

## Minutes of Meeting of Whitbourne Parish Council held on 1st March 2023

### **Attendance:**

Present: R. James (RJ) (Chair); J. Bromley (JB); P. Davis (PD); G. Cupper (GC); C. Wier (CW); T. Hunt (TH); S. Knowles (SK); M. Clark (MC)

In Attendance: N. Shaw (NS) Ward Councillor, K. Phillips (Clerk). Two members of the public present.

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies received from P. Wood (PDW).

### **2. To receive declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3. To approve the minutes of the meetings held on: 4th January 2023**

Proposed SK, seconded TH. All in favour. Approved.

### **4. Matters arising from the above minutes**

RJ expressed thanks to John Walker who had trimmed Church Bank and many hedges along the bottom lane free of charge.

### **5. To receive report from Ward Councillor**

The Ward Councillor had provided Parish Councillors with a written report. This is as attached to these minutes. In addition NS reported that the road closure on the A44 would commence within two weeks. Closure times would be between 09:30 and 15:30. There is the attendant danger that HGV's will once again attempt to navigate through the village.

### **6. To receive the Clerk's report**

- A VAT claim had been submitted and has now been paid
- The Precept form has been submitted
- Dead trees have been removed by Poplands
- The tree remedial work on the village green will commence on the 7th March. This includes pollarding the poplar tree.
- The Lengthsman grant application has been submitted
- The Lengthsman highways equipment has been delivered
- Gullies have been swept by BBLP
- The Police charter for Whitbourne has been resubmitted by request.

### **7. To approve Clerk decisions**

The approval for the planning consultation (223389) and the application for the Lengthsman grant was proposed by MC and seconded by CW. All in favour Approved.

### **8. Financial matters**

- a) To approve accounts for payment.  
Clerk Salary & HMRC PAYE Feb/Mar 23. Clerk Expenses Jan/Feb 23. Village hall, Lengthsman and SLCC membership. Proposed GC, seconded SK. All in favour. Approved. Details of expenditure are contained in a table at the end of these minutes.
- b) To approve bank reconciliation to 28th February 2023 and
- c) To approve Income and Expenditure reconciliation to 28th February 2023. Proposed PD and seconded TH. All in favour. Approved.
- d) To review current 2022/2023 budget versus spend. No issues raised.
- e) It was noted that the grass cutting costs had risen to £80 per visit. It was proposed (JB) and seconded (MC) that the current grass cutting contractor be retained for a further year. All in favour. Approved.

### **9. Planning Consultation - 230923 - 16 Old Forge, Whitbourne**

A parishioner had written to a Councillor detailing their concerns. Issues raised by Councillors covered lack of parking, the loss of the garage and the extension would overlook the property of a neighbour. It was proposed (SK) and seconded (GC) that the Parish Council object to this planning consultation. All in favour. Decided.

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### 10. To decide approach for a Speed Indicating Device

The matter was debated and was generally supported, although budgetary constraints were noted. It was agreed to seek further clarification concerning costs and specifications of the device.

### 11. To decide approach to King's Coronation Celebration

The idea of a tree planted on the village green was suggested. It was noted that no organisation or individual had come forward to seek partial funding for the event. It was proposed (JB) and seconded (CW) to set aside £150 in the event of such a request. All in favour. Decided.

### 12. S106 Projects

Still awaiting to hear from Herefordshire Council..

### 13. To receive report regarding the Lengthsman Scheme

MC reported that the Lengthsman was both efficient and pro-active and was making a difference in the parish. A meeting had been held to discuss the potential works that could be undertaken as part of the grant application. The outcome of the grant application is awaited. A what3words location scheme for assets within the parish had begun.

### 14. To receive report from NDP Steering Group

There had been no progress since last time.

### 15. To receive reports from the Village Hall, Playing Fields, Manorial Court and Community First

- **Village Hall.** It was reported that the village hall was thriving with new hirers on the increase. Wider marketing of the facility will commence soon. The repair of equipment and facilities is nearly complete. The new committee is working well.
- **Playing Fields.** A quiz has been scheduled for the 24th March. Still looking to apply for grants. Some supplier issues are causing delays in maintenance etc.
- **Manorial Court.** A Zoom meeting had been held with new members attending. The Chair remains the same and a new Clerk will be taking over. The next meetings are the 31st May and 4th September.
- **Community First.** This has now moved into an operational phase. As yet there is no formal committee and is being administered by interested parties. There is a new walking group and the table tennis evenings are working well.

### 16. To receive report regarding the Glebe/woodlands

PD reported that there had been little progress. He will apply for a copy of the recent survey when it becomes available. He will then try and get a formal meeting to determine the coppicing plan.

### 17. To report village issues regarding road maintenance, clearance etc.

- CW reported that the mud on the the stretch of road by the telephone kiosk has now been rectified.
- Another case of a severely damaged grit bin has been reported. MC suggested that local farmers be requested to take extra care when hedge trimming.
- There are some willows on the banks of Sapey Brook that may block the brook if they deteriorate any further. RJ agreed to contact the owner.
- The window on the Wheatsheaf has been damaged once again. The owner has been notified.

### 18. Public participation

Peter Stoddard, who is going to stand as a candidate for the Bromyard/Bringsty Ward Councillor position, re-introduced himself.

### 19. Items for future consideration

Tree planting on the village green for the King's Coronation Celebration.

The meeting closed at 20:45.

Cheque No	Expenditure	Payment
300538	Clerk Salary Feb/Mar 23	545.75

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300539	Clerk HMRC Feb/Mar 23	363.20
300540	Clerk Expenses Jan/Feb 23	46.89
300541	MAS Bromyard (Lengthsman)	£150.00
300542	Whitbourne Village Hall	£24.00
300543	SLCC	£112.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>£1241.84</b>

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Chairman – 1st March 2023

**Annex A - Ward Councillor’s Report**

**Whitbourne specific.**

Vandalism to the roof of the bus shelter on Bringsty has been reported.

The A44 on the Bringsty bends has subsided, and temporary traffic lights enforcing single lane operation have been in place for two weeks. I am advised that remediation works will begin this week.

No new planning application has yet been received in respect of the Wheatsheaf at the village entrance on the A44, but I am advised that one is now expected and it has been suggested that the agent present the design during the public session at the parish council.



A “Speed Camera Van” has again been checking speeds on Bringsty Common, both at this location opposite Bringsty Vintage Living and also checking vehicles coming from Bromyard at the layby by the Smithy.

**Elsewhere in the Ward:**

I’m pleased to confirm that the Hop Pole planning application has now been approved.

A new application in respect of listed building consent is anticipated in respect of 43 High Street following it’s new ownership. I’m advised that a planning consultant is now assisting the applicant.

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The TRO consultation notices have been posted for the double yellow lines by the post office crossing, at the start of Rowberry St by the changed egress onto Church Street. This will enable any cars parking on the pavement to be given a penalty notice. Work is beginning shortly on the changes to parking in Cruxwell St.

I was disappointed by the split town council decision on the new crossing in Cruxwell St. I had previously quizzed officers in respect of it's safety and positioning and it is sited in the only position that functions with the desire line and within current design parameters. Funding will be lost if the works do not proceed.



I have asked enforcement officers to examine the environ around the business unit on the Porthouse rise development, as the land around the unit has become overgrown and unsightly, affecting the amenity of residents. Ultimately this can be done through a section 215 notice, but land owners generally respond to a request before any statutory action becomes necessary.

The VAS (vehicle activated sign) at High Cross, Upper Sapey, a particular accident black spot, has not yet been installed but I have seen the approved plans which feature three signs and am still being promised installation by financial year end. A further accident, this time by a vehicle approaching from Bromyard , has been reported. I understand that police are investigating this.

A development of five properties at the Bannut on Clater Bank (A44) has been turned down by officers.

I asked a question at Cabinet about the current overspend of the Council which now exceeds £9m. Confirmation was given that the whole of the remaining financial resilience reserve is to be used to address any overspend this year and that only £3m is expected to be in that reserve at the end of next year. The finances of the Council are now a lot less resilient than they have been since 2019.

My amendment to the budget, to divert more funding (£600k) to the maintenance of rural C and U roads and invest in the County running track (£70k) was defeated in full council by two votes.