

WEOBLEY PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Weobley Parish Council Meeting held at Hopelands Village Hall, Weobley, HR4 8SN on Tuesday 26th March 2024 commencing at 7:00pm.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Lorraine Anderson (Chair), Andrew Apps, Chris Breen, Stephen Coleman, Frank Fitzsimmons, Colin Mills, Helen Quinlan, Helen Saunders, John Simons, Ian Wilkinson

IN ATTENDANCE: 3 members of the public and member of Pyons PC as an observer. Amanda Apps was in attendance as potential future Tree Warden (Agenda item 6.6.2). Nick Mason, Ward Councillor was in attendance for part of meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

None received

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WRITTEN REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION:

John Simons declared an interest in Agenda item 8.3

3. MINUTES:

It was RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 27th February 2024 were a true and proper record of the meeting. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

4. OPEN SESSION

4.1. Police Report: PC Emma Turberfield was in attendance and provided a brief report of police activities

Various incidents in and around Burton Crescent on 18th March were reported, now under investigation. The Police had applied to Herefordshire Council for funding for an additional CCTV camera for Burton Gardens.

Police had investigated a report of Excel Bully dog in the area, but it belonged to a visitor and was also below age for registration.

There had been reported disturbance and anti-social behaviour in the village, including High Street and Gadbridge Road, on the evening of 23rd March involving a broken window and a broken car wing mirror. The police had attended and three arrests made. The suspects were now on bail.

PC Turberfield indicated that she would endeavour to attend PC meetings as often as possible or send a written report.

4.1.1 There was discussion on Council's priorities under Police Community Charter. The following were agreed as top priorities - 1. Anti-social behaviour, 2. Speeding, 3. Wildlife crime

4.2. Ward Councillor: Nick Mason gave a verbal presentation of his report:

He commented on general slowness in making progress on some key issues, but some significant advances had been made on a number of key issues which would be in the public domain shortly. He reported on three main topics -

Value for money - Extra scrutiny was now in place on expenditure and all purchases of £500 or over had to be approved by a council member.

Childrens' Services - a House of Commons question had been tabled by the North Herefordshire MP. A further report had been received on required action which was in hand. The Council 's budget for this work had been increased but the problem was an increased number of children in care and the escalating costs.

Highways – Herefordshire Council were close to achieving a revised agreement with Balfour Beatty. There would be improved scrutiny of highway repair priorities. Additional funding would be available to parishes to address local drainage issues and PROW maintenance.

An additional £106 million over 11 years had been made available from central Government for road improvement and consideration was also being given to the question of utilities ducting.

Public consultations were in progress regarding the Draft Herefordshire Local Plan and Local Transport Plan. £101 million Government funding was being made available for public transport improvements. The Hereford bypass was again in active consideration.

Cllr. Mason was continuing to investigate the legal status of Weobley Marsh.

- 4.3. Local Residents:** There were no matters raised from local residents in attendance. A resident raised a brief point on the methods for pothole repair. Otherwise no other items

5. FINANCE:

5.1. Current Bank Balance:

It was reported that the current account Income balance at 21.3.24 was £57,959.68. The Chairman reported that this includes the balance of the S106 money received for the works to the Rose Garden.

5.2. Payments:

It was RESOLVED to pay the following invoices:

- 5.2.1 C Breen, Play Area repairs, £10.30
- 5.2.2 Steve Dartnell, PROW materials, £62.40 including VAT
- 5.2.3 Steve Dartnell, PROW equipment, £258.71
- 5.2.4 Lorraine Anderson, Cleaning materials for Public Toilets, £23.25
- 5.2.5 Lorraine Anderson, Create – Community website subscription renewal £101.88
- 5.2.6 Weobley Village Hall, Room Hire, February 2024, £22.50

- 5.3 It was RESOLVED:** to make a donation to St Michael's Hospice in memory of Stuart Elder, late of the Salutation in lieu of reimbursement for the Christmas lighting electricity contribution.

5.4 Donations to the Parish Church:

It was RESOLVED: to make a donation to St. Peter and St. Paul Church of £550.00 from the 23/24 budget, and to make a further donation of a similar amount from next year's budget.

5.5 Parish Council's internal auditor

It was RESOLVED to appoint HALC as the internal auditor for 23/24

6. PARISH MAINTENANCE:

6.1 Parish Lengthsman:

Correspondence had been received from Herefordshire Council re additional funding for the Lengthsman Scheme, for Public Right of Way works and for Local Drainage works.

It was RESOLVED that expressions of interest be submitted for the PROW and drainage works funding, in addition to the Lengthsman Scheme which had already been submitted. A proposed list of works would be prepared by the Parish Footpath Officers in respect of the PROW funding.

Cllrs Anderson and Fitzsimmons were due to arrange a village assessment with Mr. Glen White for smaller scale Lengthsman work.

6.1. Works to be reported to Herefordshire Council:

Repairs to a gully in Bell Square had been reported but it was unclear if repairs had yet been undertaken. Councillors were reminded that they or the public can report issues direct via the Herefordshire Council website.

6.2. S106 Highways Funding Proposals:

The proposed commissioning of works reported and approved at the February Parish Council meeting was understood to be ongoing. The results of enquiries regarding SID provision and extension of 30mph limits are awaited.

6.3. Public Rights of Way (PROW) and Footpaths:

Members were informed that the Parish Footpath Officers are preparing a list of required works for their own programming and also to support application for funds as at 6.1 above. Herefordshire Council reported at a

recent Council meeting that the bridge repair on the boundary with Dilwyn Parish is no. 42 on their list of priorities.

6.4. Maintenance of Public Toilets:

The chairman reported that she is to meet a potential employee for regular cleaning work.

6.5. Tree Warden Planting Proposal

The Chairman reported that no further response had been received from the owners of the land opposite the surgery concerning the proposal to plant trees there. The Parish Tree Warden had provided costings for the supply and planting of trees relating to her earlier proposal which could be forwarded to Balfour Beatty for consideration.

6.6.1 Councillors received, with regret, the resignation of Emma Jordan as Parish Tree Warden. The Chairman would write a letter of thanks.

6.6.2 **It was RESOLVED** to appoint Amanda Apps as Parish Tree Warden. Amanda was present at the meeting and distributed a copy of her CV. She outlined some work she had already done in connection with the leaning Prunus in Bell Square. She was intending to liaise with the HC Tree Officer, with the recommendation that it be removed for safety reasons.

The Chairman would forward a copy of the former Tree Warden's proposals to Amanda

7. DRAINAGE:

Members received a brief update report from Cllr John Simons on the Weobley Flood Alleviation Project. Cllr Simons reported on the initial meeting with Garnstone Estate Farm Manager to consider possible actions to remedy the problem and noted that he was supportive. He then reported on a visit to Wellington with Cllr Anderson and Mike Williams to view a flood alleviation scheme there, following on from which a meeting with Tom Jolley, Catchment Area Manager of the Wye and Usk Foundation had been arranged for 10.00am on 11th April at the Scout Hut, Hereford Road. Cllrs wishing to attend were invited.

8. PLANNING:

Members considered responding to the following applications to be determined by Herefordshire Council:

8.1. 240548/K Hawthorn Cottage, Kington Road, Weobley HR4 8QS. Works to trees in a conservation area.

The Tree Warden had viewed the site and the application and recommended that there were no objections.

It was RESOLVED: to support the application.

8.2. 292353/FH: Bellbrook, 1 Bell Square, Weobley, Herefordshire HR4 8SE. Retrospective application for a domestic heating oil storage tank and boiler, summerhouse, timber bridge with greenhouse over (northern end of brook), and timber bridge (southern end of brook). Permission for replacement fencing to eastern garden boundary (with associated hedgerow planting), access gate within the existing north-eastern fence and replace temporary metal/material structure with a timber pergola.

This application had been reviewed by the Historic Building officer, who had provided detailed recommendations.

It was RESOLVED: to endorse the views of the Historic Building Officer.

8.3. 240688/L: - Castle House, Hereford Road, Weobley, Herefordshire HR4 8SW. Proposed repairs and modifications to outbuilding, including part rebuilding of external walls and reconstruction of roof.

Cllr Simons left the meeting while this application was discussed. Cllrs had no objections to the proposed work.

It was RESOLVED: to support the application.

9. HEREFORDSHIRE DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

Cllr Anderson reported that the new Herefordshire Local Plan for 2021 – 2041 is in consultation stage. A recent on-line meeting for Parish Councils prior to the start of the public consultation, highlighted the settlement hierarchy for rural areas. Weobley had been placed in the 'Hub with Environmental Constraints' category with regard to future development. She also attended a drop-in-event on the 25th March and noted that no additional housing had been allocated for the parish in the Draft Local Plan above the existing target of 98 dwellings, of which 68 had already been delivered or approved.

Cllr Apps would add a reference to the Draft Local Plan and Local Transport Plan consultation process on the village website and Cllr Anderson would post notices concerning the consultations on local notice boards.

There was brief discussion concerning the need for an additional PC noticeboard in the centre of the village. **It was RESOLVED** that Cllr. Wilkinson would investigate the possibility of a board fixed to the south facing wall of the bus shelter. Commercial and bespoke design options would be investigated.

The Chairman reported on a Hereford Times advertisement concerning an application by Persimmon Homes to construct an Integrated Wetland Site on land to the north of the allotments. **It was RESOLVED** to make enquiries of Holly Thompson of Herefordshire Wildlife Trust who it was anticipated would know of the matter.

10. PLAY AREA:

Cllr Breen had circulated notes of the Play Area group to councillors and others. Particular items commented on were:

- Rotating see-saw out of use and awaiting repair
- S106 Open Spaces funding application for land drainage was on-going. Cllr Breen would liaise with Programme Manager, Andrew Houston, regarding procedures for updating the application. As per their request, the Chairman would write to confirm the continuity of use of Play Area for recreational purposes.
- use of Play area was currently low because of the wetness of the ground
- The Portaloo is now on site for duration of summer. The actual cost to be reviewed.

11. LIBRARY AND MUSEUM:

A question of legal status of ownership was raised by Cllr Anderson as there are anomalies in the documentation held by the Parish Council. No further action regarding the building is planned at present. It is hoped that the flood alleviation measures (Item 7) will help with reduction of damp problems.

12. WEBSITE:

Cllr Apps had so far been unable to meet with the possible new web-site administrator, but hoped to do so in a month's time and would report further. He would continue to main the site in the interim.

13. INFORMATION SHEET:

There had been a number of documents received from various departments of the Herefordshire Council and other bodies which Cllr Anderson had circulated to Cllrs.

Cllr Simons advised that the local Weobley Welcome Hub had closed because of lack of attendees.

14. CLERK RECRUITMENT:

Members were informed that HALC have received two applications and interviews had been set for 28th March, to be attended by Cllrs Anderson and Apps.

15. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA:

No specific items were proposed, but Cllr Anderson asked members to advise in good time for the preparation of the next agenda.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday 23rd April 2024.
Annual Parish Meeting: date fixed for Thursday 23rd May at 7pm
Parish Council AGM: Tuesday 28th May

Meeting closed 8.45pm.

CHAIR:

DATE: