

ELDERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of Eldersfield Parish Council
held on 23rd March 2025
at Eldersfield Lawn School, commencing at 7.00 p.m.**

Present: Mrs C Joseph (Chairman), Mr M. Barton,
Mrs D E Holt (Vice-Chairman), Mrs T A Owen

In Attendance: County Councillor Tom Wells
District Councillor Jenny Watkins

**Members of the
Public:** -

1. Apologies for absence

Mrs W Burr

2. Members' interests

None

3. Adoption of the Minutes of the previous meeting

The draft Minutes of the meeting held on 7th January 2025 were accepted as a true record of that meeting and were signed as such by the Chairman of the meeting.

4. Matters arising

None

5. Report from District and County Councillors

County Councillor Tom Wells reminded the meeting that he had been a county councillor for twenty-eight years and confirmed that he would be standing at the elections in May.

He described the proposed county council re-organisation. The Government had announced its intention to bring democracy closer to the people and to do this it would first abolish district councils and then reorganise county councils and later, for groups of county councils, appoint mayors. MHDC would cease to exist. The question was then whether Worcestershire County Council should remain as one Council (a 'unitary' authority) or be divided into two such authorities, a North and South. A report commissioned from a firm of consultants suggested that the first option would generate savings in its first year, the second in the eleventh. The decision would be taken by the Minister.

Cllr Wells said that he believed that his constituents would best be served by a two authority structure since they would not be required to bear the higher costs inherent with servicing the north, and more urbanised, part of the county.

On a different matter he commented that ‘Worcestershire On Demand’, a dial-up bus service, was being well used in Eldersfield. It is available through an app of that name; fares are £2.50.

District Councillor Jenny Watkins advised that MHDC had created a £1m fund for improvement of health in the district. It was likely that grants from this fund would be available for matters such as defibrillators.

She also advised members that there was an open investigation of alleged breach of planning controls within the Parish.

6. Public Comment

None

7. Neighbourhood Plan

The Chairman reported that informal consultation had taken place between councillors as to whether a Housing Needs Survey should be commissioned but that no consensus had emerged.

County Councillor Wells said that he had had experience of such surveys and commented that in his view it was important that the Council maintain control of the process and that these surveys had the capacity to cause deep rifts within communities.

The matter was deferred to the next meeting.

8. Road Safety

The Chairman said that she had received an offer of signs indicating the need for moderation of speed in the presence of horses and that the cost would be £1,200. It was noted that there had been no recorded accidents involving horses and that £1,200 represented a large proportion of the precept.

Cllr Wells offered to fund this purchase from his discretionary budget but could do so only after the elections on 1st May and on condition that he was re-elected.

It was decided to defer the matter to the next meeting.

9. Defibrillator

The Chairman informed the meeting that the search was continuing for additional sites for defibrillators.

Councillors noted that a new cabinet would be appropriate for the defibrillator at the school

10. Shed

Cllr Barton informed the meeting that he had requested the school to remove the electricity supply from the shed in order that he could demolish and remove the structure. The school had now done this and he expected to complete his task during the Easter holiday.

11. Training

Council considered the possibility of developing polices on Sexual Harassment Awareness and undertaking appropriate training but decided that the very low level of risk did not justify the expenditure of time, money and effort which would be needed.

12. Lengthsman

Council noted the report from the Clerk on the services provided by the Lengthsman for which invoices had been submitted as follows: January £288; February £144.

13. Authorisation of Disbursements

It was **RESOLVED** that the following disbursements be made for goods and services:

£269.79	J L Gabbott
£173.60	HMRC
£432.00	Jeremy Moore (Jan £288; Feb £144)

14. Future Meetings

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on Tuesday 27th May 2025 at 7.00 pm in Eldersfield Lawn School.

15. Any other business

None

JLG
25.3.25