

# DRAFT

## Little Comberton Parish Council

2024/08

### Parish Council Meeting - Minutes Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 7.30pm Village Hall

**Parish Councillors Present:** C Rabbette, L Schmitz, N Smithson, D Smithson.  
District Cllr B Hardman

**Clerk/RFO:** Nicola Harding

**In attendance:** No parishioners

#### 1. Apologies

Received from Cllr Jamieson & County Cllr A. Hardman.

Ahead of the meeting, Cllr Dermont offered his resignation as Cllr, following six years of service on behalf of the village. Sincere thanks were extended to Cllr Dermont for his time and support as a Parish Councillor, especially given all his input towards road safety initiatives.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

#### 3. Parishioner's Comments

There were no comments received.

#### 4. Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024

The Chairman summarised updates from progress reports contained within the minutes, as follows:

- Road safety Grant: An application to West Mercia's Safer Roads Fund has been submitted by the Parish Council. Following the meeting, it was confirmed that a grant offer of £3,100 has been awarded from the West Mercia Commissioner's grant scheme.  
*Action: Complete grant acceptance form by 31 March 2024, funds to be spent by 31 March 2025.*
- Airband: Airband is unable to confirm a date for the removal of the telegraph poles at the top of Endon Hill, Wick Road at present, as funds need to be released to allow for the contractors to complete the works. It was agreed to maintain pressure on Airband and revisit at the next meeting. *Action: Cllr Jamieson.* District Cllr Hardman also suggested the Parish Council relay their concerns to local MP Harriet Harman, who may be able to intervene with Airband on the Council's behalf.  
*Action: Clerk to forward the Council's original request to Airband to Member of Parliament, HH.*
- Ringsmere Orchard: Further clarification is required from the landowner and their planning consultant, regarding the conditions of the application surrounding hedging and visibility splays at the property. It was agreed to revisit this as a future agenda item and Cllr Hardman agreed to look into the matter with the planning officer for further clarity.  
*Action: Cllr Hardman/April agenda.*

*Proposed Cllr Smithson, seconded Cllr Schmitz, all in favour, to approve the minutes as a true record.*

#### 5. Progress reports from Parish Activities:

a. Lengthsman: Following delivery of keys for the phone box light removal, correct tools are still required to action the bulb replacement. The Lengthsman agreed to look into this further and liaise with the Clerk. Signage cleaning and strimming will be the focus of the lengthsman's next work plan. The overgrown trees by the Mary Brook mentioned at the last meeting have been cut back by the landowner, but are still overhanging the stream and bridge railings *Action: Clerk to follow up with Clerk to Wick Parish Council.*

b. Highways: Speeding updates and road safety concerns: A summary of the outcome of the recent village consultation was provided, which although received support, also highlighted significant concerns regarding the Council's proposal to raise the speed limit from 30mph to 40mph along a section of the C2007 Pershore Road. Given that there is currently no safe walking route into the village other than along the main road, the Council has therefore agreed that the speed limit should remain unchanged. Additional signage, a second VAS sign and a further set of village gates have been requested as a further strategy to address vehicle speeds, and a response awaits from WCC. Thanks were extended on behalf of the Council to County Cllr Hardman for his support to date with the Council's initiative. As funding has become available from the Police & Crime Commissioner towards road safety, it was also agreed to request a periodic police presence from Pershore local Safer Neighbourhood Team and to establish if the Council might be offered speed monitoring, as assured in neighbouring parishes.

*Action: Clerk to make contact with Pershore SNT.*

During the village consultation process, it was also noted that parking on pavements & bends in some areas of the village is becoming problematic and a safety issue for pedestrians. Although Cllrs recognise the nuisance this creates, it was agreed that tackling excessive speeds is the first priority at present, however in the meantime, Cllrs could note dates, times and locations that these incidents are occurring. As parking also becomes a problem in the locality when visiting the village pantry, it was agreed that a message could be circulated vi the Gmail as a polite reminder of considerate parking at these times, to assist pedestrians.

*Action: NJ.*

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As a further, potential strategy to address road safety, the Council also agreed to explore the possibility of creating a permissive footpath along land adjacent to Pershore Road, in order to generate a safer access from the outskirts of the parish to the village centre where a public footpath begins. As this would require permission from the landowner, it was agreed to establish ownership and any potential grant funding available from Wychavon to establish if the Council may proceed with initiating this proposal.

*Action: Clerk to investigate ownership with WDC & Elmley Castle PC.*

c. Casual vacancy: Confirmation has been received from Wychavon's elections team that the Council may co-opt to fill the casual vacancy recently created in January. As there is now a second vacancy created, it was agreed that the Clerk would notify the elections team and publicity would be produced by the Parish Council in order to encourage further interest in filling the two remaining spaces. It was also agreed to consider a future newsletter to provide updates on speeding & road safety, the new fitness and social class and other current initiatives.

*Action: Clerk/Cllr Jamieson/Cllrs*

\*Footpaths/PRoW: Overgrown brambles were reported along a local footway. It was agreed to request if Cllr Jamieson may liaise with the landowner. Following the meeting, it was confirmed that the hedging had now been cut back.

## **6. District and County Councillor's reports:**

### **District Cllr B Hardman**

Cllrs noted that street cleaning is required along Wick Road, which has become very muddy in recent weather.

*Action: Clerk to enquire about the DC's next street cleaning schedule.*

Cllrs also noted that the ground has become boggy by the church gate. A discussion ensued about the possibility of WCC Highways tarmacking a thin strip in the vicinity, when footway works are underway near the village hall in the next financial year. Cllr Hardman confirmed that tarmacking could not be undertaken as this is a verge, however grasscrete/matting was suggested as a potential solution to allow the grass to grow through.

*Action: Clerk to request possibility with WCC Highways.*

*Cllr Hardman provided the following summary:*

- Bio-diversity: Feedback is encouraged in response to the District Council's Bio-diversity plan in conjunction with Worcestershire Wildlife Trust and Worcestershire County Council's local nature recovery strategy. An online survey is available, following information contained within the consultation papers.  
<https://online1.snapsurveys.com/interview/a48fbfa9-786f-4636-9954-58df8976ade4>
- A pedestrian footbridge is proposed to Pershore railway station, from the creation of additional parking on Pershore trading estate.
- Funding is being sourced towards addressing heating at the District's leisure pools.
- Measures to tackle the ongoing issues of homelessness & congestion in Evesham are being explored.

Cllrs enquired if there is new speed/safety data available following the recent safety measures implemented at Hinton Cross.

Cllr Hardman agreed to establish any updates when they become available, as an opportunity to share with local communities.

### **County Cllr Hardman**

*WCC budget:* The 2024/25 budget was approved in February, with aspirational 'transformation' projects earmarked for the next three years. Rising costs seen in children's services, adult social care & school transport remains a concern.

## **7. Councillor roles:** The following roles and responsibilities were agreed:

*Notice boards:* Crossroads – CR, to be supported by other Cllrs as required

*Pool Close:* NJ, to be confirmed.

*Lengthsman liaison:* NJ

*Footpath warden liaison:* NJ

*Tree warden liaison:* NS

*Village communications/website:* NJ

*Police liaison:* to be confirmed

*Lloyds payments authorisation:* CR

*Quarterly bank reconciliations:* to be confirmed

*VAS sign:* AD

*Planning:* CR/NS/LS to liaise. It was agreed to establish future Calc planning training available for NS.

*Village organisations link:* Village Hall: NS/Sports & Social Club: CR

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It was also agreed to arrange a quarterly rota, whereby Cllrs would take turns to be available at the village pantry to update parishioners on current parish council initiatives. Cllr N Smithson confirmed potential availability in April.

## 8. Planning

**W/22/01053: The Manor House** - Conversion of existing barns to single residential dwelling – a decision remains pending.

**W/24/00031/HP Associated Ref: W/24/00032/LB** Location: The Old Thatch, Pershore Road - addition of new obscured glass window to the upstairs bathroom. Rebuild and extend the garage/workshop. Replace all existing windows. Timber rose arch between house and detached garage to form covered pedestrian link – a decision remains pending.

**W/23/01876/FUL: Construction of a general purpose agricultural building** - a decision remains pending.

**Grange Farm fields land sale: Wick Road:** A further request for any updates regarding communication with the new owner has been requested and confirmed. The landowner has subsequently confirmed that villagers can continue to use the farm track from Grange Farm to Bricklehampton as a permissive path.

## 9. Finance

### a) Current Balances at 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Treasurer's Account:	£12,667.08
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£12,667.08</b>

### b) Payments to report:

Village hall hire: January 2024	£17.00
N Jamieson: Bench expenses	£53.30
Lengthsman: January 2024 work-plan	£165.00
Clerk's Salary: February 2024	£388.70
Clerk's Expenses: February 2024	£12.00
Clerk's salary: March 2024	£388.70
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1024.70</b>

An additional invoice had been received following circulation of the agenda, for the purchase of a replacement key for the VAS sign, which was also presented for consideration and approval:

Swarco replacement key	£12.00
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*Proposed Cllr Rabbette, seconded Cllr Smithson, all in favour to approve the payments presented.*

## 10. Correspondence

Avon Vale River Action group      A request has been received to engage with the parish council to share information and discuss findings concerning local water quality. It was agreed to invite a representative to the annual parish meeting in May for further updates. *Action: Clerk.*

West Mercia Police      A request has been received for any updated parish priorities to enable targeting of specific areas whilst the Safer neighbourhood teams are out on visible patrol. Speeding has been confirmed as the top priority, with a request for a periodic police presence and it was agreed to remind the local team of likely break in equipment which was recently discovered in a verge.

WCC      Details of funding available for the creation of community orchards and mini forests from the Coronation Living Heritage Fund has been received and circulated. Further information is available via Wade Muggleton, Senior Greenspace Officer  
[WMuggleton@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:WMuggleton@worcestershire.gov.uk)  
It was agreed that as the Parish Council only owns land at the memorial garden, there is little other capacity of land available at present which can be accessible by the public.

Wychavon Sport:      A representative from the Sports & Social club has agreed to be the main contact for the 2024 parish games & S&S has kindly agreed to pay the annual fees.

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**11. Councillor's reports and items for future agenda:**

Considerable mistletoe growth has been noted on the trees along Wick Road. A working party dealt with the issue in recent times, however it was agreed to now request specialist advice from a tree surgeon for consideration.

*Action: Clerk to make contact with the tree warden. & update PB regarding the new Cllr link with NS.*

**12. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 7.30 pm**

Cllr Rabbette offered her apologies in advance of the next meeting as she would be unavailable.

Signed .....

Date.....

**Chairman**