**Notes – Meeting with Mark Harper MP and Gareth Hughes**

**21st October 2016 – The Loft, Village Shop, Brockweir**

**Present: Cllr Fox, Cllr Endersby, Cllr Sinfield, Cllr Harris, Cllr Wilson, Parish Clerk**

**Current Planning Application – Gregory Farm/Oil Yard**

There was a general discussion regarding the latest application for housing on the site. Parishioners agreed that there is a need for some development of the site, but this current planning application proposed too many dwellings and is not mindful of major flooding and environmental issues.

Mr Harper suggested putting in proposals of ideas of what could be acceptable development.

**The Brockweir Country Inn**

Brief discussion on the potential sale of the pub. Mr Harper suggested contacting Dymock Parish Council to hear of their success, which of course has already been carried out.

**Flood Prevention/Alleviation Measures**

The current situation was outlined by Cllr Fox, particularly the major concern of how allocated funding had been spent, leaving only £15,000 for the plans for Brockweir. Mr Harper agreed to investigate the funding spend and convey his findings. He also agreed to look into the current situation with plans for new measures to prevent/alleviate flooding in the future.

The question of household insurance was also raised and Mr Harper agreed to make enquiries and write to the Clerk with his findings.

**Repair of Bridge/Culvert on Quayside**

Cllr Fox gave details of the background to this initiative, including several surveys carried out by various agencies over the past 2 years. Mr Harper agreed to investigate progress on this.

Mr Harper advised that it may be prudent to seek potential funding for flood prevention measures from the developer of the Gregory Farm site. He said this was usual practice and that he will ask the question of the Planning Committee. Cllr Sinfield asked if this might be seen as cause for approval. Mr Harper thought it would not have an effect on any decisions made.

**Broad Band**

The current situation was outlined – many households and businesses still do not have access to high speed broad band. The unusual split of telephone codes between two cabinets within the parish was explained. Mr Harper was very supportive, but did comment that 75% of the Forest of Dean were getting pretty good speeds. He agreed to clarify what the current situation is and will ensure that BT are taking all telephone numbers into account – not the split in the two cabinets involved. Mr Harper advised that it would help to get a community expression of interest in taking up any improved service.

**Responses from Gloucestershire Highways**

The situation of lack of response and updates from Highways was explained. Mr Harper suggested that as a whole the Forest of Dean gets more than their allocated percentage of funding for highways. His office had contacted Brian Watson who had responded with an update on the outstanding issues and offered to meet regularly with the Council to discuss issues and provide progress reports. The Council agreed to take up this offer and the Clerk will contact Brian Watkins to arrange the first meeting and agree timing for regular follow up meetings.

Mr Harper agreed to take up the issue of Lengthsmen contracts with Cllr Patrick Molyneux and report back on how it works, how funds are allocated etc.

Concern was expressed that following a meeting with Cllr Molyneux in September, there had been no response to the several points that Cllr Molyneux had agreed to action for us. Mr Harper agreed to investigate.

The mud deposited on Quayside after each high tide was discussed along with the plight of vulnerable parishioners living on Quayside. Mr Harper agreed to look into the problem of cleaning the road after each high tide and to investigate possible special measures that may be possible for those who are vulnerable.

**Additional Items Arising**

The question of bus passes was raised. It is thought that currently it is not possible to use passes issued by FODDC from the bus stop situated just the other side of Brockweir Bridge. Mr Harper agreed to check on the current situation and report back.

Mr Harper was given a briefing sheet from The Village Shop Committee setting out various issues for consideration. Mr Harper agreed to consider and look into these issues and report back to Cllr Endersby as the Council representative on the Shop Committee.