

Minutes of Meeting of Whitbourne Parish Council held on 3rd July 2024

Attendance:

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

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

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from M. Clark (MC); P. Wood (PDW)

2. To receive declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 19th June 2024

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

4. Matters arising from the above minutes

RJ reported that John Walker had agreed to continue as the trees officer and Neil Grant would continue as the footpaths officer. He also requested that PS examine the recent planning application (241313) and request a review by the wider planning authority if necessary.

At this point PCSO Toby Stephenson joined the meeting. RJ invited him to address the Parish Council. The staffing levels at Bromyard are now two officers, himself and Police Officer Lowri Jones. PCSO Sue Berrett had now moved on to a wider area but still with the county. Another Police Officer will be coming to Bromyard soon, once released from Malvern. Whitbourne is patrolled regularly including at night. PCSO Stephenson also encouraged as many members of the public to sign up to the Neighbourhood Matters newsletter.

5. To receive report from Ward Councillor

The Ward Councillor reported that the bus service would commence on the 1st September. This would be for two years and run on a two hourly basis to link up with the buses from Bromyard to Hereford. PS noted the Parish Council Summit next week where Councillors had been invited to attend. He noted the improvement at the Wheatsheaf in response to the Section 215 notice being served. PS had been assisting a parishioner concerned about local road closures.

6. To receive the Clerk's report

- The Speed Indicating Device sockets and pole had now been delivered.
- Insurance queries had been clarified
- The Parish financial information had been submitted to the external auditor. The notice of public examination had also been posted.
- A letter had been sent to the West Midlands Ambulance Service over concerns relating to the defibrillator.
- Two applications for PROW grants had been submitted. The first for a repair of a stile, a kissing gate and a 5.2m bridge. The second for a 12m bridge. PS noted that for this item a specialist team might be involved to position the bridge in place.
- The We Don't Buy Crime officers had been contacted for their help in distributing the Smart Water kits
- Potholes had been reported
- VAT had been reclaimed

7. Financial matters

a) To approve accounts for payment.

Clerk Salary & HMRC PAYE and Clerk Expenses. Village Hall, Start Traffic (SID pole).

Proposed NS, seconded JB. 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 2024. Proposed NS and seconded LK. All in favour. Approved.

c) To approve Income and Expenditure reconciliation to 30th June 2024. Proposed SK and seconded TH. All in favour. Approved.

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d) To review current 2024/2025 budget versus spend. NS queried why the Parish Council were paid the precept in two tranches (April and September) and not a single payment in April. PS agreed to take this up and report back. There were no other points raised.

8. Clerk decision

To pay NAL Ltd for the Speed indicating Device ground sockets (£1226.46). It was proposed (JB) and seconded (NS) to approve this decision. All in favour. Approved.

9. To receive report regarding the Lengthsman Scheme

MC and PDW were not present to deliver a report. The Clerk reported that strimming had been undertaken around the grit bins. As above, the equipment is now available to erect the Speed indicating Device. MC would deliver two ground sockets to the neighbouring parish. NS noted that Lengthsmen do not typically work on A or B roads. Therefore the Clerk agreed to report the verge at the splay by the Wheatsheaf to Herefordshire Council as it made it difficult to see traffic approaching from Worcester.

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

- **Village Hall.** A recent AGM had been held. Income is up by 45%. Bookings are up. A recent water leak appears to have been resolved. Regular activities like table tennis are now established. The British Sign Language and Tai Chi courses (as a result of the Our Community Can campaign) are well attended.
- **Playing Fields.** The big breakfast event took place and was well attended. There was some good feedback and is likely to be run again next year. The quiz night has been set for the 27th September.
- **Manorial Court.** A meeting had been held in May. A new team are settling down. The current focus is onto management of the common.
- **Community First.** No update.

11. To receive report regarding the Glebe/woodlands

PD reported that he had chased through to get feedback on the recent report about the neighbouring woodlands. It concluded that the area was of low value and low priority to the trust and there would be a cursory check every now and then. PD would push for an annual inspection of the perimeter as it affected some adjoining properties. The Glebe was also in a poor state and the dialogue with the diocese had more or less stopped. PD would attempt to re-engage with them.

12. To receive report on Smart Water distribution progress

It was noted that the We Don't Buy Crime team had suggested the 9th July to come along and help distribute the kits. Some Councillors would be available to assist. RJ noted that if the distribution were undertaken during the day, many people might be out and therefore hamper the distribution. The Clerk agreed to respond to the WDBC team and seek clarification. Councillors noted that great interest was shown in the Parish Council business when knocking on doors with the kits. LK had made progress with gaining access to the Whitbourne Hall residents.

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

- LK reported that several parishioners had received a postal vote form that had issues with them. Although some had been reissued there were a couple of instances where the forms had not been delivered in time. This means that these individuals may not be able to vote. PS agreed to take this up with the Herefordshire Monitoring Officer.

14. Public participation

No members of the public present at this time.

The meeting closed at 20:38.

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Cheque No	Expenditure	Payment
300599	Clerk Salary	£556.32
300600	Clerk HMRC	£370.80
300601	Clerk Expenses	£46.00
300602	Whitbourne Village Hall	£21.00
300603	Start Traffic Ltd (SID pole)	£123.14
Total		£1117.26

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Chairman – 3rd July 2024