

DRAFT

Little Comberton Parish Council

2024/15

Annual Meeting of the Parish Council - Minutes Tuesday 7th May 2024, 7.30pm Village Hall

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

Clerk/RFO: Nicola Harding

In attendance: No parishioners

1. Apologies

Received from County Cllr A. Hardman.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

3. Election of Chairman

Cllr Jamieson agreed to continue in the role of Chairman, unanimously supported by all Cllrs. The Chairman's declaration of office was duly signed.

4. Election of Vice-Chairman

To be agreed at the June meeting.

5. Parishioner's Comments

There were no comments to share.

6. Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 16th April 2024

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

7. Progress reports from Parish Activities - brief updates:

a. Lengthsman: The lengthsman has agreed to assist with the rotation of the new VAS sign, once delivered. A Dermont has kindly offered to assist with its assembly.

b. Highways: Speed zone initiative: The Clerk has requested confirmation of costings of the proposed 6 village posts from WCC Highways in order to establish any potential shortfall in expenditure of the total project.

Action: Clerk to make further contact with BB.

Following information gained from Land Registry regarding ownership of land adjacent to Pershore Road behind Porters Cottages, it was agreed to make initial contact to positively confirm ownership. The Clerk agreed to draft an enquiry and forward to Cllr Jamieson. Should ownership be confirmed, Cllr D Smithson agreed to take the lead on actioning a potential permissive footpath along the edge of the field, in order to create a safe access to the public footpath for residents who can only currently walk along the road.

Action: Clerk/Cllr Jamieson/Cllr Smithson.

c. Highways: Drainage updates had been received and circulated from WCC Drainage engineer. It had been confirmed that contractors had started an extended survey of the village drainage system and will complete this over the next fortnight. Further updates will be provided once the survey is complete. It was agreed to request an update within a month to also establish when jetting of the drains at the crossroads will be completed, as confirmed in December 2023.

Action: Clerk.

d. Airband poles: Wick Road – Cllr Jamieson had made contact with Elmley Castle Parish Council to establish if they would be open to collaboration in progressing ongoing Airband issues. Given that their concerns are subtly different to the issue involving the redundant telegraph poles in Little Comberton, in the interim, Cllr Jamieson had prepared a formal request to Airband's CEO, requesting removal of the poles at Endon Hill. Once a response is received, it was agreed to make further contact with Elmley Castle parish clerk.

Action: Clerk to forward response as received. Cllr Jamieson to liaise with Elmley Castle PC.

e. Trees: Advice requested from WCC Senior Greenspace Officer regarding mistletoe growth on trees along Wick Road was shared with the meeting. It was agreed that this matter is not currently urgent, therefore no further action is planned at present.

Further discussion regarding the trees at the memorial garden is reported under item 13e.

f. Bonfires: Cllr Jamieson proposed to liaise with villagers at a future Saturday Pantry to engage in a debate about a possible voluntary agreement in terms of the frequency and timings of lighting bonfires in the village. It was noted that weather conditions make this difficult, however it was agreed to invite a consultation about the existing parish council bonfire protocol in order to raise further awareness.

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A further discussion ensued regarding those residents not on email, who may therefore not be receiving frequent updates from the parish council. As Cllrs are mindful to reach all villagers, suggestions were discussed such as utilising the document racks at the village hall for notices and distributing leaflets to all households. It was agreed to circulate an email to residents requesting if they are aware of any neighbour not on email, so that direct contact may then be made. *Action: Cllr Jamieson.*

8. To note model Calc standing orders and approved financial regulations (attached)

These were noted. The Clerk reported that Nalc had recently approved revised 2024 financial regulations which were circulated for information. The Clerk agreed to review any changes and report at the next meeting.

Action: Clerk.

9. To note the Code of Conduct

This was noted for information.

10. To consider and appoint Councillor remaining roles: Police liaison & quarterly bank reconciliations

Cllr N Smithson agreed to act as police liaison & Cllr D Smithson agreed to complete the quarterly bank reconciliation checks in line with financial regulations.

Actions: Clerk to forward police contact details. Clerk to completion first quarterly bank reconciliation for the period ended 30 June 2024 and forward to Cllr D Smithson for checks and verification.

11. District and County Councillor's reports

County Cllr report:

Road safety: Cllr Hardman had generously confirmed a £1,500 financial contribution towards the new village speed initiatives. Sincere thanks were extended on behalf of the parish council by Cllr Jamieson.

WCC budget: Concerns remain regarding the extent of the total budget apportioned to adult and children's social care and school transport.

District Cllr report:

Council Tax: Despite a £5 increase in Band D tax this financial year following a freeze on increases over the past six years, the district council charges remain lower than some councils nationally, with positive opportunities to utilize funds for initiatives such as water quality testing, legacy grants and improvement of walkways.

12. Planning

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/23/01896/FUL: Amendment to retrospective distillery application at Ringsmere Orchard: submission of Vehicle Access Appraisal. Comments were forwarded on 15/4/24 and a decision remains pending.

W/23/01876/FUL: Construction of a general purpose agricultural building - application now approved. Approval conditions had been circulated and noted. The only conditions related to the timing of the build (within 3 years) and some highway and drainage requirements. No changes to the orientation or cladding appear to have been made, as there are no updated applicant documents subsequent to the Council's comments being submitted.

13. Finance

a) Current Balances

Treasurer's Account £15,622.61

TOTAL £15,622.61

b) Payments to report:

Internal audit fee 23/24 accounts £140.00

Salary: May 2024 £388.70

Worcs Calc annual subscription fee £237.36

TOTAL £766.06

Income to report:

Precept (i) 2024-25 £3,550.00

Council Tax Support Grant (i) 2024-25 £162.00

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

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c) To note the period of public rights to inspect the 2023/24 financial records of the Council, to commence on 3/6/24 – 12/7/24 & publish notice on 31st May.

Action: The Clerk forwarded two notices & agreed to send a reminder email to Cllr Rabbette & Cllr Jamieson ahead of 31st May.

d) Proposal to approve Parish insurance provision for the period 1/6/24 – 31/5/25 @ £287.69

All Cllrs approved a revised quotation obtained by the Clerk @ £276.23 to enter into a 3-year Long Term Agreement, given the significant price increases seen in recent years. The Clerk also confirmed that checks had been requested with the insures to ensure appropriate cover for the new VAS sign and village posts.

e) Proposal to consider and approve quotations received for health & safety tree inspection at the parish memorial garden.

Two quotes were presented to the meeting and Cllrs agreed to approve:

BJ Unwin @ £225 + VAT

Action: Clerk to update provider of other quotations and arrange for inspection.

Following a query raised at the annual parish meeting regarding the removal of a tree at the memorial garden some 8+ years ago, it was agreed to also request the arboriculturalist’s opinion as to whether there is sufficient room for a replacement tree, whether the ground is now suitable following a previous fungal ground infection and what type of replacement tree may be appropriate.

Action: Clerk to forward order for request for inspection, including additional enquiry.

The Clerk also drew attention to current UK government Coronation Living Heritage funding circulated by WCC’s senior greenspace officer; a scheme which is open to parishes and community groups who can apply for advice, trees, guards and other materials from the County Council’s Countryside Service. It was agreed to establish further information regarding any support available in terms of the mistletoe growth along Wick Road and the potential for a replacement tree at the memorial garden, pending further advice.

Action: Clerk

14. Correspondence

Worcs Calc: A news bulletin for clerks and Cllrs had been received and circulated, for information.

15. Councillor’s reports and items for future agenda

Cllr N Smithson drew attention to a pot hole developing at the crossroads. It was noted that this can be reported on line via:

[Report a pothole | Worcestershire County Council](#)

Action: Cllr Smithson.

16. Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 12th June 2024 at 7.30 pm

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Signed

Date.....

Chairman