

DRAFT

Little Comberton Parish Council

2024/28

Parish Council Meeting - Minutes Wednesday 9th October 2024, 7.30pm Village Hall

Parish Councillors Present: C Rabbette, D Smaylen, N Smithson, D Smithson.
County Cllr A. Hardman.

Clerk/RFO: Nicola Harding

In attendance: No parishioners

1. Apologies

Received from Cllr Jamieson, Cllr Schmitz & District Cllr B. Hardman.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

3. Parishioner's Comments

One parishioner's comment had been received, as reported under item 5, Footpaths.

4. Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 11th September 2024

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

5. Progress reports from Parish Activities: brief updates:

- a. Lengthsman: Gully grates have been checked and cleared following the recent spell of heavy rain, in addition to vegetation clearance and sign cleaning. It was agreed to request that the parish grit bins are checked to establish if they require replenishing.
- b. Highways - Speed initiative: Road marking works approved by WCC are still to be completed. Village posts have been ordered and delivery will be arranged to the WCC depot where the parish installation team operate from. Works to improve the passing places along Wick Road remain outstanding, however the senior highways liaison officer has put in a further request to get these completed. *Action: Clerk to continue to pursue with WCC Highways.*

A query was raised in terms of accessing speed data from the two VAS signs. It was agreed to request assistance from a previous parish Cllr who had supported the council in their application for grant funding, ahead of the new post installations. It was also noted that the Clerk has updated the new local Safer Neighbourhood Team about the council's ongoing commitment to address road safety, and it was agreed that Cllr N Smithson would liaise with PC Prentice to discuss future community engagement & enforcement in the village.

Action: Clerk to make contact with AD. Clerk to forward new police contact details to Cllr N Smithson.

Wick Road – Following a recent request to explore the possibility of applying for a weight restriction along Wick Road, Highways confirmed that the Traffic Management Team have conducted a survey of the road - data collected recorded very low counts of HGV movements over both a 24-hour period and day time survey for comparison. Given the number of vehicles recorded, WCC have confirmed that this is insufficient for the Council to consider a weight limit in this instance. Cllrs agreed that it was worth pursuing the possibility of single track signage to deter additional vehicle movements, given the environmental concerns.

Action: Clerk to request with WCC Highways.

c. 'Our Community Can' initiative: Cllr Rabbette provided an update regarding progress with the initiative. A village survey has been printed, to be included in the next edition of The Link. A list of the current weekly activities on offer in the parish will be available for information, in addition to an opportunity for suggestions and feedback to Wychavon regarding any additional physical/creative community activities parishioners might wish to access.

Action: Cllr Jamieson/Cllr Rabbette.

d. Footpaths: A report was noted regarding access to the public right of way on the field under new ownership off Wick Road, known locally as the 'prairie.' Fencing and gates which marked the previous public right of way have now been removed and there are concerns therefore that this area may be ploughed or cause confusion for walkers. It was agreed to keep a watching brief at present and potentially flag up the issue with the footpath warden, if necessary.

Action: Cllrs.

A report had been received from a parishioner at Brookfield, regarding the height of the conifers at the rear of the bungalows. It had been confirmed by the footpath warden that the trees had been cut back last Summer, retaining an adequate width of footpath and privacy to the garden attached to the bungalows behind. This matter had also been raised with the Senior Public Rights of Way Officer at WCC and colleagues had attended to inspect the area. It was confirmed that the height of the trees in terms of footpath accessibility is not an issue, therefore WCC are unlikely to take on any further work than is required unless there is a safety aspect of concern for footpath users. A discussion ensued regarding ownership of the trees and it was considered that the roots are on Rooftop Housing land and therefore their responsibility to take any future action.

Action: Clerk to update parishioner regarding potential ownership and maintenance.

e Airband poles: Cllr Jamieson has made further contact with an Airband Manager who has supported neighbouring parish councils, however no responses have been received to date. A request has therefore been made by Cllr Jamieson to meet in person with this manager, in an attempt to conclude the ongoing issue of the redundant telegraph poles. *Action: Cllr Jamieson.*

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f. Trees: Memorial Garden: Works to reduce the canopy of the overgrown lime tree have been scheduled for 4th November by a local tree surgeon. It was agreed to send a reminder email to the nearby homeowner who would need to remove cars from the vicinity on the day.

Action: Clerk.

The tree surgeon has also advised the parish council of an ash tree outside Bredon View, Wick Road, which has the start of ash dieback affecting its structure. It has therefore been recommended that the tree will require removal within the next twelve months. Given that the diseased tree is planted in the highway's verge, it is believed to be the responsibility of WCC to remove. It was agreed to report this update to WCC online and Cllr Smaylen agreed to approach the homeowner of Bredon View with an update of the action agreed as a courtesy gesture, given the tree is on their boundary.

Action: Cllr Smaylen.

g. Avon Vale River Action Group: Cllr B Hardman has confirmed that a date can now be agreed for training of volunteers who have agreed to conduct water testing in Little and Great Comberton parishes. The Clerk has requested suitable dates from volunteers, to be confirmed with Cllr Hardman.

Action: Clerk/WDC.

h. Bonfires: A letter of concern has been forwarded on behalf of the parish council to a local contact & Rooftop Housing Group, regarding noxious bonfires which had caused concern for several local residents in July. A response has been received from Rooftop noting this incident, with a request for evidence of any subsequent bonfire activity.

Action: Monitor.

It was also agreed to proof read the Parish Council's amended bonfire protocol, ahead of re-circulation to villagers at the start of next Spring.

Action: Cllr Rabbette/Schmitz/N Smithson.

6. District and County Councillor's reports:

County Council

Budget: Cllr Hardman reiterated ongoing cost pressures faced by the County Council, with a £40 million overspend incurred in the first quarter of the financial year. The demand for adult social care saw a reduced trend to that noted previously, however with future Winter pressures, this seems likely to increase.

Flooding: Works in recent years to address the drainage system at Pool Close have proved a success, and it was noted that no issues were experienced during the recent prolonged spells of heavy rainfall.

7. Planning

W/24/00941/AGR Land at (OS 9652 4375) Wick Road: Prior Notification for a new agricultural building – prior approval requirement approved and granted.

The meeting noted that there has been a substantial cut back of the hedging, trees and road verges by contractors appointed by the new tenant – although this was quite a severe cut back, it was agreed that the area looks neat and was well cleared after the event. There were no further updates to note regarding the application approved, although subsequent to the gaps now created by the clearance between some of the trees, it was agreed that this could provide an opportunity for some additional tree planting along Wick Road. It was proposed therefore that the Clerk would draft a message to circulate via the Gmail group, inviting anyone interested in sponsoring a tree to make contact. Action: Clerk/Cllr Rabbette.

8. Finance

a) Current Balances at 1st October 2024

Treasurer's Account:	£17,499.87
TOTAL	£17,499.87

b) Payments to report:

Street Furnishings Ltd: Village posts	£1,284.36
Wychavon DC: Bin cleanse/empty – Wick Road	£112.87
Salary: October 24	£388.70
*Lengthsman: August 24	£165.00
*Lengthsman: September 24	£165.00
*Tree warden: Scott's Pine	£49.50
*Expenses: October 24	£12.00
TOTAL	£2,177.43

*Payments to be approved.

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Income to report:

Precept (ii) 24/25	£3,549.00
Council Tax Support Grant (ii) 24/25	£162.00

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

*Action: Clerk to set up the payments highlighted *, to be authorised by Cllr Rabbette.*

d) Bank reconciliation (ii) 26 September 2024: Documents were forwarded to Cllr D Smithson for checks & verification ahead of the meeting and it was confirmed that the second quarterly bank reconciliation was accurate. This was noted by the meeting and the documents signed.

The Clerk summarised a review of income and expenditure against the budget to date, in addition to an update regarding outstanding final costs to fund WCC’s speed initiative works. A copy of the latest budget review and speed initiative expenditure was circulated ahead of the meeting for information. It was agreed to continue to monitor this expenditure as the financial year progresses, potentially utilising a small proportion of the legal reserve at the year-end, if necessary.

Action: Monitor.

9. Correspondence

- Sergeant Eades, SNT Evesham, WM Police Notification of a change in Ward and Parish ownership amongst policing areas, with Little Comberton Parish now coming under the management of Evesham neighbourhood Team. The new policing team have been advised of the council’s speeding priority forwarded previously. Quarterly updates will be received regarding parish priorities and the new Police Team are: PC Prentice, PC Trowman and PSCO Harris.
- WCC Highways Yellow grit bins are to be refilled by WCC with salt where needed in preparation for the Winter months – if any require topping up for use on the public highway, report via: <https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/reportit> Lengthsman to check & advise.

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

There were no future items to note, however it was confirmed that:

- The Remembrance Sunday wreath ordered by the Clerk would be delivered to Cllr Rabbette on 10th October. Contact will be made with a village representative regarding laying of the wreath on Sunday 10th November 2024, and a notice circulated to the village.
Action: Cllr Rabbette.
- Following a recent offer from West Mercia Police’s Rural Crime Prevention Officer to hold a Crime Prevention Awareness Day in the Parish, it was agreed that coinciding such an event with the annual Street Market would be an ideal opportunity to take advantage of a large, captive audience in the village. Details of the event in May 2025 will therefore be forwarded to the team. *Action: Clerk.*
- The Clerk will make contact with the village hall bookings secretary to request hall bookings for 2025 on behalf of the Parish Council. The following provisional dates were agreed on the second Wednesday’s of the following months: January 15th, February 12th, March 12th, April 9th, May 14th, June 11th, July 9th, September 10th, October 8th & November 12th 2025.
Action: Clerk to secure the bookings with the VHC.

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 13th November 2024 at 7.30 pm

Signed

Date.....

Chairman