

DRAFT

Little Comberton Parish Council

2023/25

Parish Council Meeting - Minutes Tuesday 7th November 2023, 7.00pm Village Hall

Parish Councillors Present: A Dermont, L Haycock, N Jamieson, C Rabbette, N Smithson
District Cllr Hardman, County Cllr Hardman.

Clerk/RFO: Nicola Harding

In attendance: No parishioners

1. Apologies

None received.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

3. Parishioner's Comments

There were no parishioner's present or comments received.

4. Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 2023

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

Wychavon's 50th anniversary: Following actions agreed at the previous meeting, Cllr Rabbette confirmed that contact details had been forwarded and a visit is pending from Wychavon's Chairman for an Indoor Bowls session with the Sports & Social Committee.

Remembrance Sunday 12/11/23: A reading and wreath laying ceremony will be conducted by A. Kirby at 11am on 12th November. A bucket will be provided on the day for a collection of any donations to the Royal British Legion. Cllr Smithson confirmed potential availability on the day.

D Day: information received from Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils (CALC) to encourage a national day of remembrance of the D Day landings on 6th June 2024, has been circulated to the Sports & Social Club.

5. Progress reports from Parish Activities: brief updates:

a. Lengthsman: It was noted that the lengthsman had inspected the culvert and drains on the corner of Orchard Drive in September, as requested by WCC. A request would be made to clear leaves on the footway beside the village hall, to remove the slippery sludge accumulating at this time of year. *Action: Cllr Jamieson/lengthsman.*

Due to unforeseen vehicle issues in October, the lengthsman has been unable to complete his regular tasks. An update has been provided that once resolved, work will resume to catch up within the Parish. The Clerk confirmed that the lengthsman had agreed to check if the two parish grit bins require replenishing. *Action: Lengthsman/Clerk.*

b. Queen's Memorial planters: a commitment to a share in expenditure cannot be considered by the village hall committee at present, due to an investigation of works currently pending for essential roof repairs. It was requested that the committee forward photographs and designs of the planters and the location agreed, to enable the Parish Council to consider and approve their contribution of funds. Thanks were also extended from Cllrs to Cllr A. Hardman who confirmed a 50% contribution from his local member's fund towards this venture. *Action: Cllr Smithson.*

c. CPR training: The event held on 17th October 2023 was a great success, with eighteen attendees, plus volunteers from the South Worcestershire Lifesaving and Lifeguard Club. Quality training was delivered which boosted confidence and familiarisation with the defibrillator equipment to hand at the village hall. Donations were received on the evening and the Parish Council agreed to propose match funding under finance item 8d.

d. Highways: Drainage: There were no issues reported in the vicinity during the recent spell of heavy rain. It was agreed that the Clerk would request further updates from the County Council's Highways Drainage Manager, regarding plans to complete an extended survey and sub-contractor's checks further downstream. *Action: Clerk.*

e. Rooftop Housing: latest updates received from the local housing officer were summarised and discussed and following recent funding communication received, advice had been sought from Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils (CALC.) Cllrs agreed a draft response for completion and circulation. *Actions: Cllrs/Clerk.*

f. Airband poles: There are no further updates from WCC regarding the removal of the redundant telegraph poles on Wick Road at present, however Cllr Jamieson confirmed he would continue to pursue this matter. *Action: Cllr Jamieson.*

g. Safer Neighbourhood Team: Updates were provided following Cllr Haycock & Dermont's recent communications with the Safer Neighbourhood Team, regarding concerns raised about an increase in speeding vehicles through the village, however no positive responses have been received to date.

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Latest data retrieved from the Vehicle Activated Speed Sign (VAS,) was shared and discussed and the following proposals were put forward for the Parish Council's action:

1. Explore improved Vehicle Activated Speed signage (VAS) and potential locations.
2. Consider moving the existing VAS closer to the village or within the village - both these options would require a new pole.
3. Continue to monitor data from the existing VAS sign of average speeds of vehicles entering the village – it was noted that the average speed for drivers passing the speed sign is around 35mph. Unfortunately, a large number of cars significantly exceed even that speed. 15% of drivers are passing the sign at 39mph or more, with some 300 vehicles travelling into the village at 50mph and more during October.
4. Experiment with the rotation of the existing VAS sign for one month, in order to gather data of vehicle speeds also leaving the village.
5. Contact the West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner in order to highlight the statistics from the existing speed sign, in support of the Council's increasing concerns.
6. Contact to be made with the County Council's Highways Liaison Officer to explore all options and any traffic calming recommendations which are available to the Parish Council.

h. PRoW: Updates from the volunteer footpath warden were shared ahead of the meeting and necessary works identified. The pathway over the small brook has been reported to WCC.

Trees: Following the Council's previous discussion regarding the dedication of trees along Wick Road, there were no further village uptakes to share at present, however Cllr Rabbette confirmed the purchase of a red Oak tree on behalf of the Rabbette family to replace one recently removed along Wick Road, and Cllr Haycock also agreed to purchase a tree on behalf of the Haycock family.

Action: Cllr Rabbette/Cllr Haycock.

6. District and County Councillor's reports:

District Cllr B. Hardman: In summary

- Chris Day has been voted as Council leader of the District Council, following the resignation of the outgoing leader, Bradley Thomas.
- A County Council survey regarding the County's bus service had been circulated and it was agreed that Cllr Rabbette would complete this on behalf of the Parish Council, in light of recent communications received from a parishioner concerning restrictions to the local service. *Action: Cllr Rabbette.*
- Grant funding is available from Wychavon's Community officers to support activities to tackle social isolation and a Town and Parish Council event is scheduled on 23 November 2023, 6.30-8.30pm at the Civic Centre, Pershore.
- Cllr Hardman is keen to explore opportunities to address loneliness in the district, in particular, supporting those residents unable to or struggling to leave their homes. Potential suggestions were raised and any further ideas would be welcomed to address this issue in local communities, to establish if there is a local need for such provision. Although it was recognised there are positive opportunities via the Pershore Hub and through the local Link circulation, it was agreed to action likely demand via a local survey, to establish an appetite for regular events at the village hall, for example mixed group exercise classes for the retired with social opportunities to interact afterwards. Cllr A. Hardman noted that County Council funding is available for such ventures which address the County's 'prevention' agenda in remaining active throughout later life.
Action: Cllr Rabbette to explore and provide further updates.

County Cllr A. Hardman: In summary

- There are real concerns surrounding the County Council's budget deficit, with the number of children in care at an all-time high. There has also been a significant rise in costs in School Transport and Special Educational Needs transport, therefore structural changes are ahead, as seen in other top tier authorities nationally.
- Improvements to the footway beside the village hall are included in the County Council's schedule of works and will be completed during the next financial year.
- Updates were noted regarding recent communications regarding the service lay-by on Pershore Road, as forwarded to a local resident.

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7. Planning

- W/22/01053: The Manor House** - Conversion of existing barns to single residential dwelling – a decision remains pending.
- W/23/00375/00376/LB: The Old Thatch** – Rebuild and extend kitchen, add new obscured glass window to upstairs bathroom, rebuild and extend garage/workshop, replace existing windows – a decision remains pending.
- W/23/01420/FUL: Belle’s Cottage** - Change of use for a small piece of land from domestic use to agriculture and agriculture to domestic. Demolition of concrete garage and provision of new driveway: comments had been forwarded by the Parish Council and a decision remains pending. Cllr Hardman confirmed further communications with the planning officer.
- W/23/01876/FUL: Construction of a general purpose agricultural building** – The Parish Council had forwarded comments to Wychavon District Council and a decision remains pending.
- W/23/00358/HP: Ringsmere Orchard** – Ground floor extension to existing house for dining, gym, utility and car park – although notification had been received from Wychavon that this application had been approved, it was confirmed that the enforcement officer is continuing to advise on this application, following concerns raised by the Parish Council.
- W/23/02200/HP: Ringsmere Orchard** – Erection of garden shed (retrospective) A new application had been received and comments are to be submitted by 27 November 2023. *Action: Draft comments to be circulated for approval.*

Farm land sale: Wick Road: It was noted that a sale had been agreed. A discussion ensued regarding boundaries of the existing farmland and it was proposed to request a detailed map of this information to understand the impact upon neighbouring footpaths and properties, in addition to details of the new owner in order to build positive future relations.
Action: Clerk.

8. Finance

a) Current Balances at 30th October 2023

Treasurer’s Account:	TOTAL	£15,191.66
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b) Payments to report:

Salary: September 2023	£362.70
VHC: Hall hire September 2023	£13.00
ICO: Annual data protection fee	£35.00
Salary: October 2023	£362.70
Clerk’s expenses: September/October 2023	£24.00
Lengthsman: September work-plan	£165.00

TOTAL	£962.40
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*Income received:

Precept (ii)	£3,450.00
CTSG (ii)	£161.00
WCC: Lengthsman August work-plan	£165.00

Proposed Cllr Jamieson, seconded Cllr Rabbette, all in favour, to approve the payments presented.

c) VAS sign: Maintenance contract: Consideration of 3-year maintenance contract:

The speed sign suppliers had forwarded a new 3-year maintenance contract for the Council’s consideration. The Clerk had obtained further clarification regarding the terms and conditions of this new contract which were shared at the meeting. It was agreed that the new contract price is costly for a small parish, therefore it was proposed that the Clerk establish the possibility of reverting to an annual contract for 2023/24. *Action: Clerk.*

d) Proposal to approve donation to South Worcester Lifesaving & Lifeguard Club for village CPR training @ £85.00

e) Proposal to approve annual gift up to £100 to village volunteers: Christmas 2023:

f) Proposal to approve lengthsman payment @ £102.86 towards Lantra safe lifetime pesticide training qualification (shared between 7 parishes.)

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Proposed Cllr Smithson, seconded Cllr Dermont, all in favour to approve the expenditure proposed under items 8d-f.

g) Bank reconciliation (ii) & Budget review 2023/2024: documents had been shared for checks and verification.

Action: checks to be completed by a Cllr and signed for the internal auditor.

***2024-2025 budget requirement:** Councils have been notified that the total budget requirement for 2024/25 should be approved and forwarded to Wychavon District Council by Friday 26 January 2024.

9. Phone box

The existing bulb is no longer working – the Clerk has explored options, including a replacement bulb and LED option from a specialist phone box supplier. It was agreed to explore the costs of an LED equivalent bulb, once the lengthsman is able to gain access to the original casing and provide model details.

Action: Lengthsman/Clerk.

10. Correspondence

WCC The recent trial conducted by Worcestershire County Council to broaden the scope of the Parish Lengthsman Scheme to include elements of maintenance work on the Public Rights of Way network, is to be continued.

WCC Details of a survey relating to WCC’s enhanced partnership plan to improve local bus services in the County had been received, as reported under item 6, District Cllr report.

WCC A latest Winter newsletter had been received – grit bins on main routes are currently being refilled by WCC. Any others in parishes which require replenishing are to be completed online via: <https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/reportit>
The lengthsman has agreed to check the two parish bins.

11. Councillor’s reports and items for future agenda:

There were no further items to note.

12. Date of Next Meeting:

Tuesday 23rd January 2024 at 7.00 pm.

Signed

Date.....

Chairman