

DRAFT

KILMINGTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT 6.30 P.M. ON MONDAY 13th MAY 2024 IN THE MAIN HALL AT KILMINGTON VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllrs P. Ball (Chair), S. Seward, A. Dare, K. Veberth, B.Reed, A. Collier
The Clerk (A. Jenkins),
39 members of the public

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Parish meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr. O. Miller, Cllr. N. Bayley, Cllr. Jones

2. **MINUTES OF THE 2024 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING:**

J. Falconer proposed that these be approved, seconded by S. Seward, Agreed by all.

3. **MATTERS ARISING:**

None

4. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

The Chairman, Cllr. Peter Ball gave the following report:-

I will now attempt to summarise what your parish council has been doing over the past year and our priorities for the coming months.

Councillors

Your Parish Council is made up of nine councillors. This time last year there were nine nominations for these places. Therefore, the positions were uncontested and there was no election. We are fortunate, many parishes can't raise enough volunteers to raise a full council. I personally think we have a good mix of personalities, skills and experience, and I thank my fellow councillors for standing and working for our community.

New councillors have attended some training sessions already to help guide them along.

So, what have we been doing?

Tonight, I'll only give you brief outline of the projects. I'm sure you're aware that you can all attend KPC meetings, agendas and minutes are posted on the village noticeboards and website.

At present these are the only official KPC communications. We also add some news in PostScript magazine. And, as the Kilmington Now FaceBook site is very popular, we are considering if we should add a KPC page.

Our first duty is Planning

We review all parish planning and licensing applications, 20 this year. We use the

Kilminster Neighbourhood Plan as our main guide.

We have raised two issues this year, both regarding the A35 Motor Fuels Group Service Station - 24 hr alcohol licencing, as we feared it could attract increases in noise and anti-social behaviour. I attended the hearing to give our case, but the license was awarded.

Thankfully there has, so far, been only a few minor incidents.

- The installation of EV charging bays was the second concern, as parking is limited on that site and already this results in delays on the A35 as vehicles try to enter. The area needed for EV chargers would reduce the number of parking spaces further. We brought the matter to the attention of National Highways, and they acknowledged the issue and raised their own objection. EDDC planning has not given permission, asking for more data on vehicle movements before they make a decision.

We also take an active part in the consultation for the New East Devon Local Plan - Video Conferences and Questionnaires. Our Neighbourhood Plan should help us manage development going forward. But as the Housing Needs Assessment we did is now almost 5 years old, we have been advised we will be in a stronger position if we do another. Therefore, in June you will receive a housing questionnaire. Please complete and return it.

Highways

A35

Update to our questions was received today from National Highways:

1. Has it yet been agreed that Kilminster will get a reduction in the 50mph limit through the village?

If yes: - what will be the new limit?

The latest design drawings for the A35 safety study include a reduction of speed limit from 50mph to 40mph along with the introduction of average speed cameras within the village extents

- when will the signage go up?

A national review of designated funding schemes is currently being undertaken due to a need to reduce the overall programme. Once this review is complete, I will be able to provide greater clarity on the likely programming of the works delivery. Delivery is almost certainly not going to be until at least the start of the next RIS period (25/26) As you'll likely have seen, we've started the delivery of the wider scheme with lining elements in Dorset as committed to when we met last year.

2. Has it yet been agreed that Kilminster will get a light controlled pedestrian crossing?

No.

If yes, when will this be operational?

To manage expectations, Kilminster did not make it onto the list of 13 sites across the southwest for a study on severance and potential crossing points. This is not to say nothing will happen but rather to highlight that there are currently higher priority sites across the region.

So, it's clear National Highways are not moving very quickly and with limited budgets the review of our crossing in the near future looks doubtful. A meeting is being planned soon, we will try to get our MPs involved.

Devon Highways

20mph You will have seen this has progressed and we have a scheme planned for our central residential area with estimated costs. We now need the legal approval and the implementation budget. So our first try is asking DCC for the budget to complete it. If we

are unsuccessful then we will push EDDC who are holding some of our CIL & Section 106 monies, that they collected from development in the parish, to give us the funds.

Speedwatch We have a small group of volunteers who have started to monitor speeds at several points in the village, notably by the school and on Shute Rd. Now the weather is improving we could do more checks, but we need someone to help us with the administration. If you've just two or three hours a week and have basic computer knowledge, please let Stafford know.

Pot Holes National Government has distributed some of the money from the cancelled HS2 project to local councils to improve the roads. We all need to use the DCC website to report these, the more who do, the more likelihood there is the pot holes will be filled.

Roman Rd One small success story the road section was resurfaced.

Allotments

Kieran & Nicky have taken on the allotments. They want to improve things on site and have held an initial discussion meeting, arranged for Arnold Dare to do a green waste collection and there will soon be a collection to clear other plastic and metal waste.

Rental agreements have been revised and now terms are more up to date.

Trees

We regularly have safety inspections carried out on the trees on and around the public areas we manage. In recent years, high gusty winds and wet soft ground, has increased the risks of injury. Therefore, Mark has had to organise more tree work, some of it in emergency.

Playground

Regular Inspections & minor repairs. We know there is an issue with the Black ground matting, an estimate to replace it was over £16,000. So our Clerk Adrian is trying to find another more cost-effective solution

Footpaths

Footpath No. 1, has been changed so it doesn't route through Coryton Farm. Footpath 9 – has a temporary closure as the bridge is unsafe, no idea at present when it will be finally fixed.

The King's Coronation Celebration

As always Kilmington loves a good celebration with Flower displays and a Coronation Celebration Service in St Giles.

A big screen show of the Coronation for families at the Beacon.

We held a Family Celebration Disco and BBQ at the Village Hall and a Big Picnic in the Recreation Field.

Monday saw volunteers take part in The Big Help Out with a Spring Clean of Kilmington.

To mark the King's Coronation a new picnic bench was purchased for Jubilee Green and has been a big hit, regularly used for playing cards, take away pizzas and family picnics.

Defibrillators

We continue to maintain the defib at the village hall, which has been accessed several times. Following comments at last year's annual village meeting, residents raised the idea of fitting another defibrillator at The New Inn with managers Vickie and Spike. They were only too pleased to help, Palmers Brewery kindly agreed to host the unit, and fundraising bingo and quizzes started. The Parish Council approached County Councillor Iain Chubb who donated £500 from his Locality Budget. Another £500 was donated by The Kilmington Community

Fund. We must also thank many others who have made personal donations to enable us to purchase the unit. However, things are never simple, and we've been going round in circles between EDDC Planning and Palmers to finally agree where it could be fitted. It had to go on an outside mount, and with the skilled help of Robert Crabbe who made a steel mounting frame, the unit is now in place. We have already held one training session and we'll do another this summer.

Telephone Box Library The library continues to go from strength to strength and now the mobile library service has ended, it will probably be more in demand. Our thanks to volunteers Karen Hodder, Linda Boon and Linda Loverage who do great job keeping it stocked, clean and tidy – Thank you.

Finance & Budgets

All of this work and the management of these public assets in the village are carried out within the KPC budget which last year was set at just £23k. We took the decision to increase the budget this year to £25k as it is clear our costs are likely to increase.

Common

After looking at the history of the common and various discussions with East Devon ANOB and other groups, the KPC created and published a management plan for the common. Our objective is to regenerate and care for it more positively to improve biodiversity and benefit residents. We are very lucky to have volunteer Judith Simpson and her family who have taken on the task, forming work parties of volunteers. Judith will tell us more later this evening.

Finally I wish to thank my fellow councillors and the Clerk for their support and hard work through the year.

5. Report from DCC /EDDC Cllr. Iain Chubb

Cllr. Chubb said that as we move towards spring and summer, it seems that our traditional four seasons are now more like the Northern Territory of Australia with just two, the wet from November to April and the dry, May to October.

Unfortunately, our wet season seems to be far longer than the dry one, having a detrimental impact on the Devon Highways network, particularly in rural areas where the potholes are all too obvious to see, appearing on what are effectively former cart tracks with tarmac on the top. In urban areas, most roads are purpose built with proper foundations that are generally more robust.

This state of the public highway is by some distance the item that features most in conversations and correspondence with constituents and below is a more detailed report on how this last winter has gone for DCC Highways who are trying to keep up with rising demand, combined with limited human and financial resources.

Winter 2023/24 Highways update

DCC has established a 'Planned and Reactive Maintenance: Potholes and Drainage Task Group' first reporting in March 2019 and an updated Performance Dashboard Report has now been produced to Councillors.

As is typical for the winter period, DCC Highways the Service has recorded a gradual increase in the number of publicly reported pothole defects (PIPs) since November, mainly via the 'Report a Problem' web site. A team of Highway Safety Inspectors undertake assessments, using extended weekday and weekend working where resource allows. The Main contractor called Milestone are currently in the process of recruiting three additional permanent inspectors to assist in driving further efficiencies and timely inspections.

There have been more pothole defects this financial year than 2022/23. Whilst a further 12 months of network deterioration has occurred, the impacts on network condition of the relatively early and harsh freeze/thaw cycles experienced during last winter (2022/23) were felt deep into the summer months of 2023, added to by a number of severe storms and torrential rainfall.

Additional in year Government funding of £7.5 million is enabling more reactive, short notice and planned works, including minor hand patching and ‘dragon patching’ will be delivered on the minor network in Devon as a result of it.

While there have been challenges around plant breakdowns and availability relating to gully cleaning, it is anticipated the programme to clean 150,630 gully assets will be completed on time for the current financial year. The additional high pressure jetting resource is currently resolving approximately 800 recorded issues per month, effectively maintaining pace with the number of issues reported during the flooding events experienced over the 2023/24 winter period. The Service continues to trial a different approach to cleaning both urban gullies and gullies that require multiple cleans per year.

Special Educational Needs Deficit (SEND) After a protracted and very difficult period of negotiation, a high-level agreement had been signed between Devon County Council and the Government, which will see an extra £95 million of national funds set aside to reduce the deficit on special needs education.

The cumulative spending on education for children with special needs and disabilities (SEND) over the past 10 years is set to create a deficit of £163 million by the end of this financial year.

In common with many councils across the country, DCC had been negotiating with the Government for extra funding for special needs education under the so-called Safety Valve programme.

£10 million has been set aside in 2023/24 to help bring down the deficit.

The new agreement will see the Government contribute £38 million by the end of March with the remaining cash being spread out over the following eight years.

We will contribute a further £5 million a year from its revenue budget and £20 million from reserves to bring the deficit back into balance by the end of the agreement.

It is recognised that DCC must improve its service to children needing help in this Area. DCC is committed to doing this, as well as managing its finances most effectively, keeping the Council on a long-term sustainable basis

6. **Reports from Village Clubs and Organisations**

Recreation Ground Report

The Chairman, Cllr. Peter Ball said he firstly needed to make it clear that the Recreation Ground was owned and managed by the Arthur Hitchcock Charity. The Parish Council was only responsible for the Children’s playground.

Michael Collier, the Chair of the Trustees of Arthur Hitchcock Trust who own and manage the recreation ground then gave a report.

He reported that last year the two Public Spaces Protection Orders (PCSOs) had come into force, one for No dogs allowed in the children’s enclosed playground and the other for Dogs on Lead for the remainder of the Recreation Ground. Whilst the introduction of Dogs on Lead PSPO had been opposed by a number of dog owners, following the implementation of the PSPO the amount of dog faeces being left on the playing fields had reduced.

Postscript Editor Janfryd Gordan-Kerr

Postscript village magazine is provided free of charge to every household in Kilmingon. A very small friendly team pull ten editions together through the year. For the magazine to continue, additional volunteers are needed to help contribute content and produce it. Editor Janfryd will retire this summer and a new editor is needed to take Postscript forward.

St Giles

Reverend Julie Lomas reflected on what had been a great year with the village celebrations last year and recently for King Charles III coronation. These events had allowed the Community to come together and had demonstrated the community spirit which exists in the parish. Everyone's contribution, however small, through their involvement with the various village organisations and the Churches help to foster this spirit of fellowship, harmony, welcome, love and good works in the Community.

She said that the Churches are supportive of the British Legion and are prepared to be part of the discussions for an additional War Memorial close to the Village Hall.

She gave a big thank you to the volunteers who support and help at both the Churches. She also thanked the Parish council for supporting the churches Warm Welcome initiative.

Kilmingon Garden Club

Lesley Rew, the Chair reported that the club was in good shape financially and that membership remained strong. Through the year a full programme of nine talks had been enjoyed.

She said that the Kilmingon Gardening Club brings together both experienced and beginner amateur gardeners in a convivial atmosphere and aims to provide a range of events throughout the year to enhance members' gardening experience. The club is affiliated to the RHS

What do we do? We:

- organise the Kilmingon Flower Show
- have monthly meetings with talks on Plants, Gardens and Gardeners – see the Annual Programme page on the website
- organise garden visits, both in the area and with discounted coach travel for trips further afield – details on the website and at our monthly meetings
- have a Spring Plant Market
- exchange plants and ideas
- enjoy discounts at local nurseries

All this for only £10 per person per annum – terrific value! New members are made very welcome.

The Baptist Church Kilmingon

Pastor Mike Hudson spoke about their activities in the community with a particular focus on Children, Youth and Families. Details of all these are published in Postscript and also on the baptistchurchkilmingon.org website. He also described the facilities available at The Beacon.

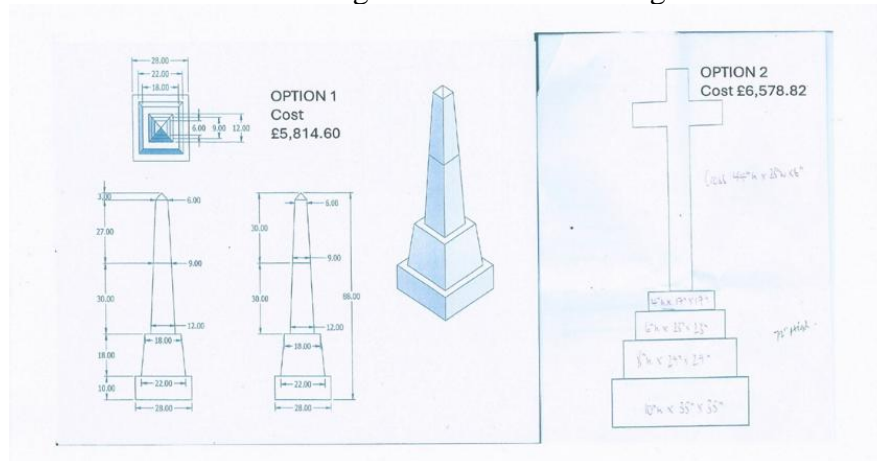
Royal British Legion Kilmingon Branch

Stafford Seward, the Chairman of the RBL Kilmingon branch said that the branch had now been in existence for 99 years and reported:

The location of 'the War Memorial' is a very difficult issue, as the A35 traffic is now so great. This is particularly so for the Remembrance service, necessitating road closures to ensure the safety of those attending. Also, the noise of the traffic detracts from the solemnity and dignity of the service.

Over recent months we have reviewed the dangers of attendance at our current War Memorial Adjacent to the A35. After much deliberation it has been decided by the RBL branch and the

Parish Council that we would seek to erect a New Memorial close to the Village Hall, in an area that could be accessed by all, without the dangers and noise issues currently associated with the A35. He reassured everyone that this decision does not mean that the existing War Memorial will be moved, removed or neglected. It is a listed memorial, and the Parish Council will continue to maintain it. Stafford said there are two outlines currently under discussion for the new Memorial and showed the meeting the two different designs:-



The consensus expressed by the attendees at the meeting was for the option 1 design.

Kilmington Common Volunteer Group

Judith Simpson gave a report on the work of the Volunteer group. She said that the Kilmington Common is owned by the Parish Council and is the remnants of a much larger area of Lowland Heath Grassland that at one time stretched up to Shute Woods.

The process of restoring this local gem began in 2019 with the reintroduction of the Nationally rare Heath Lobelia, *Lobelia urens* also known as the Kilmington Lily and Flower of the Axe. Since November 2021 the group of volunteers have been working to continue with the task to increase and restore the range of flowers, insects and other wildlife. Work parties mainly held from late summer through to early spring.

During this time 35 people have generously volunteered their time 339 hours of it! Within the core group we have a great deal of experience, knowledge and expertise in botany, ecology, entomology and land management. We have achieved a great deal, with much more to be done. The prolonged heavy rains over the Autumn, Winter and early Spring led to an unprecedented number of work parties being cancelled. Climate change is happening here in Kilmington. We are all having to change the way we work on the land and planning for future work parties will likely be better done on an ad hoc basis rather than too far in advance. The response from volunteers to this change has been encouraging.

Last year a management plan was put together with members of the Parish Council and volunteers.

It was agreed that it is important for there to be a main grass cut at the end of the summer, once flowering plants have set seed, and for the arisings to be removed. This to be carried out by the contractor taken on by the parish Council. Unfortunately, this didn't happen last year in part due to the very wet late summer and autumn, which meant that the cutting of the central area was done piecemeal. Hopefully the cutting will be done this year at the optimal time for the plants.

A major task for the volunteers has been to remove bramble. The plants are vigorous, their roots are deep and long and it will take some years yet to eradicate them from the central area. One of the volunteers has calculated that if not managed, cut and removed 30 bramble plants will multiply and become 20,000 plants in 6 years.

On a positive note removing bramble and tree seedlings from around the Heather plants has been successful, new seedling plants are emerging and pegging down some of the older growth has resulted in new growth.

Last summer the volunteers organised a very successful activity day, it was well attended by villagers and visitors of all ages.

We are planning to do something similar at the end of July this year. An opportunity to showcase and celebrate the plants, insects and all wildlife that lives and passes through the Common. There was also a Bat Walk held in the Autumn, again very well attended and popular with a wide age range.

Judith said that they would love to hear from anyone who is interested in joining the volunteer group and for them to contact her.

Village Hall 100+ Club

Jean Falconer spoke and explained that the 100+ Club supports the Village Hall by providing a pot of money to help pay for maintenance of the hall. Over the past year this has assisted in the provision of the Solar Panels and a new dishwasher. There is a monthly draw with cash prizes. If anyone would like to join the Club, please get in touch with her.

Kilmington Players

The Chairman, Cllr. Peter Ball read out the Kilmington Players report 2023/24 from Louise Quincey:

Following the previous year's very successful Jack and the Beanstalk pantomime. It was decided that the pantomime for 2024 would be Beauty and the Beast.

Written by Limelight Scripts and directed by Louise Quincey & Bev Reed, this pantomime would be great fun for all of the family and guaranteed to have everyone laughing in their seats. We were fortunate to have many willing volunteers for all the supporting roles behind the scenes so crucial for a successful production. And so rehearsals began in early November and over the following months after many laughs, retakes and much hard work we presented Beauty and the Beast to great audiences on four evenings in February. We had both a fabulous cast and behind the scenes support for which we are very grateful. Thank you to all our audiences and to anyone who helped with the production in any way.

Kilmington Players has been in existence for approx. 70 years and very much alive and kicking. We are a friendly bunch who just love to get up on the stage! As a group we often contribute to village causes using monies raised from our productions. In recent times we have donated funds to the school and to the village hall.

We welcome anyone who fancies getting involved both on and off the stage so do get in touch with Louise if you would like to find out more. For future productions watch this space!"

Kilmington Community Association

The Chairman, Cllr. Peter Ball reported that the Association was formed to manage the Kilmington Village Show and other village social events. They have successfully generated some funds through these activities, and they want this money to be reinvested in the village to support our clubs and encourage more social events. A management structure and a constitution has been conceived to ensure that the association operates fairly on behalf of the whole community. If you run an existing village club that needs new equipment or, you want to start a new group or hold a social or educational event that will benefit Kilmington residents, you can now apply to the association for small grants.

Additionally, the association plan to organise other social events for residents through the year. If you have an idea for an event let us know. Some events will offer complimentary benefits, some will be self-funding and, if they return a profit, this will be added to the fund. We also hope to grow the number of volunteers willing to lend a hand with future events so we can

maintain our lively village community.

Kilmington History Group

David Ingles advised that a group of eight residents started the history group 2 years ago. A significant amount of material has been collected, and some research has been done on specific properties and village areas. The Archive has grown already with significant number of village deeds, photographs and documents. Two Talks have both been well attended with repeat shows. There has also been monthly articles in Postscript. If anyone has property deeds, photographs or other paperwork, please let the group have access so that they can scan and return the material to you. All this work will ensure we don't lose the valuable historic material in the village. They plan to set up a website/database and further events for residents will be held in the coming months.

Axe Valley and West Dorset Ring and Ride Service

Cllr. Ball read out a report that Sandra Ward had submitted.

The service has been going for nearly 25 years. 20 years ago Sandra became Chairman and has tried to keep it going. However, personnel are much as when started and all getting older. Only one member of staff not on pension. Despite all of us professing that 80 is the new 40, Father Time does not agree.

Costs increase, particularly training and paying drivers make it difficult for a small charity. We have tried to get new trustees to take on the responsibility but to no avail. So we have to face reality, All of us are too old now to run a charity in the way it should be run. So, with a heavy heart we have sought the help of Devon County Council, who have had many others recently in the same boat, and we have decided it's time to merge our services in with another charity doing similar work. When this will take place is a little uncertain but Jane our wonderful coordinator has agreed to stay while it takes place to ensure the continuity of the service. So, in future the bus proudly displaying the Axe Valley and West Dorset logo will change but still give it a wave and support the new team and the vital service provided for those that need it.

Kilmington Village Hall

Judith Chapman reported that the Hall have now completed the solar installation and should be benefitting from reduced costs in the future. The hire charges are reviewed regularly, and they increased the hall charges in January 2024. These increases have helped balance the Hall's costs. Kilmington Community Cinema Club made a very generous donation of £2,486.00 to the hall funds during 2023, for which they are extremely grateful. The 100+ Club - There were 213 members at the end of 2023, and a fund of £3,411.80. Earlier in 2023 money from the 100 + Club account contributed £4,000 towards the installation of solar panels.

The Broadband connection is moving forward. They will have 21st century usage in the village hall for matters such as cash handling, monitoring the solar panels, for film streaming and for user groups use. The hall has never had a telephone line. We managed to get funds to cover the cost of installation under the Universal Obligations up to £4k connection costs. An additional pole has been erected and Whitford Road will be shut on 12th May, to dig up the road to connect our line.. The Cinema Club is going very well matinee cream teas are very popular. It is keeping it's numbers and has received positive feedback from people coming from outside the village. Judith said she regretfully needs to stand down as Chair in the coming 3-4 months but is delighted to say that Clive Frankish has agreed to take over as Chair. She will work alongside him for 3-4 months so there is a smooth transition. Pauline Horward is also stepping down as Treasurer. Judith thanked Pauline for the tireless work she has done for the Village Hall over a long span of 14 years.

7. Public Forum

Persons spoke expressing thanks to Judith Chapman and Pauline Horwood for their work for the Village Hall .

8. Presentations to Sally Huscroft & Michael Collier

Cllr. Ball said that last year these two long serving Councillors had retired from the Parish Council after many years of service to the parish.

The Parish Council wished to note their exceptional service in accordance with Council's adopted Awards Policy which allows the Council to present them with a Certificate and a gift and in addition, to commemorate outstanding public service of these two Councillors with commemorative public benches with an appropriate plaque to be placed in a suitable public location agreed with the retiring Councillors and Council.

Cllr. Ball presented Sally and Mike with their Long Service Certificates and cut-glass gifts.

He said that Sally Huscroft had retired after serving the parish for 22 years during which she has seen through many projects that have benefitted local residents. Thanks to Sally and the support of husband Peter. He thought 22 years deserved a special applause.

And finally, although he doesn't look a day over 21, Mike Collier has retired after would you believe 42 years serving our community as a parish councillor, Chairman and Vice Chairman. A massive thanks to Mike and of course to his wife Gill who, in addition to her own village activities, has supported Mike in many of his.

Cllr. Ball said Mike and Sally, both deserve everyone's heartfelt thanks for all they have done. "I would say: happy retirement, but I'm sure you will both be continuing to help out and be getting involved in community organisations and events". He said that the Council had purchased two commemorative engraved public benches and these would shortly be installed in the chosen locations.

Sally and Mike both spoke expressing their thanks for the gifts and the kind words.

All the attendees gave a special applause to both.

9. Talk: Axe Valley Wildlife Park by Andrew Collier

Andrew gave a very interesting and informative talk on the history of the Wildlife Park, how it had all started, then changed over time and developed into the present Wildlife Park Zoo with its present extensive and varied menagerie of exotic animals – mammals, birds , invertebrates and reptiles. He told many interesting stories about a variety of the animals and passed round for persons to touch and hold the Ostridge egg he had brought with him.

Cllr. Ball thanked him on behalf of everyone for his excellent talk.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm