Annual Parish meeting Wednesday 8th May 2024 at 7.00pm – at Little Birch Village Hall

 **Minutes**

**PRESENT: Councillors**; **(ND) Nick Deacon (TP) Tom Palfrey (CA) Chris Atkinson (SC) Steven Coles (KD) Kate Dillon**

**ALSO: Neil Barrington (NB) (Parish Clerk), Chris Fowler (CF) (Footpath Officer) and 1 member of the public**

**Meeting Opened: 7.00pm**

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| 1.  | Apologies: None received |
| 2. | **To approve and sign Annual Parish meeting minutes:**  Annual Parish minutes May 17 2023 were signed on July 6 2023 Item 6  |
| 3. | **To receive Chair of the council Annual report:** Chairmans Report 2023/24 The Parish Council faced a difficult start to the 2023/24 year with just 3 Councillors, and with the prospect of Mike Davies, our chairman, moving out of the area we were faced with the possibility of having to merge with a nearby Parish Council. Fortunately, Tom Palfrey joined us and later Steve Coles. Mike Davies resigned his Chairmanship in October and we thank him for his hard work and leadership, and wish him, and Mara, well in their new house near their daughter in North Herefordshire. Somehow, I ended up as the new chairman. Our footpaths officer Chris Fowler continues his sterling work by not only walking all paths in the area but cutting back branches, adding posts and signs. He is also managed to recruit some willing volunteers to assist him with general maintenance. And he is in regularly contact with footpath officers in adjoining parishes to make sure all paths are passable. We would all like to say thanks, keep up the great work. Steve Coles took on the challenge of acquiring a new Defibrillator at a subsidised cost as the old one was becoming obsolete. The village now has a new Defibrillator and cabinet and Steve has organised training course run by Hereford Heartstart for parishioners which will take place here in the village hall on Saturday 1stJune at 11am. We would like thank the Village Hall committee for their 50% contribution to the cost of the Defibrillator and thanks to Steve for the work he put in. Unfortunately, the Parish notice board at the top of Holly Lane was knocked over so the Parish council engaged Glen Sims who did a great job of rebuilding it. Fortunately, we managed to persuade Kate Dillon to rejoined the Parish Council in February bringing her immense local knowledge. So, we are now back up to 5 Councillors. Another project which the Parish Council has been involved in is the promotion of the Full Fibre Government Grant scheme. We have been spreading the word explaining the benefits of a new Full Fibre infrastructure. Steve and other members of the Parish Council organised a meeting at the village hall on March 4th where David Linton from Openreach spoke to about 30 local people telling them how the scheme works. Sadly, we still have not quite reached the target numbers of pledges but Openreach has extend the March 31st deadline, and is still ongoing but hopefully Openreach will proceed with the project. Finally, I would like to thank Councillor Toni Fagan for her regular attendance of our meetings and her updates and help she has given on various issues |
| 4. | **To note any Parish matters raised by parishioners of the parish:** None raised.Meeting closed at 7.05pm |
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|  | Date of next meeting: Next meeting June 5, 2024, 7.30pm at Little Birch Village Hall Meeting closed at 7.05pmSIGNED:................................................................CHAIRMAN Dated:.................................................................. |
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