

Minutes of Meeting of Whitbourne Parish Council held on 13th July 2022

Attendance:

Present: R. James (Chairman); P. Davis (PD); M. Clark (MC); G. Cupper (GC); C. Wier (CW); J. Bromley (JB); P. Wood (PDW)

In Attendance: Ward Councillor N. Shaw (NS); K. Phillips (Clerk). 10 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from T. Hunt (TH); S. Knowles (SK)

2. To receive declarations of interest

There were no declarations.

3. To approve the minutes of the meetings held on: 25th May 2022

Proposed PDW, seconded GC. All in favour. Approved.

4. Matters arising from above minutes

There were no matters arising

5. To receive report from Ward Councillor

The Ward Councillor had sent in a written report to the Parish Council prior to the meeting. NS read out his report as there were several members of the public present. NS requested that blocked gullies be reported even though there had been no rain as this will avoid a backlog when the rains do come. NS was unsure of the works that had been undertaken at the Wheatsheaf Inn. The Ward Councillor report is as attached at Annex A.

6. To receive the Clerk's report

- The Clerk had been in touch with the new police officer at Bromyard. He would like to join the meeting in September.
- Three tree inspection quotes had been sought.
- The financial accounts are now published and the certificate of exemption sent to the external auditors.
- A report had been received from the Chair of Bringsty Common Manorial Court regarding the outcome of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations.
- An email from a parishioner had been received regarding Rosemore Grange highlighting Herefordshire Council's investigation into the current state of planning consent.

7. Financial matters

- a) To approve accounts for payment.
Clerk Salary & HMRC PAYE Jun/Jul 22. Clerk Expenses May/Jun 22. Village Hall, Parish Council insurance, Playing Fields insurance, church grass gutting and clock maintenance. Proposed GC, seconded PDW. All in favour. Approved. Details of expenditure are contained in a table at the end of these minutes.
- b) To approve bank reconciliation to 1st July 2022 and,
- c) To approve Income and Expenditure reconciliation to 1st July 2022. Proposed JB and seconded PDW. All in favour. Approved.
- d) To review current 2022/2023 budget versus spend. No issues raised.

8. To review tree inspection proposals and select contractor

The Clerk reported that three invitations to quote had been sent out but only two received. The quotes had been sent to Councillors prior to the meeting. After due consideration it was proposed (CW) and seconded (PDW) that *David Gardner Arboriculture* be selected as the successful contractor. All in favour. Decided. The Clerk would contact the contractors as appropriate.

9. Planning

- a) Planning Consultations - 221749 and 221750 - Hill Cross Barn, Tedstone Delamere
As this dwelling is outside the parish no comments would be submitted.

10. S106 Projects

PDW reported that the outcome of the village safety initiative was still awaited as these may impact upon any future works decided by the Parish Council.

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11. To receive report regarding the Lengthsman Scheme

PDW reported that there were two local parishioners that had made enquiries. Interviews will be undertaken to determine suitability.

12. To receive report from NDP Steering Group

The group had postponed activities until such times as the Government and Herefordshire Council had clarified the requirements. The grant application was also on hold for the same reason.

13. To receive reports from the Village Hall, Playing Fields and Manorial Court

- **Village Hall.** A new committee has been formed and now comprises up to nine members. Liz Kershaw is the new Chair. The next meeting is scheduled for the 1st August 2022.
- **Playing Fields.** The football goal posts and nets were now in place and being used. A heavy duty roller was being planned to help reduce the mole hills on the field. One more adult keep fit machine was being planned and some new swings for the future are in the pipeline. The 250 club was being reinstated, this time with a direct debit facility. The ticket costs would be £10.00 per annum.
- **Manorial Court.** As noted above the Parish Council had received a report from the Chair of the BCMC. The report showed a profit of £828. This will be donated to the Disaster Emergency Committee - Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal.

14. To receive report regarding the Glebe/woodlands

PD reported that it was the quiet season for tree works and would likely commence in the autumn. A local member of the church DCC will try and 'invigorate' discussions. Tree disease may be an emerging problem.

15. To decide approach to the reported decline of the village bus service

The local mid-day services run by DRM Bus are scheduled to cease on the 6th August 2022. RJ had spoken with the company and reported that there was a problem recruiting drivers and that as there was only an average of five passengers per trip (the majority on a concessionary pass), the service was not profitable, especially with the rising cost of fuel. RJ had suggested a village circular bus once a week mid-morning and mid-afternoon. DRM Bus would consider this. It was proposed (JB) and seconded (MC) that the meeting be opened to the public. All in favour. The Chairman then opened the meeting to the public. It was suggested that First Bus be invited to take on the mid-day services. NS noted that other villages within the county were facing a similar problem. It was suggested that Herefordshire Council seek Government support to help fund the service. NS responded that Herefordshire Council had difficulty allocating funds across all of its services and commitments. If buses were to be funded, another service would need to see a decline in funding. He also noted that the local Bromyard community transport service may help in getting people to doctors' surgeries etc. Another suggestion was to write to Worcestershire County Council to see if they could help. It was noted that there is a bus service (number 423) that runs from Knightwick into Worcester and back during the day. The Chairman then closed the meeting to the public. It was agreed to contact Herefordshire Council and Worcestershire County Council to see if any help was available. LMS (the bus company operating the 423 service) were also to be contacted to see if an extension to the service across the county boundary was possible. The Clerk agreed to contact the editor of the parish magazine to publish the 423 bus timetable.

16. To decide approach to a parish petition with respect to the Wheatsheaf Inn

PDW reported that he had had several representations from members of the public regarding the poor (and deteriorating) condition of the Wheatsheaf Inn. He felt that a parish wide petition to Herefordshire Council would demonstrate the depth of feeling of parishioners. A draft had been sent to Councillors prior to the meeting. Although it was acknowledged that some works had been undertaken under a section 215 order, these were not satisfactory. There were other powers under section 215 that would ensure that the building was returned to a presentable condition. It was proposed (PDW) and seconded (PD) that the meeting be opened to the public. All in favour. The Chairman then opened the meeting to the public. Matters were raised regarding the visibility of signatories to the petition and the timescales for signing. The Chairman then closed the meeting to the public. It was proposed (PDW) and seconded (CW) that a petition be drawn up and then taken

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door-to-door for signatures. All in favour. Decided. The number of signatories would be reviewed at the September meeting of the Parish Council to determine if more were needed.

17. To determine approach to ‘We Don’t Buy Crime’ initiative

RJ outlined the concept of the ‘We Don’t Buy Crime’ initiative and noted that the Parish Council would need to part fund the initiative if it went ahead. It was agreed to hold a public meeting and to publish the details in the parish magazine. It was agreed that the meeting should take place in mid September in the village hall, which would be funded by the Parish Council.

18. To report village issues regarding road maintenance, clearance etc.

- Grips on church bank and Redhill need attention
- The road out of the village towards Whitbourne Hall was now worn down to its sub-surface
- The C1066 at the junction with Ardley Meadows now has potholes once again
- Bottom lane by Whitbourne Ford bridge. There is a tree growing out of the top of the adjacent wall, which is now beginning to crack and break away.
- Cars parked in Old Forge by the junction with the school road were proving to be an obstruction for motorists exiting the junction.

19. Public participation

- NS reported that the annual plan had now been released by Herefordshire Council. Works in Whitbourne were to include the culvert close to Whitbourne Hall lodge, hazard posts at the bottom of church bank and culvert works close to Whitbourne Ford bridge.
- There was one couple in the village currently hosting Ukrainian refugees and another couple were due to receive two more.
- It was noted that there were two Ukrainian refugee visitors attending the Parish Council meeting. A warm welcome to the village was expressed to them, which was acknowledged with grateful thanks.

20. Items for future consideration

It was agreed that GC would be involved in the interviews and discussions relating to the appointment of the Lengthsman. The Clerk would be given delegation authority to make the appointment based upon the outcome of the above interviews. This was in order to allow works to proceed before the next full Parish Council meeting in September when the Clerk decision would be approved.

The meeting closed at 21:11.

Cheque No	Expenditure	Payment
300515	Clerk Salary Jun/Jul 22	727.35
300516	Clerk HMRC Jun/Jul 22	181.60
300517	Clerk Expenses May/jun 22	40.00
300518	Whitbourne Village Hall	48.00
300519	Parish Council Insurance	360.03
300520	Playing fields insurance	404.46
300521	Whitbourne DCC	1250.00
Total		£3011.44

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Chairman – 13th July 2022

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ANNEX A

Ward Councillor Nigel Shaw's report

Report to Whitbourne Parish Council meeting 13/07/2022

Whitbourne

DRM have announced they are withdrawing their 420 bus service east of Bromyard from 6th August. I have written to the Cabinet member, the HC transport services manager and our MP (who has subsequently raised the issue with our chief executive. I also alerted the Hereford Times to the news. The issue has been a lack of passengers on the off-peak hour services that DRM run, together with an ongoing shortage of drivers. I am advised that Worcestershire CC are experiencing similar reductions in service on their network. Bromyard Community Transport may be able to provide a service for people needing to visit the surgery but there appears little likelihood of securing council funding of his route. I remain in dialogue with the transport services team in case other funding becomes available.

In respect of the Wheatsheaf, the enforcement officer reports, as of 16th June "I have taken a look and can confirm the work to the building addresses the concerns I previously raised. The vegetation at the rear of the property needs to cut back and the car park hedge will need attention soon."

In reply the owner has undertaken to do such works once there is no danger of disturbing nesting birds. I have written to the owner again to ask for an update on the status.

Village Safety Initiative: At a meeting last week with Tracy Morriss BBLP) I was told that a large number of disparate schemes had been proposed and that no decisions had yet been made in regards to which schemes were to be preferred.

The white centre lining on the A44 opposite and to either side of the Wheatsheaf junction has been reported to BBLP and accepted for action by the white lining team.

Whilst in the current hot spell the thought of rain may be a blessing, can I ask that any blocked gullies continue to be reported so that they are ready when the rain does come? Vegetation growing in dried mud and detritus can block otherwise sound gullies and any help in identifying them for remedial action before they cause a problem will be appreciated.

This week has seen an Ofsted inspection of the Council's Children and Young People's department begin. There is also a live consultation on the Local Plan, open until Friday 29th July. <https://consultations.herefordshire.gov.uk/consultations/article/79/local-plan-2021-41-place-shaping-consultation>