

**WOLVERLEY & COOKLEY PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025, 7.00pm,**  
**Wolverley Church Hall, Wolverley**

Present:

Mr R Drew (Chairman)  
Mrs V Bordewich  
Mr B Brookes  
Mr J Hart  
Mr M Hart  
Ms M Huselbee  
Mr D Jones  
Mr C Sherrey  
Mr W Southam  
Mr J Wood

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

150. **Apologies**

Cllr D Cox due to work commitments, Cllr J Hicks due to family commitments, Cllr C Nicholls due to health, Cllr A Webber due to holiday, Cllr I Hardiman due to another meeting and West Mercia Police.

151. **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 5 as Parish Council representative to The Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust. Cllr M J Hart declared an ORI in agenda item 5 but as it is not prejudicial, he would take part in the debate.

Public Question Time:

The Chairman welcomed members of the public and asked for any speakers.  
There were no speakers.

152. **To consider the adoption of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024 at 7.00pm**

These having previously been circulated it was proposed Cllr Brookes, seconded Cllr J 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:**

153. **Police Report.**

Written Report had been circulated which stated for the first time in a long time you will be pleased to note that there is nothing of note to report for either Wolverley or Cookley for December.

154. **Correspondence from Wolverley Tennis**

Cllr J Hart left the room.

The Chair advised that all Councillors had been circulated the letter dated 20<sup>th</sup> December 2024 from Wolverley Tennis Club requesting information on twelve points raised in the letter.

The Chair stated that the Clerk had sought advice from the Executive Officer at Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils, also Caroline Newlands, Solicitor & Monitoring Officer at Wyre Forest District Council. The Chair explained that the Freedom of Information requests fall into three categories.

1. The information is already Reasonably Accessible and therefore you do not have to provide it, example minutes are available on the Parish Council website,
2. Some information is Non-Disclosable and therefore exempt from the Freedom of Information Act 2000, example Legal Advice is exempt under section 42a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Legal Professional Privilege,
3. Then there is Disclosable Information which the Parish Council would clearly be open and transparent and disclose.

The Chair advised that when a Freedom of Information request is made you have 20 working days to respond, that takes us to 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025 however a response can be made earlier.

Cllr M Hart agreed with the Chair that the requests fall into three categories, some of which are commercially sensitive and will not be disclosed, minutes are accessible on the website and other requests will be disclosed. Cllr M Hart proposed delegation be given to the Clerk, Chair and Vice Chair to send a response to the author of the letter by the deadline of 22<sup>nd</sup> January at the latest. This was seconded by Cllr Sherrey and unanimously agreed.

#### 155. County / District Councillor Reports.

##### County Councillor Report;

Cllr Hardiman reported.

##### **Local Issues:**

##### **Lamp 0245 Caunsall, Damaged:**

The Highways Engineer attended this issue where a tree has fallen during storm and demolished the lamp 0245. He has asked the Lighting Team to deal with this; also he has requested the County Structures Team, to assess the bridge for repair works.

##### **Pavement Resurfacing:**

I am pleased to confirm that Beechcote Avenue, Wolverley and Brampton Close Cookley are being resurfaced as requested.

I was happy to agree a £35,000 contribution from my Devolved Fund towards these two projects together with an agreed scheme for the Queensway in Wribbenhall.

##### **Siding-Out Schemes: (Removal of verge overgrowth of pavement)**

I have now been informed that it is programmed for Siding-Out of the Park Gate Road pavement and the A449 Cookley to Island Pool pavement in Late January / Early February. These works should restore the full width of these pavements to provide safe usage by pedestrians.

**ALSO:** I am still awaiting updates from County Highways ref. Bollards replacement by Wolverley High School and Frequent Surface Flooding in Sladd Lane, lower section.

##### District Councillors Report;

Cllr Drew reported.

##### **Local Issues**

We have reported damaged street nameplates on Blakeshall Lane.

Fly tipping has been reported on Lea Lane following calls from residents.

We have been dealing with a planning enforcement issue on Sion Hill, the landowner has now removed the shipping container along with the other storage containers and is clearing the site. On Drakelow Lane the landowner has removed the motorhome that was being used for temporary accommodation however continues to develop the site, officers will continue to monitor all further developments.

We have been out and about in the Parish generally over the last month chatting to 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 1<sup>st</sup> August and runs until 29<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **Wyre Forest Issues**

WFDC have launched a budget consultation on the website which closes 5pm Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025. The proposals include additional funding for a litter blitz squad, tackling illegal parking and environmental issues like fly tipping and dog fouling. They are also proposing to install more inclusive play equipment in our parks.

Work to commence on our ECV points in our pay and display car parks, by the contractor Flowbird has been further delayed due to technical issues.

WFDC handed over the Piano Building on 27<sup>th</sup> 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 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

WFDC have let the contract for the £2.4m HLF project at Brinton Park to McPhillips. Work has now started with completion in the Autumn.

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.

Cllr Southam advised that the caravan is back on site in Drakelow Lane, they have also extended the and are putting sheep on the site. Cllr Drew reported that WFDC enforcement officers are keeping a close eye on the sight.

## **156. Financial Matters.**

a) To agree Budget for the financial year 2025/2026.

Cllr Sherrey presented financial schedules. Schedule 1 shows Income & Expenditure to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024. Cllr Sherrey explained the variances which are mainly due to street lighting as the Parish Council agreed to convert 60 lights instead of 30. Also, the Parish Council did not have a new gateway, did not do a Parish Newsletter, Website/Domain costs have been put

on hold due to the Community Governance Review, Defibrillator Training is no longer needed, and VAT will be reclaimed on the Quarry Legal Fees payment.

Schedule 2 shows Income & Expenditure Forecast to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

Cllr Sherrey explained figures contained therein. The Precept has been shown as a 0% increase, but the property base has increased. VAT is mainly due to new streetlights. Cllr Sherrey explained he has principally used a 3% increase.

New Street Lights, the Parish Council had previously agreed 30 per year but he has included 50 as the Parish Council want them all done before a potential split. There are only 81 lights left to be replaced. Cllr Southam has requested £1500 for an additional speed sign for Cookley. Election expenses have been included as the Parish Council may have to pay for the Community Governance Review. Forecast overspend is £21,716.22 reducing balance to £52,679.46.

It was proposed Cllr J Hart, seconded Cllr V Bordewich and unanimously agreed to approve the budget for 2025/2026.

- b) To agree Parish Council Precept for the financial year 2025/2026.

Cllr Sherrey suggested a possible increase of 3%, Cllr B Brookes was happy to formally propose this, seconded by Cllr M Hart and unanimously agreed. This means the Band D Council Tax will go from £49.04 to £50.51, an increase of £1.47 per year. This will give a total Precept payable of £107,639.37 and will show as a 3% increase on the Council Tax Bill.

- c) To agree the accounts to be paid.

62	B J Drew - Salary December 24	£1255.02
63	HMRC - Tax and NI October - December 24	£530.75
64	Mrs B J Drew - Ink/Paper July - December 24	£60.00
65	TG Hardwicks (Mrs B J Drew) - Parish Grit	£72.96

It was proposed Cllr Sherrey, seconded Cllr Bordewich and unanimously agreed the above payments be approved and paid.

Cllr Sherrey advised the Clerks pay will increase from next month due to the recent rise in payscales.

- d) Contract Negotiations progress.

Cllr Sherrey advised that the Clerk is arranging meetings with the Contractors for Bin Emptying, Grass Cutting and the Lengthsman. Cllr Jones has advised he is unable to attend therefore Cllr Sherrey asked if any other Cookley Councillor would like to join Cllr Sherrey and Cllr J Hart for these meetings. No-one was forthcoming.

Cllr Sherrey advised that regarding Planters, Cookley in Bloom undertake Cookley Planters and Wolverley are going out to tender for planting for the financial year 25/26. Cllr Sherrey asked all Councillors to let the Clerk know if they know anyone that may want to quote for this as ideally three quotes are needed. Cllr Southam suggested asking the Lengthsman, Jason Hull. Invitations to tender will be put on the website and displayed in Parish Noticeboards.

157. **Planning Applications for Consideration: -**

WFDC No/Details

24/0807/HOU Front porch extension, rear dormer extension, new external brickwork skin at Little Croft, Sheepwash Lane, Wolverley,

Recommend Approval, proposed Cllr Bordewich, seconded Cllr J Hart, unanimously agreed.

24/0830/CLP For Information Only - Proposed three car garage and home office at Blakeshall Lodge, Solcum Lane, Blakeshall, Wolverley,

Cllr J Hart proposed a condition to ensure this remains ancillary to the main dwelling, this was seconded Cllr Sherrey and unanimously agreed.

24/0831/PNH For Information Only - Single storey rear extension at Blakeshall Lodge, Solcum Lane, Blakeshall, Wolverley,

Noted.

24/0863/CLP For Information Only - Proposed use Class C3(a) at Sladd Barn, Kinver Lane, Caunsall.  
Noted.

Planning Decision Notices.

24/0564/FUL Permit - Land at Os 384162 278701 Wolverley Road, Wolverley,

24/0567/PNR Refused - Building at Os 383464 279339 Brown Westhead Park, Wolverley,

24/0777/CLP Certificate of Lawfulness - Solar Panels at Cookley Sports & Social Club.

Appeal against a Planning Enforcement Notice

23/00040/ENF Land at Os 382777 278875 Mill Lane, Wolverley

**Parish Matters for Update Only - no decisions required.**

158. Clerks Report. (Clerk) Nothing to report.

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

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

161. Date of Next Meeting - to confirm the date of the next meeting which is scheduled for Tuesday 4th February 2025.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.40 pm.

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Signed by Chairman - 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025