

DRAFT

2022/12

LITTLE COMBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes from the Parish Council meeting, held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 5th April 2022 at 7pm, at Little Comberton Village Hall.

PRESENT: Cllrs: L Haycock, A Dermont, C Rabbette and S Britten, District Cllr Kearsley & County Cllr Hardman.

Rev Katryn Leclizio, Vicar in Bredon Hill group, A. Haycock (Co-option candidate)

Cllr Haycock was voted Chair for the meeting – all in favour.

1. **APOLOGIES:** There were apologies received from Cllr Jamieson.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were none declared.
3. **CO-OPTION:** Following formal approval of an application for co-option received from Adam Haycock at the March meeting of the Parish Council, Cllrs approved the signing of a declaration of office of acceptance and welcomed Mr Haycock as a new Council member.
Action: Clerk to forward a register of interest's form to Cllr Haycock for completion and return to Wychavon District Council.
4. **PARISHIONER'S COMMENTS: OPEN FORUM**
No parishioners were in attendance, however comments had been received from two parishioners regarding the split pear tree in Orchard Drive, and the Redwood tree behind the church, which were discussed under item 7, Trees. A proposal had also been received from a parishioner regarding the potential amalgamation of Little Comberton & Great Comberton Parish Councils, which was discussed and considered under item 11.
5. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** Minutes from the previous meeting held on Tuesday 1st March 2022 were approved: *proposed Cllr Rabbette, seconded Cllr Britten, all in favour to accept as a true record.*
4. **PROGRESS REPORTS:**
 - a) *Land adjacent to Wick Road:* Cllr Dermont reported that he had discussed with the landowner the growing public use of the land at the edge of the field bordering Pool Close gardens. A post has now been erected at the Wick Road end and signs clarifying that the land is private with no public right of way, have been placed at both ends of the 'passage'. It is hoped that this will resolve the situation. It was agreed that the Parish Council would inform the landowner that the matter had been discussed further, and out of courtesy, inform him that signage had been erected and by whom.
Action: Cllr Dermont to provide an update to the landowner on behalf of the Parish Council.
(Following the meeting, Cllr Dermont confirmed the landowner had now been informed and had expressed his approval).
 - b) *Highway Matters:*
 - Drainage, Corner of Orchard Drive – Following the last update from the County Council in October 2021, County Cllr Hardman confirmed that he was not aware of a timetable for the completion of works to the storm water drain at present, but agreed to liaise on behalf of the Parish Council to establish further information from the relevant officer.
 - c) Ditches/watercourses: The connection to the brook at Old House Farm appears to have resolved the situation, therefore it was agreed to remove this as an agenda item.

- d) Lengthsman: The Clerk confirmed that new contract paperwork had been signed and received from the lengthsman and Cllr Jamieson had met with BA to discuss a proposal for future work plans, to coincide with work in neighbouring Great Comberton. It was agreed that the lengthsman would work alternate Wednesday mornings and communicate via Cllr Jamieson.
- e) Footpaths/PRoW: Following discussion of the latest report received from the footpaths warden, Cllr Rabbette confirmed that a meeting with Cllr Jamieson was due to take place. When possible, it was agreed the Cllrs would look at the areas referred to, establishing if there are safety or access issues to address.

Action: Retain as an agenda item for further updates at the May meeting.

7. TREES

(i) Redwood Tree

A report had been received from a parishioner regarding the condition of the Redwood tree behind the Church, which has been affected over time by grazing livestock. Information had been obtained previously from the Senior Greenspace Officer at Worcestershire County Council, who had advised providing some sort of physical barrier to prevent grazing of the bark. It was confirmed that the landowners had previously expressed an interest in taking action, therefore it was agreed to make contact to establish if assistance was required in progressing the issue, with the support of the Greenspace Officer.

Action: Clerk to contact the landowner and provide contact details of the Greenspace Officer at WCC.

(ii) Damaged pear tree, Orchard Drive

A concern had been received regarding the proposed removal of the damaged pear tree, approved by the Parish Council at the March meeting. Professional advice had been obtained, informing that the existing tree would need heavy pruning and potentially a bolt to stop it falling apart, and would not look in keeping with the surrounding trees, therefore felling was considered to be the best option. A second quote had been obtained for remedial works of the existing tree and as there was little difference in price, Cllrs agreed to proceed with the tree removal. A discussion ensued regarding a suitable replacement for the tree, and it was agreed that a like for like replacement was preferable as it would be in keeping with the existing street scene and therefore more acceptable to residents. Thanks were also extended to County Cllr Hardman who had provided Cllr funding to finance the works.

Action: Clerk to liaise with tree surgeon to proceed with the work quoted and approved.

*Lime Tree – Memorial garden: Prior to the meeting, a parishioner had reported a loose, wedged branch of a lime tree in the Memorial Ground to Cllr Rabbette, which was forwarded to the Clerk and members of the Council. The Clerk made contact with a local tree surgeon, familiar with the tree, on the day of the report and confirmed that the surgeon would attend to the tree on 6th April to make safe and remove any material.

(iii) Role of Tree Officer 2022-23

There is no official tree officer at present, as previous volunteers are unable to fully commit to the role to the best of their ability due to other commitments. It was agreed that as trees are a regular item of discussion, although it is essential for a professional to attend to any trees which present a safety hazard, it would be useful if general feedback of any action required might be obtained from villagers and forwarded to the Council to manage the situation collectively. It was agreed therefore to request assistance from the village via the email group, and an approach from Cllrs to any potential interested parties.

Action: Cllr Dermont to make initial enquiries with a previous resident who was tree warden, and report back to Cllrs.

8. DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS:

District Cllr Kearsey reported on the following items:

- Wychavon District Council have frozen their Council Tax for a fifth year.
- Cllr representatives are encouraged to attend the forthcoming 'Ticket to Ride' community based transport event, taking place at the Civic Centre on 27 April 2022 6-8pm. The purpose of the event is to provide inspiration and ideas to communities in Wychavon who are looking to develop community-based transport schemes and to encourage applications for the next round of the Ticket to Ride fund which opens in June. Booking is required via: tracy.perkins@wychavon.gov.uk
- WDC have requested Ukrainian speakers to come forward to assist with work currently underway to support refugees. The DC is working collaboratively with WCC and government at pace, in order to provide essential support to refugees in the district.
- Cllrs are reminded that £100 in Jubilee funding is available from the DC towards Parish Jubilee events in June. There is no deadline for funding, and street closure fees have been waived. Cllr Rabbette confirmed that plans are in hand and would be discussed further at the next Sports & Social meeting.
- Boundary Commission Ward Boundary proposals: Cllr Rabbette's excellent response on behalf of the Parish Council was noted and submitted on 4th March 2022. It was reported that the best, alternative suggestions were put forward and passed unanimously by the District Council, but do not unfortunately help the rural Bredon parishes. Comments will be added to the Boundary Commission website when their recommendations are published, therefore no further updates at present.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT:

County Cllr Hardman reported on the following items:

- Pershore Area Review consultation: Updates had been received and circulated, outlining Worcestershire Children First's intention to submit recommendations to Worcestershire County Council Cabinet in March 2022, presenting the Pershore Review consultation responses and feedback from individual school proposals and the next steps for the review.
At present, the recommendations are not finalised and Worcestershire Children First now intend to submit the proposal to the Worcestershire County Council Cabinet in April 2022 as the next opportunity. Worcestershire Children First, the Department for Education (DfE), the Multi-Academy Trusts and the Diocese of Worcester are continuing to work together to find a collective and collaborate solution. A discussion ensued, and Cllr Hardman confirmed that he had received no communications from local parishioners regarding the situation, to date.
- County Cllr Hardman has submitted a request for resurfacing works to the path by the village hall and round the corner, following an inspection of its current condition.

9. PLANNING:

- W/21/02701: Old Rectory - Erection of residential annexe following demolition of outbuildings and wall. Comments were forwarded in support of the application by the Parish Council on 7/3/22. District Cllr Kearsey confirmed that she had been in regular communication with the planning officer assigned to the application and a decision remains pending.
- W/22/00105: Ringsmere Orchard – Replacement garaging. Comments were forwarded to WDC on 11/3/22. *Decision pending.*

*Calc planning training March 2022 – Cllr Haycock provided members with an update following recent planning training undertaken with Worcestershire Calc. District Cllr Kearsey drew attention to current changes being made within the planning process which involve consideration of a new set of criteria regarding the number of comments received and type of application, and local Ward members calling applications to Planning Committee where Parish Councils have put in a material planning consideration. It is

important, therefore, that correct representation is made from Parish Councils in terms of how an application fits within current planning regulations. DCllr Kearsey also highlighted further, helpful planning

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advice which is available via a government portal and reiterated her previous support in checking or discussing any comments the Parish Council are considering regarding future applications.

10. FINANCE / GOVERNANCE:

a) Current Balances at 29th March 2022:

Current Account: £5,641.61

Deposit account: £4,931.11

Petty cash: £61.21

TOTAL £10,633.93

*The Clerk confirmed that balances were different to those outlined on the agenda as current statements had been subsequently received and final lengthsman income credited by the year end. The previous Clerk had prepared final year end balances which were circulated to members for information.

b) *Payments to report:*

Salary (March 2022) £330.98

Expenses (March 2022) £12.00

Village hall hire (April) £12.00

2 x Calc planning training £180.00

TOTAL £534.98

Income to report: County Cllr Hardman: Cllr funding: Tree – Orchard Drive £150.00

Proposed Cllr Haycock, seconded Cllr Rabbette, all in favour to note current balances and approval of payments and income reported.

c) Annual Return 2021-22 accounts: The previous Clerk had agreed to complete the end of year accounts for 2021-22 and forward to the internal auditor for checks and verification, ahead of approval at the May meeting of the Parish Council.

d) Bank mandate changes: Further confirmation is required regarding new and existing signatories, in addition to the recent standing order request. *Action: Clerk to liaise with Barclays.*

11. CORRESPONDENCE:

Pershore Education Review	Details of the current position of the Pershore Area Review consultation and next steps have been received: <i>As noted under item 8, County Cllr report.</i>
BW	Proposal received for discussion, regarding the potential for amalgamation with neighbouring Great Comberton Parish Council: A thorough discussion took place, regarding the advantages and disadvantages of such a proposal. Although the Parish Council recognises the close community connections with its neighbouring Parish and the challenges faced in the recruitment of Cllrs, it was agreed that there were significant drawbacks, with the potential for a larger scope of Cllr responsibilities which may deter future recruitment further. <i>Action: Clerk to thank BW for his suggestions on behalf of the Parish Council for raising the proposals, which were closely considered.</i>

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Clive Leworthy	<p>Cllrs have confirmed a Zoom format of the village Airband meeting scheduled for Wednesday 20th April @ 6pm-7pm.</p> <p><i>Action: Clerk to forward Zoom meeting details and link via the village email.</i></p>
WDC	<p>Jubilee funding has been approved @ £100 towards potential events in the village. Details and a breakdown of costs are required in order to apply for funding.</p> <p><i>As reported under item 8, District Cllr report.</i></p>
SNT	<p>A newsletter had been received and circulated from the Safer Neighbourhoods Team, and updates requested if any, to report at the Annual Meeting</p>
Rev. Leclizio	<p>Ukrainian refugees: Further to Cllr Haycock's recent update, the Clerk has updated Great Comberton, Elmley Castle and Bricklehampton Parish Council regarding the Facebook page set up by an Elmley Castle resident, in order to communicate a local community response in support of Ukrainian refugees.</p>
Wychavon Sport	<p>Details received regarding 2022 Parish Games – there will be 15 events and packs of rules/entry forms are available upon request. Entry fees to be discussed at the April AGM. <i>Clerk to circulate further information regarding events and entry fees, once received, to be circulated on the village email.</i></p>

12. MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS / DISCUSSION:

Cllr Rabbette extended thanks to Cllr Britten for her many years of loyal service as Parish Councillor and member of Bredon Hill Conservation Group, which was supported unanimously by all Cllrs.

Recruiting new Cllrs remains a challenge, therefore the Council continue to promote the two vacancies and agreed to review the sharing of responsibilities at the May meeting. It was also agreed to explore a potential expanded list of village volunteers who may be willing to be available on an ad hoc basis in order to provide support to the Parish Council, without the full time commitment.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: The Annual Parish meeting, followed by Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, was proposed for Tuesday 3rd May 2022 in the Village hall at 7pm – *availability to be confirmed by Cllr Jamieson.*