

Abbotsham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Abbotsham Parish Council held on Tuesday 26 July 2016 at 7.30 pm at the Old School Rooms, Abbotsham

1. Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies for absence – Jenna Tolley, Cllr Boyle, Graham White
- 1.2 Items raised by members of public – Mr & Mrs Shore – enquired about Post Office. Martin summarised the details outlined by Cllr Boyle

2. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda and Minutes

- 2.1 Declarations of interest by Councillors - none
- 2.2 Minutes of previous meeting held on 21 June 2016 - agreed
 - 2.2.1.1 Matters arising - none

3. Report by Councillor Robin Julian

A39 road resurfaced in patches – Robin has asked why they didn't do a complete cover. Looking at doing ironworks to Hoops Inn. Run out of money for washing signs (circles & triangles). Will be highlighting NDD hospital closure at full council. Has been told more services may be put in Bideford and Torrington hospitals to keep them open

4. Report by Councillor Alison Boyle

Not present but sent report -However, I just wanted to add my notes following the meeting 22nd July with Matt Wall regarding the Post Office. Post Office Ltd became separate from the Royal Mail in 2012 - details of which are given in the House of Commons Library Briefing Paper 2015. A substantial financial package was received from Government committed to transformation, re-investment and modernisation within the Post Office. The vast majority of post offices being run by franchisee partners or submasters. For its package the Post Office is required to meet 5 Access Criteria.

The criteria which affected Abbotsham was the one that stated 95% of the total rural population had to have access provided within one mile.

The number of rural post offices had fallen from 9,294 in 2000 to 6,327 in 2015.

I checked with Chris Dobbs of TDC regarding the populace numbers in Abbotsham, Alwington and Littleham - these were the areas most likely to be served by Abbotsham. Looking at the potential census figures this would represent about 2% of the population. Kenwith as a ward includes Parkham so the figures which were the most relevant excluded Parkham. There is a great deal of difference in people preferring to use Bideford, and some people from Bideford choosing to use rural outlets. So none of the figures stand on their own merits. Unfortunately Abbotsham Post Office is not being fully used and the numbers have fallen dramatically. The

Purpose of the meeting on 22nd July was to regard the possible options for keeping a post service in the village.

I reviewed the Network Transformational Programme and Mr. Wall confirmed that the programme is being applied.

As we all know, efforts have been made for many years by the current owners but the postmaster eventually resigned. The post office now falls into a Temporary Closed Service. Local contacts had been approached but were not able to take on the responsibility. As I understand it the post office will stage a Hosting Service.

This will result in the post office being operated by someone twice a week for 3 hour sessions. There will be a small benefit available to the person taking this on, under the Community Grant system. The letter box can stay in the wall if the new owners of the premises agree.

Please would you accept this as my report for the meeting this evening

5. Planning

- 5.1 Close Care dwellings at Kenwith Castle for Chichester Homes – give a holding reply that we will discuss at our meeting on 6 September

6. Clerks Report

- 6.1 Boundary changes for Kenwith Gardens – email circulated and will be dealt with by TDC after boundary commission
- 6.2 Road traffic closures/work - circulated
- 6.3 TAP funding – ask Alwington/Littleham how they are using their TAP funding. Grass cutting no longer an option

7. Chairs Report

- 7.1 VIPS/maintenance in the Village – Jenna going to send out email with list of jobs that need doing. What jobs need to be included – edging along St Helens and Pump Lane, first bit in Pump Lane needs to be trimming back again. Ditches at bottom of Rocky Lane (near stream) need clearing out. Hedge from Vicarage Close/ to junction needs attention. Hedge of Ann Elston's coming over into Pump Lane – Roger to speak to Ann.
- 7.2 Post office closure – Village Hall happy for hall to be used for outreach post office

8. Correspondence

- 8.1 Round Robin Items – emails sent

9. Any Other Business

Write to Mickey to thank him for doing posts

Should we be making parish council response to link road improvements consultation. Why has the stretch from Heywood Road to Abbotsham Cross not been mentioned. Westward Ho! Junction accident hotspot. Traffic build up towards

Heywood Road roundabout from Abbotsham Cross. Abbotsham Road junction is already suffering from new housing and will be exacerbated with further housing developments.

Roger had no feedback from DCC re clearing silt. Is there going to be a white line – no

Trees on overflow car park – was discussed with Rick, he wanted barrier of trees. Northern Devon Countryside group said in 2003 that they would be trimming them back

10. Items raised by Councillors for inclusion on the next agenda