

MATHON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting held at Mathon Parish Hall
On Wednesday 4th May 2016 at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr S Harte, Cllr C Green, Cllr R Lawrence, Cllr T Ainscough
Cllr P Davies

In Attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Mr D Baldwin & Mr Chris Rouse – Malvern Hills
Conservators

Public attendance: 1 member of the public attended the meeting

Apologies: Cllr N Walker

Chairman's Report

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and reported on the work of the Parish Council during the year to 31st March 2016, as follows:-

This year began with elections, with four Councillors putting their names up for re-election as there were no other nominees. All four were returned in this uncontested election. One of the retiring Councillors – Thelma Barnes – had moved away from the Parish and was no longer eligible to stand. Paul Davies was away during the election period, but he was co-opted onto the Council at the next Council meeting. The remaining vacancy was filled by co-option by Tom Ainscough. This means we now have a full complement of Councillors and can be quorate for all our meetings.

In November 2015 we re-appointed David Baldwin as the Parish Council's representative on the Board of Malvern Hills Conservators. Also in November the parishioners of Mathon elected Chris Rouse as the elected member for Mathon onto the MHC Board. Both of these posts are for a term of four years.

2015/16 saw the introduction of the Transparency Code, and to comply with this Code the Council set up its own website www.mathonparishcouncil.co.uk on which can be found all the Agendas, Minutes and Reports to meetings. It also shows our Financial Regulations and Accounts, Standing Orders and Code of Conduct.

During the year the Council was able to keep within budget despite having the extra cost of cleaning the Parish Map. The Council is grateful to the Parish Hall Management Committee who contributed towards the costs. In November 2015 we set a precept of £6,773 for 2016/17 – this is less than a 2% increase. In the coming years we are unlikely to be able to increase by such a small amount as the P3 Grant for Footpaths is being phased out and the full cost of this will fall to the Council if it decides to continue with footpath maintenance. Another future cost will be the preservation of the Parish Map.

The Council continued to give grants to the PCC and Mathon Parish Hall towards maintenance costs of the graveyard and the overheads for the Hall. We also paid for the grass cutting of the green and areas around the bridge and the seat by the church. Thanks are due to Ron Hadley for keeping these areas smart and tidy at a very minimal cost to the Parish Council.

In August 2015 the Parish Map was professionally cleaned by Louise Vale who had agreed to do this work in the hall rather than having it transported to her studio in Birmingham. With the help of some Councillors the Map was taken down and the mould removed. It did, however, need a new backing board, and we were fortunate in that Myles Meager was able to supply this at very short notice, which enabled the work to be completed the same day. The Council was advised that a longer term solution needed to be found as the mould would eventually return due to the fluctuating temperatures in the hall. Cllr Tom Ainscough is currently looking into various options for the Map.

In April 2015 Balfour Beatty (BB) combined the P3 Scheme with the Lengthsman Scheme and changed the format for funding. The Council now pay invoices to the appointed contractor and reclaims the costs from BB. This new system caused considerable delays in starting work on the footpaths, but Geoff Fielding eventually sorted out all the paperwork. However, at the end of March 2016 Geoff resigned as Footpaths Officer due to having to cut down on his many commitments. I would like to thank him and Ted Stewart for all their work and effort in getting to grips with the new scheme.

There have been fewer planning applications in the past year, and there is only one which caused concern, which was a driveway put in without permission. This situation is still ongoing.

One issue raised by members of the public was that of speeding traffic through the village. The Council looked into this but it appears there is very little we can do. An expensive detailed survey would need to be undertaken but would not necessarily be cost effective.

Finally I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for their attendance at meetings – this enables the Council to function at its best. Thanks also to our Clerk – Diana Taylor – for all her work in keeping up with the ever increasing amount of legislation that is now required for the Council to be run effectively.

Public Question Time

No questions raised.

Close of Meeting - the Chairman thanked all those present and closed the meeting.