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Great Comberton Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting - Minutes Wednesday 4th May 2022, 6.30pm Village Hall

Parish Councillors Present: K Collingwood (Chair), S Hamilton, S Inglis, A Lavelle, G Hodgson, H Peart
District Cllr E Kearsley, County Cllr A Hardman.

Clerk/RFO: Nicola Harding **In attendance:** Six parishioners
Also in attendance: Parish lengthsman & Parish Footpaths warden

Apologies – apologies were received from Cllr Barnes.

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 3rd March 2021

Proposed Cllr Lavelle, seconded Cllr Hamilton, all in favour, to approve the minutes as a true record.

Reports

In advance of the meeting, the following reports were circulated and are appended to the minutes:

- Parish Council Chairman report
- Footpaths Warden report
- Tree warden report
- Police report
- Great Comberton Social Club report
- 75th Great Comberton Fruit & Flower show report
- Great Comberton Village Hall report

The Chairman summarized her report, followed by Cllr Hamilton & Cllr Hodgson, on behalf of the Fruit & Flower Show and Social Club.

- **District Cllr report**

DCllr E Kearsley shared her annual report with the meeting, which is appended to the minutes for information. In summary, it had been a busy and enjoyable twelve months newly representing the Ward, becoming fully immersed in the Community Funding Panel to achieve the Intelligently Green Plan, in addition to active involvement with the recent Ticket to Ride transport event. As substitute member for the Planning Committee, DCllr Kearsley continues to seek improvements to make a positive difference in the District within the parameters of planning policy, and has also been invited to become involved in the Budget Scrutiny Policy. 2022 saw the fifth consecutive year of a Council Tax freeze for residents and bulky waste collections had resumed. Representations had been made towards the Boundary Review and an outcome remains pending. DCllr Kearsley will walk the Wychavon Way as a Jubilee event to raise funds towards St Richards Hospice, and will circulate further details for information.

- **County Cllr report**

CCllr Hardman delivered his report to the meeting, which is appended to the minutes for information. In summary, regrettably, Covid-19 cases remain high within the area but throughout the pandemic, the County Council has continued to deliver its services in a flexible manner. The 2022/23 budget ensures that all adult social care and children's care pressures are fully funded, however governmental social care reforms will put considerable pressures on County Councils to administer these. The County Council is in the process of welcoming Ukrainian guests in partnership with District Council colleagues, and are repurposing the "here to help scheme" in arranging for the provision of much needed support. Following the new water main, roads are in a satisfactory state within the Parish, but there remains some work to complete in footpaths repairs, namely the section of Church Street and Joe's Farm, which will be upgraded at the existing width. Cllr Hardman reported that further repairs and resurfacing works are planned in Eckington at the start of the summer term, which will result in further traffic diversions through the village, anticipated for one week. The current review of the Pershore pyramid could well result in a two tier system - a ministerial meeting is scheduled to discuss how much support the government will provide to the project, which will require an expansion of Pershore High School.

Following the County Council's failed bid to government for its Bus Service Improvement Plan, a Cllr raised concerns regarding coordination between County and District Councils and effects upon local bus services and the subsequent implications upon rural villages. County Cllr Hardman confirmed that the County Council has the overall strategy to provide the best bus service and network that it can afford. Bespoke services can be laid on in Parishes and the District Council is also reviewing fund raising to provide alternative services.

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- **Parish lengthsman**

Concerns were raised by the lengthsman regarding excess loose grit and deterioration of the gutters, which is creating blockages in the drains and resulting in more use of weed killer, at increased costs to local Parishes. As the lengthsman is prohibited to work on the highways, confirmation was requested from DCllr Kearsy regarding current schedules for road sweeping in the District. It was confirmed that services are now returning to normal with bespoke sweeps conducted in problem areas, but DCllr Kearsy would request a definitive answer regarding local schedules for road sweeping to work hand in hand with existing weed maintenance.

- **Footpath warden**

The recently appointed footpaths warden was in attendance, to introduce himself to members of the Council and provide an update of recent inspections completed within the Parish. Any problems noted by parishioners on parish footpaths should be reported direct to Worcestershire County Council using the online form via:

<https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/onlinereporting/FindLocation.aspx?FaultType=8>

- **Police report**

A recent speed check conducted did not indicate a speeding issue within the Parish, however it was noted that a true representation was not obtained, given the early afternoon timings of the checks. Following a spate of night time suspicious activity of vehicles and prowling, it was encouraging that a visible police presence had been sighted completing patrols in the village in recent days.

- **Invitation to parishioners to raise issues**

A parishioner noted that patching works originally scheduled to repair verge erosion and pot holes on Pershore Road during the week beginning 2nd May, had yet to take place. County Cllr Hardman confirmed that County Council Highways teams can experience short delays, but as a meeting was imminent, it was agreed that Cllr Hardman would clarify this and provide further updates.

A comment had been received from a parishioner unable to attend the meeting in person, requesting:

‘a reassessment or review of the current village design statement given the change of population in the village and the constant evolution of social and environmental factors that affect the village and surrounding area, since the last one was undertaken.’

As the village design statement is not current, District Cllr Kearsy raised the benefits of the Council’s consideration of a Neighbourhood Plan, as a shared vision, allowing local people to plan for detailed priorities for the types of development to meet the needs of their community. The process is not a light undertaking, however 100% funding is available from Wychavon District Council, and once adopted, a Neighbourhood Plan takes precedence in terms of future planning applications. A discussion about the process ensued and District Cllr Kearsy also updated members about recent changes to the planning process in determining planning applications within the District.

Action: Clerk to provide updates to this effect to parishioner.

Cllr Peart reported on the Alderman Gibbs & Joseph Wright Parish charities, which had raised £400.00 for distribution.

Signed

Date.....

Chairman