

WOLVERLEY & COOKLEY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 3rd September 2024, 7.00pm,
Cookley Sebright Primary School, Cookley

Present:

Mr R Drew (Chairman)
Mrs V Bordewich
Mr B Brookes
Mr J Hart
Mr M Hart
Mrs J Hicks
Mr D Jones
Mr C Nicholls
Mr C Sherrey
Mr A Webber
Mr J Wood

West Mercia Police: PCSO Becky Ruston, PCSO Nikki Thomas.
County Councillor: Apologies.
District Councillors: Councillor R M Drew and M J Hart.

76. **Apologies**

Cllr D Cox and Cllr Southam due to holiday, Cllr I Hardiman due to illness.

77. **Declarations of Councillors Interests**

- a) Register of Interests: Councillors are reminded to complete and need to regularly update their register of interests.
- b) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.
- c) To declare any Other Registerable Interests or Non-Registerable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.

Cllr R Drew declared an NRI in Agenda Item 7 as a Potential Risk of Bias as former Tennis Club member and friends with several current members of the Tennis Club.

Cllr J Hart declared an ORI in Agenda Item 7 as Parish Council representative to The Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust.

Cllr C Sherrey declared an ORI in Agenda Item 7 as was previously accountant for the Tennis Club.

Cllr M Hart declared an ORI in Agenda Item 7 as an employee of Solicitors firm who acted on Licence to Assign and indicated that if there was any discussion or debate about the actual propriety or integrity of the actual legal advice that the Parish Council received, he would recluse himself and leave the room otherwise he had no interest and would take part in the debate as previously.

Cllr M Hart also declared an ORI in Agenda Item 14 as he is a member of the Fire and Rescue Authority.

Public Question Time:

The Chairman welcomed members of the public and asked for any speakers.

The Parish Council were advised of an upcoming meeting on 24th September 6.30pm, Heathfield School regarding the proposed Quarry.

Declarations of Councillors Interests were raised. The Clerk advised there are different interests and Councillors take advice on what to declare. Some mean Councillors must leave the room and others can remain.

The decision to remove clause 13.1 was raised. The Chairman advised that the Parish Council have taken legal advice and this will be discussed later.

78. **To consider the adoption of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6th August 2024 at 7.00pm**

These having previously been circulated it was proposed Cllr Brookes, seconded Cllr M Hart and 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:

79. **Police Report.**

Written Report circulated;

00102_I_06082024 - We are investigating a reported car key burglary on Fairfield Lane, Wolverley. Between 1900hrs on 5th August and 0930hrs on 6th August, unknown persons have gained entry to a property by forcing a rear door, an untidy search has taken place and car keys were taken from the property. They have then stolen a blue BMW from the driveway.

00124_I_17082024 A Ford transit recovery van, in white and blue was stolen without keys from Caunsall Road. The vehicle had a steering lock on, so was more than likely towed from the roadside. The theft occurred between 16th and 17th August whilst it was parked on the roadside.

We have been made aware of an attempt theft of a Tele Handler from a farm situated on the West Mercia/ Staffs border in Wolverley. It's believed that they were disturbed by passing cars. At this time this has not been reported to West Mercia Police, but at the request of the farmer we have been asked to make farms/ rural residents aware.

We recently released a press report following the theft of breeding Ewe's in Chaddesley Corbett due to concerns they may enter the food chain; it is important the wider community are aware of the risks surrounding this incident. Please see below for the press release.

'We're urging people to report suspicious sales of meat following the theft of three sheep in Chaddesley Corbett over the bank holiday weekend.

It's feared that the sheep may have been stolen to be illegally butchered for meat. The animals were on medication which would make their meat unfit for human consumption.

PCSO Kate Easthope said: "We're concerned that if the meat from these sheep has entered the food chain it could cause serious health issues for those who consume it.

"As always, for your safety we would only advise buying and consuming meat from reputable sources.

"As well as being unsafe for consumers, illegal butchery is a serious offence which can cause unnecessary suffering to the animal. Rural crimes like this also have serious emotional and financial impact on our farming communities.

"We've launched an investigation into this incident, and I would ask, as always, that people contact us if they think someone is selling illegal meat." '

Your current priorities are ASB, Burglaries and Speeding.

Cllr M Hart queried whether the rumours of proposed changes in the SNT to reduce the number of warranted officers from 2 to 1 is true. The PCSO's are not aware of any changes.

80. **County / District Councillor Reports.**

County Councillor Report:

Cllr M Hart gave the report in Cllr Hardiman's absence.

LOCAL ISSUES:

Safer Routes to School, Wolverley:

Further to my Report last month, I am pleased to report that together with Cllr Marcus Hart, on 22nd August I met in Wolverley with the WCC Cabinet Member for Highways, two directors for Highways, two Highway Planning Officers; also in attendance were Cllr Ben Brookes, Deputy Leader of WFDC and Parish Council Chairman Cllr Robin Drew.

We were informed that the subject would be considered in two halves: firstly the Franche Road (Highlow Bank) area and the matter of a Pelican Crossing facility across the B4189 by Hardwicks premises. Financial considerations and feasibility could only be debated for these but secondly, the pavement run improvements from Brown Westhead Park to Lea Lane would be a future consideration for the following financial year.

We walked and inspected the pavement run from Highlow Bank and also inspected the proposed point for a Pelican Crossing by Hardwicks; in principal, subject to confirmation when actual costing is completed, increasing the pavement width where necessary plus the Pelican Crossing cost, should be justifiable and approvable in due course. Such measures would allow the County Council to reduce Pupil Bus Service provision and its funding.

Caunsall, Highway Voids:

Despite chasing the Highways Department, I am still awaiting an update on how these issues will be resolved.

Cllr Jones again reported the dangerous overgrowth on the A449 footpath from The Crescent to the Island Pool which has still not be cleared. The landowners are clearly not going to do it so he believes WCC should and then charge.

District Councillors Report:

Cllr Drew gave the report.

Local Issues

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

We have been reporting signage on street nameplates and in verges to WFDC for removal. They have been very proactive in this area, writing and warning companies about their legal responsibilities and issuing FPN's for repeat offenders.

We have been dealing with a planning enforcement issue in respect of the Blue Ball Business Centre at Caunsall in respect of the conditions around permitted opening hours.

We have been out and about in the Parish generally over the last month chatting to local residents about local issues in particular at Lea Castle. We have also been talking about the current Community Governance Review that WFDC is undertaking in respect of the Parish and the next stage of the process which commenced on 1st August and runs until 29th November, with details on the WFDC website and being publicised locally.

Wyre Forest Issues

Work to commence on our ECV points in our pay and display car parks, by the contractor Flowbird should over the next few weeks. There will be a mixture of speed types.

WFDC handed over the Piano Building on 27th August to our contractor Speller Metcalfe (who are doing the Town Hall work too) and they are starting on internal work and work that doesn't require planning permission. The planning application will most likely go to October planning committee, there is a slim hope for September!

WFDC have let the contact for the next phase of the Connectivity Project and work has commenced on the construction of the urban park. The contractors are Shropshire based building and civil

engineering contractors McPhillips (Wellington) Limited and as of 21st August they were mobilising. The main body of the work should be done by the end of the year and the Green Space by Spring 2025.

Work on the Creative Hub (The Old Court) as it will be named and so you will see the name start to be used by WFDC and their marketing agents. The building is being marketed now. The building should be handed back to WFDC in December and we hope to hit the ground running with tenants to provide a revenue income.

Fingers crossed WFDC are about to let a contract for the £2.4m HLF project at Brinton Park as WFDC have had several contractors tender for the contract. The final due diligence is being done but at last we hope for a spade literally in the ground imminently.

WFDC have commissioned a feasibility study for Worcester Street, Market Street, the former Crown House site and Lionfields (former Glades site) and this will report later in the year. We are keen to see more residential development in the town centre.

81. **Financial Matters.**

- a) Proposed Cllr Sherrey, seconded Cllr J Hart and unanimously agreed that the following accounts be paid.

32	B J Drew - Salary August 24	£1254.82
33	Mr Keith Basketfield - Extra 6 th Grass Cut	£794.64
34	Mr Jason Hull - Lengthsman August 24	£204.00
36	DM Payroll Services Limited - Payroll April - September 24	£90.00
36	Pkf Littlejohn - External Audit Fee	£378.00

- b) To discuss the review of payroll fees and terms.

It was proposed Cllr Sherrey, seconded Cllr Bordewich and unanimously resolved to agree to the new payroll terms and conditions which is an increase from £180 per year to £204.

82. **To discuss Legal advice received following review of Renewal Lease and Licence to Assign.**

Cllrs R Drew, J Hart and C Sherrey left the room. Cllr B Brookes took the Chair.

Cllr Brookes stated that all Councillors had been sent a copy of the legal advice received which had been circulated by the Clerk.

Cllr Brookes advised that he would like to highlight the following advice.

The council cannot unilaterally change the lease or the licence (for example by reinstating the deleted schedule(s)). That requires agreement between both the council and TWMCT. Any unilateral action by the council to do so would not be lawful or valid.

Neither the lease nor the licence can be changed without the agreement of both parties
The licence amended the lease with the signed approval of landlord and tenant (and assignee).
It can't be changed again without both the landlord and the current tenant agreeing.

Cllr Jones commented that he had read the advice and was disappointed. He proposed that the Parish Council write to The Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust and ask if they would re-instate the schedule that allows the tennis club the right to use the courts.

Cllr M Hart stated that the advice received was entirely in order and not a surprise. He formally seconded Cllr Jones proposal. He suspects the Parish Council may get a negative response but will

have done all they can do. This was unanimously agreed. Clerk to write to The Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust.

83. **To discuss Community Governance Review - Wolverley & Cookley.**

Cllr R Drew returned as Chair.

Cllr Webber reported that the terms of reference and survey had been widely advertised. He felt that due to the increase in size to the already large parish, also the fact that there are specific things that are important and local to the 3 different villages that the Parish Council write supporting separate Parish Councils be formed for Wolverley, Cookley & Caunsall and Lea Castle Village. This was seconded by Cllr Jones and agreed with 9 for and 2 against.

84. **To discuss Parish Council Vacancy.**

The Chairman reported that no election had been requested therefore the Parish Council can fill the vacancy by co-option.

Cllr Nicholls queried why there is no election, and the Clerk clarified that for an election to be called, ten electors had to write to the returning officer by a specific deadline. Notices were displayed in the Parish.

The Clerk will put up Notices advertising the vacancy.

85. **To agree Cookley representative Governor to Sebright's Educational Foundation.**

The Clerk advised that due to the resignation of Barry MacFarland there is now a vacancy for a Cookley Representative Governor to Sebright's Educational Foundation.

Cllr Nicholls was adamant that this should not be agreed tonight and be deferred until the Cookley Ward Parish Councillor Vacancy is filled.

Cllr M Hart queried whether none of the existing Councillors want to be representative, if they do then there is no problem with them being appointed as there is only one vacancy.

Cllr Nicholls and Jones were adamant to wait until after the co-option.

After much discussion it was proposed Cllr Drew, seconded Councillor Hart and unanimously agreed to defer the appointment of a representative Governor to Sebright's Educational Foundation until after the co-option of a new Councillor for the Cookley Ward.

86. **To discuss revised Quarry plans. (View online at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/eplanning using the application reference: 19/000053/CM - documents CD15.01 to CD15.24)**

Cllr Drew reported that there have been changes to the plans, also extra information submitted by NRS aggregates, and the Parish Council need to decide if they wish to comment further. He proposed the Parish Council write stating the changes make little impact and the Parish Council remain opposed to the Quarry application. This was seconded by Cllr B Brookes and it was unanimously agreed Cllr Drew do the response.

87. **Cookley Christmas Lights.**

Cllr Jones advised that a company has been agreed to supply and erect the Cookley Christmas Lights. The Parish Council agreed £1500 towards this project however the power supply needs to be sorted and is a three-year contract.

Cllr Sherrey advised that both wards had an allocation of £1500 in this current year, but this may not be there in future years. Cllr Jones thought it was not from the Village Fund - Clerk to check. Cllr Drew stated that the Parish Council cannot agree to a three-year contract for power supply if there is only budget for this year, he also queried if this in the name of the Parish Council, has appropriate insurance been sought and permission from home / business owners?.

Cllr Jones advised it is a group of individuals organising the lights and a company doing the work, insurance is covered and permissions.

Cllr M Hart asked, if the Parish Council is making a grant for Christmas Lights what is the legal entity or are the Parish Council paying the operator directly or giving the grant to an organisation in Cookley? Cllr Jones advised he would send out further information. Cllr M Hart re-iterated the Parish Council need to ensure it acts legally.

88. **Austcliffe Bridge Steelworks - email received from Phil Coulson, WCC requesting update.**

Cllr Drew advised of another email received from Mr Phil Coulson asking what has been done with the iron work remains from the Austcliffe Bridge refurbishment.

Cllr Wood advised there is no update, but they are safely secured at Cookley Sports & Social Club.

Cllr Drew advised they have been in storage for over two years and there are no plans in place to use them locally therefore he proposed the Parish Council write to Ironbridge Museum and the Black County Museum to offer them to the museums. Cllr M Hart seconded the proposal and added it has been a long time with no progress and they are a heritage asset and should be in a museum. This was moved with 7 for, 3 against and 1 abstention.

89. **Community Risk Management Plan 2025-2030 Consultation.**

Cllr Drew will respond by the deadline of 6th September 2024.

90. **Replacement for broken bin, Wolverley.**

Clerk advised a bin has rotted from the bottom and needs replacing. It was proposed by Cllr Bordewich, seconded Cllr Webber and agreed to get a replacement bin.

91. **To discuss Parish Council Meetings held in month of August.**

Cllr Nicholls stated that a lot of meetings are cancelled in January due to holidays and proposed the Parish Council do not meet in August and any plans can be dealt with under delegated powers. This was seconded by Cllr Webber. Cllr M Hart suggesting deferring this decision until after the Community Governance Review and then if there is a separation, each Council can make their own decision.

Cllr M Hart made an amendment to the proposal to decide on this after the Community Governance Review. This was seconded by Cllr Brookes. The substantive motion was not carried, and the amendment was carried with 7 for, 4 against.

92. Planning Applications for Consideration: -

WFDC No/Details

24/0336/FUL: Construction of a menage for private use together with perimeter fencing and gated access at Berry Hill House, Caunsall Road, Caunsall.
Recommend Approval with addition of a condition to ensure there is no commercial activity at this site.

24/0520/CLP: FOR INFORMATION ONLY
Proposed habitable room in loft space - velux conversion at 32 Beechcote Avenue, Wolverley.

24/0543/PNH: FOR INFORMATION ONLY
Single storey extension at 65 Sebright Road, Wolverley.

Planning Decision Notices:

24/0499/TCA Various tree works - Queens Head, Wolverley - Permit
24/0171/FUL Construction of eco dwelling, The Shortyard, Wolverley - Permit

Parish Matters for Update Only - no decisions required.

93. Clerks Report. (Clerk) Prohibition of waiting order, CALC AGM.

94. Lengthsman. (RD/WS) Nothing to report.

95. New Issues / Items for Next Meeting. (All)

96. Date of Next Meeting - to confirm the date of the next meeting which is scheduled for Tuesday 1st October 2024.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.01pm.

Signed by Chairman - 1st October 2024