

WOLVERLEY & COOKLEY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council
Held on Tuesday 4th January 2022, 7.00pm at Cookley School

Present:

Mr D Jones (Chairman)
Mrs V Bordewich
Mr D Cox
Mr R Drew
Mr J Hart
Mr M Hart
Mr C Sherrey
Mr S Sherrey
Mr W Southam
Mr J Wood

County Councillor: Ian Hardiman
District Councillors: Ian Hardiman, Marcus Hart
West Mercia Police: PCSO Easthope

156. **Apologies.**
Councillor C Nicholls and B McFarland due to co-vid, Councillor A Carloss due to caring for mother and Councillor L Jones due to hospital appointment.

157. **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 Disclosable Interests (Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary) in items on the agenda and their nature.

None declared.

The meeting will now be adjourned for PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:

Resident of Gaymore Road awaiting streetlight replacement in wall expressed concern it has still not been done and requested this job is now rescheduled until after Easter.

Resident reported light 137, opposite Drumart House not lit, Clerk will report.

158. **To consider the adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2021 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.

159. **Police Report**

Written report circulated.

Theft - Staite Drive, Cookley - Police ref 00275_I_06122021 - Between 0700hrs and 1800hrs on Friday 3rd December, unknown persons have stolen a wheelchair from outside the front of a property.

Vehicle Crime - Attwood Close - Police Ref 00086_I_20122021 - Just after midnight on 20th December a White Ford Transit Van was stolen from this location. Registration similar to G12 *DP. The van had tools inside, is white, and has the words Phoenix Flooring and Bedrooms on the side in blue. There is also an 01527 number on the side. NOTE THIS VAN HAS NOW BEEN RECOVERED.

Vehicle Crime - Sebright Road - a Van parked at this location outside the owner's address, has been entered and a stereo stolen from within. An attempt was made to steal the van, but they were unable to do so due to a "disabling device" that stopped them. It is believed this happened around the same time that the above van got stolen.

Speed operations have taken place over the festive period as part of our Drink/ Drug Campaign and parish priorities.

Bike Marking Event - 17th January, Lock Inn Pub, Car Park.

Wolverley and Cookley DAA - Chris Nicholls has resigned but it is hoped it will continue.

Councillor Marcus Hart said it would be helpful, regarding the speeding/drink drive campaigns, to know results of these, e.g. general stats on how local the motorists were that were caught speeding and what speeds, how many, if any failed a breath test. Kate will look into providing this information.

160. **County / District Councillor Reports.**
County Cllr Ian Hardiman's Report

Lea Lane Landslip:

I am still awaiting a response from Highways' Senior Management on when the restoration works will commence. Meanwhile a further incident of a wall collapse has occurred and Highways have been asked to engage and supervise urgent attention in the interests of safety.

Lea Castle Farm Quarry Application:

Although I can't confirm categorically, I have discussed this matter with the County Council's Development Manager who is hoping to include this application for debate in the County's Planning & Regulatory Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 8th February; I should receive clarification during this week.

Cookley, Castle Road Vehicle Speeding:

Despite Speeding Enforcement being carried out on a scheduled basis by the Safer Roads Partnership and local police enforcement initiatives, I am being informed that vehicle speeding is continuing causing ongoing concerns for residents. I have therefore asked the Highways Engineer Paul Green to consider whether engineering solutions can be considered for this road.

A451 Stourbridge Road Vehicle Speeding:

I have received further resident concerns regarding speeding here; I am awaiting vehicle speed analysis which has been requested and consideration for improved signage and engineering solutions.

Wolverley, Highlow Bank Pavement Muddy/Leaf Covered:

Following considerable rainfall and falling of leaves, this pavement is in need of cleansing. I have therefore reported this to the District Council, asking for mechanical sweeping, in the interests of safety!

Councillor Southam re-iterated that the Lea Lane situation is ridiculous and queried why it cannot be repaired and the parties argue about the costs afterwards. IH confirmed this is not possible due to the cost of the works involved.

Castle Road speeding – this is still a problem and it was queried whether a zebra crossing could be put in? Councillors D Jones and D Cox will discuss with Paul Green. PCSO Easthope mentioned the Community Speed Watch Scheme, Councillor Southam has previously been in communication with them but has not heard anything. Kate will chase.

Councillor Cox advised that several drains had been marked on Castle Road.

District Councillors Report

Clerk read report.

Local Issues

We have been dealing with the usual routine casework, fly tipping and litter picking on the main A roads and along the country lanes. We have reported litter along the A451 Stourbridge Road and the A449 now the hedges have been flailed.

The job was investigated for litter picking the A449, we were informed that the job had been completed but unfortunately the operative had not carried out the works, we are extremely unhappy that the District Council operative had not assisted the residents. Green Street have apologised for not completing the job, this was due to a discrepancy between the operative and the supervisor, this has now been rectified and we have been assured that this will not happen in future. We would like to thank the three residents for their hard work, the bags were collected by Green Street.

Regarding the Red Lion Planning Application, this is still ongoing and do not have any updates as of today.

We have not received an installation date as yet from Royal Mail for the new post box in Cookley. It may just be installed without a notification like the new one in another of our parishes.

We have ensured that posters for the mobile post office in Cookley Village Hall have been put around the village for residents.

The Environmental Enforcement team have been carrying out patrols at the playing fields on Brown Westhead Park after complaints from residents regarding dog fouling. This area amongst others in the parish will be earmarked for the upcoming "We are Watching You" dog fouling campaign. The fine for dog fouling is £100, the maximum amount if convicted in court is £500/£1000. This includes walking a dog without poo bags, failure to place a dog under your control on a lead when asked by an officer and allowing a dog to enter a restricted area such as a children's play area/cemetery, area surrounding Hurcott Pool.

Enforcement Issues

The Old Post Office, Cookley - This is ongoing, the enforcement notice is still active and do not have any updates at present.

Land off Drakelow Lane K9 Pawfection - Unfortunately due to the Christmas break we do not have an update on this at the moment and will report back in due course.

Drakelow Tunnels Fencing - The revised planning application for mesh fencing further back from the highway has a deadline of the 14 January and is still be considered by officers at the moment.

Low Lane Enforcement Issues - Land at Brookfield Cottage - The enforcement officer has advised that the bricks needed to be removed before Christmas, she is conducting a site visit this week. The wood in the field opposite - the enforcement officer has spoken to the leaseholder and has advised that the wood needs to be removed as a priority, this will be carried out when their son is on leave, she is again conducting a site visit this week.

Regarding Fly-Tipping, ten additional cameras have been brought for the district and funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner to enforce and deter future offenses. Fines have been issued for fly tipping in Axborough Lane in 2021, a £900 fixed penalty notice, a £300 fixed penalty notice, a £600 and £400 fixed penalty notices to the same person and a £300 fixed penalty notice.

We are pleased to see these results and have thanked the hard work of our Environmental Enforcement Team. We have forwarded the clerk a breakdown of all fly tipping fines from 2020-2021 for your information.

Wyre Forest District Issues

Wyre Forest House is still closed to the public as is the Green Street Hub save for dealing with housing and homelessness applications.

The Progressive Alliance have increased car parking charges throughout the district. Season tickets are going to be increased by a staggering 50% from £400 to £600 for an annual pass and an OAP's pass from £175 to £200, an increase of nearly 15%. Pay and display charges are going up by 10%. There should be a greater element of free car parking within our three towns, sadly the Progressive Alliance removed this some time ago. This is an executive function; this decision cannot be reversed by elected members at the Full Council Meeting.

The District Council has launched a consultation on proposals to introduce new policies in relation to their hackney carriage (taxi) and private hire functions. There are a number of recommendations to help keep children and vulnerable adults safe. Full details of the consultation, including the link to enable residents to provide their views online, can be found by visiting (consultations and e-petitions - Wyre Forest District Council). This consultation will remain open for responses until 14 February 2022.

Members received an informative presentation from the District Council's Environmental Enforcement team explaining their powers, fines and regulations. We have been informed that the team will be sharing the presentation to the Parish Councils in due course.

The Environmental Enforcement Team have now carried out five roadshows around the district for their "Don't be a Tosser" campaign to tackle those that deposit litter from their vehicle. They are continuing to promote their "Crime Not To Care" campaign which aims to educate residents about the right thing to do with their rubbish. This is to reduce the amount of household waste that is fly-tipped.

161. **Financial Matters:**

a) Agreed the following schedule of cheques be approved.

56	Mrs B J Drew (Salary December 2021)	1067.71
57	Inland Revenue (Tax and NI - October - December 21)	415.80
58	Mrs B J Drew (Ink/Stamps)	20.19
59	Nathan Turvey (Cookley Christmas Tree)	540.00
60	Wolverley & Cookley Matters (Bi-monthly full-page article)	350.00
61	Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust (Annual Grant 21/22)	1514.22

Councillor M Hart queried the cost of the Christmas Tree and enquired what was the budget. Councillor D Jones advised they could not get a tree donated this year, the tree was delivered to site, machinery used to erect and secure, alternative quotes were not obtained due to timescales. The excess over the tree budget of £200 will be used from the Cookley Village Fund budget. It was re-iterated that all expenditure should be approved by Full Council.

- b) To agree Budget for financial year 2022/2023.

Councillor C Sherrey provided very comprehensive papers on Income & Expenditure, Budget Forecast to year 31st March 2023, Possible Precepts and notes to explain the schedules. He was thanked for all his work in producing this information.

Councillor C Sherrey went through all items in Schedule 2 for the Budget Forecast. £30,000 has been included for new lights following receipt of the KIWA structural report. Councillor S Sherrey suggested a sub committee should be formed regarding streetlights and possibly, due to the large cost involved, an independent report should be requested.

After discussion on Localism projects and Village Improvements the budget was proposed Councillor M Hart, seconded Councillor D Cox and unanimously agreed.

- c) To agree Parish Council Precept for financial year 2022/2023.

Councillor M Hart advised that the Parish are now benefitting from the housing growth as the tax base has increased by 88 to 1,804. He proposed a 10% increase in Parish Precept which due to the extra tax base would show as 4.7% on the bill. There was much discussion on this. Councillor J Hart seconded the proposal and with 4 votes for, 5 against and 1 abstention it was not carried.

Councillor W Southam proposed a 15% increase in Parish Precept, this was seconded by Councillor S Sherrey and carried with 7 for and 3 against.

This will show as a 9.4% increase on the Council Tax Bill.

162. **Localism Proposals from Wyre Forest District Council.**

The Clerk confirmed the meeting with Ian Miller in December had been cancelled and will be re-scheduled.

The Clerk re-iterated the proposals from Wyre Forest District Council.

They wish to transfer the following assets to the Parish Council - Cookley Allotments, Lionfields Road, Land at Drakelow Lane, Wolverley and Woodland at Lea Lane, Cookley.

In addition, they want the Parish Council to take full financial responsibility for Grass Cutting and Bin Emptying/Litter Picking. (A small transitional grant will be given for Bin Emptying for one year)

Councillor C Sherrey advised that last month the Parish Council agreed not to take on the woods at Drakelow Lane, therefore the Parish Council need to discuss and agree a position regarding the allotments and the woodland at Lea Lane prior to the meeting with Ian Miller and WFDC representatives later this month. There was much discussion on this with various differing views raised. Concerns were expressed over liability regarding the woods, safety, ongoing costs with tree maintenance etc. A suggestion was made that a community trust may be an option, but this would be an agreement between the trust and WFDC, not the Parish Council. After a strong debate Councillor D Jones proposed the Parish Council take on the Woodland at Lea Lane. This was not seconded. Councillor D Cox proposed the Parish Council do NOT take on the woods, this was seconded by Councillor S Sherrey and carried, with 1 against. He suggested the community could investigate the possibility of setting up a community trust.

Regarding the allotments Councillor D Cox proposed the Parish Council accept this asset transfer, this was seconded by Councillor Southam and carried with 1 abstention.

Grass Cutting - Councillor M Hart advised he has secured funding from Worcestershire County Council to pay the Parish Council directly for grass cutting. All agreed this is excellent news and thanked Councillor M Hart for securing this. The Grass Cutting sub committee (CS,SS,DJ) will meet to discuss contract with Mr Keith Basketfield.

Bin Emptying/Litter Picking - This is more difficult as although the District Council have a statutory duty to keep land free of litter this does not mean they have to empty bins. The commuted sum from Wyre Forest to undertake this work was £6261.00 in 21/22 and they are proposing to pay a one-off sum of £1115.40 in 22/23 and nothing thereafter. There is also the issue of emptying the two 1100litre bins each week stored at Dale's farm.

Again, there was much discussion on this and it was agreed that the Localism subcommittee will endeavour to negotiate a deal on Bin Emptying/Litter Picking with Wyre Forest District Council but in tandem a meeting needs to be held with Mr T Dale to negotiate a 12-month contract on a rolling basis. It was agreed the Parish must not agree to WFDC preparing an agreement to delegate its responsibilities under section 89 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Clerk to arrange meeting with Wye Forest District Council to discuss.

163. Lea Castle Village - Management of Community Facilities

Noted.

164. Queens Platinum Jubilee - Events/Tree Planting

No further updates.

165. Planning Applications for Consideration: -

PC No WFDC No/Details

3597 21/1002/PIP: Construction of New Dwelling (Permission in Principle Application) at Cattery, 2 Webbs Cottages, Caunsall Road, Caunsall, Recommend Refusal - development in Green Belt.

3598 21/1185/NMA: Slight rotation in angle of Plot 5 - The engineers have done the developer enquiries and the water company has come back and asked that plot 5 be parallel to the existing pipe so the agreed easement is the same width along the Western Gable of plot 5 as part of a 'build close to' agreement at 29 Kimberlee Avenue Cookley. Recommend Approval.

Parish Matters for Update Only - no decisions required.

166. Clerks Report. (Clerk) Road Closure Notices, Decision Notices, Planning Training 12th Jan.

167. Update on Lengthsman. (RD/WS) Cllr. Drew given her salt to fill grit bins.

168. Update on Gateway, Kinver Lane, Caunsall. (WS/DJ) Cookley Councillors to look again as there are two Kinver Lane's and confirm requirements.

169. Update following meeting regarding Community Work within Cookley. (DJ) Councillor D Jones gave a brief update on meeting he and Clerk had attended.

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

171. Date of Next Meeting - to confirm the date of the next meeting which is scheduled for Tuesday 1st February 2022.

Meeting closed 8.40pm

Chairman - 1st February 2022