

WALFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk: Catherine Murray. Rose Cottage, Coughton, Ross on Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 5SF.

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Minutes for the meeting of the Parish Council held at Walford Village Hall on Wednesday 10th January at 7.30pm

Present: Frank Myers - Chairman

Councillors: Dave Berry, Karen Chinn, Simeon Cole, Eric Drummond, Heather Evans, Nesta Hirst, Sophie Hurley, Angus McIntosh.

In attendance: Clerk Catherine Murray.

Before the meeting commenced, the Chairman invited those present to hold a minute of silence, in memory of Lydia Cole, daughter of Councillor Simeon Cole and his wife Sandra. Lydia passed away unexpectedly just before Christmas; our thoughts are with the Cole Family and friends at this very sad time.

1. **Apologies:** Murray Alston, Shane Carlson, Luke Freeman.
2. **Declarations:** None.
3. **Minutes:** It was proposed and seconded and unanimously **RESOLVED** to accept minutes of the previous meeting held on 22/11/17.
4. **Reports and questions:**
 - 4.1 **Community Support Co-ordinator:** Sarah gave her report:
 - Since our last meeting in November we have provided 53 volunteer hours comprising of 21 social visits, 10 shopping trips & 1 appointment.
 - Before Christmas we held a very successful Fundraising event for local businesses to learn more about what we do in terms of the Scheme & donate in support. We are looking forward to planning a similar, but more social event in the Summer months.
 - As a result of the donations we've received, we're now able to plan a program of events for the coming year for our service users. And we've Christened this programme of events as – What's on Walford...or WoW! We're planning one activity / outing every other month. We're also hoping to work alongside the Ross Action Bus & see how we can fit together.
 - Coffee mornings continue to take place 2nd Tuesday of every month at the back of the St Michaels & All Angels.
 - Karen, Sophie & I meet regularly to discuss the Scheme's progress & how we can expand. To this end, we're covering the Walford Hills – Bulls, Howle & Leys – one each & carrying out a door to door, delivering leaflets & face to face information on the scheme. We feel there are people living there who may be isolated & needing help or company. If anyone, is concerned about a neighbour, it's a good opportunity to contact us now, as we will be targeting all homes on the hills, so no one will feel singled out.
 - Finally, I am in contact with the Herford Branch of the Alzheimers Society. Karen & I attended a short awareness session on Dementia in Hereford last year. We found it very useful I am intending on getting a session together in Walford for those who're interested. There can't be many who aren't directly or indirectly affected by Dementia. The sessions will be free. Please do get in touch if you're interested. I need a minimum of 6 people in order to run a session. They are no longer than an hour.
 - 4.2 **Police representative:** Was not present.
 - 4.3 **Ward Cllr:** Was not present.
 - 4.4 **Localities Steward:** Was not present.
5. **Finance:** The bank reconciliation, Finance Appendix A and bank statements for November & December were noted and signed.
 - 5.1 **Update from the Finance Chairman: Additional budget information:** Councillor Chinn highlighted the cost of the election, which has been taken into account when setting the budget. She asked the clerk to provide information on the actual costs and turnout figures for the Finance Committee agenda after the details are known.

- 5.2 **Precept and Budget:** The proposed budget had been discussed at the previous meeting, circulated to all Councillors and posted on the website.
- 5.2.1 It was proposed and seconded and unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the budget and set the precept for 2018-19 at £26,500 and to fill out the precept request form, which was duly signed by the Chairman. Cllr Chinn explained that operational costs are £28,700 and income £29,000. There will be an increase of £370 on last year's precept.
- 5.3 **Payments:** It was proposed and seconded and unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the following payments:
- 5.3.1 HMRC PAYE & NI. £138.94
- 5.3.2 Information Commissioner – Data Protection Fee. £35.00
- 5.3.3 Autela Payroll Services & Pension enrolment. £78.00
- 5.3.4 Clerk expenses Nov & Dec. £113.07
- 5.3.5 Community Support Co-ordinator expenses Nov & Dec. £82.35
- 5.4 **The following payments were noted:**
Clerk and Community Support Co-ordinator salaries – December. (Figures are not published)
6. **Planning:** Members of the public and applicants were invited to comment prior to the Parish Council discussing following and it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to comment as follows:
- 6.1 **Planning Applications:**
- 6.1.1 **Application No:** 174178. **Site Address:** Land opposite Cheques Lodge, Leys Hill, HR9 5QU.
Comments: *There were no objections, the Parish Council supported the application with the condition that sympathetic materials in keeping with the area be used in the construction. There were concerns about the impact on traffic, particularly at the junction with Leys Hill and the B4234.*
- 6.1.2 **Application No:** 174443. **Site Address:** Walford House, Priory Lea, HR9 5RT.
Comments: There were no objections, the Parish Council supported the application.
- 6.1.3 **Appeal for Application No:** 170615. **Site Address:** Hill Side, Walford, HR9 5QS.
Comments: The Parish Council had no further comments to add to the previous.
- 6.2 **Neighbourhood Planning:** Will Warburg was not present, but had provided a written update, which the Chairman read out: *'The consultants' report for the site assessments was unexpectedly delayed, and has only just arrived. It will be circulated to the NDP Group members shortly, and a meeting convened to consider the report. This meeting will be scheduled after allowing sufficient time to read the report, which is a substantial document.'*
7. **Licensing Section Environmental Health and Trading Standards:** LICENSING ACT 2003 Notification of APPLICATION FOR VARIATION OF A PREMISES LICENCE: **Foxtail Distillery, Croft Cottage, Hom Green, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 7TF.** The applicant was present and explained the background to the application. As the information from Herefordshire Council was not complete, the Parish Council did not comment. The applicant agreed to send the relevant information to the Clerk, who was given delegated power to respond by the due date of 15th January and to send the information to all Councillors. There were no objections put forward at the meeting. <<**Action Clerk**>>
8. **Highways / Rights of Way / AONB:** (*Appendix D contains Councillors Highways & Rights of Way Reports.*)
- 8.1 **Report from the Lengthsman Co-ordinator and Rights of Way Officer:** Cllr Cole said that all was going according to the Annual Plan. Cllr Evans said that the Rights of Way signage is going to be done. She has not had complaints about paths and asked people to report signage and post issues to her.
- 8.2 **Approve work orders for the Lengthsman and Rights of Way:** Cllr Berry said that overgrowth on the footway from Walford Village Hall to the Church needs cutting back and Cllr Cole said that this would be done by the Lengthsman.
- 8.3 **Expression of Interest for Lengthsman / P3 schemes:** It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to sign the Expression of Interest form and the clerk will send it to Herefordshire Council.
- 8.4 **Footpath WA3:** Cllr Evans explained the background, in that Mr Allen is being disturbed at night by users of the footpath and has been locking the gate after dark. Cllr Evans suggested that a stile could be put in and the clerk was asked to facilitate contact with Herefordshire Council and try to find a solution. <<**Action Clerk**>>
9. **Parish Projects: To receive updates and discuss further action.**
- 9.1 **Community Support Scheme:** Will be showcased and discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting. Ideas need to be generated to improve the scheme.
- 9.2 **Kerne Bridge Canoe Launch Site:** It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to sign the Amended Land Transfer document. The Chairman explained that the Management Agreement has been completed and is being finalised by the Solicitors. It will be brought to Full Council for approval, when ready.

9.3 **Forest Green Management:** A congenial meeting regarding the felling of the dead Oak tree has taken place with Mr Dowgill on site at Forest Green; it is thought that the soil is contaminated with Phytophthora – a soil test will be carried out; a solution should be found. There had been some discussion about planting a hedge, as some local residents are concerned about travellers settling there Cllr Evans suggested that the site should be left for wildlife to make use of and she added that the safety issue regarding the dead Oak tree was addressed just in time, given the high winds and storms that occurred shortly after the dead tree was felled. . She added that there is a rare Black Poplar tree nearby, from which cuttings could be taken and planted at the site, where the ground is very boggy - conditions that suit Black Poplars. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** not to plant a hedgerow, but to pursue the idea of bringing on and planting cuttings from the Black Poplar.

10. **Land at The Dam:** The Chairman explained the background and read the explanation from Mr Dinnik, about what he wishes to do with the land, should he be successful in purchasing it. He plans to fill in the hole and use it for additional parking. Cllr Cole said that it is a drainage hole and a lot of water drains down it. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to go and look at the piece of land before making any decision. The Clerk was asked to arrange a visit with Mr Dinnik. <<**Action Clerk**>>

11. Information and correspondence:

11.1 Appendix C, Appendix D and HALC Information corner, which had been circulated to all Councillors were noted.

11.2 **Responses to Correspondence:** There were no responses required to correspondence above those which the clerk had dealt with.

11.3 **Councillors reports on local matters:** Cllr Berry highlighted the bad pot holes, just this side of Tudorville. Cllr Drummond asked whether the cuttings into the ditches at Hom Green will be attended to and Cllr Cole said that he will contact the Lengthsman and ask him to do it. Cllr Evans said that the potholes were bad between Suff Lodge and the end of her lane and the length between Suff Lodge and Freeman Farming there was brash on the road. Cllr Evans had contacted Richard Freeman about overhanging trees and he stated that these were Forestry Commission responsibility; the Clerk was asked to contact the Forestry Commission. <<**Action Clerk**>>

12. Public participation session: *(This item has been expanded upon for purposes of clarity and transparency)*

- A member of the public raised a query about the picnic area at the Canoe launch site, which is cordoned off; who is responsible? Who will maintain it? How much will it cost?

The Chairman explained that it will be done before the season starts and if there is any expense, WPC will sort it, perhaps by donation of time. He explained that the hardware at the site is the responsibility of the PC, who owns the site.

- **Another complained about the PC highlighting the costs of the election in the last issue of the Newsletter.** Cllr Chinn explained that it was a financial matter, because it impacts on the budget.

- **Another asked whether there will be a public meeting, and one stated that there had been a commitment to hold a public meeting:** Cllr Chinn explained that this meeting taking place is a public meeting, as is every PC meeting, at which the public may have their say. The Chairman said 'We have decided to open up the subject at the Annual Parish meeting, where we will discuss this.' He listed the agencies with whom the PC has consulted:

The Environment Agency

The Wye Navigation Committee, which is attended by representatives of the Canoe Hire Operators
British Canoeing

The Canoe Hire Operators Collective Group

The AONB Management Team

Powys County Council

Herefordshire Council

Local Stakeholders (At the start of the process)

Bishopswood Village Hall Committee

He apologised if the PC could have done more to communicate, but this has been discussed at meetings since 2010; he was sorry if the message had not reached everyone, but reassured the public that the original commitment in 2010 has not been departed from and the PC will not do anything additional to that without it being discussed in a council meeting; a café is being installed there, but nothing will happen that has not been part of the initial commitment.

The Clerk explained that the APM is dedicated entirely to the electorate, with no formal PC business taking place; as such it is a perfect vehicle for an open discussion and it will showcase both the Community Support Scheme and the Canoe Launch, so all present will be able to express their views and to ask questions in an open public forum.

- Another requested that no more work be done at the site before the next PC meeting. He added that he would like to see an 'implementation plan' and Cllr Hurley asked what works were causing him concern. He responded that he would like to see what is actually going to happen.
- Another member of the public raised the issue of the junction at Leys Hill; the Clerk responded that she had contacted the senior highways engineer at Balfour Beatty and was awaiting a response.
- Another was concerned that she is directly affected by the site and in her opinion, it is too small to take any more development. Cllr Chinn explained that it has for years been operating as a canoe launch site, whilst owned by Herefordshire Council, the only difference is that the PC is managing it and making some money to fund parish projects. The Chairman explained the history of the management regime and our vision for the site; he gave an example: A local school has suggested an archery school at the site, so that school groups can partake without having to move to another site when they leave the river. A member of the public mentioned health and safety concerns, which of course will be addressed.
- Another was worried about the lack of concern apparently shown by the PC about the environment; the Chairman explained that we have regularly consulted with the 'Environment Agency' throughout the process.
- The Café / Kiosk was mentioned and the Chairman explained that this was in the hands of the right people, therefore will be dealt with appropriately.
- A member of the public expressed concern about 'rumours' and asked that the PC give an undertaking that any changes that take place will be publicised; and the agenda include specific items.
- Another said people need to understand proposals for the site and want clarity, saying that a public meeting on the issue would resolve these issues. Cllr Chinn re-iterated that we are already having a public meeting; although plans for the APM will cover this. Cllr Berry said that the PC has been giving the public information in the public meetings which have taken place, but some of the public present don't seem to want to hear what is being said. It was also noted that much of what is being questioned now had been discussed many times at meetings since 2010 but those who were raising questions now had not attended those earlier meetings. It was also pointed out that most newsletters in the past seven years have contained an update.

13. Items for next meeting agenda: Costs of the election and turn-out. *(If available)*

14. Next meeting: 21/02/17 Finance Committee @ 6.30pm, Full Council @ 7.30pm at Walford Church.

15. Confidential Closed session: *(The public were asked to leave the room)*

Kerne Bridge Canoe Launch Site. Management Agreement. (Summary)

- Lawyers and are assimilating points raised by Councillors, in response to the draft circulated.
- Negotiations are taking place with Herefordshire Council regarding the overage clause.

Signed:

Date: 28.02.18