

KIDDERMINSTER FOREIGN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held in Trimpley Village Hall on Monday 26th July 2021 at 7.30pm

Present Councillor Mr. C. Jordan
Councillor Mr. C. Grainger
County Councillor I. Hardiman
Mrs E Whitehouse (Clerk)

Councillor Mr. J. Gammond
Councillor Mr. C. Holford
5 members of the public were present
Dist. Cllr. J. Byng & Dist Cllr.P Harrison

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, and asked that all those present should please treat each other and individual's opinions with respect, and abide by the Code of Conduct of the Council.

1. **Police Report** – Police were not present. From a report sent in, the only incident of note was the theft of a Quad Bike from a shed in Trimpley. The Clerk had also received the West Mercia Police Community Charter, detailing the three priorities given by the Parish to them for special attention – Speeding vehicles in local lanes, Anti-Social behaviour in vehicles locally, and Fly Tipping. They also advised that they would be putting up ASB all-weather signs in the Arley Estate car park at Eymore. Clerk to contact the police to ask if they could also liaise with Severn Trent about putting these signs up in their car park too. Cllr. Gammond advised that at Trimpley crossroads, there were tyre marks indicating that there had been vehicles “donutting” at this junction.
2. **Public Open Forum**
It was reported again that the **road surface leading up to Trimpley** crossroads (outside Wildwoods) was like glass and very slippery for horses, even with roadnails in their shoes. Councillor Hardiman promised to look at this problem on the following day after the meeting with Highways Engineer, Paul Green.
Gateway structures – Councillors were urged when considering these to ensure that a margin for safety was left for pedestrians on the verge, in the interests of highway safety.

3. **Apologies For Absence:** Received and approved for Councillors Mrs. L. Green, Councillor Mrs. C. Gammond, Councillor B.Phillips,

4. **Resignation of Cllr. L. Green.** Cllr. Mrs. Louise Green had written tendering her resignation from office Clerk read out her letter, explaining her resignation brought about for personal family reasons, which was met with sympathy and understanding, and considerable regret at losing such a valued member from the Council. Clerk was requested to write, expressing this, and also thanking Cllr. Green for her service to the Council and local community over the past 8 years.
Clerk was instructed to set into motion the administrative procedures to fill the resulting Casual Vacancy.
5. **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr. Grainger declared an interest in any item concerning Riddings Brook and also 21/0551 – Hoarstone Court. Cllr Mr. C. Jordan declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning application 19/0754, and also litter picking at Trimpley reservoir, being Chair of the Trustees of The Emily Jordan Foundation.
6. **Approval of the Minutes** The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 28th June 2021 were approved and signed, with the deletion of Cllr. J. Gammond being in the list of those present.
7. **Report by outgoing Chair, Cllr Mrs. C. Gammond on 2020/21** In the absence of Cllr. Mrs Gammond, the Clerk asked Cllrs if, as it was detailed in the newsletter, that the report (Details given here) could be taken as read. It was agreed not to read out, but to detail here for the record.
*“What a year this has been – getting used to holding monthly meetings via Zoom (thanks to Chris Jordan for hosting these meetings for us) and coping with the pandemic restrictions and the effect these have had on carrying out our duties. Our Zoom meetings during the year were well attended by members of the public and proved very successful. There have been a number of controversial issues – WFDC Local Plan and proposed development on Green Belt land at Low Habberley; Clay Pigeon Shooting at Honeybrook; Concerns regarding changes at Hill Farm Chalet site and at Mary Moors Farm following the sale of the farms; Problems with large numbers of visitors to Trimpley Reservoir causing parking issues as well as litter and antisocial behaviour. This was following the easing of restrictions at the end of the first pandemic lockdown.
All these matters have been regularly discussed and the Parish Council has raised the issues and pursued solutions with relevant authorities wherever possible.
We thank County Cllr Ian Hardiman, and District Cllrs Paul Harrison and John Byng for their regular attendance at meetings and for the work they do on our behalf.
As usual, drainage issues have appeared on each monthly agenda, including Lightmarsh Lane – Hollies Lane – Northwood Lane – Low Habberley. These were reported to the relevant C/C departments for attention and resolution. We must thank Cllr. Chris Jordan for his efforts, time and determination in pursuing superfast fibre broadband for properties in the northern half of the parish.
Parishioners in Crundalls Lane have also now received fibre broadband.
Road safety/speeding has been a concern and the Parish Council have installed new solar powered VA Signs in Low Habberley and Trimpley. Thanks go to several councillors for their efforts in addressing problems with the one sign. We are still waiting for the requested speed cables to be put down in Low Habberley, and for a final decision from the County Council on the problem of parking at the entrance to Low Habberley Farm.
New safety barriers have now been installed where Crundalls Lane crosses the brook.
During the year several minor road accidents were reported. Our local police continue to report to our monthly meetings.
The Archer brothers were again signed up as our Lengthsmen and we thank them for the work they continue to do, both on drainage of the roads and litter collection. They also keep our rights of way cleared of seasonal undergrowth. Lengthsman training has been an issue during the pandemic and we are still waiting for the C/Council to resolve this.*

Fly tipping has continued to blight the parish but, some good news, there was a successful prosecution following a load of rubbish being dumped in Eymore Lane.

Over 30 planning applications were seen during the year, including a considerable number of Certificates of Lawfulness notified for properties on Hill Farm Chalet site.

The Parish Council responded again on the WFDC Local Plan, objecting to the proposal for land at Low Habberley to be taken out of Green Belt. A meeting was held with the developers to learn more about their proposals for development should the Local Plan allow the land to be removed from Green Belt. We are still awaiting the Inspector's Report on this. Local residents have set up a group to oppose any development here.

Our Clerk has obtained various grants which help with the cost of improvements to the Parish. This included the new V A Signs and we have installed a bus shelter at the Eymore Lane junction and propose to add another near Trimpley crossroads and one at Low Habberley. A grant will also help pay for an improvement project at The Black Pools later in the year.

I wish to thank all our Councillors for their time, effort and support in attending meetings and working voluntarily for the good of the Parish.

Finally, a huge thank you to our Clerk, Elsie, who has worked so hard this past year dealing with so many controversial matters during the pandemic, when restrictions effected so many aspects of the job. She has continued with determination and resolve to ensure we, as councillors, carry out the duties expected of us in an appropriate and legal way. The support and help Elsie has given to me during my term as Chairman has been invaluable - Thank you Elsie. I now wish my successor all the best for the year ahead which, unfortunately, looks to include the continuation of several controversial issues .”

8. **County and District Councillors' Reports –
Report from County Councillor Ian Hardiman**

Wyre Forest Issues:

. “Re: Application 19/000053/CM Proposed Sand and Gravel Quarry, Land at Lea Castle Farm.

I have received an update from the County Council's Development Manager, explaining that he has now received the final outstanding further information from the applicant.

He is now arranging a further public consultation which will likely run from Early August till Early September but is not sure when this application will be considered by the County Council's Planning Committee.

Local issues:

. On Friday 23rd July, I attended a Zoom meeting with your Parish Chairman, your Clerk and councillors Chris Holford and James Gammond, and Highways Engineer Paul Green. This was a necessary meeting to obtain clarification on outstanding issues for the parish many of which have been long standing. I am sure there will be active debate on these at your Parish meeting.

I will continue to monitor progress on each of these.”

Thanks to Cllr. Hardiman for his report.

9. **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL:**

a) **New Planning applications:** - (Again Certificates of Lawfulness had been advised to councillors (for information only) in relation to chalet/shack residences on Hill Farm). No other Applications.

b) **Update on Previous applications**

19/0754 – Retrospective application re COU to Swimming Pool at The Guildings

Eymore Lane, Trimpley – **Pending decision** (Cllr. C Jordan has expressed an interest)

21/0421 - Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except for means of access) for erection of up to 124 dwelling houses, including public open space and landscaping surface water attenuation and associated infrastructure at Habberley Lane, Low Habberley – **Pending decision**

21/0388 - Retention as a permanent dwelling house inc. extensions and demolition of unlawful extension at Easter Cottage, Severn Meadow, Northwood Lane, Bewdley – **Approved**

21/0567 - Proposed Single Storey Rear Extension, Porch to Front and External Alterations, following removal of Existing Conservatory : 19 Habberley Lane, Low Habberley – **Pending decision** (Cllr. Mrs. Green expressed an interest in this application)

21/0349 - Mixed use of land as a caravan site and use by permanent residential dwelling houses at Hill Farm, Northwood Lane, Bewdley – **Pending decision**

21/0551/HOU - Erection of open sided pergola - Hoarstone Court, Willow Lodge, Hoarstone Lane, Trimpley - **Pending decision** (Cllr. Grainger has expressed an interest)

c) **Compliance Issues/Appeals** –

Appeal Reference APP/R1845/W/20/3263496 - Conversion of former stable building to dwelling (Use Class C3), together with new vehicular access and closure of existing vehicular access (to pedestrian access only) Application Reference 20/0405/FUL.

It was agreed to repeat objection to this appeal and also repeat the comment originally made on application 20/0405.

d) Information re laws and guidance re Outdoor Lighting – As requested, Clerk had researched this and outlined regulations which applied. Although no specific action was to be taken, problems for motorists encountering lights adjacent to lanes, and causing problems, and lights around large sites such as the Treatment Works were discussed. No further action.

10. **Progress Reports and other Outstanding Items**

- **Highway Matters** – (A progress meeting with the highways engineer had been held via Zoom.) These were the main notes drawn from that meeting.

Planting on Grass Verge outside of Low Habberley Farm

Installation Target - 2nd Week of August

After some discussion it was agreed to finalise on wooden-look plastic bollards, of which the County Council had 31. These to be spaced so as to prevent the passage of a vehicle inbetween them. If more were required to cover the

area, then more would be purchased.

Paul Green requested that, following installation, the Parish consider funding a planting scheme where the cars had previously parked. It was generally thought that a scheme involving the planting of wildflowers be considered, but if shrubs were incorporated into this, then they should be of no greater height than half a metre when fully grown. Clerk asked if the Lengthsman could be employed to do this work, and Paul confirmed that as it was highway verge then he could be employed to prepare the ground, and plant suitable seed.

Sump at Rock Cutting, Hoarstone Lane

Date for work to be agreed by end of August

The clearance of this drainage sump was considered very low priority, as it only flooded the highway and not any residential property. It had been further complicated by the discovery of beetles in the fallen trees. Removal of the tree debris was only part of the problem, as the sump had become silted up and needed digging out to take the run-off water from the road. A discussion took place on the use of private, local contractors, but such persons would not perhaps have the relevant permissions to work on the highway. In addition, a road closure would be required to do the work, because of the dangerous and narrow aspect of the site, and such closures required 3 months to organise, if no emergency existed (such as with utility problems - e.g. gas, water, electricity etc.). It was stressed that this required attention before the onset of winter, and Paul Green confirmed that a date for the work would be agreed by the end of August.

Hollies Lane Drainage

Date - none from County Council - Video footage required to be collected by Parish

After some discussion, and deliberation over evidence supplied by Mr. Collins, it was agreed that a sub-Committee should be appointed amongst the Parish Councillors to gather evidence on site in the event of heavy rainfall. The pictures/video the County Council required was water **actually bypassing** the bottom sump, and carrying debris onto the A442. That was the concern of Paul Green and the Highways Dept. and indeed considered of danger, particularly to those road users on two wheels. The video photographic evidence provided so far did **not** give witness to this. Water further up the lane (which is a permissive by-way - and not an adopted highway) is not a concern of the highways department, but rather of Phil Coulson, from the County Countryside Service. Alternative solutions were briefly discussed - putting a bund into land owned by Honeybrook Lodge to hold excessive water; putting in a large cattle grid catchment at the bottom of the lane - but until the video footage requested was obtained, there was no point in discussing these solutions further.

In the public Open Forum the responsibility of Highways, as opposed to Rights of Way (Countryside Service) were discussed. It was stated that the Highways responsibility ended by the brick pillars at the bottom of the land, whereas the water flowed from further up the lane, and that, being a restricted byway, was the responsibility of the Countryside Service. It was felt that the answer lay with the Countryside Service to provide a means of piping away the water further up the lane, before it got to the bottom either by pipes taking it into the Honeybrook, or into a bund by Honeybrook Lodge. It was stated that if the County Council (whatever department) did not take action to remedy this, then they would have to take the consequences of possible flooding and damage, or worse re RTAs on the A442.

Speed Cables in Low Habberley

Date - (to be advised next week) - but for installation by End August

Although these had been promised for June, due to problems with Coronavirus and Safe Working, it had now been delayed until August. Clerk advised that residents in Low Habberley were keen to set up a Community Monitoring Scheme for vehicle speeds, in conjunction with the Police, but were awaiting the results from the speed cable monitoring. It had become particularly more prominent in local residents' minds since a bad accident occurring at the bottom of the bank leading to Jacob's Ladder - entirely due to a speeding vehicle. Paul Green said that there was not any reason why the Community Group could not be set up before the cables were put down. Clerk to check with police in this respect.

Licences for Bus Shelters

Date - Licence applications – promised within next 2 weeks- Clerk had re-sent siting photos and plans, to clarify sites. It was resolved that the Clerk should place orders for 2 more identical shelters.

It was confirmed that all the work in respect of two shelters would be undertaken/arranged and funded by the Parish Council including the base pads. The Parish Council required information from highways re how far back from the tarmac edge the pads would need to be sited, and also the requisite licences.

VA Signs and Pole Siting

It was explained that the one VA Sign was being hit each year by silage trailers passing along the road. It therefore needed re-siting - possibly elsewhere and certainly further back into the verge away from passing HGVs and Heavy Traffic. It was agreed to provide a map to be sent to Paul - giving requested siting for new pole(s). Clarification is also sought on whether the Parish Council could erect these poles themselves. Parish need to draw up a map and pinpoint requested sitings for pole(s). An existing pole was also discussed at the top of Hoarstone Lane. **Clerk to order replacement Solar Panel, but to delay ordering the batteries, which may be able to be sourced more economically elsewhere.**

Village Gateway Structures

It was understood that the Parish Council had not made any final decision on whether to install these or not. Paul Green confirmed that permission to erect these on the verge was required by the County Council, and again a map showing sitings and type of structure would be required from the Parish. It was noted that there had been dissention in the Parish when the village nameplates had been put up - due to the very fragmented nature of residences, and the large distances between them. Paul stated that the best course of action was usually to put up the gateway structures where the speed limits commenced / ended. However, until a final decision was made by Parish Councillors on whether to install these or not, no siting information could be supplied to the County Council. **After discussion on this at the meeting it was agreed to go ahead with just the Low Habberley gateway structures, initially, due to dissention by Trimpey parishioners as to where their gateways should be sited. Councillors would provide a map detailing where the structures should be placed, and giving measurements of the verge at those sites, so that a suitably sized structure could be priced up. Clerk to await advice from councillors, and then draw up costing.**

Low Habberley Drainage

Cllr. Hardiman raised the problem again of the drains in Low Habberley not taking heavy rainwater, and asked for

remedial work to be undertaken concerning a collapsed under-highway drain. He also pointed out that a manhole/drain in the verge was in danger of brickwork collapsing into the road. This was situated (if travelling towards Kidderminster - on the right hand side) between the end of the houses at Low Habberley, and the roundabout. Clerk also informed Paul Green that a large collection sump for drainage from the highway was behind the old Fountain Lower car park. Indeed, the Parish had paid for and provided an extra wide gate so that County Tanker vehicles could access it to clean it out. Paul stated he would check this out, to ensure it was working correctly.

Other Matters

- **Restoration Project – Black Pools** - Cllr Holford had been unable to see Mrs. Briggs, and therefore the Clerk had drafted a further letter, asking for her permission again to proceed with the project. Clerk presented this for approval, since without this, the project would not go ahead – a loss to the Parish.
- **Clare Witnell Blount Charity** – Clerk had received a response from the Charity Commission stating that they had re assessed the situation against their Risk Scale, and still deemed that they would only offer advice and guidance to the Board of Trustees. They would not be taking any other steps in respect of the shortcomings notified to them.
- **Local Visits** –

Brief Notes on Information meeting only of Parish Councillors/Arley Estate/Bronwin & Abbey

“Cllr. Jordan outlined the poor management experienced in the woodland over the past 10 years, and asked for details of the new scheme to be explained. The misuse of the car park by boy racers, burnt out stolen cars, etc., and possible drug dealing was also drawn to the attention of those present.

Mr. Bronwin advised that the company had bought Abbey (retained the name), and had submitted a 10 year Management Plan for the woodland. He agreed that over the past 7-8 years there had been a lot of thinning, and the maintenance in respect of any replanting that had been done had been poor. Where conifers had been taken out and replanted with broadleaf species, the replanting had not been particularly successful.

The aim now was to encourage some natural regeneration, some felling of unsuitable tree species, and some replanting, with the aim of achieving a mixed woodland where there was a range of maturity, which was the optimum for wildlife and nature. Abbey had previously only been paid for felling, but the new management plan was contrary to this, as outlined in the previous sentence. Some felling of diseased trees (larch, and ash) would also need to take place. Obviously the timing for the forestry works was key, and Cllr. Jordan asked if the Parish Council could kindly be kept informed of work being done in the woodland.

Mr. Bronwin advised that the company had also taken advantage of an annual Countryside Stewardship grant for

- Ride management and clearance
- Management of the SSSI

Councillors asked about the Definitive Rights of Way within the forest, and highlighted the poor and broken stream crossings, and the lack of way-marking within the wood. It was agreed that Arley Estate, along with Bronwin's would contact the County Council Countryside Service concerning these matters for actual definitive Rights of Way.

Arley Estate / Bronwins were asked about what other activities were being allowed to take place in the woodland (other than walking). Arley Estate advised that there would be the usually organised shoots, but rumours that they were going to introduce a clay-pigeon shoot were untrue. It had been considered once, and was now dismissed. Cllr. Jordan asked if Arley Estate would kindly advise the dates of their organised shoots so that any other shooting could be reported as unauthorised. No other organised leisure activities were planned. The only other shooting planned to take place was to cull grey squirrels, and the deer. A permanent stalker (“Tom”) was engaged to undertake the latter.

Clerk advised that she had received complaints recently from the public about the amount of litter in the woodland, including dog-poo bags. She advised the meeting that the Parish Council itself pays for the two bins in the Arley Estate car park to be serviced. However, as an idea, and an aside, and as Chair of the Trustees of The Emily Jordan Foundation, Mr. C Jordan advised he would most likely be taking this matter up with officials at a separate time, with a possible scheme extended from the STWA Reservoir site current operation to tackle this problem - this involvement being entirely separate from any Parish Council business.

Communication channels for exchange of information with Bronwins/Arley Estate/ Parish Council were verified and confirmed”

Habberley Valley Visit on Wednesday 30th June.

Cllrs. Holford and Grainger attended the site visit, and reported that it was very informative and were very impressed with the steps taken to preserve the unique wildlife of the valley.

11. Lengthsman / Litter Collection and Footpath Clearance Matters

- a) No worksheet tabled.
- b) **Public Rights of Way Warden, and Recreational Route Warden** – Of the two applications received, Clerk had been advised by the Countryside Service that they were hoping to appoint one person to each of these functions. Clerk was awaiting further notification on current position.

12. Financial Reports –

a) Payments –

Chq 1130 – HMRC – Clerk’s PAYE - £75.80

Chq 1131 – E. Whitehouse – Clerk's expenses - £96.11

It was noted that the Chairman had decided not to take the usual £100 Chair allowance for additional duties re Chair, but would perhaps donate this amount into awards in the parish, particularly for young people. Details to be decided at a later meeting.

b) Internet Banking progress – Clerk would try to set up some standing orders for regular payments.

c) Audit – Now finalised. No queries received from public by 16th July closing date.

13. **Newsletters** – Given out for distribution. Clerk would deliver remaining sheets to distributors. Clerk stated that with new councillors present now, it would be necessary to reconsider the distribution methods and areas to be covered by individual councillors.

14. **Worcestershire CALC Reports & County and District & other Correspondence** –

a) The ability to attend meetings remotely was being supported by the Chair in correspondence with MP and CALC concerning this. It was felt to be too restrictive to deny remote access to councillors who could not physically attend a meeting due to a variety of reasons. The Chair had received no reply from the MP.

b) CALC Area Meeting Wednesday 30th June – Clerk attended. There were no major matters of note, except the lack of support for Parish and Town Councils from the District, the devolvement of responsibility to Parishes and Towns for services under the guise of Localism, and calls for possibly looking again at a unitary authority.

Other Correspondence

Letter from Mike Clarke & Daughter about creation of a pool on Holbeache Farm

Having studied the plans for this work, there being no opposition voiced to this by councillors, the clerk was to draft and send a suitable reply – as follows “we are happy to support this, particularly if it takes out any impurities from the water before entering the natural watercourse, thus having a beneficial effect on the environment and improving local wildlife habitat.

However, one cautionary note, please ensure that you have checked with the local planning department at Wyre Forest District to ensure that all planning conditions are complied with and we also assume that the landowner has given their blessing to this plan”

15. **Road Accidents** – In early July, car travelling at some speed, clipped the kerb, and lost control, hitting a wall at Low Habberley. Driver made off, when police arrived, and it was thought to be a car known in association with crimes committed in the Birmingham area.

16. **Other Matters**

Litter pick – It was decided to arrange a volunteer litter pick in the Parish in October.

Date of Next meeting - After some discussion, on availability, it was concluded that this should be :

– Monday 16th August 2021. Cllr. C Jordan said he would be unable to attend in person, and so it was agreed that Vice Chair Cllr. J. Gammond would take the Chair.

Chairman :