

WOLVERLEY & COOKLEY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 3rd December 2024, 7.00pm,
Wolverley Church Hall, Wolverley

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 Sherrey
Mr W Southam
Mr J Wood

West Mercia Police: Apologies.
County Councillor: Cllr I Hardiman.
District Councillors: Councillors R M Drew, I Hardiman and M J Hart.

134. **Apologies**

Cllr D Cox due to work commitments, Cllr M Huselbee due to work commitments, Cllr C Nicholls due to health and Cllr A Webber due to holiday.

135. **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 J Hart in agenda item 6 as Parish Council representative to The Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust. Cllr R Drew in agenda item 8c) as married to the Clerk.

Public Question Time:

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

136. **To consider the adoption of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th November 2024 at 7.00pm**

These having previously been circulated it was proposed Cllr Bordewich, seconded Cllr John Hart and resolved to receive and adopt the minutes as a true record of the meeting and these were signed by the Chairman.

Matters for Discussion / Decision:

137. **Police Report.**

Written Report circulated;

WOLVERLEY & COOKLEY - Priorities Oct - Dec 24- Speeding / ASB / Burglaries

Cookley

We are appealing to the community for information following an attempt burglary at a home on New Road Caunsall. The attempt took place at approximately 01:30 hours on 23/11/2024. 3 unknown males were seen trying to gain access to the rear of the property. It is believed offenders were in a grey BMW thought to have been stolen from another force area earlier in the evening. No entry was gained to the property and efforts were made to locate the vehicle.

This month we have carried out various events or operations
Speeding/ traffic ops

County lines - various events have taken place, warrants conducted, and a visit to Wolverley High 6th Form to deliver a workshop

We are seeing an increase in burglaries across the area and patrols have been increased. We are reminding the public to remain vigilant and report any suspicious persons/ vehicles as well as making sure their homes are secured and valuables locked away safely.

It was agreed police priorities to remain the same.

138. **County / District Councillor Reports.**

County Councillor Report;

Cllr Hardiman reported.

LOCAL ISSUES:

Cookley A449 Overgrowth of Pavement:

I have received an update from the Highways Liaison Engineer: The vegetation at the Old Cottage has been cut back and our Green Team are to cut the rest back during the winter and annually thereafter! Regarding Siding-Out, which is very much needed, this will not be dealt with until the next financial year, unfortunately!

The Crescent Road Surface Condition / & A449 Speed Reduction:

I have been informed that Subject to Planning Approval, the Main Spine of The Crescent will be resurfaced as described in the Phase 2 Application; however, the remainder of The Crescent is not included! Therefore, I have requested that WCC Highways register the road here to be resurfaced on a scheduled basis a.s.a.p.

Regarding the A449 desired speed reduction to 30mph, this will be included in the Phase 2 Application AND whilst initially (Phase 1) the pedestrian road-crossing will not include a pelican crossing, the Phase 2 Application will specify this. This is all subject to Planning Approval!

District Councillors Report;

Cllr Hart reported.

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 reported damaged street nameplates at the top of Lowe Lane and Park Gate Road for repair and re siting.

We have been dealing with a planning enforcement issue at land at Caunsall. The gates are padlocked and an investigation is proving difficult to officers but they will persevere.

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 promoting 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. Now this stage has been completed we await the next stage.

We are aware of a request from Kidderminster Town Council for a Community Governance Review (CGR) to amend the parish boundaries in certain areas to align with urban Kidderminster. The request is to consult on a couple of areas of Wolverley to move into Kidderminster.

On Sunday 24th November there was flooding in the village and WFDC's street scene team were very proactive with the sweeping and gully machines in the clear up operation on the Monday morning. Robin also assisted residents on the Sunday.

Wyre Forest Issues

Work to commence on our ECV points in our pay and display car parks, by the contractor Flowbird has sadly been delayed but is hopefully imminent. There will be a mixture of speed types.

WFDC handed over the Piano Building on 27th August to our contractor Speller Metcalfe and since then planning consent has been granted and work is well under way now. We are marketing the ground floor for rent for food and beverage and the first and second floor for office space. Work should be completed in the summer.

WFDC have also let the contract 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. 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) is nearly completed and the building is being marketed now. The building should be handed back to WFDC by the end of this month and we hope to hit the ground running with tenants to provide a revenue income. The grand opening will be on 30th January 2025.

WFDC have let the contract for the £2.4m HLF project at Brinton Park to McPhillips. Work is about to start but has been delayed due to Badgers setts under the Old Pals Shelter and we have had to engage advice from an expert ecologist.

WFDC have commissioned a feasibility study for Worcester Street, Market Street, the former Crown House site and Lionfields (former Glade's site) and there will be a cabinet report in the spring setting out our aspirations for redevelopment and we are keen to see more residential development in the town centre.

If you have any issues you would like us to deal with, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Finally, can we take this opportunity to wish you a Happy Christmas and a peaceful new year.

139. **Motion that moves to reverse the vote of no confidence against The Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust trustees.**

Cllr J Hart left the room.

Cllr R Drew stated that agenda item 6 is a motion that moves to reverse the vote of no confidence against The Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust trustees. Cllr David Jones moved this motion at the October Parish Council meeting. The Chairman said that the Standing Orders at 7. a) allow for this to be challenged by written notice by at least four councillors. The Clerk has received seven letters requesting the motion to reverse the vote of no confidence.

Cllr Drew explained that Graham Wallis, Chair, and all trustees are all volunteers. They have worked tremendously hard to transform the hall. They have been successful in obtaining grants and funding of £187k. The outside of the hall has been cladded in steel to extend the life of the building and make it visually attractive. The inside has been reconfigured and refurbished throughout. A new meeting room has been created at the rear and a new bar has been in the main hall to serve

functions. A new community café has been created which hosts lots of talks and events, provides a meeting place for residents and is very well attended. A new disabled parking area has just been finished to allow direct access to the hall. Outside is a well-maintained community play area, and several trees have been planted named after previous committee members. The hall is a genuine asset to our community and parish.

Cllr Drew called for a named vote on this motion which was agreed.

Cllr Drew moved the motion to reverse the vote of no confidence against The Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust trustees and that the Clerk write to the trustees to say Wolverley & Cookley Parish Council has every confidence in the trustees and apologise for any distress the previous motion caused. Cllr M Hart seconded the motion and emphasised the huge amount of time, effort and dedication it takes to be a trustee. The hall is fabulous and a great asset and as a Parish Council we should support these trustees and work in harmony. Cllr Brookes echoed the comments made and was most upset by the decision taken at the October meeting.

The Clerk called out the named vote;

Cllr Bordewich	FOR
Cllr Brookes	FOR
Cllr Drew	FOR
Cllr M Hart	FOR
Cllr Hicks	FOR
Cllr Jones	AGAINST
Cllr Sherrey	FOR
Cllr Southam	AGAINST
Cllr Wood	AGAINST

Motion carried six votes to three.

140. **Use of Cookley School for 2025 meetings.**

The Clerk reported that Cookley School had advised that they are no longer doing any outside lettings so the Parish Council will not be able to hold meetings there.

Standing Order 3a) states meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol. It was therefore agreed that future meetings will take place at the Church Hall, Wolverley unless an alternative venue can be found.

141. **Financial Matters.**

a) **Items Councillors wish to include in the Budget for 2025/2026.**

Cllr Sherrey asked that any items Councillors wish to be included in the budget for 2025/2026 are sent to the Clerk before Christmas.

b) **Negotiation of contracts for Lengthsman, Grass Cutting and Bin Emptying.**

Cllr Sherrey, J Hart and D Jones will have meetings to discuss contracts in January 2025.

c) **Clerks Salary.**

The clerk and Cllr. Robin Drew left the meeting and Cllr. Ben Brookes took the chair for this item.

Cllr. Marcus Hart advised the Parish Council that he and Cllr. Chris Nicholls had discussed the matter, they being the staffing committee.

Cllr. Hart further advised the Parish Council that approximately 5 years ago we did a route and branch overview of the clerk's salary, pay scale and hours of work and at that time we resolved to pay the clerk at the rate of scale point 24 and that we would faithfully follow the agreed national pay scale at the rate and back date it to 1st April each year. The employer and employee bodies have agreed the 2024-2025 pay scales now and therefore I formally propose we stay with SCP 24 and that we back date to 1st April, 2024. SCP 24 is currently £17.16 per hour so it is proposed to go up

to £17.79 per hour so 63 pence per hour increase. The pay rise is therefore £606.06 pa. This is a 3.7% pay rise. This was seconded by Cllr. Charles Sherrey and unanimously agreed.

d) Recommendations from Grants Committee.

Cllr Brookes reported that the Grants Committee had met and made four recommendations.

Wolverley Parish Church	£500 - 2025 Meetings
WCC (Cookley School)	£500 - 2025 Meetings
St John the Baptist Church, Wolverley	£250 - Churchyard Grant
St Peters Church, Cookley	£250 - Churchyard Grant

Cllr Sherrey advised that due to the change of circumstances regarding Cookley School the payment to Worcestershire County Council will not be made. The £500 to Wolverley Church Hall will cover the first six months of meetings. Cllr M Hart suggested Council approve up to £1,000 for Wolverley Church Hall. Cllr Sherrey was content, and grants were approved.

e) To agree the schedule of accounts to be paid

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

47	B J Drew - Salary November 24	£1254.82
48	Mr Jason Hull - Lengthsman November 24	£272.00
49	Cookley Sports Club - Cookley Christmas Lights	£1500.00
50	Leedan Packaging Ltd (Mrs B J Drew) - Black Sacks	£111.24
51	TG Builders (Mrs B J Drew) - Parish Grit	£86.26
52	Smith of Derby - Cookley 2000 Clock Service	£360.00
53	Mrs B J Drew - Canes / Tree Covers / Laminating Pouches	£60.43
54	Microsoft Office Share	£16.00
55	Wolverley & Cookley Matters	£350.00
56	Annual Grant - The Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust	£1703.14
57	Annual Grant - Cookley Playing Fields & Village Hall	£1703.14
58	Quarry Legal Fees	£3600.00
59	Wolverley Parish Church - Wolverley Meetings	£500
60	St. John the Baptist Church, Wolverley, Churchyard	£250
61	St. Peter's Church, Cookley, Churchyard	£250

142. Appointment of Representative to Sebright's Educational Foundation - Cookley Ward Councillor.

It was proposed Cllr Jones, seconded Cllr Southam and unanimously agreed Cllr Huselbee be appointed as Parish Council representative to Sebright's Educational Foundation for the Cookley Ward.

143. Consultations

- a) Managing road verges to promote biodiversity

The Chair will respond.

- b) Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plans
The Chair will respond.

144. **Adoption of anti-harassment and bullying policy.**

The Clerk advised that due to new employment laws the Council are required to have a policy. The Clerk had circulated a model policy received from Worcestershire CALC and it was unanimously agreed to adopt the policy.

145. Planning Applications for Consideration: -

WFDC No/Details

24/0671/HOU & 24/0776/LBC Proposed single storey ground floor extension (to replace existing green house at Coach House, Wolverley Court, Wolverley Road.
Cllr J Hart proposed approval, seconded Cllr Hicks and agreed.

24/0758/HOU Erection of a new steel access platform, bolted to the rear elevation at 50 Bridge Road, Cookley.,
Cllr Southam recommended refusal, seconded Cllr Jones and agreed on the grounds of loss of privacy due to increased height in balcony.

24/0777/CLP For Information Only - Proposal for roof mounted solar panels at Cookley Sports and Social Club, Cookley.

Planning Decision Notices.

24/0614/HOU Permit - Hope Cottage, Caunsall.
24/0623/TPO Refusal - Fell Ash tree, Knight House, Wolverley Village.
24/0676/TCA Permit - Tree works, 3 Upper Lea Cottages, Lea Lane, Cookley.
24/0706/CR Confirmation of compliance with planning conditions, The Old Telephone Exchange, Lea Lane, Cookley.

Parish Matters for Update Only - no decisions required.

146. Clerks Report. (Clerk) Wyredin - The Parish Council has been invited to feature in the WFDC newsletter, Wyredin.
147. Lengthsman. (RD/WS) Cllr Drew stated the Lengthsman is doing an excellent job and is very good at promoting what he has done on social media which is being well received by residents.
148. New Issues / Items for Next Meeting. (All)
149. Date of Next Meeting - to confirm the date of the next meeting which is scheduled for Tuesday 7th January 2025.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.36 pm.

Signed by Chairman - 7th January 2025