

ALBRIGHTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
Thursday 5th May 2016 at 7.00 pm in St. Mary's Church Hall

Minutes of the Albrighton Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting held in St. Mary's Church Hall, Albrighton at 7.00 pm on 5th May, 2016.

PRESENT:

Cllr. Sylvia Pledger, Chair of Albrighton Parish Council was in the chair accompanied by Mr Michael Ward, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer for Albrighton Parish Council, and 19 members of the community.

1. Welcome by Cllr. Sylvia Pledger, Chair of Albrighton Parish Council, and presentation of her Annual Report 2015/16.

Cllr. Pledger welcomed residents to the meeting and thanked St. Mary's Church for allowing the council to use the church centre for the meeting.

Her report had been published in the Parish Magazine and copies were available to each member of the public at the meeting. Cllr. Pledger stated that she did not intend to go through the report as it had been in the public domain for some considerable time and instead would take questions and comments from the public.

2. Questions and comments on the Annual Report by members of the public.

The Chairman was asked about the status and maintenance of the football pitch at Clockmills. She was asked about the control of moles and the income from the pitch that came to the parish council. There were also questions about the details of the lease taken out with Severn Trent Water.

There were no other questions on the Chairman's report.

3. Presentation of the Annual Accounts 2015/16 of Albrighton Parish Council by Mr. Michael Ward, Responsible Financial Officer.

Mr Ward presented the accounts for the end of the 2015/16 financial year and commented on the reconciliation that had been presented to those attending the meeting. The accounts showed a balance of £113,776 at the end of the financial year which was a considerable increase on the balance in 2014/15, mainly caused by successful applications for grants to improve the CCTV facility. The accounts had been part audited but the audit process was not complete at the time of the meeting.

4. Questions and comments on the Annual Accounts by members of the public.

There were no questions on the parish council's accounts.

5. To formally accept the Annual Report and Accounts.

Cllr Illes proposed that the Chairman's report and the council's accounts should be accepted as a true record which was seconded by Cllr. Beechey and agreed by the meeting with 3 abstentions.

6. Report by Mr Clive Wright, Chief Executive of Shropshire Council.

Mr Clive Wright, Chief Executive to Shropshire Council, reported that Shropshire had had to make cuts of £140m to its budget over the previous three years and it had reduced management costs, buildings and overheads. It could increase council tax by up to 4% in order to protect essential services and the top priority for the council was the safeguarding of young people, education and the care of vulnerable adults. There had been extensive consultation using a variety of means in order to establish priorities for a new corporate strategy regarding the use of scarce resources over the next five years. The overall income for Shropshire Council was app. £500m and once compulsory reductions had been taken out this figure fell to £200m. A 25 year Veolia contract plus costs for adult social care reduced the figure to £140m and Government cuts reduced the sum to just £25m. In order to cope with such drastically reduced income key services were being devolved to other providers to include leisure centres, libraries and aspects of ground maintenance.

7. Questions and comments on the Shropshire Council report by members of the public.

Mr Wright was asked about the government policy of making all council run schools into academies, footpaths and the role of the parish and town council in the changing system. Mr Wright said that everything apart from compulsory services will be reduced or passed on as the council could not overspend and had to present a balanced budget. When seeking to devolve a local service discussions had to be tailored to each parish or town council as circumstances varied widely and sometimes smaller councils had to consider working with other local councils. There was also discussion as to whether Albrighton should become a town council and whether the benefits office should have a box number as part of its address.

At the end of the discussion Cllr. Pledger thanked Mr Wright for attending the meeting at the end of a very busy day and for the information and comments that he made available.

8. Report and presentation by Rev. Mary Wade, Vicar of St. Mary's Church, Albrighton, followed by questions and comments by members of the public.

Rev. Mary Wade told the meeting that the church was part of the Diocese of Lichfield and had five main aims in terms of its support for all people in the community. A particular problem related to the churchyard which was full with existing graves and had recently

opened an area for cremated remains. If steps under consideration were not taken the churchyard would have to be closed. Another priority was the east window which needed urgent work in order to restore it to its original state.

The Rev. Wade said that it had been helpful to have been the curate in the church before she became the vicar. There were many opportunities in the village and she worked closely with the village schools.

She was thanked for her contribution to a recent funeral and best wishes were extended to her in her new role. The proposed Care and Share scheme was raised as an initiative that could involve the church and Rev Wade also stated that the covenant restricting the use of the church hall to church use expired in the summer and this meant that it could be used for a wider group of activities.

Thanks were extended to Rev. Wade for her contribution to the meeting and for her work with St Mary's church.

9. Any other business.

A member of the public asked about the caravans that were parked by the A41 and was told that the matter was in the hands of the planners at Shropshire Council. There were also concerns expressed about parking problems by the railway station which would be exacerbated by the new drinking establishment at the station if the planning application was successful.

10. Final thanks and future action by Cllr. Sylvia Pledger

As there was no other business the Chairman thanked everyone who had attended and for their contributions to the meeting which closed at 8.03 pm.

Signed.....Date.....
Chairman