

**WOLVERLEY & COOKLEY PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council**  
**Held via ZOOM on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 7.00pm**

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

County Councillor: Ian Hardiman  
District Councillors: Ian Hardiman, Marcus Hart, Lisa Jones  
West Mercia Police; Apologies

99. **Apologies.** West Mercia Police

100. **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. Chairman Cllr. R Drew in agenda item 4 - Clerks Review (Clerks Husband).
- c) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests (Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary) in items on the agenda and their nature.

**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME: No public present**

101. **Minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 at 7.00pm.**

These having previously been circulated it was resolved unanimously to receive and adopt the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

**Matters for Discussion / Decision:**

102. **Clerks Review**

Cllr. M Hart took over to host the meeting for this agenda item.  
The Chairman and Clerk were removed from the meeting and placed in the waiting room.

Cllr Marcus Hart introduced this item and reported that the Staffing Sub-committee of Cllr. Marcus Hart and Cllr. Chris Nicholls met on Thursday 3rd September 2020 at 2:30pm.

Cllr. Marcus Hart outlined as follows:-

The clerk is currently employed in line with her contract dated 2nd January, 2001 and is employed for 17.5 hours per week plus 4 additional hours per month to cover meetings. The salary was set at LC-1 scale point range of 15-21, with an annual scale point increment each April until SCP 21 is reached, subject to satisfactory performance and the scale point to be paid in line with NALC pay rates.

N.B. 17.5 hours per week x 52 = 910 hours per year plus 4 hours per month x 12 = 48. This gives a total of 958 hours per year.

N.B. 37 hours is a FTE post, and therefore we are ever so slightly under a .5 of a FTE post, which is 18.5 hours. 18.5 hours per week x 52 = 962 per year.

The clerk's current gross salary paid is £11,345.64 divided by 958 hours = £11.84 per hour. (This is not in line with any current correct SCP)

Marcus further reported that by way of background, our clerk is paid at SCP 20 at both Rushock (128 electors) and Broome (295 electors) PC's, which is currently £13.15 per hour but due to increase to £13.47 per hour due to NALC rate increase as of 1st April, 2020.

Marcus further reported by way of background, a clerk at another larger parish within Wyre Forest is paid for 14 hours per week at £14 per hour, but in fact with about a quarter of the electors.

Marcus said, our clerk had a pay rise as a result of a review undertaken by Cllr. John Hart and Cllr. Charles Sherrey and on 2nd August, 2016, this was approved by Full Council. This was a salary increase of 2% backdated to 1st April, increasing the salary from £11,123.16 to £11,345.64 (its current rate) and therefore no rise in 17-18, 18-19, 19-20.

Marcus concluded by stating it is our unanimous view that the clerk's salary range is far lower than it should be and the current salary rate has lost track with a NALC scale point.

We feel that the clerk's salary should now be LC-2 SCP 24-28. The rate is £14.50 per hour but on 24th August 2020, there has been agreement reached between the unions and the national employers at the national joint council and the rates are to be uprated by 2.75% backdated to 1st April, 2020. This makes SCP 24 £14.86. This will mean an additional annual salary cost to the PC of £2,949.68.

Our recommendations are as follows:-

1. The clerk's hours should be increased by 4 hours pa so that she is on 18.5 hours p/week, .5 FTE, and therefore the contract of employment varied accordingly.
2. The clerk should be placed on LC-2 substantive benchmark range, SCP 24-28, and therefore contract varied accordingly.
3. The clerk should commence on SCP 24 with immediate effect and backdated as of 1st April, 2020.
4. The clerk's salary should be back dated from 1st April, 2020.
5. The clerk's current hourly rate be approved at £14.86 (Current NALC rate for SCP 24).
6. The clerk's hourly rate will increase in line with the nationally agreed rates when they are set and backdated to the 1st April of that financial year.
7. The clerk will now not automatically move up a scale point each year.
8. The staffing committee will meet every year after the AGM in May and report back to the PC by no later than the July meeting that year to review the clerk's salary and hours and all such ancillary matters.
9. The clerk should be paid a one off ex-gratia payment of £1,000 (tax free) in lieu of no pay rise since 2016 and no formal review of scale points and contract for many years and for work outside of the current contract.
10. Authorise Cllr. Charles Sherrey to liaise with our payroll provider to make the necessary arrangements.

Cllr. Chris Nicholls then spoke and thanked Marcus for his background research and spoke on the quality and excellent service that our clerk has provided us and that we were lucky to have her and fully supported the recommendations.

Cllr. Barry McFarland spoke and supported the recommendations.

Cllr. Vicki Bordewich spoke and supported the recommendations.

Cllr. David Jones spoke and supported the recommendations.

Cllr. John Hart spoke and supported the recommendations.

Cllr. Charles Sherrey spoke and supported the recommendations and said that as a Parish Council we could afford this additional payment and the unbudgeted additional amount could be taken from reserves and we could then be able to budget the new salary accordingly from 1st April, 2021.

Cllr. Simon Sherrey spoke and supported the recommendations.

The recommendation was proposed by Cllr. David Jones and seconded by Cllr. John Hart and unanimously approved.

Cllr. M Hart returned the Chairman and Clerk to the meeting.

### 103. Police Report

Written report circulated;

Shrubbery Close - Suspicious Circumstances.

We have received a few reports of a male in a white van in the Cookley area appearing to take photographs of properties. The male has been spoken to by officers and advised re the concerns of local residents. He is subcontracted to work for Severn Trent and will be in the area for a few days. He was advised to wear his high vis jacket/ID.

Island pool - Vehicle Crime Sometime between 1145hrs 02.09.2020 and 1330hrs a purse was stolen from the back seat of a vehicle. The Vehicle had been left insecure

Caunsall Rd - Report of fly tipping in Caunsall road. large pick up with cox hire on the side - red in colour. Officers attended area and vehicle had already left the area.

Lower Kingsford Lane - Sometime between 2200 and 0745 a grey Piaggio Beverly ST Motorcycle has been stolen - they have cut through bolt and lock

Blakeshall - Burn out stolen vehicle located in a field off Blakeshall Lane. Vehicle had been stolen the night before from an address on Truro Drive Kidderminster

Hayes Rd - Suspicious Circumstances - An unknown male has knocked the door at an address in Hayes Road claiming to be from the council. Alarm raised as it is believed this person was not from the council. There were denied access to the property and left presumably on foot. Officers attended but unable to locate anyone in the area.

Castle Road - Attempt Burglary on 15/09/2020 at approximately 01:30hrs an unknown male has tried to gain entry to property on Castle Rd. No entry has been gained. Nothing taken.

Castle Barns - sometime overnight on 24/09/2020 a shed located several metres away from the property has been broken into and 3 X Bikes Stolen. Nothing seen or heard.

Hardwicks - Over the last few weeks we have received 3x reports of incidents of Diesel been taken from vehicles on the yard. Enquires are currently ongoing.

Island Pool - At approximately midday on 27/09/2020 A motorcycle was stolen from the Island pool car park by 2 men in green biker jackets, dark helmets and were riding on a scooter. Enquiries are currently ongoing

If anyone should have any information on the above, they are requested to please call police on 101

104. **County/District Councillor Reports**  
**County Cllr Ian Hardiman's Report (Strategic) to Wolverley & Cookley PC 6th Oct. 2020**

**Strategic Issues:**

The County Council has continued to be heavily involved in the response to the Coronavirus pandemic, working with our statutory partners.

Cases in Worcestershire in line with the Country have been increasing and particularly concerning has been the increases across Wyre Forest in the last week or so but things do change on a weekly basis.

Our Hospitals are coping very well with substantial capacity on all 3 sites and despite our increases, Worcestershire has been less affected by infections than many other authorities in the West Midlands region.

We have continued to assist our many care settings with PPE.

Worcestershire "Here2Help" Community Action response to Coronavirus continues to provide excellent support to Residents and Businesses.

Council meetings are still taking place virtually and it likely that County Full Council will not meet in person for some months yet.

As for all County Councillors, I have a fresh allocation of Divisional Funding for 2020/2021 for deserving local causes and will be pleased to consider any applications over the coming months.

**Wyre Forest Issues:**

County Highways' Kidderminster Churchfields Spur Road project has been delayed as a result of Coronavirus but I understand contractors will soon be recommencing with safe distancing measures being put in place.

**County Cllr Ian Hardiman's Local Issues Report to W&C PC 6th Oct. 2020**

LEA LANE LANDSLIP: Unfortunately, agreement has still not been reached with the Canals and Rivers Trust to allow the County Council to commence the necessary works.

I have forwarded enquiries from local Lea Lane residents and also from Parish Councillor Dave Jones, requesting that the Lane remains permanently closed to vehicles to enable ongoing use by cyclists and pedestrians. County Highways have responded saying they feel that costs to achieve this would not be feasible! Notwithstanding this, I have asked for further investigation before the County Council provides a definitive response.

LEA CASTLE QUARRY: No further update has been received from County Planning Management on this.

SPEED ENFORCEMENT ISSUES: Wolverley Road, past the Lock / the B4189 Shatterford Lane: Enforcement is still being awaited for these agreed locations; I remind the Highways Engineer frequently for this. He will pursue with the Safer Roads Partnership.

OUTSTANDING VEHICLE SPEED ANALYSIS: Lowe Lane, within the 30 mph zone: In response to my chasing the Highways Engineer, I have been informed that there is a backlog of locations across the county seeking speed analysis.

CAUNSALL LANE, CAUNSALL - ROAD SUBSIDENCE: Remedial works are due to commence on 8th October.

CAUNSALL, DAMAGED RIVER BANK SAFETY RAILINGS: For the second time during the last year, the railings near to the bridge have been fully repaired by the County Council following damage caused twice by large vehicles reversing into the railings.

COOKLEY, BRIDGE ROAD RESIDENTS PARKING SCHEME: This is now moving forward; District and County Councillors are being consulted on a scheme to suit the needs of the Bridge Road residents.

**District Councillors Report:**

**Report to Wolverley & Cookley PC from District Councillors Marcus Hart, Lisa Jones Ian Hardiman.**

**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 keeping a keen eye on planning and enforcement issues across the Parish as usual of which there are a number!

Issues still outstanding in our caseload are Lowe Lane in three locations, firstly the Lowe Lane Wolverley end, an application has been received and the applicant has provided the outstanding documents and the enforcement officer is waiting for it to be checked and assigned to an officer which should be in next couple of days.

Secondly, the field in front of Brookfield Cottage, the enforcement officer has spoken to them last week about the track and they have advised that they are not carrying out any ground works and it will remain as a grass track to the barn from the gate which has been in situ from when the agricultural building was built and the enforcement officer is going to go out this week and take some more pictures and see what Paul Round thinks.

Thirdly, the 'Horse land' Kidderminster end of Lowe Lane the enforcement officer has spoken to Paul Round about issuing a PCN here as they have had no response from the owners regarding the barn and Paul has agreed that the enforcement officer can do this which they will be doing shortly- however the officer states "we are not classing it as a priority as we believe the barn has been there for some time have you received many complaints regarding it?"

In respect of the shack at the Lock Pub Car Park of which a planning application has still not been received and if one isn't imminently enforcement action will be pursued, signage at the Eagle and Spur PH of which Ian and Marcus had a site meeting last Thursday with officers as to what would and would not potentially be acceptable and officers will liaise with the representatives of the Pub and of course the ongoing issues of the Motor Cross at Lea Castle Farm of which Lisa is our lead on.

#### Wyre Forest Issues

Wyre Forest House is still closed to the public as is the Green Street hub save for dealing with housing and homelessness applications. Staff continue to work from home and there is currently a consultation out on the future of home working to potentially make it more permanent post Covid - 19. This will be the subject of a Full Council decision at the 9th December meeting. We will await the outcome of the consultation and the proposals before determining what our view is. The Council has been successful in a £2.4 million Heritage Lottery Bid which was something commenced when Marcus and Ian were Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council in 2018.

The Council led by the Progressive Alliance continues to pursue a localism agenda, divesting itself of many local services and assets. It is in talks with all 3 towns regarding the transfer of land, buildings, parks and open spaces, toilets and the potential TUPE of staff etc....

The Council at its last meeting of Full Council unanimously resolved to support a request for permanent flood defences at Beales Corner in Bewdley. This came after a lengthy scrutiny exercise by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been looking at the Government's planning white paper making a number of recommendations regarding concerns about taking local decision making away and other than at the local plan stage having a lot less influence. Essentially it is aimed at making development much easier without the need for planning consent.

The planning inspector has confirmed that the Examination in Public (EIP) will commence on 11th January and also sit on weeks commencing 18th January, 25th January and 8th February. The inspector will announce the format and timeline in due course, we expect it to be a hybrid of virtual and

There have been some political changes in that the 2 Labour group members left the Progressive Alliance in the summer but more recently 2 members of the Conservative Group have left to join the Independent Community Health Concern Group so they now have 11 members, the Liberal Democrat and Independent Group have 8 members, giving the Progressive Alliance 19 members, then with a Conservative Group of 12 and Labour Group of 2.

Cllr. Peter Young has stepped down as Vice-chairman of the Council and at the last meeting Cllr. John Aston was appointed as Vice-chairman for the rest of the municipal year.

All meetings are still being held virtually and I suspect that will be the case for some months yet.

Cllr. Carloss enquired as to the issues with The Eagle pub, it was advised that the signage is in breach of planning.

There was much discussion on the issue of Lea Lane and whether it should be closed to traffic and open to pedestrians and cyclists only. Cllr. D Jones advised that he did not request it to remain closed, only to be accessible for all. County Cllr. I Hardiman advised that it would need a full consultation before any decisions were made.

#### 105. Financial Matters

Agreed the following accounts be paid;

32	Mrs B J Drew (Salary September 2020)	889.23
33	Mrs B J Drew (Stationary/Ink/Zoom)	27.38

34	Inland Revenue (Tax and NI - July - September 2020)	143.64
35	Wyre Forest District Council (VAT omitted from Election Charges)	107.93
36	Mr K Basketfield (6th Grass Cut)	671.00
37	Mrs B J Drew (Expenses April 2020 - September 2020)	165.00
38	Wolverley Memorial Hall (Play Area)	1323.00

106. **Lengthsman Scheme**

Clerk advised that no e mail communications had been received despite requests for updates and the timesheet and invoice had been received the day before the meeting despite reminder it is required by the Wednesday before the Parish Council meeting. The Clerk also advised that invoices are still being made out to her personally, not Wolverley & Cookley Parish Council.

After much discussion it was unanimously agreed that as the invoice was submitted late it will be put on the accounts for approval next month and any invoices not addressed correctly are to be returned by the Clerk.

107. **To discuss report received regarding Structural Safety Testing of Street Lighting Columns in the Parish.**

The Clerk had previously circulated report received from Worcestershire County Council detailing results of structural testing. This advised 7 category 4 columns which ideally need replacing by March 2021 and 139 category 3 columns to be replaced/repared within 2 years. There was much discussion on these quite alarming results which have come out of the blue, especially as the Parish Council pay a yearly fee for every column to be maintained by Worcestershire County Council and no safety concerns have been previously highlighted. It was agreed that a meeting will need to be held with Street Lighting to discuss this when co-vid restrictions allow. The 7 columns identified at category 4 however do need actioning. It was agreed that the Chairman discuss these with James Douglas, Street Lighting Manager and put necessary works in hand.

108. **To discuss matters relating to Wolverley Memorial Hall.**

Councillor C Sherrey advised that at the Parish Council meeting on 7th January 2020 it was agreed that each village would have £3,750 for village improvements in the financial year to 31st March 2021. It has been difficult to spend this money because of Covid but a comment was made at the last Council Meeting that the Play Area in Wolverley could not be opened for the time being because of the cost of keeping it safe.

Cllr. C Sherrey reported that together with John Hart, they have had a meeting with Graham Wallace and Robert Lawrence to discuss the costs of getting the Play area up to the required standard and the ongoing disinfecting costs.

The committee are incurring costs on -

Signs

Inspection of Play areas - ROSPA Play Safety

Wood Chippings

Materials for equipment repair and ground stabilisation

Removal of Carousel including the Hire of a Digger and making good ground, soil and turf

Hiring of labour for above - other labour will be supplied by volunteers

The total projected costs of the above excluding voluntary labour amounts to £1,764.00.

In addition to the above there are the weekly disinfecting costs. It is the Memorial Halls intention to disinfect 3 times a week at a cost of £10 per clean ie £30 per week. 26 weeks to 31st March 2021 comes to £780.00.

Councillor C Sherrey advised he would like to recommend to the Parish Council that we contribute 75% of £1,764.00 = £1,323.00 immediately and we contribute 75% of the disinfecting costs up to 31st March 2021, on the production of the invoices, which would total £585.00. Our contribution for disinfecting to be capped at £585.00 to 31st March 2021.

The total cost in the current financial year would amount to £1,908.00.

It was unanimously agreed to support this recommendation. Clerk to add to the Accounts for Payment cheque to Wolverley Memorial Hall for £1323.00.

109. **To discuss Horsiculture / Stable developments in the Parish.**

Cllr. M Hart advised that a briefing note has been sent to the three District Councillors from Paul Round however at present it is Private and Confidential so cannot be shared with the Parish Council. Clerk to agenda for next meeting as last item.

110. **To discuss Motocross Events in the Parish.**  
Cllr. D Jones advised that events are still ongoing and are actively being advertised on social media. Cllr. L Jones reported that enforcement is still involved and asked that any information be forwarded to the District Councillors to pass to enforcement.
111. **Self-Watering Planters - Cookley Project.**  
Still awaiting written confirmation of Highways agreement to siting of planters.
112. **Planning Applications for Consideration: -**
- | PC No | WFDC No/Details  |
|-------|--|
| 3483  | WF/20/0532/HOU: Erection of front porch and installation of two bay windows to front, and single storey infill extension to side at 61 Franche Road, Wolverley,<br>Recommend Approval  |
| 3484  | WF/20/0672/HOU: Retrospective conversion of pig-sty building to office/garden store to be used incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling house (Clangers) including roof extension, new external materials, windows and doors at Clangers, Wolverley Road, Wolverley,<br>Recommend Approval  |
| 3485  | WF/20/0712/HOU: Erection of rear conservatory at Linford, Kingsford Lane, Wolverley,<br>Recommend Approval   |
| 3486  | WF/20/0728/HOU: Proposed porch and recladding to all elevations at Mayfield, Sladd Lane, Wolverley,<br>Recommend Approval subject to application relating to proposed porch and recladding only on existing elevations.  |
| 3487  | WF/20/0733/CLE: Certificate of lawfulness for existing use of land as a residential caravan/park home site including associated infrastructure at Kinverdale Chalet Park, Wolverley,<br>Noted. Delegated to WFDC Solicitor to determine this.  |
| 3488  | WF/20/0749/HOU: Erection of single and two storey rear extension and single storey side extension, following demolition of conservatory and rear chimney breast at Hope Cottage, New Road, Caunsall,<br>Recommend Approval   |
| 3489  | FOR INFORMATION ONLY:<br>WF/20/0775/NMA: Amendments to planning approval 20/0029/Full to lower the finished floor level and retain overall 4m height at Wyre Mill Cottage, Wyre Mill Lane, Wolverley,<br>Although this was sent to the Parish Council as a Non-Material Amendment after discussion the Council felt very strongly that this is a material amendment and they do wish to make a comment. They concur with the comments from Kirsten Huizer, North Worcestershire Water Management regarding the finished floor levels to be set no lower than 36.02 as requested by the Environment Agency. |
| 3490  | WF/20/0789/HOU: Single storey side extension at 10 Winston Road, Cookley.<br>Recommend Approval  |

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

113. Clerks Report. (Clerk) Worcestershire Minerals Hearing Sessions, Remembrance Day Update, WFDC Media Releases, Planters (RD/WS to liaise)
114. To update on improvements to walking/cycling routes in the Parish. (DJ) Noted - put on next agenda.
115. To update on temporary use of adopted telephone kiosks for food banks. (DJ) Noted - not in use yet.
116. To update on Winter Grit. (BS/RD) Chairman advised will order when required.
117. Neighbourhood Plan / CLT. (DJ/JW) Noted. CLT has had AGM.
118. New Issues / Items for Next Meeting. Wolverley Memorial Hall Update.
119. Date of Next Meeting - to confirm the date of the next meeting which is scheduled for Tuesday 3rd November 2020.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.00pm.