

Minutes of Whitbourne Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 23rd May 2023

Attendance:

Present: J. Bromley (JB); S. Knowles (SK); L Kershaw (LK); T Hunt (TH); P. Davis (PD); P Wood (PDW)

In Attendance: K Phillips (Clerk), Ward Councillor P Stoddart (PS); No members of the public.

1. Election of Chairman to the Council 2023/24

Per section 83(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Chairman may be elected *in absentia*. RJ had confirmed to the Proper Officer his willingness to continue as Chairman if so elected. It was proposed (LK) and seconded (TH) that RJ be elected as Chairman. All in favour. RJ was duly elected as Chairman.

2. Chairman Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The Chairman had signed the declaration of acceptance before this meeting, witnessed by the Proper Officer.

3. Election of Vice-Chairman to the Council 2023/24

It was proposed (PDW) and seconded (LK) that JB be elected as Vice Chairman to the Council. All in favour. JB was duly elected.

4. Apologies for absence

R. James (RJ), M. Clark (MC) were unable to attend.

5. To receive declarations of interest

There were none.

6. To Complete Acceptance of Office forms

Those present completed the acceptance of office forms, which were witnessed by the Proper Officer. RJ and MC had signed the forms prior to this meeting, also witnessed by the Proper Officer.

7. To appoint representatives on outside bodies

- a. Village Hall - LK
- b. Playing Fields - JB and TH
- c. Manorial Court - SK

A further representative was identified for the Community First group (LK).

8. To appoint Parish officers

- a. Tree Warden - John Walker was to be asked if he would continue as tree warden.
- b. Footpaths - Neil Grant was to be asked if he would continue as footpaths officer.
- c. Pollution - PD
- d. Transport - MC
- e. Flag Officer - TH
- f. Defibrillator - SK

9. To approve the minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd March 2022

It was proposed (PDW) and seconded (SK) that the minutes be approved. All in favour. Approved.

10. Matters arising from Minutes

There were no matters arising.

11. To approve Clerk consultation decisions

It was proposed (PDW) and seconded (LK) that the Clerk decisions from the 10th May 2023 Clerk consultation meeting be approved. All in favour. Approved. The Clerk decisions are listed at the end of these minutes.

Minutes of Whitbourne Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 23rd May 2023

12. To receive report from Ward Councillor

PS arrived later in the meeting and gave his report. There were now 21 Conservative councillors at Herefordshire Council, being the majority, The first Council had taken place recently. Roles and responsibilities for Councillors will be published shortly. The by-pass around Hereford is back on the agenda. There will be a focus on potholes and 'levelling up'. Levelling up is the re-balancing of priorities to ensure that Herefordshire funds are spread appropriately across the whole of the county. PS will also take up the issue of busses and in particular, getting the 423 from Worcester to come into Whitbourne and perhaps Bromyard.

13. To receive the Clerk's report

The Clerk report covered the following points:

- Based upon Councillor feedback, advised Herefordshire Council to go ahead with two cuts for the village verges.
- Reported discarded BT line on lane to Whitbourne Hall.
- The above Clerk consultation meeting took place.
- Reported a footpath bridge in need of repair
- Applied for a VAT refund, now been paid.

14. Financial Matters

It was suggested by PDW to take all financial matters as one item.

- a. To receive the internal auditors report.
- b. To approve and sign the Certificate of Exemption.
- c. To complete and sign the annual governance statement (2022/2023).
- d. To approve the end of year accounting statements (2022/2023).
- e. To approve bank reconciliation to 31st March 2023.
- f. To approve accounts for payment
 - i. Clerk salary (Apr/May 2023) (£727.35) and Clerk HMRC (£181.60)
 - ii. Clerk expenses Mar/Apr 2023 (£40.00)
 - iii. King's Coronation Event (£150.00)
- g. To review budget versus spend (2022/2023).

It was proposed (PDW) and seconded (SK) that the above financial matters be approved. All in favour. Approved

- h. To determine signatories to the bank account. JB would become a signatory.

15. To re-adopt the following policies

- a. Standing Orders
- b. Financial Regulations
- c. Risk Management
- d. Complaints procedure
- e. Clerk Scheme of Delegation
- f. Councillors' Code of Conduct (Herefordshire Adoption May 2022)

These were taken together. It was proposed (PDW) and seconded (PD) to re-adopt the above policies. All in favour. Decided.

16. Planning

- a. Planning Consultation - 231159 - Marley Cottage, Bringsty

It was noted that pre-application advice had been taken. It was proposed (LK) and seconded (SK) that a 'no comment' response be made. All in favour. Decided.

Minutes of Whitbourne Annual Parish Council Meeting

held on 23rd May 2023

17. To determine approach to Councillor Co-option

The Clerk had taken advice from the Herefordshire Council Returning officer concerning protocols and procedures. The Parish Council may follow its own protocols and procedures. A further meeting will be scheduled to interview the two known candidates. The meeting will be closed to the public.

18. To receive reports:

Village Hall. LK provided a summary of activity for the village hall. Bookings and repeat bookings have increased. The business market is being actively targeted. A study will be commissioned for the possibility of putting solar panels on the roof. There is a healthy reserve in the bank.

S106. PDW reported that there had been little progress with the submission for improvements to Herefordshire Council by Nigel Shaw (previous Ward Councillor). A quote had been received to resurface the lane at the junction of Ardley Meadows. PDW was not inclined to recommend this as the costs were too high. Some of the remaining transport S106 monies could be used for the speed indicating device, if the application is successful by the neighbouring Parish Council.

Playing Fields. Two events will be held to help fund maintenance and repairs. The current maintainer has gone out of business and another is being sought.

Manorial Court. The next meeting is due shortly.

Lengthsman. PDW reported that the additional funding at the end of the last financial year has been used on the agreed projects. A budget has been set aside for the forthcoming financial year and the Parish Council will need to decide to continue with the service. The Lengthsman has indicated that he would be happy with a renewal should the Parish Council so decide.

Community First. LK reported that a meeting would take place shortly and would attend to observe the outcomes.

19. To report village issues regarding road maintenance etc.

- Potholes down by the lodge at Whitbourne Hall.
- A possible sinking man-hole by the old school.

20. Public Participation.

- No members of the public were present.

21. Items for future consideration

- Lengthsman contract
- Councillor vacancy

The meeting closed at 20:58.

.....
Chairman – 23rd May 2023

Clerk Decisions:

- Planning consultations 230572 and 230574 -Old Baymores - 'No comment'
- Form of words for Playing Fields grant application.
- Defibrillator registration. The Clerk would register the machine.
- Casual vacancy. Approach to be decided by the Parish Council at its next (i.e. this) meeting.