

**WOLVERLEY & COOKLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 2023, 7.00pm, Wolverley Church Hall, Wolverley**

Present:

Mr R Drew (Chairman)  
Mrs V Bordewich  
Mr A Carloss  
Mr D Cox  
Mr J Hart  
Mr M Hart  
Mr D Jones  
Mr B McFarland  
Mr C Nicholls  
Mr C Sherrey  
Mr S Sherrey  
Mr W Southam  
Mr J Wood

West Mercia Police: PCSO Rebecca Ruston  
County Councillor: Councillor I Hardiman  
District Councillors: Councillor I Hardiman, Councillor M Hart

Cllr Dean Cox informed the Parish Council of the recent sad passing of Paul Mills. Paul was a Wolverley & Cookley Parish Councillor from 2011 - 2015, he was also the Parish Paths Warden. He also served on Worcestershire County Council and was a friend and colleague to many people in our Parish.

153. **Apologies**

The Clerk advised that no apologies had been received from Cllr Mrs L Jones and this is the sixth meeting not attended. Under the Local Government Act 1972 S85(1) and (2) Persistent Absence - If a member fails throughout six consecutive months to attend any meetings of the council, they automatically cease to be a member of the Council unless they have a statutory excuse, such as military service or their failure to attend is due to a reason approved by the council before the end of the six month period. As no reason for absence had been given, the Council did not consent to absence therefore Cllr Mrs L Jones automatically ceases to be a member of Wolverley & Cookley Parish Council. Clerk to advise Elections Manager at Wyre Forest District Council.

154. **Declarations of Councillors Interests**

- a) Register of Interests: The Clerk reminded Councillors that it is their responsibility to update their register of interests forms as required. If you require a new form, please contact the Clerk.
- b) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.
- c) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests (Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary) in items on the agenda and their nature. Cllrs D Cox and D Jones in Planning Application PC3652 as applicant known to them. Cllr J Hart in Planning Application PC3653 as he lives in Lowe Lane.

The meeting will now be adjourned for PUBLIC QUESTION TIME. No Public Questions.  
The meeting now reconvened to conduct the items of business listed below.

155. **To consider the adoption of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 7.00pm**

These having previously been circulated it was resolved unanimously to receive and adopt the minutes as a true record of the meeting and these were signed by the Chairman.

**Matters for Discussion / Decision.**

156. **Police Report.**

Written Report circulated. PCSO Ruston reported;

Theft - The Crescent, Cookley - police ref 00560\_I\_06122022

At approx. 2240hrs on 5th December an unknown person has stolen an Ifor Williams trailer from a driveway.

Suspicious incident - Castle Road, Cookley - Police ref 00392\_I\_08122022

On 8th December at approx. 1540hrs an unknown male has knocked a number of doors on Castle Road asking for fuel or money as his car had broken down. He was described as white, in his 50's with long grey straggly hair. Officer attended the area however the male had left the area.

Attempt Theft - Beechtree Lane - police ref 22/124500/22

At approx. 1425hrs on 14th December, 4 unknown males were seen attempting to steal a caravan. They left the area in a black Vauxhall.

157. **County / District Councillor Reports.**

County Cllr Ian Hardiman's Report; Written Report Circulated.

**Lea Lane Landslip:**

In response to my further chasing for action on this subject, I have received a response stating that whilst County Highways have long been ready to proceed with the necessary repairs and restoration of the highway in Lea Lane, they are still not able to proceed because the margin of land (collapsed) between the highway and the canal is privately owned and the owner has so far not been prepared to meet with the other interested parties to agree a way forward. The County Council's Legal Department is now being consulted to find a way to make progress with this unacceptable situation.

**Lea Castle Village Residents' Pedestrian Difficulties:**

Residents of the new homes of the Lea Castle Development have expressed their concerns, especially for children in crossing the busy A449, either at the Crossroads or at the Crescent/A449 junction. The planned re-configuration works at both is long overdue, as they should have been completed in accordance with planning consent conditions to provide adequate pedestrian safety improvement measures by now.

I have been chasing both the County Highways Department and Wyre Forest District Council Planners, urging explanation as to why the highway improvements have not even been commenced yet. I have now been informed that "Instead of implementing the intended works to mitigate the impact of the initial (600 houses) development, it would be better to consider also the wider site development (additional 800 houses) impact and shape the re-configuration works accordingly; presently, Homes England are providing the technical design details of the re-modelling for approval by County Highways / WFDC, and actual works are likely to commence around June/July 2023."

**Cookley, Bridge Road Double-Yellow Lines Improvements:**

Further to my previous report regarding difficulties experienced by long HGV's, County Highways officers have now agreed to extend slightly the double-Yellow Lines near to the Titan Wheels factory access which should alleviate the vehicle passing point problems by providing an improved margin here. County Officers have assured this would not negatively affect local residents' parking opportunities.

Cllr D Jones commented that as the Lea Castle Housing development is well underway and has all gone ahead with no junction improvements this is really posing serious safety concerns crossing the A449 and needs attention as the Parish Council have said on many occasions. Cllr C Sherrey suggested the Parish Council write again and this was unanimously agreed. Cllr D Jones asked that until resolved could the Parish Council request a temporary 30mph speed limit in the area. County Councillor Ian Hardiman will pursue this.

District Councillors Report; Written report circulated.

**Local Issues**

We have been dealing with the usual routine casework, fly tipping and litter picking on the main A roads and along the country lanes.

The Old Red Lion Public House, Cookley - The Planning Officer and Development Manager have met with the agent on site and discussed the perimeters of the future design. We will keep you informed when a revised application has been submitted.

**Enforcement Issues**

The Old Post Office, Cookley - The Conservation Officer and the Planning Enforcement Officer met with the agent before Christmas; the agent was rather aghast at the standard of work that had been carried out. They had a positive conversation regarding what was needed to restore the original characteristics of the building and discussed the illegal signage that had been erected this week. The agent is aware of 31st January deadline for all works to be completed and is aiming to submit revised drawings reflecting The Conservation Officer's recommendations in the first week of January. In addition, they have been given 21 days to correctly position their signs so they will revisit week ending 13th January to ensure this request has been adhered to. They will liaise again with ourselves as District Councillors in the first week of January.

**Wyre Forest District Issues**

Wyre Forest House is open to the public through the reception facility only, Green Street Hub is not open as a walk in Hub, appointments must be pre-booked save for dealing with housing and homelessness applications and 'urgent' issues.

The Registrars are now based in Wyre Forest House in the Chaddesley Room. They will also be using the Wolverley Room. This is due to the Kidderminster Town Hall Renovations.

If you, a friend or a family member are struggling financially, they can contact Rose Leonard or Sonia Stowe the District Council's Financial Inclusion Officers. Together they provide confidential and impartial financial advice, from housing, benefits and council tax to help with utilities. They have a wealth of knowledge and are available to help anyone who is struggling with the current cost of living crisis. The District Council also have lots of information and help on their website.

Brent Metcalf joins the District Council as a Housing Project Officer. He will be leading on the delivery of the Sustainable Warmth grants. The grants help low-income homeowners in particular install energy efficiency measures.

Cllr M Hart reported that with regard to the former post office, the backstop date is 31<sup>st</sup> January to deal with all the issues that need dealing with, it did not stop them applying for a licence which went to committee and was approved.

Budget setting at WFDC - proposals are freezing car parking charges for 12 months, increase Band D by maximum of 3%, restore £1k Community leadership fund, increase in number of policy officers, this will be debated at Full Council in February.

158. **Financial Matters:**

a) **To agree the schedule of cheques to be signed.**

73	Mrs B J Drew (Salary December 22)	1139.27
74	Lorraine Neal (Lengthsman)	161.70
75	Westcotec (Additional VAS Sign - 50% funded by PCC)	4852.80 <b>CANCELLED</b>
76	TG Hardwicks (R Drew) (Grit & Wooden Pegs)	67.92
77	TG Hardwicks (W Southam) (Grit)	60.00
78	Mrs B J Drew (Ink /Stamps / Padlocks for VAS)	32.59
79	Westcotec (Additional VAS Sign - 50% funded by PCC)	4852.80
80	CANCELLED	
81	HMRC (Tax & NI Oct - Dec 23)	357.61

b) **To agree Budget for financial year 2023/2024.**

Cllr C Sherrey presented financial schedules to all Councillors (appended to minutes). Cllr C Sherrey explained Schedule 1 - Income & Expenditure to 31<sup>st</sup> 2022 and forecast to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. Then Schedule 2 which showed budget forecast to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. He highlighted figures to note, VAT reclaim much higher due to expenditure on streetlights. Lighting is an estimate based on four quarters maintenance and energy charges. New streetlights/repairs based on thirty columns. Election costs of £6,000 is an estimate as it is unknown whether elections will be contested and if so what costs will be. Localism Fund outstanding projects is for noticeboards. Defibrillator training based on 10 people to be trained in Wolverley. No budget is required for Wolverley Pound or Elizabeth Bache Corner.

There were no questions and the budget as per Schedule 2 was unanimously agreed.  
Thanks were expressed to Cllr C Sherrey for his work on this.

c) **To agree Parish Council Precept for financial year 2023/2024.**

Cllr R Drew said that due to the current economic climate the Parish Council need to be fair to residents but be mindful of the budget, he commented that a 5% increase in Band D would equate to £2.22 rise per house per year (18.5p per month) and would give the Parish Council £4,421.31 extra to reduce the forecast deficit.

Cllr M Hart thanked Cllr C Sherrey for his work and commented that it is good news that the tax base has increased by 184 properties, and this will continue for the next five years at least. Last year the Precept was increased and the Parish invested substantially in localism projects, gateways and street lighting improvements. The Council do have healthy reserves, but are forecasting a deficit so Cllr M Hart agrees that a 5% increase would be sensible and proposed that Wolverley & Cookley Parish Council increase Band D by 5% to £46.70 per house per year to give a Precept of £92,839.60.

This was seconded by Cllr J Hart and unanimously agreed.

d) **Progress with On-Line Banking.**

Completion of application in progress.

159. **To discuss Community Speed Watch.**

Cllr R Drew suggested Clerk put an advert in Wolverley & Cookley Matters and on Facebook explaining the scheme and requesting anyone interested to get in touch with the Clerk.

160. **Planning Applications for Consideration: -**

PC No WFDC No/Details

3652 22/0899/OUT: Outline application for the erection of 4 dwellings and garages and formation of vehicular access and associated operational development, with all matters reserved at Land At Os 385100 280950, Caunsall Road, Caunsall,

Cllr W Southam recommended refusal on the basis that it is removal of green fields, overdevelopment and would have an adverse impact on parking for The Anchor Pub.

Cllr R Drew advised that this plot was released from green belt for housing in the local plan and also the proposed houses are the type identified in the housing needs survey. Cllr M Hart agreed and advised that as the Local Plan has been adopted it cannot be refused on the argument of green belt it needs to be another material planning objection.

Cllr C Nicholls seconded the motion of refusal and this was carried with 9 for, 2 against and 2 abstentions.

Cllr W Southam will provide Clerk with a response for Planning Portal.

Response - Recommend Refusal

Highways - Concern over additional traffic on this already congested narrow road.

Adverse impact on local environment - This is one of the last green spaces in the area and one of the last two strongholds of the skylark a bird on the RSPB red list, would also block view of the surrounding farmland.

Overdevelopment - The immediate area has seen 3 big barn conversion projects and a new build over the last 10 years.

3653 22/0958/FUL: Change of use of agricultural land to create a secure dog walking facility with new vehicle and pedestrian access to the site, associated car parking and field shelter at Land At Os 381760 279630, Shatterford Lane, Wolverley,

Cllr J Hart Recommend Refusal. This was seconded by Cllr Bordewich and agreed. Cllr M Hart abstained as the application will go before the Planning Committee.

Inappropriate development in the Green Belt resulting in loss of amenity.

Noise Pollution from the inevitable barking from dogs detrimental to residential dwellings that are adjacent to site and on the quiet tranquil nature of the area.

Concerns regarding access.

Cllr M Hart advised that the previous application was refused due to impact on species and intensification of use of access, they have now done an ecological appraisal which have showed no protected species on site and highways have requested further information and their comments are awaited. The Parish Council need to stress the impact of loss on amenity on greenbelt.

3654 22/0969/CLP: FOR INFORMATION ONLY - Proposed single storey rear extension to original dwelling house at Tregarron, Lowe Lane, Wolverley,  
Noted.

3655 22/0988/PNR: FOR INFORMATION ONLY - Conversion of an agricultural storage building to form a single holiday let at Land At Os 383575 280035, The Shortyard, Wolverley, Worcestershire.  
Noted.

3656 22/1005/HOU: Single storey side and rear extension at 11 Orchard Grove, Caunsall.  
Recommend Approval.

Planning Decisions.

22/0841/HOU: Permit - 58 Castle Road, Cookley

22/0893/HOU: Permit - 51 Castle Road, Cookley

22/0919/HOU: Permit - 1 Caunsall Road, Caunsall

**Parish Matters for Update Only - no decisions required.**

161. Clerks Report. (Clerk) Contracts (Lengthsman/Grass Cutting/Bin Emptying) Meetings are to be held in January and this will be on the next agenda for approval., Funding opportunities - circulated to all.
162. Quarry Appeal. (RD) Cllr R Drew thanked Cllr S Sherrey for his help with the response which has been submitted and the right to speak granted.
163. Neighbourhood Plan. (DJ/JW) Clerk explained that an e mail from Christopher Wayman, Exec Office at CALC had been received enquiring on progress with the plan. Cllr D Jones reported that the group are awaiting the outcome of the Quarry application and will then make a decision. There has been no further progress.
164. Cookley Allotment Lease. (MH) Cllr M Hart advised that Roger Hill will be delighted to act for us with the transfer of freehold title for the allotments.
165. Vehicle Activated Sign. (RD/WS) Cllr R Drew advised we have now got the second sign for Cookley. Cllr Drew will help with the setup of data collection,
166. Update on Lengthsman. (RD/WS) Lengthsman has filled all grit bins, also doing drains which regularly flood but please advise Cllr Drew or Southam of any work to be done.
167. New Issues / Items for Next Meeting. (All)
168. Date of Next Meeting - to confirm the date of the next meeting which is scheduled for Tuesday 7th February 2023.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.25pm.

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Chairman - Cllr R Drew