

PEOPLETON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk Lisa Cope, Email: peopletonpc@gmail.com Tel: 07773793185
Address: Walcote, Top Street, Charlton WR10 3LE

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 15th January 2025 at 7.30pm in Peopleton Village Hall

- Members and Officers present:** Cllrs Mason (Chair), Wall, Bailey, Phillips, Harbon, Darby, and District and County Cllr Robinson. 16 members of the public attended.
- Apologies:** Cllrs Killoran, Povey and MacCalman sent their apologies
- Declarations of Interest:** None

Public Question Time

The time allocated is at the discretion of the council/chairman. Residents are invited to give their views and question the parish council on issues on this agenda or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the chairman. Members of the public may not take part in the parish council meeting itself. This period is not part of the formal meeting; brief notes will be appended to the minutes as an aide memoire.

- Minutes-** The minutes from the Meeting held on Wednesday 13th November 2024 were approved as true and correct as proposed by Cllr Phillips and seconded by Cllr Harbon.
- District and County Councillors report**

So here we go for my first report of 2025. I hope you all enjoyed a break over Christmas. I was heartened to see so many of our villagers across my Division embracing the various activities that were held over the festive season and would like to thank all those who worked hard to make them happen.

I would like to publicly thank those who attended the County Council meeting last week and was pleased to offer my support and speak further to the cabinet member after the meeting regarding your request.

The engineers at Wychavon need to capture details of any internally flooded properties in Wychavon. This has been requested by WCC its role as lead Local Flood authority (contact Martyn Cross at WDC)

I have attached a statement I have prepared re proposals towards Unitary proposals and hope it offers some clarification but would stress that nothing is definite at the moment. I think we can safely say though that change is coming!

Pershore Education Planning Area review- forthcoming changes. Decisions have been reached to extend the age ranges of all the first schools in the Pershore Education Planning Area to become primary schools. The middle schools in Pershore will no longer have a point of entry into Year 5 for September 2025, and Pershore High School's intake will be expanded to accommodate all Year 7 pupils in the area from September 2027.

School	Age range in 2025	Age range in 2026	Age range from 2027
Abbey Park First & Middle	2-12	2-12	2-11 (Year 7 closed)
Crowle CE First	5-10 (Year 5 added)	5-11 (Year 6 added)	5-11
Defford-Cum-Besford CE First	5-10 (Year 5 added)	5-11 (Year 6 added)	5-11
Fladbury CE First	3-10 (Year 5 added)	3-11 (Year 6 added)	3-11
Pinvin CE Academy	2-12	2-12	2-11 (Year 7 closed)
St Barnabas CofE First and Middle	2-12	2-12	2-11 (Year 7 closed)
Upton Snodsbury CofE First	5-10 (Year 5 added)	5-11 (Year 6 added)	5-11
Pershore High	11-18	11-18	11-18 (all Year 7 places for area)

PEOPLETON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Lisa Cope [Tel:07773793185](tel:07773793185) Email: peopletonpc@gmail.com

More information about these changes is available at <https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/pershorereview> but if you have any questions, please email [persshorereview@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:pershorereview@worcestershire.gov.uk)

Devolution

1. Prior to Christmas the government announced major changes to how local government will operate in the years to come, following the publication of its White Paper. Nothing has been decided but the government's intent seems to be clear, and I would suggest these changes will happen.

I will try to outline the proposed changes and how these changes are likely to affect Worcestershire.

- a. The government wants to abolish District Councils and County Councils and replace them with one Unitary Council. This would mean that the six District Councils and the County Council in Worcestershire would all disappear to be replaced with one Unitary Council. Town Councils and Parish Councils will not be affected.
 - b. The timeline for this is very short. The government want "letters of interest" by interested parties by 10th January 2025. It is my understanding that the government will make its decision early in March as to which counties will proceed in "the first tranche". If Worcestershire was in "the first tranche", it is likely that elections in May 2025 to the County Council will be cancelled and elections to the new Unitary Council may be held in May 2026.
 - c. The above is further complicated because this is the first phase of the government's proposed changes. Once the counties have become Unitary Councils, the government then wishes to create Strategic Authorities. It is proposed that each Unitary Council will represent approximately 500,000 people; Worcestershire has 600,000. Strategic Authorities will be made up of a number of Unitary Councils (2 or 3), headed by an elected Mayor.
 - d. A letter of interest has now been submitted to the Government by the leading political group at County. It was felt that if Worcestershire was to have any say in shaping its own future it is imperative that we are in the first tranche. It remains to be seen if Worcestershire itself will remain united as a single unitary authority or is linked with other shires.
- a. The Cabinet met to discuss the government's proposals and we decided it was clear that these were not really proposals, they were changes which the government intends to implement. With the "majority" which the government has, then of course, any legislation would pass through Parliament with ease.
 - b. We decided that if Worcestershire was to have any say in shaping its future, it is imperative that Worcestershire is in "the first tranche".

6. Planning:

- a) There were no new planning applications to consider

PEOPLETON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk Lisa Cope, Email: peopletonpc@gmail.com Tel: 07773793185
Address: Walcote, Top Street, Charlton WR10 3LE

b) Enforcement Updates

Cllr Mason shared the below summary of the situation to date at Stone Arrow Farm:

1. In 2018 there was an application for permission for a Waste Transfer Operation at Stone Arrow Farm. This was approved and had to start within 3 years of permission being granted. There were various restrictions including the total throughput, arrangements to be put in place to restrict noise, dust and litter, hedges and trees to be protected and no fires. The entrance to the yard could not be from the first entrance off the road after the A44 turn but the next entrance. Lorries had to approach from the A44. It is not clear whether this operation ever started.
2. According to the email which Stef Edmundson received, there are various exemptions granted for work on the site which all expire in March 2027:
Use of waste in construction;
Screening and blending waste;
Mechanically treating end of life tyres;
Burning waste in the open;
The business or organisation responsible for carrying out the exempt waste operations agrees to:
 - comply with all limits on waste types and quantities;
 - comply with all conditions governing how waste must be stored, handled and treated;
 - carry out the operations without endangering human health or harming the environment;For the operations to remain exempt they must be carried out without:
 - causing risk to water, air, soil, plants or animals;
 - causing a nuisance through noise and odours
 - negatively affecting the countryside or places of special interest.
3. There are various permissions for activity on the land although it is likely or certain that the area used exceeds that for which permission was given. Enforcement Officers at Wychavon are checking this. However, it is not clear what activities at Stone Arrow Farm are legal and licensed.
4. Recently an application was made for a Goods Vehicle Operating Licence. This has not yet been granted and the Office of the Transport Commission does not know the name of the person responsible for the operation. We suspect that the application might be retrospective considering the number of lorries already using the site.
5. The verge opposite the entrance to Stone Arrow Farm has been dug out and partly filled with hardcore to enable lorries to use this entrance. Despite being told to reinstate the verge by Worcestershire County Council, the owner has refused. The entrance is currently being widened. In addition, part of the hedge and fence further along the road have been removed, possibly, to create another entrance to the site. Other hedges have been removed within the site.
6. On behalf of the Parish Council, Councillor Mason wrote to Nigel Huddleston, MP, in September. The response from his assistant included the following: "From the outset, we should advise that as an MP, Nigel (generally speaking) must respect the divisions of responsibility between different tiers of government, in this case Wychavon District Council, on all matters which fall under their purview. As such, his powers to intervene are quite limited.
However, after his office made preliminary enquiries with Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Nigel has brought this matter to the attention of Ian Macleod, Director of Planning and Infrastructure at Wychavon District Council. Ian has asked the planning enforcement team to look into the issues you have raised, and we have been assured we will be contacted as soon as they are able to provide any updates."
7. Councillors Mason, Wall, Bailey and Robinson met with the Chief Executive of Wychavon DC and various officers in October about a range of issues relating to Stone Arrow Farm. No action has resulted from this meeting. Councillor Mason wrote to the Chief Executive on 13th January. [Councillor Allison has responded to say that they will discuss the matter internally in the near future and that he will get back to us.]
8. Councillors Mason and Harbon met the PCSOs in early December to discuss the operations at Stone Arrow Farm. They offered to organise a "drop-in surgery" in the village. We suggested a meeting for villagers instead. Neither has happened yet.
9. The Environment Agency and the police visited Stone Arrow Farm at the end of November and 14th January 2025
10. Councillor Harbon keeps in touch with the police and the Environment Agency.

PEOPLETON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Lisa Cope [Tel:07773793185](tel:07773793185) Email: peopletonpc@gmail.com

11. Councillor Mason keeps in touch with the Enforcement Officer at Wychavon about a range of issues at Stone Arrow Farm and had a site visit on 26th November.

Following this Cllrs discussed what the next actions were and agreed the following:

To keep a diary of events and timings of activity at Stone Arrow Farm and residents were encouraged to help with this through the Parish Council, Cllr Harbon to collate any information and forward to the necessary authorities.

To start a petition within the village complaining about the slow progress in dealing with the issues raised by the activities at Stone Arrow Farm by Wychavon DC acting with WCC, the Environment Agency and the police. The petition will be addressed to the leader of Wychavon DC and the Chief Executive of Wychavon DC and presented to the leader at a future council meeting. Cllr Mason to make arrangements and the petition to be available to sign in the shop.

Cllr Mason will write again to MP Nigel Huddleston and encouraged residents also frustrated by the current situation to write also.

7. Progress reports:

- a) Chairman's- TM. As covered above.
- b) Village Trust- LB
The Village Hall is having a very successful year to date.
The Trust are sad to share that Jo Smith is retiring as Hall Manager and recruitment has started for a replacement.
A three-year maintenance plan has been started this year and a new water tank fitted, also pest control visiting monthly.
On 15th March there is a travelling theatre group performance at the Hall.
- c) Village shop-TM
It is thought the shop has broken even compared to last year and the full accounts will be available in May at the AGM.
- d) Community policing charter-DH
One incident of forced entry to a garden in Peopleton
Community Protection Notice to be researched by Cllr Harbon
- e) Lengthsman-LB. Nothing to report
- f) Rights of Way-LB
Tree fell over during the storm at Barrells Bridge which was reported to the footpaths officer at Wychavon who attended very efficiently and removed it.
- g) Flooding- DW
During recent heavy rainfall the flood alleviation scheme has worked well.
Clerk to chase follow up from Severn Trent on ditch correspondence.

8. Finance

- a) Bank Balance- As of 30th December 2024 the bank balance is:
Treasurers Account £7,173.38
Business Instant Account £15,378.21

- b) The following payments for November and December were approved to pay:

Worcs CALC (training session)	£40.00 (Paid 24/11/24)
Jamie Farmer (Hedge Cutting WCC reimbursing the PC)	£120.00 (Paid 18/11/24)
Lengthsman November	£184.00
Clerk's salary	£637.40
Clerk's expenses	£25.50
Lengthsman December	£120.00
CJC (Grit for gritbin)	£157.20

PEOPLETON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk Lisa Cope, Email: peopletonpc@gmail.com Tel: 07773793185
Address: Walcote, Top Street, Charlton WR10 3LE

c) The Budget requirement for 2025/26 was drafted by the Clerk and considered by Cllrs before the meeting and it was agreed that the budget would be set at £9,850 for the year, an increase of 3.82% against last year on a Band D levy. This was proposed by Cllr Mason, seconded by Cllr Harbon and agreed by all Cllrs present

9. Land acquisition Monk's Way

Cllr Mason shared that although delayed the land sale was close to completion and he will write to both the seller and VLHT to try and move the process as quickly as possible.

10. Streetlights

Cllrs discussed research sent from Cllr Killoran for the meeting and agreed that a clearly costed quote was first required for installation, running and maintenance of any streetlights before a survey could be produced for the village to gauge interest on whether residents would like any additional lighting.

11. Information Board

Cllrs discussed replacing the current board but agreed that as it is currently fit for purpose that this is not an urgent matter, however if any future funding possibilities did arise Cllr Killoran could explore this.

12. Youth Council

Cllr Killoran circulated notes before the meeting that he is still exploring funding and research into the project and will report back any further findings at future meetings.

13. Correspondence:

Correspondence received from a resident regarding enforcement issues in the village and was discussed under item 6(b).

The Clerk shared details of a Town and Parish Event being held for Cllrs on Thursday 6th March, currently Cllr Killoran is attending and there is one other place should any others wish to attend.

14. Future agenda items and reports

Cllr Phillips shared that she is resigning from her position as Councillor and Cllr Mason shared his thanks for her service for almost ten years on the Parish Council, four of which as Chair, with all Cllrs in agreement. Clerk to share the details with electoral services

15. Date of next meeting: This will be held on Wednesday 12th March at 7:30pm in the Village Hall

Signed

Dated.....

Future meetings

March	12/03/25
May	14/05/25
July	09/07/25

AIDE MEMOIR

One resident commented on a large crack in the road through the village thought to be caused by heavy vehicle use

One resident enquired if the Parish Council had any funds allocated for legal advice

Several residents complained about hedges and verges being cut back in the village/ removed