

Minutes of Meeting of Whitbourne Parish Council held on 5th July 2023

Attendance:

Present: R. James (RJ) (Chair); J. Bromley (JB); P. Davis (PD); L Kershaw (LK); T. Hunt (TH); S. Knowles (SK); M. Clark (MC); P. Wood (PDW); N Shaw (NS)

In Attendance: P Stoddart (PS) Ward Councillor, K. Phillips (Clerk). Two members of the public present.

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. To receive declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest. PCSO Sue Berrett had joined the meeting and the Chairman decided to include this item at this point. PCSO Berrett provided a summary of the current policing team at Bromyard. There are now two PC's and two PCSO's. Sue also gave advice as to the methods of being able to report incidents and the need to report even tiny details as these may form part of a bigger picture. Non-emergency events can also now be lodged online. The neighbourhood matters newsletter is a useful source of local police information. The policing priorities Charter between the Parish Council and West Mercia Police will be reviewed at the next Parish Council meeting.

3. To approve the minutes of the annual Parish Council meeting held on 23rd May 2023 and the annual parish meeting held on 30th May 2023

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

4. Matters arising from the above minutes

RJ had spoken to John Walker who had agreed to remain as the parish Trees Officer.

5. To receive report from Ward Councillor

PS had previously supplied a written report to the Parish Council and provided a summary to the meeting. The report is attached to these minutes. PDW had contacted PS concerning the Road Safety Scheme and the possibility of a 20mph zone through the village. PS agreed to investigate.

6. To receive the Clerk's report

- The defibrillator has been registered and now has two supporting guardians.
- The FY 2022/23 accounts have been closed down and the certificate of exemption sent to the external auditor. The public notice has also been posted on the notice board and web site.
- A BT cable lying in a verge for some time had been reported as fly-tipping and had now been removed by Herefordshire Council
- The 'We don't buy crime' officers had been in touch. They are planning on attending the Parish Council meeting in September.
- Damaged grit bins as a result of the recent verge cutting have been reported. One has been replaced.
- An offer of a new grant for the Lengthsman scheme has been received amounting to £2352 plus match funding.
- The forms for the change of bank signatories has been sent to the bank.
- Volunteers to maintain the patch of land by the playing fields have come forward.

7. To approve Clerk decisions

Cheque for the Lengthsman (£1641.00). Proposed by NS and seconded by PDW. All in favour Approved.

8. To review and determine approach to the Lengthsman Scheme.

PDW provided a summary of the genesis of the Lengthsman Scheme within the parish. The current incumbent is doing an excellent job and is attracting positive feedback from parishioners. PDW proposed that a) the Lengthsman Scheme continue for 2023/24 and b) the Parish Council agree to the submission of the grant application with match funding. Seconded by JB. All in favour. Decided.

9. Financial matters

- a) To approve accounts for payment.

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Clerk Salary & HMRC PAYE Jun/Jul 23. Clerk Expenses May/Jun 23. Bringsty Common Manorial Court, Lengthsman, Whitbourne DCC and insurance. Proposed MC, 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 30th June 2023 and
- c) To approve Income and Expenditure reconciliation to 30th June 2023. Proposed PDW and seconded TH. All in favour. Approved. NS abstained to vote as he had not been provided with the financial information as just being co-opted as a Parish Councillor.
- d) To review current 2023/2024 budget versus spend. No issues raised.

10. Planning

- a) Planning Consultation 231770 - Flat 1, Whitbourne Hall, Whitbourne. It was proposed (PDW) and seconded (LK) that the Parish Council support this planning consultation. All in favour. Decided.
- b) Planning Consultation 231967 - Kennets Cottage, Whitbourne. It was proposed (PDW) and seconded (SK) that the Parish Council support this planning consultation. All in favour. Decided.
- c) Planning Consultation 231809 - Barns at Lower Tedney farm, Clifton-on-Teme. It was proposed (NS) and seconded (MC) that the Parish Council support this planning consultation with the proviso that Herefordshire Planners take into consideration the reports from the Ecologist and Natural England. All in favour. Decided.

11. To determine approach to assessment and maintenance of the pack-horse bridge

The Parish Council have cleared the bridge in the past but it is now in private ownership. It is a grade 2 listed structure registered in 1973. This feature was considered historic and of importance to the parish and its demise should be avoided. PDW agreed to contact the owner and propose a one-off offer to use the Lengthsman to tidy up the location.

12. To review S106 Projects

Still awaiting to hear from Herefordshire Council concerning the safer roads initiative. There is still £2000 left on the highways portion of the S106 monies and it is hoped a joint scheme with BBLP may be implemented for the repair of the road by the Ardley Meadows/shop crossing.

13. To receive report regarding the Lengthsman Scheme

Delivered as part of item 8 above.

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

- **Village Hall.** There had been a recent AGM with some changes in the committee. A future focus was to attract more businesses to use the facility. New groups have started to use the village hall. A technical assessment is under way for the provision of solar panels for the roof.
- **Playing Fields.** The lottery grant has been completed and submitted. Another supplier is being sought for the equipment repairs. Revisions to the insurance cover are being negotiated. A quiz night will be held in October.
- **Manorial Court.** Some Herefordshire Council money has been received, which will be used to improve the ecology on the common. A woodland grant of £7,000 has also been received to help with coppicing and improve biodiversity. The Live and Let Live pub on the common remains closed due to illness.
- **Community First.** The first tranche of actions have now been completed. A new Steering Group of eight people has now been established. A report has been submitted as part of a survey to utilise £2m to improve transport links with Whitbourne as the key example of issues faced. The initial grant of £2,500 has been well utilised including the purchase of table tennis tables, a tablet for common use and the creation of the web site, which is attracting some useful user traffic.

15. To receive report regarding the Glebe/woodlands

PD also gave a summary of the events up until now but reported that there still had been little progress. The trees had been marked and felling approved by the Forestry Commission however

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no action has been taken. The felling licence runs out in 3 1/2 years. PD is looking for a better contact as there have been changes of staff causing some of the delays.

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

- NS noted that one or two of the chevron signs on the 'S' bends towards Bromyard have been destroyed. They have been reported but it is noted that there is a large repair required, which will involve substantial planning and coordination.
- NS also noted the car lodged next to a tree on the 'S' bends by Bringsty Cafe. This has now been removed but once again showed the danger along these stretches of the A44.
- The recent work by the Lengthsman by Sapey bridge was noted as a significant improvement to the amenity.
- Some trees are overhanging the lane by Badley Wood common

17. Public participation

Mike Hogg gave a summary of the CPR course that took place recently. The attendees were chosen to represent various groups within the parish. He would be willing to organise another course and would seek a grant (£200) to provide as a donation to the charity that runs the course. It was agreed to put this on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.

18. Items for future consideration

As noted above. No other items identified.

The meeting closed at 21:20.

Cheque No	Expenditure	Payment
300552	Clerk Salary Jun/Jul 23	£727.15
300553	Clerk HMRC Jun/Jul 23	£181.00
300554	Clerk Expenses May/Jul 23	£40.00
300555	MAS Bromyard (Lengthsman)	£153.00
300556	Bringsty Common Manorial Court	£200.00
300557	Whitbourne DCC	£1200.00
300558	Gallagher Insurance (for Parish Council)	£423.76
Total		£2924.91

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Chairman – 5th July 2023

Annex A - Ward Councillor's Report

Two months on since the Local Elections on 4 May and I am asking myself where has the time gone?

The Conservative Minority Administration held their first full Cabinet meeting on 22 June with one particularly contentious issue being the implementation of a pause on the move of the Library to Maylords Orchard Shopping Centre. This pause will enable the Council Officers to provide a review which will include a number of other options that the Cabinet will then consider. If the result of the review is that the best option is Maylords Orchard then that will be the recommended option. The result of this review is due later this month.

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The Council leader and other Cabinet members have also meet with a number of business forums to make them very clear that Herefordshire is open for business.

In regards to the four big issues that we are dealing with, the recent OFSTED report on Children's Services has stated that we are making progress which is good news. There is however, much still to do.

In respect to fixing the roads, I have sat in on a number of Working Groups to identify how we can gain best value for money in regards to the amount that we have available. This plan will be announced as soon as it is finalised.

Another working group is addressing the issue of the Hereford Bypass. This will be a long-term task but one which is vital to the future of Herefordshire.

A fourth working group is also reviewing the future waste contract which sees the move to a three weekly collection system.

As the Cabinet member responsible for Finance and Corporate Services I have also spent considerable time getting to grips with the current year's budget and commencing the plans for next year's budget. As part of this I am investigating the provision of funding for a Lengthmen's scheme for all Parish Councils across the County.

In respect to Whitbourne specifically:

Whitbourne Parish Council. The planning application to turn the Wheatsheaf Pub into a family residence is progressing and the planning officer expects to have the result announced in the near future.

I have also engaged with the Council Officer responsible for Bus routes across the county and have asked him to speak with Worcestershire Council in regards to extending the 423 bus to Whitbourne. I also noticed that DRM, this weekend on the Bromyard Info site, have intimated that they are interested in recommencing a daily 420 service between Bromyard and Worcester. I will be contacting them to discuss this further.

Across the Ward's other Parish Councils I would like to highlight the following activities.

North Bromyard Group of Parishes. I am very disappointed that the High Cross traffic signs have not yet been installed. The post base units have been received by Balfour Beatty and they have been have requested to have these installed as soon as possible. The Visual Sign units are on order and we have requested that Balfour Beatty expedite the delivery of these three signs as a matter of the highest priority.

Following a request from a resident of Saltmarshe I have assisted him with his request for council housing.

Brockhampton Group of Parish Councils. Following a request from a resident for a speed reduction on the B4203 as it approaches Bromyard I have forwarded this to the Parish Council as they have to submit a request for a TRO to the Traffic Management Department.

I am also engaged with the Balfour Beatty Local Steward in regards to clearing the drains on the Malvern Road.

Following complaints from two local residents I have also contacted the Enforcement Officer to investigate planning issues that two local residents have brought to my attention.

Finally, another resident has asked if a Bringsty Common sign can be erected on the Bromyard side of the A44. I have asked the Parish Clerk to submit a request to Balfour Beatty to address this.

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Bromyard and Winslow Town Council. The Council's Planning Department have received a response in regards to the planning conditions imposed on the planning application for the Hop Pole. They subsequently expect to hear from the owner's agents details of their work plan for this listed building.

Clare Davies (Bromyard West) and I are working collaboratively on a transport initiative around the Bromyard area. Following my discussions with the Council Officer responsible for bus routes he has provided me with some helpful suggestions.

A local resident has raised the issue of public consumption of alcohol in Frog lane and asked if the Bromyard Alcohol free zone could be extended to include Frog lane . The Clerk to the Town Council was able to forward me a map of the alcohol free zone which shows that Frog Lane is included in the zone. I am subsequently identifying how to get additional alcohol free zone signs installed there.

Following receipt of the TRO for a 20 MPH zone through High Street I have asked to meet with the Chair of the Transportation Committee to discuss this and gain an understanding of the Town's Council's position.