

KIDDERMINSTER FOREIGN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

held in Trimpley Village Hall on Monday 21st March 2022 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr. C Jordan County Cllr. I. Hardiman
Cllr. C Grainger Dist. Cllr. J. Byng
Cllr. C Holford Clerk – Mrs. E. Whitehouse
Cllr. S. Stone 4 Members of the Public.
2 Police officers were in attendance

Welcome by Chair and Apologies

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received and approved from Cllr. C Gammond, Cllr. J Gammond and Cllr. B. Phillips, and District Cllr P. Harrison.

A One Minute's Silence was held to recognise the atrocities being faced in Ukraine in the current conflict.

Matters the public raise in Open Forum –

One member of the public present advised that he felt very let down by the Government Inspector re the District Local Plan. The Inspector had found the Local Plan to be sound, and had given it approval. It remained for the District Council to approve those findings, and the plan would come into force until 2036, and this would give the go ahead for the housing development outlined for the field at Low Habberley.

Police Report – The police present advised that there had been very little crime over the past four weeks.

It was reported that general anti-social behaviour was still going on, with signs being turned around and graffiti. It was queried if there was still interest in setting up a Community Speed Watch scheme, and the Clerk was instructed to send details to officers in respect of this.

The policing Parish Three priorities were also due to be updated, and it was decided that these should remain the same for the coming 3 weeks. It had been noticed that local noticeboards did not show the current Police team for contact details, and Clerk advised she would get these updated.

Update re Clare Witnell Blount Charity – There had been administrative and management problems, during the past year, with the result that the Parish Representative, Mrs. Sally Merritt Collins had resigned. It was also noted that the District Council had not had the requisite Trustee attending meetings of the Charity. District Cllr. J. Byng stated that he would investigate this, and the Clerk would mention details of a representative being required in the April newsletter.

There being no further matters for the Annual Parish Meeting, this was immediately followed by the monthly

Parish Council meeting.

<u>Present</u> Councillor Mr. C. Jordan Councillor Mr. C. Grainger County Councillor I. Hardiman Mrs E Whitehouse (Clerk)	Councillor Mr. C. Holford Councillor Mrs. S. Stone 4 members of the public were present. Dist Cllr. J Byng
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- Apologies For Absence:** Received and approved for Councillor Mrs. C Gammond, and Cllr. J. Gammond and Cllr. B. Phillips, and District Cllr. P. Harrison.
- Declarations of Interest:** Interests as previously minuted, but also to include an interest by Cllr. Grainger when discussing the grant for Arley School, as his grandchildren attend.
- Approval of the Minutes** The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 21st February 2022 were approved and signed.
- County and District Councillors' Reports –**
Report from County Councillor Ian Hardiman
Councillor Hardiman had worked on progress issues relating to Highway Matters with engineers at County Hall, and in addition had recently been helping restore telephone and internet services which had been down since 7th March, when a pole had been knocked down in a traffic incident in Hoarstone Lane.
The latest information was that the road would be closed on an emergency basis, and the pole and lines restored tomorrow – 22nd March. The outage had lasted just over 14 days by this date, which was entirely unacceptable to all concerned.
Dist. Cllr. Byng – advised that on 26th April WFDC would convene to approve the Local Plan. If people wish to speak – they will be allowed to if they prebook on the website. It was noted that a petition against the development at Low Habberley was planned to be presented at that meeting.
- PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL:**
 - New Planning applications: -**
22/0218 Retention of temporary roof structure over contact tank at Trimpley Water Treatment works until June 2023
Comment: No objections.
 - 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**
21/0794/FUL Conversion of barn to one dwelling at Honeybrook Kennels, Bridgnorth Road – **Approved**
21/0850/FUL Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 4 new dwellings at Honeybrook Kennels Bridgnorth Road – **Pending decision**

22/0005 – Upper Birch Farm – 60 x 20M covered Riding arena, Hay Storage Bay, Covered walkway from arena to Stable Block for 10 horses, Tack Room and Stores, and a covered horse walk – **Pending decision**

Applications for Information only. 21/1126/S73 : Park Attwood – **pending decision**. In respect of work ongoing at Park Attwood, the Clerk had reported to Enforcement that the Parish was not fully aware of what was on-going, as the site had been surrounded by high fencing. The District Enforcement and Arboriculturist had paid the site a visit during the month but in respect of the large small-leaved Lime, which the Parish had tried to protect with a TPO in the centre of the site, the Arboriculturist had advised *“It has very little growth and is decaying rapidly. I fear that even if it put on significant growth it would collapse under the weight. There is little left of it other than a 6ft stem and given the new use for the site it will be a hazard to the new residents. I’m therefore finding it difficult to justify its continued protection and am looking at re-viewing the TPO to remove this tree from the order. It’s been 6 years since the works took place and I would have expected it to have responded much better than it has. I feel we have given it enough time and with the level of decay it is not worthy of a TPO”*.

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. – **No decision yet received re appeal.**

Appeal Reference APP/R1845/W/21/3281433 - Northwood Farm , Northwood Lane, - Change of use - Agricultural to Dog Breeding Kennels(21/0029) - Clerk had submitted the same comments to the appeal Inspector as were submitted to application 21/0029.- **No decision yet received re appeal**

Brick Structure in Roadside Verge at The Gables – Eymore Lane – The structure had disappeared. A larger soakaway was being dug, and the sewage smell was being addressed. Minute closed.

Static Caravans seen arriving at Mary Moors Farm – This had been reported to Enforcement at Wyre Forest who had visited Hill Farm (not the adjoining Mary Moors) and had been shown old static caravans. The Enforcement Officer had reported back as follows:” *the owner told me that he had brought 4 caravans on to the site for amenity purposes for labourers. I saw 2 and no works were taking place so I did not feel it appropriate to jump over the gate to snoop around. The owner has been honest and up front about everything he has done previously, so I feel that constantly questioning his actions is inappropriate.”*

Parish Councillors remained convinced that they had witnessed 6 new Static caravans being delivered to the Mary Moors Farm site, and that full situation had not been disclosed to the officer.

Local Plan - the Inspector’s report and decision in respect of this had now been received by Wyre Forest District and it now remained for WFDC to meet to finally adopt the plan (as previous reported in these minutes) In respect of the development at Low Habberley, the Inspector had commented:

“ Low Habberley

131. Policy 30.21 allocates 5.6ha of greenfield land at Low Habberley for 120 dwellings. The site lies in an area of Green Belt on the north-western edge of Kidderminster that makes a significant contribution to containing urban sprawl and preventing encroachment into the countryside. However, development of this site entails a limited extension of the town between Habberley Lane, Habberley Road and the bridleway/access to High Habberley House, and it is unlikely to lead to visual or physical coalescence of settlements.

132. Mature woodland on the elevated ground adjoining High Habberley House provides a strong landscape setting and will assist in containing visual intrusion into the countryside to the west. Also, the policy’s requirements to supplement and strengthen the hedgerow on the western flank of the site will help to contain encroachment into the countryside and provide a defensible Green Belt boundary.

133. The site forms a small part of a much larger parcel of countryside (over 92ha) that was assessed in the sustainability appraisal report. This identified the potential for a significant adverse impact on biodiversity as well as potential adverse impacts on other interests. However, the allocated site entails only a limited expansion of the built-up area into an arable field. Based on all the evidence and the Plan’s policies, as modified, it is reasonable to conclude that the potential impacts on biodiversity, landscape, and other important interests will be managed and mitigated to secure a high standard of development. 134. The Plan’s reference to the distance to the town centre is disputed; nonetheless, the site’s location offers reasonable accessibility by sustainable travel modes to schools, services, and employment opportunities in Kidderminster. On the balance of all the evidence, the proposed development of the site is justified. For the above reasons and the factors summarised in Wyre Forest District Local Plan 2016-2036, Inspector’s Report 11 March 2022 26 paragraph 38 above, there are exceptional circumstances that justify the release of this site from the Green Belt.

135. Nonetheless, some modifications are necessary to clarify and strengthen the policy requirements for development of the site. They include provision for biodiversity net gain, protection of surrounding habitats and species and the setting of High Habberley House. Biodiversity net gain is likely to include habitat compensation measures such as the creation of additional hedgerows and woodland and providing connectivity with supporting habitats and species beyond the site’s boundaries.

136. A small increase in the indicative number of dwellings is justified by more up to-date evidence. The distance of a site from the town centre is not a determinative factor in the site selection process and the disputed reference to it should be deleted. Subject to MM30.17 which makes the necessary modifications to the policy and reasoned justification, the allocation is sound”

The Clerk had also asked the Enforcement officer and Arboriculturist about the TPO placed on the roadside Oak tree, which had recently been mostly felled when a branch had fallen during recent storms, and had been

advised *“I passed the site yesterday and am investigating what happened. I did wonder whether there had been some sort of storm damage that necessitated its complete removal, but I’m disappointed that they did not contact me to inform me of the reason for its removal. I’ll let you know the outcome when I find out.”* Discussion then took place amongst Parish Councillors as to whether some tree removal could feasibly take place in the vicinity of this development.

6. Progress Reports and other Outstanding Items

• Highway Matters

Bollards on Grass Verge outside of Low Habberley Farm - Confirmation had been received from County that the Parish could undertake the work to put the bollards in the correct position. The Clerk had received a quote for this work from Chris Bunn (who is allowed with certification to work on the highway verge) of £140. for labour and concreting in. Discussion then ensued regarding whether extra bollards were needed if the spacing was adjusted. No firm decision was reached, as further discussion and plans were required.

• Sump at Rock Cutting, Hoarstone Lane – Some of the work had been undertaken by Parish Councillors during a recent road closure, but further work was required. The County Council had advised *“The Parish Council will be advised when road will be closed and given notice (unless it is urgent/emergency). If the road is closed the Parish Council will be able to undertake the work.”*. A further discussion took place, and it was decided that a JCB with a back acting reach would be required, and, as there was likely to be little notice of any road closure, it would be whether there could be someone found at short notice.. Do we know anyone who could come along quickly.

- **Hoarstone Lane** – Whilst discussion Hoarstone lane, it was reported that water was again erupting through the middle of the carriageway. Clerk was requested to report on the hub.
- **VA Signs and Pole Siting** – Trimpley sign was still not working. Not yet checked out by electrician.
- **Low Habberley Drainage** –the reported blockage between street gullies through Low Habberley had not yet been rectified, but was due to be undertaken at the end of March, programmed for a 2-days closure.
- **Slippery road surface on approach to Trimpley Crossroads** – C Cllr. Hardiman advised that “*the Works are currently not yet programmed. Engineer Paul Green was chasing.*”
- **Track to rear of Council Houses, Low Habberley** – Unauthorised use by traffic was discussed, but it was decided Not to put sign up on rear access track. Minute closed for now.
- **Broken STW Manhole, below Low Habberley:** Cllr. Hardiman advised that this was a STW cover, and that the County Council had chased them several times for a repair. Clerk was asked to report it to STW as well.
- **Crundalls Lane** – Councillor Grainger reported that when the roadsweeper attends Crundalls Lane, it does not drive up to the end of the lane. Clerk had reported, and asked for it to be included in the regular schedule.
- **40mph restrictions on Local Roads** – Clerk had received notification of proposed orders being made in respect of these new restrictions, and had shared this with Councillors. It transpired that the roads shown on the maps submitted were not “proposed” but already had speed limits, but the exercise was just to bring records at County up to date.
- **Upper Birch Lane** –The proposal to make this lane have no exit onto the A442 had been rejected. Cllr Hardiman stated that he would attempt to find out the full reasoning behind this decision.

7. Lengthsman / Litter Collection and Footpath Clearance Matters

- a) **Final Lengthsman worksheet Tabled and approved– value £368**
- b) **Lengthsman Contract for 2022/23 from County Council** – Clerk had received this and sought approval from Councillors to agree, sign and return. The budget to cover the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 had been increased for the first time (it was believed) in over 20 years to £2,369.61 for the year. It was confirmed that the Clerk could sign and return the contract. Clerk would also raise the contract from the Parish Council for Messrs. Archers for Sam to sign and return.
- c) **Litter Contract (Localism)** – The Clerk had received and circulated to councillors a revised contract offer for April 2023 onwards from Wyre Forest District Council, i.e. offering 60% of the grant amount of 2022/23 for 2023/24, followed by 40% for the following year. It was resolved not to send a response to this proposal at the current time. A discussion took place into where the litter originated from – i.e. was it mainly KFC / MacDonalds etc. as very little was generated locally.

8. Financial Reports –

a) **Grant for Arley School** (*Councillor Grainger left the room at this point*). Clerk advised that she had today learned from the School that they were trying to establish a quiet reading area, for which books were required, and funding towards this would be most welcome. It was thought to be a good idea to buy books for the reading shed. It was resolved to buy books relating to nature of the area, and environment. Clerk was to relay that information to the school, and ask that they provide a list of book related resources that they would like. (*Cllr Grainger re-joined the meeting*)

b) Ratification of payments to be made:

- 1) Lengthsman - £368
- 2) Training – Worcs. Calc (re S. Stone) - £36
- 3) E. Whitehouse – Backpay - £114.24 (taking into account the newly agreed NALC negotiated payscales)
- 4) Vision ICT – Support and Hosting of website for 12 months May 2022-April 2023 - £161.26
- 5) E. Whitehouse – Clerk’s Expenses - £39.99

c) **Financial Regulations** – Clerk to send another copy through to councillors reflecting that the Clerk and RFO are one and same person.

d) **NALC newly advised Payscale for Clerks** – it was agreed that the Clerk could implement the newly agreed NALC salary rates which had been negotiated, w.e.f. 1st April 2021, and which she had shared with Councillors. Clerk would amend Standing Orders accordingly.

e) **Internal Audit** – Clerk requested and received approval to approach Mr. Trevor Stanley to conduct the internal audit for 2021/22.

9. Newsletter

Clerk asked for any items for inclusion in the April newsletter.

Distribution List - A long discussion took place, and Councillors said they no longer wished to hand deliver hard copies of the Newsletter, and postage was dismissed as too expensive. Clerk to advise in the April edition that it would be the last time hard copies would be delivered, but the Newsletter would still be compiled, and available to view on the website. It could also be expanded somewhat to more than just a single, double-sided A4 Sheet. Clerk also to compile a list of those who would like it e-mailed, along with permission given to use the email address to comply with Data Protection regulations.

10. Worcestershire CALC Reports & County and District & other Correspondence –

Thursday 17th March – Joint Parish/District Forum – It was reported that a long discussion took place on Localism, and the changes being proposed by District; also a discussion on Parish precepts, where it seemed to be frowned upon if these were frugal; also the fact that there was not much uptake for the CALC training courses offered.

Clerk read out a letter from former Parish Councillor Mrs. Louise Green, complimenting the Parish on the bus shelters provided, and the fact that a reduction of 49% had been achieved in the Parish precept for this year.

11. Road Accidents – 7th March – Vehicle hit BT Pole Hoarstone Lane, which resulted in phone/internet outage for over 2 weeks.

12. **Other Matters**

Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Proposed events were discussed, including Beacons at both Crundalls Farm, and Valley House, Eymore. There was also a tea party being organised in the Village Hall at Trimpley.

A discussion took place as to whether children in parish should be presented with possibly a commemorative Jubilee Mug, but numbers were unknown, and no decision was made.

Also some tree planting was again discussed.

Date of Next meeting - Monday 25th April. (avoiding Easter Monday on Monday 18th).

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Chairman :