

WOLVERLEY & COOKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council

Held at Cookley School, Cookley on Tuesday 7th January 2020 at 7.00pm

Mr R Drew (Vice Chairman)
Mrs V Bordewich
Mr A Carloss
Mr J Hart
Mr M Hart
Mr D Jones
Mr B McFarland
Mr C D Nicholls
Mr C Sherrey
Mr W Southam
Mr J Wood

County Councillor: I Hardiman
District Councillors: I Hardiman, M Hart
West Mercia Police: PCSO Becky Ruston

167. **Apologies.** Chairman Mr D Cox due to work commitments, Mrs L Jones due to another meeting and Councillor S Sherrey due to family bereavement.

168 **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. Councillors A Carloss, L Jones, C Nicholls, J Wood, W Southam on potential quarry, Lea Castle Farm from advice received from WFDC Solicitor.
- c) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests (Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary) in items on the agenda and their nature. Councillor B McFarland on potential quarry following election literature.

The meeting will now be adjourned for PUBLIC QUESTION TIME;

The Chairman welcomed members of the public and invited questions. Please see notes after the minutes.

169. **To consider the adoption of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 3rd December, 2019 at 7.00pm. (minutes previously circulated).**

These having previously been circulated it was resolved unanimously to receive and adopt the minutes as a true record of the meeting and these were signed as such by the Chairman.

Matters for Discussion / Decision;

170. **To receive report from Local Representative West Mercia Police.**

PCSO Becky Ruston gave the police report;

Burglary Christmas Eve, Castle Road, Cookley, keys stolen and theft of car, theft of motor vehicle Kimberlee Avenue, Blue Ford Focus stolen, Burglary Austcliffe Road, keys to 2 vehicles taken, Burglary Hayes Road, Wolverley, cash taken, theft at caravan park 2 lawnmowers stolen, caravan taken today Lionfields Road, Cookley,

171. **To receive Councillors Reports;**

County Councillor Ian Hardiman reported;

Local Issues

The Quarry: I still have not been notified further regarding the Application.

Residents from the far end of Lower Kingsford Lane, where the lane is in fact a Bridleway, contacted me asking for help with dealing with the potholing problem that arises quite regularly. The residents are happy to deal with the pothole filling but have run-out of plainings with which to do this. As this is not a County adopted highway, tarmac is not possible; however, I engaged the help of the County's Countryside Services who offered to supply and deliver 16tons on the proviso that I utilise my Divisional Fund to cover the £240 cost of the plainings- which I have agreed to. The plainings will be delivered shortly.

Low Lane overhanging Branches & Hedging: I have reported this issue to Highways asking them to ask the landowners to cut back this overgrowth into the highway which is to the detriment of vehicle owners.

Wolverley B4189 by the Memorial Hall (30mph) Speed Surveys: have been carried out and whilst the average speeds are acceptable, the 85th percentile figures are high! I have therefore gained agreement from Paul Green, Highways Engineer that the Safer Roads partnership will be asked to carry out speed enforcement along this road, even along the National Speed limit areas where high speeds have been observed.

Wolverley Village Blakeshall Lane from the junction opposite Hardwicks; the sunken drain has at last been rectified and vehicles should not now be affected by a severe dip in the road.

Flooding into a property in Staite Drive: Paul Green is helpfully investigating the cause of this

Strategic Issues County Wide

The Cabinet have announced their budget strategy and are proposing increasing Council tax by 1.99% and having an adult social care levy of 2%. The government has reduced the capping level for general council tax from 3% to 2% this year. It is anticipated that we will collect an additional £14.5 million in council tax income in 2020/2021 (as a result of an additional 2,500 properties across the county) and council tax income now amounts to 81% of our overall income. Due to growth we anticipate a further £1 million of income through business rates retention.

Our income, is however, not growing fast enough with our expenditure, given the pressures on our demand led services and the ever-increasing complexity of need in children's and adult's social care, together with inflation and the national living wage increases.

In 2020/2021 we will be investing a further £13.2 million in adult's social care and £4.7 million in children's social care and transport. This follows investment of £14.1 million and £7.7 million respectively in 2019/2020. In addition, £10.5 million was re-prioritised for children's safeguarding and placements, which makes a total investment in adult's services of £30.9 million and children's services of £22.9 million over the last 3 years.

We are forecasting a further £14.9 million of other pressures, in respect of pay awards to staff and in delivering our corporate plan priorities on highways, economy and the environment with inflation and external factors playing their part. We also have additional waste disposal costs. The impact of weather affects our roads and also the fragmented commercial passenger transport market is a pressure.

With these financial pressures that means an additional £32.6 million of pressure in 2020/2021, offset in part by £24.1 million of growth in funds less £1.1 million use of reserves leaving the Council to find £9.6 million of efficiencies or increased income.

Importantly and good news is that there is further investment to tackle congestion in the sum of £5 million in 2020/2021 and an additional £6million for highways in 2020/2021 and a further £6 million in 2021/2022, together with a further £4 million for footways in 2020/2021 and a further £4 million in 2021/2022.

There is also a £1 million investment for flood mitigation in 2020/2021 and a further £1 million for 2021/2022.

There is also a £1 million investment for an LED replacement programme in 2020/2021 and a further £1 million in 2021/2022.

We will therefore overall set a net revenue budget for 2020/2021 of £344.9 million.

Cabinet have approved the continuation with a further schools national funding formula for 2020/2021 and we should see an additional £8.7 million for SEND and an additional £18.7 million for mainstream schools.

Cabinet have also approved the libraries strategy now, following the consultation process during 2019 and none of the county's 21 libraries are going to close, albeit there will be some changes to the smaller libraries.

Questions:

Councillor Carlross asked for any idea when works will start on Lea Lane and timescale, residents are still having problems with people turning in their drives. Ian reported that this is trespass and a private matter for residents. He will report back on timescales when known.

Councillor Drew asked to attend the next site visit with Paul Green and Ian to discuss Highlow Bank and the main island in Wolverley. Ian will advise date.

District Councillor Marcus Hart reported;

Wolverhill, Wolverley Village - Planning enforcement is being pursued as it does require planning permission.

Stable blocks on A449 land, planning contravention notices have been sent to all landowners.

Feedback on road names for the new development on the former Sion Hill site have been given with the same views expressed as the Parish Council.

Fly tipping in layby Shatterford Lane reported.

Litter on main A road from Park Gate junction to Ismere reported.

Motocross events field on A449, also on Court Farm has been raised with Paul Round. If there are no formal ramps, then no planning consent is needed but if there are this may be a different matter and will need to be investigated. They can have activity for 14 days a year, encourage residents to keep a log if they consider there is more activity than this.

Strategic issues;

Consultation on budget, 2.33% increase in council tax.

Change in car parking fees and charges from April 2020, increases and charges extended to 9.00pm.

Localism Fund remains and Community Leadership Fund but reducing money on grass cutting.

Councillor D Jones asked if the motocross events are 14 per calendar year, it was confirmed yes. It was also reported a third area by the Equestrian Centre is now being used which does have ramps. This will be investigated.

172. Financial Matters:

- a) To agree Budget for Financial Year 2020/21.
- b) To agree Parish Council Precept for Financial Year 2020/21.

Councillor C Sherrey handed out very comprehensive financial schedules to the Parish Council and very thoroughly explained all figures contained therein.

Schedule 2 showed the Budget forecast for year to 31st March 2021.

An amount of £5,000 for Village Improvements, £2,500 for each village has been included to enable improvements to the appearance of the villages, this is a matter for discussion. All Budget heads were discussed.

Schedule 4 shows possible Precepts and Councillor C Sherrey advised that a 10% rise in Precept would mean an increase of £3.08 per year for a Band D property, 6 pence per week.

A full discussion took place and very grateful thanks were expressed to Councillor C Sherrey for all his work on this and his very thorough explanations to the Parish Council.

Councillor Nicholls thought the Village Improvements is an excellent idea and the budget should be increased to £7,500, £3750.00 for each village. All agreed with this.

Councillor Nicholls proposed a 15% increase in Precept, and an increase in the budget for village improvements from £5,000 to £7,500, this was seconded by Councillor McFarland and unanimously agreed.

- c) Accounts for Payment - Approved all accounts be paid.

61	Mrs B J Drew (Salary December 19)	880.47
62	Mrs B J Drew (Stationery)	8.99
63	T & A Dale (Lengthsman Fee)	604.20
64	Inland Revenue (Tax and NI Oct - Dec 19)	175.29
65	Cookley Village Hall & Playing Field Association (Annual Grant)	1441.29
66	Wolverley Memorial Hall (Annual Grant)	1441.29

173. Proposed Sand and Gravel Quarry and Restoration Scheme at land at Lea Castle Farm, Wolverley.

No application yet received

174. Report on Cookley and Causall Neighbourhood Plan / Wyre Forest Community Land Trust.

A meeting is scheduled for next Monday.

Clerk advised of e mail received from Helen Checketts, Senior Planning Policy Officer reminding that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group come under the umbrella of the Parish Council and should report back at all stages of the process and everything should come from the Parish Council and not the steering group.

175. To discuss changes to Wolverley Memorial Hall Lease.

Councillor M Hart advised that the Parish Council are the freehold owners of the title which the Memorial Hall sits on and all of the land. The Parish Council have spent a considerable amount of money on legal fees to act upon a request from the trustees of the Memorial Hall charity who wanted a new lease with a greater length in it to secure further investment for new hall and to update some of the clauses. This was agreed in April last year. Around autumn time the Parish Council had another approach from the Memorial Hall that they are changing the legal status so now will be known as Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust, our lease is with the charity not the charitable trust therefore a new assignment of lease is needed. They also requested an amendment to some of the clauses in the lease. This is very regrettable with timing as the previous lease has only just been finalised and agreed by both parties. The Parish Council need to "in principle" agree they wouldn't object to assignment of lease and also need to appoint a solicitor who has the skills and knowledge to deal with this. Councillor M Hart recommends Mr Roger Hill, a director and specialises in this area, he does work for practice Councillor M Hart works for but

he would get no personal benefit from him doing the work so would suggest the Parish Council use him. The Parish Council need to stress that they do not incur any costs, these are met by the new charity,

Councillor M Hart proposed the Parish Council agree "in principle" to the assignment of the lease, instruct Roger Hill to act on their behalf and reaffirm no cost to be met by the Parish Council. Councillor M Hart is happy to be the link with Roger Hill and will advise Adam Davies, the solicitor on behalf of the Charity trustees. Councillor C Sherrey seconded the proposal and it was agreed with one abstention, Councillor J Hart declared an interest as a trustee of the Memorial Hall.

176. Wolverley and Cookley Matters monthly magazine.

A new editor has taken over the magazine, Clerk to make contact and try and negotiate a bi-monthly article for payment of £350.00 per year.

Clerk to also submit an article on the recent presentation to Peter Smith.

177. Wolverley and Cookley Charities.

Defer awaiting Councillor S Sherrey.

178. Cleaning and Planting of Gateways 2020 and repositioning of Highlow Bank Gateway.

Councillor Drew advised the gateway at the bottom of Highlow Bank is constantly flooded, is filthy dirty and the plants do not survive in the planter. He is meeting with Paul Green to discuss possible re-siting.

Councillor Drew suggested that quotes be obtained for both the cleaning of gateways and for the planting, both of which have been budgeted for. This was unanimously agreed.

179. Planning Applications for Consideration: -

PC No WFDC No/Details

3451 19/0803/Full: Erection of two-bedroom pair of semi-detached with private amenity and associated parking at Red Lion, 70 Castle Road, Cookley.

Recommend Approval

Parish Matters for Update Only - no decisions required

180. Clerks Report (Clerk). Appeal Allowed Wyre Mill Cottage, Superfast Broadband, Funding for Communities, Severn Trent Community Fund, Letter from Peter Smith, Pension Regulator.

181. Update on Lengthsman Scheme. Work has been undertaken this month.

182. New Issues / Items for Next Meeting. None

183. Dates for Meetings:

Parish Clerks Meeting (New Planning Software) Friday 10th January 2020.

Wyre Forest Area CALC - Thursday 19th March 2020.

CALC Executive Committee - Tuesday 21st January 2020.

184. Date of Next Meeting - to confirm the date of the next meeting which is scheduled for Tuesday 4th February, 7.00pm, Wolverley Church Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Chairman - 4th February 2020

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:

Mr Steve Rushton addressed the Parish Council regarding access to Kidderminster town centre from local buses. Worcestershire County Council had promised improvements to bus services, but you cannot now depart a bus in Blackwell Street to access the Swan Centre and local shops trade is decreasing. The Chairman suggested raising concerns with the local County Councillor.

Mr Tim Partridge advised the Minerals Plan has been submitted to the secretary of state and hopes the Parish Council support refusal of this application.

Mr Dean Talbot raised concerns over a rise in crime in Cookley over the last six months, today a touring caravan has been stolen from a property in Lionfields Road. Becky Ruston advised that local police are still patrolling but actively encouraged residents to increase home security and be vigilant.