

MATHON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting held at Mathon Parish Hall
On Wednesday 5th April 2017 at 7.30 pm

Present:

In Attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk

Public attendance:

Apologies:

Chairman's Report

Planning - there have been fewer planning applications this year, apart from garages and small extensions. There was one for a tree house to be used as a holiday let, which the Council did not support.

At our March meeting, Mark Tansley from Herefordshire Council Planning Services came and gave us a very interesting and informative talk about planning, and in particular enforcement, which was what the Council had an issue with. However, after his talk we had a greater understanding of the process. He said that enforcement had now been given a higher prominence in planning matters and he was attending courts almost weekly over enforcement issues, previously these had been only five or six a year.

Finance - This Council is paid for by money raised from a precept paid by the householders of Mathon. This year the precept was £6,373.00. This pays for the Clerk's salary and expenses, insurance and other expenses we are obliged to pay for such as the data protection fee and the website. We provide a grant to the PCC towards the upkeep of the churchyard, and we have also provided a grant to the Parish Hall. We pay for the green in the centre of the village to be mowed and kept tidy. This has been done by Ron Hadley who has done an excellent job as usual, and who does far more than he is paid for. I'd like to thank him for all his efforts.

This year is the last year we got a grant from Herefordshire Council for the upkeep of the footpaths. In future, we will have to contribute to get the grant, and in a couple of years this grant will be totally phased out. With this in mind, we increased our precept for 2017/18 by an extra £300.00.

In November we set our precept for 2017/18 at £7,289.00 – an increase of £516.00 which includes the £300 for footpaths.

Footpaths - Cllr Tom Ainscough agreed to be our Footpaths Officer and took over from Geoff Fielding who had resigned from the position in March. Along with a group of helpers who walk the paths and report back on any problems – this has worked well. Ted Stewart carries out repairs, mowing and strimming under Tom's direction, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Tom and his helpers and Ted for all their hard work keeping the paths up together. This year we have had to purchase our own materials as they are no longer provided by Herefordshire Council.

For the coming year 2017/18 we will be required to pay a percentage of the grant we get from Herefordshire Council ourselves to gain the grant from Herefordshire Council. This grant will be phased out over the next couple of years and we will then be required to fund all of the footpath work we wish to carry out.

Parish Map - The Mathon Map has been removed as it had slipped in its frame and was deteriorating. It has been put into storage. Tom Ainscough has been finalising an application for a grant towards a storage unit for it, and also looking at any further restoration that might be required.

Other Issues

Potholes - There is a steady flow of pothole issues which get repaired with varying degrees of success.

The Cliffe - still remains closed. We keep an eye on it and write periodically to the owner, but as yet we don't have any information about when or if he plans to open it.

Finally - I would like to thank our Clerk Diana for all her hard work and my fellow Councillors for turning up to meetings and keeping this Council viable.

