

Defford and Besford Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

of Tuesday 22nd March 2016
at Defford Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Clive Woods, (Chairman) Roger Atter, Julian Clarke, Ron Davis, Ian Spiers, Patricia Steel and Hazel Wakefield.

Absent: Cllrs Nicola Szabranski and Jane Thompson

Also present: Adrian Hardman, Worcestershire County Councillor; Linda Blake, Clerk; 6 members of the public.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received and were accepted from Cllrs Nicola Szabranski and Jane Thompson.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

Public Question Time – see notes at the end of these minutes

3. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th January be confirmed and signed:

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of the 12th January 2016 be accepted and signed as a true record and the Chairman signed them.

4. Parish Clerk's Report

The Parish Clerk updated the meeting on the following points:

- i) The Railway Memorabilia and Village Photographs have now been organised and put into the display cabinet purchased by the Parish Council. This cabinet has been fixed in a suitable place on the wall in the village hall foyer and the Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee has confirmed that a spotlight will be installed so that the contents of the cabinet can be clearly seen. Due to the number of photographs, the intention is to change those on display every so often.
- ii) With regard to the on-going issues of drainage and flooding on the A4104 in the village, Wychavon District Council has confirmed that this is not a matter within their remit and is the responsibility of Worcestershire County Council. The Clerk has therefore logged a request with the County Council for action to be taken.
- iii) The Parish Council website is still progressing well and the IT contractor has put together a draft website design and is waiting for some wording to be sent over to complete the template. When the draft is completed the clerk will send a link to the test site for councillors to view.

5. Councillors reports

a) County Councillor A Hardman

Cllr Hardman reported the following:

- With regards to the issues regarding the recent flooding of the A4104, Worcestershire County Council has a list of priorities as to how it must respond to flooding. Although flooding in people's homes and on people's business premises are at the top of the list, flooding on A roads in the County are next on the order of importance, so Councillor Hardman would expect a response to the flooding of several weeks ago fairly soon. He agreed to chase this matter up and ensure that it was looked at.
- Councillor Hardman informed the meeting that he had issued a works request for an inspection to take place around the bridge over Bow Brook. From reports received, it seemed likely that this initial inspection has already taken place.
- Councillor Hardman confirmed that with regard to run-off from local fields, it is not possible to stop landowners discharging water onto the road, but confirmed that this issue is an area of concern for Worcestershire County Council and the Environment Agency.
- Following a report at the last meeting, Fiona Argyle at the Countryside Service had reported that maintenance of the footpaths between Upper Street and Main Road has now been scheduled.
- In the recent Budget, presented by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it had been stated that every school should become an academy. Councillor Hardman expressed his concerns as to how this would affect small schools such as Defford-Cum-Besford and how they would be supported in achieving this target. This would be an issue that he will be following closely.

b) District Councillor R Davis

Cllr Davis reported the following:

- The South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) has now been signed by all 3 local Councils.
- At present, there are several consultations relating to the SWDP taking place, including A Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) - Preferred Options. Councillor Davis informed the meeting, that although there were site allocations in Eckington, no new sites have been identified in this document.
- There is also a six week consultation taking place relating to the Draft Charging Schedule for the Community Infrastructure Levy. This levy covers the rates for developer contributions, due when developments take place within the area.
- All budgets have now been signed off and a Band D Council Tax Charge in Wychavon has seen an increase of 4.4%.

c) West Mercia Local Policing Team

The Clerk had received an update from PCSO, Julie Pardoe. There had not been any incidents to report in the Parish from the last two months. The team have been made aware that there are cars speeding up and down the Severn Stoke Road on a Friday and Saturday evening. Two reports have been received, but despite investigations, the Police have not witnessed any incidents of this nature to date.

Councillor Julian Clarke reported that, as Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator for Besford Court, he had been made aware that there was less burglary taking place locally, but more cybercrime was taking place.

d) Parish Councillors

Councillor Hazel Wakefield reported that Sonja Lee has resigned from the Defford in Need Group within the village and that there is a position to be filled. She commented that it would be good to recruit someone in the village who is connected with the younger age demographic and therefore possibly someone with connections to the School.

It was noted that this item would be raised at the Annual Council meeting along with other nominations for representatives on outside bodies.

Councillor Roger Atter reported that speed cameras had been continuing to operate regularly on the A4104 in Defford village

Councillor Julian Clarke reported that he had started to put together a spreadsheet to review tasks and targets for the Parish Council on an on-going basis. He commented that he had not received much feedback to the email that he sent round on this subject.

The Chairman commented that he thought that this was an excellent initiative which should be continued by Councillor Julian Clarke and that input would be required from other councillors to allow this exercise to be completed.

Councillor Patricia Steel once again stressed the importance of using the 382 bus service in the village, otherwise it would be lost. It was noted that responses have been received following the Parish Council's request to hear people's views on the service and these had been sent to the bus company.

Councillor Ron Davis suggested that the Parish Council should have a representative on the Bredon Conservation Group, as all of the other four local parishes are part of this group. Cllr Davis agreed to confirm the date of the next meeting and the Chairman would try and attend if he could.

6. Planning

(a) New Applications

W/15/03058/OU: Brook Cottage, Upton Road, Defford.

Proposal: New build zero carbon dwelling to garden land adjacent to Brook Cottage, Defford.

The Parish Council had no objection to this application.

W/15/03173/PB: Defford Arms, Upton Road, Defford.

Proposal: Erection of a wooden building to be used as a retail unit (village shop)

No objection in principle, but Parish Council comments were submitted regarding pedestrian access across the main road, entry and access to the site and benefit of the shop for all local residents.

W/16/00383: Rectory House, Church Road, Strensham

Proposal: Landscaping and earth remodelling of garden land

(This application although not in the Parish had been passed on by Strensham Parish Council due to traffic implications in the local area)

It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council should write and object to this planning application. The Parish Council supports Strensham Parish Council's comments and feels that the very large number of vehicle movements is totally inconsistent with rural life. The frequency of lorry movements is totally unsuitable for a single road track and for the access to the site.

(b) Wychavon District Council decisions

W/13/02118/OU: Defford Motors, Upton Road, Defford	Pending Consideration
W/15/01502/OU: Land off Church Lane, Defford	Approved 15/01/2016
W/15/03073/PN: Wright's Farm, Besford Bridge, Besford	Approved 17/03/2016
W/15/03174/LB: Besford Bridge House, Besford Bridge, Besford.	Approved 12/02/2016

7. Finance

(a) To approve any payments due

The following invoices totalling £4,256.01 were approved for payment:

Npower Ltd, Street Lighting 3rd Quarter 2015/16; Worcestershire CALC, 11 Councillor training sessions; Salary Payments for January 2016; LA Garden Services, Grass Cutting for February 2016 (extra cuts) and installation of a new gate at The Millennium Green; Defford Village Hall Trust, Hire of Defford Village Hall for meeting in January 2016; Salary Payments for February 2016; Playdale Playgrounds Ltd, 50% deposit for installation of a Team Swing at The Millennium Green; Linda Blake, Clerk's expenses for the period March 2015 until March 2016.

(b) To note the Quarterly Budget Monitor

The Clerk presented the Quarterly budget monitor and the figures were noted. An overspend of £1,921 against budget was being forecast for the current Financial Year, but this figure includes additional expenditure incurred in the year such as £1,690 for maintenance work at The Millennium Green, the purchase of a display case for railway memorabilia and the costs of creating a website. These projects had not been included in the original budget.

(c) Internal Audit for 2015/16

It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council would continue to use the services of its current Internal Auditor; Gallagher and Co.

8. Meeting Dates

The Parish Council **RESOLVED** to accept the following meeting dates for the 2016/17 Council year:

19th July 2016 – Besford Community Hall

13th September 2016 – Defford Village Hall

22nd November 2016 - Defford Village Hall

17th January 2017 - Defford Village Hall

21st March 2017 - Defford Village Hall

23rd May 2017 - Defford Village Hall (Annual Meeting of the Parish Council followed by the Annual Parish Meeting)

All meetings to commence at 7:45pm, except the Annual Meeting which will start at 6:30pm.

It was noted that the Annual Parish Meeting should be include interesting agenda items to try and encourage attendance. It was suggested that local groups such as the POSH club and the Youth Club should be encouraged to come along to this meeting to make presentations and to comment on any issues in the villages.

9. Millennium Green

➤ Installation of New Play Area / Official Opening Event

The Clerk reported that the new Team Swing would be installed at The Millennium Green during the week commencing Monday 28th March. An exact date had yet to be given, but it was likely to be towards the end of that week, with the safety surfacing being fitted by a sub-contractor, during the week commencing 4th April.

Members of the Parish Council discussed whether to hold an official opening event following installation. It was **AGREED** that an opening ceremony would be held on Saturday 16th April at 1pm and that the Clerk would contact the local media to advise them of this.

➤ Consideration of future expenditure

The Clerk informed the meeting that whilst the proposal for the Team Swing had been progressing, the playground company involved had been asked to come up with some ideas to further expand the equipment at the site.

Two proposals had been put forward and a detailed illustration provided to the Parish Clerk. It was **AGREED** that this should be presented at the Annual Parish meeting for residents to comment on.

10. New Homes Bonus Money

Councillors discussed the possible uses of the New Homes Bonus Money.

It was **AGREED** that tarmacking of the Village Hall Car Park owned by the Parish Council was the priority as the current surface had been down for 20 years and was begin to wear.

Councillor Wakefield had been investigating the costs of drainage and levelling which needed to be undertaken before a new surface was installed.

The need for suitable barriers at the railway side of the car park was raised by Councillor Spiers who stated that second hand barriers previously used on motorways could be obtained for this purpose.

It was **AGREED** that Councillors Spiers and Wakefield would continue to progress this matter and look at possible costings.

11. Dog Fouling within the Parish

This item was deferred until the next Parish Council meeting as Councillor Thompson was not present.

12. Parish Council Aims and Objectives

Following the last Parish Council meeting Councillors had circulated their ideas and thoughts for Parish Council Aims and Objectives that should be pursued within the next year.

The following items were reviewed and agreed and it was noted that these would continue to be reviewed throughout the next 12 months:

ITEM	CHAMPION	PROGRESS
1) Acquisition of a Defibrillator	Jane Thompson	Initial investigations have taken place.
2) Resurfacing of Village Hall Car Park	Ian Spiers and Hazel Wakefield	Quotes for drainage and levelling are being sought. The Clerk has confirmed that New Homes Bonus Money can be used for this project.

3) Upkeep of Millennium Green / Play Area Inspection	Nicky Szabranski and Parish Clerk	Maintenance works have been completed, a new gate installed and the Team Swing is due for installation in late March / early April 2016.
4) Campaign to reduce dog fouling in the village	Nicky Szabranski and Jane Thompson	To be confirmed.
5) Parish Council Website	Parish Clerk	Website under construction. Parish Clerk to continue liaising with IT contractor.
6) Address Drainage Issues on A4104	County Councillor Hardman and Parish Clerk	Issues reported to Worcestershire County Council. Work order has been raised for investigations into blockages around the Bow Brook bridge.
7) Campaign for continued provision of 382 bus service	Patricia Steel	Letter has been written to the bus company. Parish Clerk will invite bus company representative to a future meeting.
8) Monitor Provision of Broadband in Defford and Besford	Julian Clarke	Defford already has Broadband, but Besford has not been timetabled until July 2017.
9) Ensure Street lighting is adequate and well maintained	Parish Clerk	The issue with the Street Light in Crown Lane has been resolved. No other issues at present.

13. Correspondence for Information

Councillors **NOTED** the following correspondence:

- Correspondence relating to the Adoption of the SWDP
- Worcestershire Mineral and Waste Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report April

14. Staffing Committee

Councillors **NOTED** that the current Parish Clerk was stepping down from the post and had given notice that she would work until the end of June 2016.

It was **RESOLVED** to form a Staffing Committee of four members who would be tasked with carrying out the duties required to find a replacement Parish Clerk. Councillors Clive Woods, Patricia Steel, Roger Atter and Jane Thompson were elected to this committee.

The Chairman asked that a statement of appreciation for the work undertaken by the current clerk, Linda Blake, be included in the minutes and other councillors supported this suggestion.

15. To confirm dates of the next meeting

The date of the next Parish Meetings are as follows

- Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on 25th May - 6:30pm at Defford Village Hall.
- Annual Parish Meeting on 25th May – 7:45pm at Defford Village Hall.

The meeting was closed at 9:47pm.

Public Questions / Comments

- i. A parishioner asked for an update on the status of the drainage problems within the village, particularly with regard to the drain in Upton Road outside Keppel Gate and the flooding around Bluebell Lane and Bow Brook.

It was noted that Wychavon District Council has confirmed that it did not fall within their remit, but that this should be referred to Worcestershire County Council. The Clerk had lodged a request with the County Council that this matter required immediate investigation and action and Councillor Hardman confirmed that he too had raised the issue.

- ii. A parishioner reported a sunken manhole cover on the main road through Defford. This would be referred to the Highways at the County Council.

- iii. An update on the bench missing from the graveyard was requested. Councillor Spiers confirmed that the bench was in his workshop awaiting the last coat of paint. When this had been done and the ground had dried up suitably, the bench would then be reinstalled.

- iv. Thanks were expressed to Councillor Spiers for all of the voluntary work that he continues to do within the village.

Signed by the Chairman

DRAFT