he was extremely grateful for all her efforts behind the scenes.

He welcomed the new councillors Brian Morris, Ed Rollings, Becky Beaumont and Jo Read, and said that he was looking forward to working together with them this year.

A number of achievements had been made during the past year, including securing the final planning approval for Stockton Field enabling future housing for both local people and those wishing to move into the area. This in turn would help to support the school, church, pub and multitude of clubs and societies.

The neighbourhood plan had now become an integral feature when planning applications were submitted, and is highly regarded by Herefordshire Council. Its influence has provided the provision of four affordable houses as part of the Stockton Field development to name just one example. In turn the neighbourhood plan would also protect the village against unwanted or potential over development.

He said that we could all look forward to the village hall floor being refurbished in the coming weeks, after lengthy budgeting and negotiations with the village hall committee.

Speeding remained a hot topic along the A4112. He gave a brief overview of the a significant numbers of measures had been undertaken during the past thirty years -

Saltbox Cottage, which was adjacent to the Stockton Cross, was demolished during the early 1980’s enabling some elevation of the blind S bend.

A number of road widening works together with footpath construction (not all be it fully linked up) were carried out during the 1980 and 90’s.

40 mile and hour, chevrons and red road markers were applied during the early 2000’s.

The Parish Council purchased the community car park around 2010 securing its future for both the parishioners and primary school.

In 2015 the 40 mile an hour was finally reduced to 30 mile an hour, after four decades of campaigning.

Last but not least, village planters and a SID unit were then introduced most recently.

He went on to say that despite all of these evolving efforts he feared that we, similar to many hundreds of villages throughout the UK, are still being out-flanked by the speeding motorist His estimation was that this was about twenty percent of vehicles travelling through Kimbolton. He said he would like to assure everyone that the Parish Council will continue to apply pressure against all of the relevant authorities.

He said it was worth acknowledging just who was primarily responsible for speeding motorists through the village of Kimbolton and did anyone have any ideas ? It was in fact the person sitting behind the wheel of the speeding vehicle at the time of the offence. He reminded everyone that it is an offence with serious potential consequences. Catching them in the act and possibly prosecuting them was another matter. Based on this information, he politely reminded everyone that speeding vehicles through the village is not the primary responsibly of the Parish Council or indeed our ward Councillor, John Stone.

Moving on, he said that the Parish Council faced a small deficit into 2019/2020 because of the recent elections. Footpaths and Lengthsman schemes had been safeguarded for this year from direct Parish Council funds, although there will be no grants available or spare monies into next year. If we wish to continue with these schemes there would need to be significant debate around potential increases of the precept.

1. **Report from Councillor John Stone –**Councillor Stone started by congratulating all the Parish Councillors, either successfully re-elected or elected for the first time last Thursday. Kimbolton was the only Parish in the Leominster North ward to hold an election and the turnout was higher than average, which showed residents were taking an interest. He thanked Grenville, Graham, Jeff and Kevin for their services to the Parish Council and the community. He welcomed all the newcomers and said that he looked forward to working with them all.

Herefordshire is now a hung council following the voting on last Thursday and the results on Friday morning. He was pleased to retain his seat and thanked everyone who had supported him. He said that we may not know for some days who will control the Council, but it was likely to be some form of coalition led by the Independents. Things will have to be in place by the annual Council meeting on March 24th 2020. It was too early to say exactly what policy changes may occur but the budget and spending priorities for 2019/20 were already in place. We would have to wait and see.

Roads. Councillor Stone said it was good to see the resurfacing work done on parts of the A4112 in the village in the Autumn and said that he would keep up the pressure on Balfour Beatty for further improvements. He added that the pot holes were getting repaired and appealed to everyone to continue to report them. He said that Colin Smith was very active as our local steward and did get around the parishes.

He went on to give a big thank you to Brian, our parish lengthsman scheme co-ordinator, for his sensible and well-judged use of the limited resources. Several successful drainage schemes had been carried out in recent years and the local work on our minor roads represented a considerable saving for Balfour Beatty.

He also thanked Will for his persistence with the Kimbolton speed indicator device. It would not stop crazy drivers but did remind us all of our speed, and even if it only slowed down a modest number of vehicles, it did remind everyone of the 30mph limit. He said that we may have to wait for the village gates and other safety measures until the houses behind Chestnut Avenue had started to be built.

He went on to say that road safety on the A49 remained a concern but we were in the hands of Highways England. However, along with colleagues on the Council, he would continue make representations. He said that the problem was that Highways England did not see the A49 as a priority. He had especially raised the section of the A49 between the Kimbolton turn and Leominster with Highways England but had so far received no response.

Councillor Stone said the Council had recently spent £50,000 on a full re-decoration of the Leominster Library. This followed similar work in Hereford and Ross. The work at Leominster included new movable shelving, an improved children’s area, and a new gallery space for exhibitions. This was a welcome vote of confidence as the library is well used. Since 2012 some 449 libraries have been closed. However, all of the Herefordshire’s libraries had been kept open in spite of all the budget pressures.

He concluded by saying that the Kimbolton neighbourhood plan had now been linked to Herefordshire Core Strategy for several months, following the positive referendum result. The plan is now regularly quoted in planning determinations, so well done to John Wood and his team. All parishes, including Leominster, now have a plan in place in the Herefordshire North Ward.

1. **Community Report –** Nothing to report.
2. **Open Discussion –** No Comments.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm.