

BROOME PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman – Cllr Nick Norton

Clerk – Mrs Bev Drew

DRAFT Minutes of the Meeting of Broome Parish Council Held on Wednesday 2nd February 2022, 7:30pm, Broome Village Hall

Present:-

Cllr Don Billington (DB) (Chairman)
Cllr Amanda Allen (AA)
Cllr Mark Billingham (MB)
Cllr Sherida Breedon (SB)
Cllr George Brown (GB)
Cllr Warren Edwards (WE)

Also, present were Mrs Bev Drew (Clerk), County Cllr Marcus Hart, District Cllrs Ian Hardiman, Lisa Jones and Marcus Hart, Parish Lengthsman Mr Bill Waldron (BW) and PCSO's Becky Ruston and Nicky Thomas.

1. Apologies:-

Apologies received from Cllr. Nick Norton due to ill health.

2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:-

DB and SB in village hall as member of the village hall committee.

3. Public Question Time:-

None.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting 1st December 2021:-

These were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

5. Police Report:-

Report previously circulated;

Suspicious circumstances - police ref 00431_I_21012022

Report received of a Silver TRANSIT van, taking photos of properties. It is believed the registration is similar to M**LOU and has with two male occupants.

Suspicious circumstances - police ref 00561_I_23012022

Report of person/s unknown pressing the gate buzzer of a property. Unknown if it was a fault with the buzzer or if there were people about, the buzzer rang approx 13/14 times. Officers attended but could not identify anyone about.

Monday 17th January saw the start of our "week of Action" across Wyre Forest where various operations took place along with partner agencies. These included Speed enforcement. Working with the DVSA and identifying unroadworthy Vehicles and reporting vehicles for no tax/insurance etc. We also attended various Community events that were being held throughout the week.

As part of the Parish Priorities we have continued to provide increased patrols in order to deter anti-social behaviour.

I have also attached some leaflets in relation to Op Prospero. If these could be distributed anywhere you think would be suitable or even forwarded to anyone you know to help get the message across it would be greatly appreciated. The more people we can reach the less chance these scammers have of getting hold of people's money. Details below.

*****SCAM ALERT*****

#SCAM 🚩 | We've received reports of calls in #Worcestershire, where fraudsters are impersonating police officers and telling victims that their bank cards have been used to make payments without their knowledge.

This is a scam.

Police officers will never ask for your bank details over the phone or ask you to transfer money.

The three Policing Priorities were agreed, with priority as Speeding then retain Burglaries (and any suspicious behaviour), and increased police patrols in rural parish of Broome.

6. District Councillor's Report - District Councillor Ian Hardiman reported;

Report had been circulated, Cllr. Lisa Jones read report;

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 reported fly tipping along Watery Lane to the Enforcement Team at WFDC following a report from a local resident. This was a lorry load of garden waste and obstructed Watery Lane, fortunately this was cleared by a contractor and WFDC liaised with the landowner for its removal. They will look for any evidence to issue a fine.

We met 5 local residents just before the Christmas break to discuss concerns regarding land being occupied by horses and whether it had the requisite planning permission,

Regarding the land use, having liaised with WFDC we reported back to residents and can confirm that the horses are classed as purely grazing at present. There is a little bit of hay across the field but we are advised that it is acceptable to use this in the winter and likewise regarding the bucket of Herbi Block for the horses, we have been advised by officers at WFDC that this is a supplement that can be provided to supplement normal grazing techniques. Therefore, there is no Breach at the moment as there is no change of use and officers will need to look at the land use over a 12 month period.

We have also been made aware by residents and yourselves of gates being installed at the end of Redhall Farm Lane at the end of the track at Redhall Farm and also at the end of the track at the junction of Hackman's Gate Lane. Given their height and proximity to the public highway these in fact required planning consent. However, as a result issues regarding the bridleway which will be covered in the County Councillor's report the landowner has decided to remove both of the gates completely.

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 District Council are still proposing that Parish Councils take on litter picking and bin emptying but with no grant from WFDC. We totally oppose this.

The District Council will set its budget on 23rd February. Council tax is proposed to increase by the maximum it can £5.

For those areas outside the 3 towns, WFDC have given notice to WCC that as of 31st March 2022 they won't cut the grass and this will affect those Parishes in Wyre Forest where WCC has granted the money to WFDC and then WFDC has had localism agreements with the Parish Council to cut the grass.

The Garden Waste (Brown Bin) collections start again from Monday 28th February. Residents can sign up through the District Council's website. There are three different sizes from small through to large available.

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.

They have also launched the Keep Britain Tidy Campaign in Wyre Forest to empower residents to love where they live. The first event took place in Kidderminster on Saturday.

7. County Councillor's Report;

Report had been circulated, Cllr M Hart gave a precis of the report.

Broome Issues

Egg Lane flooding issues are ongoing and long standing. This appears to have gone quiet but I am determined to tackle them.

A speed limit reduction at the Broome Lane crossroads area on the A450 has still not been progressed but I am chasing.

I can confirm that I together with my District Council colleagues met with 5 local residents on 21st December regarding the stile and public right of way issue at the track at the bottom end of Redhall Farm Lane. At the time of the meeting no stile had been installed and I was to chase an update as to when it would be. Events then progressed as one has been installed in a different location to the original one. I have now had the opportunity to discuss this with the WCC Public Rights of Way (PROW) team to seek their advice on these matters.

They advise as follows:-

"That the stiles are the permitted limitations on that route. The stiles installed were provided by Worcs CC and are British standard. As for position and location of the stile it is irrelevant as that isn't mentioned on the statement other than there are 5 stiles and a hurdle along a path. The location is

not as important as the amount installed. The statement does mention it is next to the roadside but not which side. Please see attached statement. The statement just states it is a roadside stile and as Mr Lampard has moved it back from the road so it is probably safer to use than before.

As he (Mr. Lampard) is aware of the fact that stiles are the legal limitation there is nothing in law I can do enforce an improvement.

I should also point out that there is no provision in law to make a stile accessible for dogs. It depends purely on the goodwill of the owner to provide or allow a dog hatch to be installed. Simply put he (Mr. Lampard) is well within the law and we cannot force him to do otherwise in terms of improvements.

I know that I received the same answer re the stiles and dogs when I was asked about the matter before Christmas.

I did just want to clarify the position of the stile being on the right of the track now as opposed to previously on the left and thus the exact line of the footpath and the response I have today received is as follows:-

“The statement mentions a track therefore as far as any interpretation can be made wide of the track is the width of the path therefore the stile can be either side of the width of the track between the boundaries (fence ,hedge, ditch) or any delineating boundary of the track.

The position isn't as important as the amount of limitations. For example if the path has 3 stiles along the route they can be anywhere on that route, but must not exceed 3 or be in a position to hinder progress . Meaning all three one after another in close proximity.”

To summarise, I think that is clear advice from the PROW team that it is perfectly acceptable to have the stile on the right and set back given what is contained in the statement and whilst it would be desirable to have more dog friendly stiles there is nothing in law to insist upon this.

Speeding in Hackmans Gate on the A450 has been raised with me by local residents and having liaised with your clerk I have committed £2,000 from my divisional funding to fund circa 50% of a new VAS in partnership with yourselves to fund the balance. This will be a mobile VAS that can be deployed in a number of locations and I have discussed potential locations with the highways engineer and your clerk on a recent site visit,

I would also encourage you to raise speed enforcement in this area as one of your priorities for the police Safer Neighbourhoods team to tackle.

I have ensured Paul Green has inspected the pavement on the B4188 from Knoll Hill in the direction of Hackmans Gate and a scheme is currently being priced up.

Paul has inspected with Bill, all of the drains on the A450 and surrounding area and these are all clear but the pipes are blocked hence the system not working correctly. Paul is chasing a date for these to be surveyed with the camera to check for any broken connections and their location.

The dead Elm trees at the property Claremont adjacent to the A450/Hackmans Gate have been inspected. They are on private land and the landowner will be written to with the standard letter to ensure safe repair/removal. However, Paul has clarified and suggested that the removal need not be immediate, it was an advisory letter at this stage.

Paul, myself and your clerk, recently held a site meeting to look at potential tree planting locations on the A450 for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

I have been made aware of the new gates at the end of the track at Red Hall Farm, both at the Hackman's Gate Lane and Redhall Farm Lane ends where the bridleway which runs down the middle of the track would potentially be obstructed or diverted. One of the PROW officers attended a site meeting with the landowner and have given clear advice that the bridleway could not be obstructed or diverted and indeed as reported in the DC report the gates have been removed and the scheme is not being proceeded with.

Wyre Forest Issues

The planning application for the proposed Quarry at Lea Castle, Wolverley has still not been determined yet but it may be getting closer as it likely to go to either the May or July planning committee at WCC.

A planning application for a proposed 87 space car park should be submitted to the WCC planning committee in March and is due to be determined between July and September.

The Hoobrook Island congestion reduction scheme has now been completed and is proving a great success.

Strategic Issues County Wide

The County Council has been heavily involved in the response to the Coronavirus pandemic working with our other statutory partners.

Worcestershire has a fantastic website Here2Help which is a community action response to Coronavirus. There is also a dedicated phone number 01905 768053 for those without access to the internet. There is now a Here2Helpbusiness scheme as well. (simply google Here 2 Help Worcestershire and it comes straight up.)

WCC received £1.6 million from central government to support free school meals and fund holiday activities over the

We are approaching that time of year when it is time to set the budget and council tax levy.

The Cabinet met on 6th January and approved the draft budget for consultation. Full Council will debate and formally set the final budget at its meeting on 17th February.

It is proposed to increase general council tax by just .094% but to precept 3% for the social care levy, 1% for this year and 2% which WCC chose not to levy last year so this can be levied this year, so in simple terms overall council tax is proposed to increase by 3.94%. The maximum it could be increased by under Government rules is 5%. In money terms, 3.94% is £52.95 per annum on a Band D property which will mean the County Councils portion of the bill will be £1,396.78 compared to £1,343.83 last year. Remember that WCC make up 70% of your overall council tax bill, with WFDC being about 12%, your PC's share 1% and Police and Fire making up the rest.

The net revenue budget is proposed to increase from circa £355 million in 2021-2022 to £373 million in 2022-2023. The gross budget is over £1 billion.

We have had additional monies from central government this year to tackle pressures in adults and social care, a further £6 million in social care grant and a one off what is called a 'services grant' of £4.4 million, of which £1.4 million is to fund the new national insurance levy but this is still £3 million net.

We are also predicting an increase in council tax income of circa £11.3 million from the increase, 1% is worth about £2.8 million and circa £2.7 million from council tax buoyancy (new properties being built and occupied) and circa £1 million from the collection fund (ie more people coming back into paying council tax). Therefore, adding everything together WCC is circa £30 million better off than in 2021-2022. That said there still are final pressures in social care and frankly unless the grant continues to go up substantially from government they will remain but the additional funding this year is very welcome and will go some way to alleviating the immediate pressure. Overall those pressures amount to £44.2 million so there is a gap of £14.2 million to be plugged by use of some reserves, £2.7 million, £8.1 million of income and efficiencies and use of some adult social care external funding of £3.4 million.

We have also had substantial grants to use for our Covid -19 response.

We have a large capital programme and through the period 2020 to 2024 it is proposed to spend £439 million.

So what are we spending your money on, well £155 million in our People Directorate (Adult Social Care, Public Health, Communities, Libraries, Countryside Side Service, Registration Service etc...), £109 million in Worcestershire Children First, (Children's Services, Social Care Placements, Education, SEND etc...), £57 million in Economy and Infrastructure (Highways, Waste Contract, Trading Standards, Public Rights of Way, Major Projects, Passenger Transport) and £55 million on Corporate services, (Finance, Legal and Democratic Services, Administration, Buildings and Property Management, Interest on Debt ie paying for the borrowing on capital schemes and many other things.

In broad terms we spend circa £260 million of the £373 million net revenue budget on vulnerable adults and vulnerable children, this is circa 70% of our budget.

We are proposing spending an additional £12 million in both 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 on road resurfacing and a further £4 million in both 2022-2023 and 2024 on pavement resurfacing.

We have also created a pot of money, £500,000 in both 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 to fund small scale schemes such as creating new pelican and zebra crossings.

There will be an uplift in the budget for Parish Lengths man. I am awaiting the specific details of this ie whether is a straight percentage uplift for each Parish across the board or not. I am aware the level of funding that each Parish receive has been frozen now for about 10 years.

There will be an additional £1 million for drainage including small schemes to support flood alleviation.

Each county councillor will be allocated £22,500 in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 to spend on capital local highways schemes. I have spent all of mine on resurfacing pavements and this additional money will allow me to get even more done.

We are also allocating an additional £1.1 million to extend for a further 2 years the Councillors Divisional Fund allocating each County Councillor £10,000 per annum to spend on projects and community organisations within their electoral division

In terms of school funding whilst we still are one of the more poorly funded areas and the Government has not yet changed how the formula works nationally, the quantum of cash is at least going up nationally which translates into more money for Worcestershire pupils. Under the parameters of the National Funding Formula which Worcestershire uses, there will be a minimum increase per pupil of 2%.

The dedicated school grant has increased from £371 million in 2021-2022 to £383 million in 2022-2023 (this is for mainstream schools) and the Higher Needs Block (this is for special school funding and SEND) has increased from £68.5 million to £75.5 million which is a step in the right direction but there is still a substantial overspend in special needs which needs addressing.

There is much more I could say but these are the highlights.

The CQC and Ofsted have published their report following their reinspection in the latter part of 2021, further to their 2018 inspection that found serious weaknesses in 12 areas relating to SEND. The reinspection has confirmed that an appropriate level of improvement has been made in 8 out of 12 of the areas. The areas still of concern, which WCC and Health are already addressing relate largely to integration in mainstream schools, the appropriateness of an individual's placement and the quality of their ECHP and the interface and liaison with parents and carers.

A question was asked whether the 30mph speed limit could be extended at Hackman's Gate further down past Egg Lane. MH advised this would not be accepted by WCC and the Police.

8. Lengthsman's Update:-

WW - nothing to report.

DB reported that following inspection of drains, the one on the A450 near the bench is totally blocked, WW has shown Paul Green this problem, DB feels it is most dangerous and should be prioritised, MH will chase Paul Green.

9. Planning Report:- (to consider the spreadsheet and note any applications since the last meeting)

Planning Spreadsheet had been previously circulated. Clerk reported on planning since the last meeting;

270 21/1128/HOU/21/1129/LBC - THE OLD WELL HOUSE, REDHALL FARM ROAD, BROOME:

Replacement of clay tile roof coverings and replacement of existing conservatory. Broome Parish Council are supportive of this application.

271 22/0059/TCA - CHURCH HALL, CHURCH ROAD, BROOME:

Lime – Carry out a framework pollard aiming at around a 40% reduction. Broome Parish Council Recommend Approval.

It was agreed Planning Committee would remain as DB, GB and AA.

10. Financial Report:-

a) To agree Budget for financial year 2022/2023.

Clerk had circulated Provisional Budget which had been prepared by DB. DB talked through the draft budget for 2022/2023. DB explained that £180.00 expenditure for bulbs needs including. It was agreed the £500 for stile maintenance be re assigned. The Plaque for the bench does not have a separate budget line as cost is less than £50. No budget has been included for trees as the Parish Council are hoping if this goes ahead to get free from The Woodland Trust. The Lengthsman Budget is due to be increased but County have not yet advised the figure. DB has included £250.00 Jubilee Donation towards any events organised in the village. After discussion the budget was unanimously agreed.

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

DB proposed to increase the Precept from £5,500 to £6,000, this would be a 9% increase in monetary terms but would show on the Wyre Forest District Council Tax Bill as 4.9% increase as the Broome Tax Base for 2022/2023 has increased by 8 to 210. This was unanimously agreed.

c) To discuss HSBC banking (Account charges, Additional signatories on mandate, Safeguarding Review, On-line Banking).

Clerk advised of continued problems with dealing with HSBC over Safeguarding Review and changing Bank Mandate to add additional signatories. In addition the bank have now started charging for the account, £5.00 monthly fee plus 0.40p per deposit and withdrawal. DB proposed the Parish Council should investigate changing banks and this was unanimously agreed. Clerk / Chair and Vice Chair to meet to discuss alternatives.

d) To consider the bank reconciliation spreadsheet and bank statements since the last meeting.

The financial spreadsheet was duly circulated, and it was in accordance with the bank statements. The current bank balance as at 28th January 2022 is £14,237.09 (Community Account) and £954.10 (Business Money Manager Account).

e) To approve accounts for payment.

Already Paid;

Mr W Waldron (Lengthsman December 21) £60.00

For Approval;

ICO Fee (Direct Debit) £35.00

Mr W Waldron (Lengthsman January 22) £45.00

11. Localism Proposal from Wyre Forest District Council – Bin Emptying and Litter Picking.

Clerk has advised Wyre Forest District Council that Broome will review this prior to the end of the contract in March 2023.

12.To approve GDPR Policies.

Clerk had circulated draft Privacy Policy and Retention of Documents Policy. Agreed to put these on the website and they will be reviewed at Annual Council Meeting.

13.Correspondence.

Relevant e mails and correspondence are forwarded to Councillors.

Clerk advised of reply received from Top Banana regarding damage to kerbs.

14.Queens Platinum Jubilee.

Clerk advised of meeting with Paul Green regarding tree planting for the Platinum Jubilee. He has agreed in principle three trees, one by the bench on the A450 and two on the verge between Stourbridge Road and the A450. Clerk to check ownership of verge with Paul Green and proceed.

GB advised that thought has been given to having a street party but locally there are concerns over the safety of the small children. Another possibility is a “picnic by the pond”, GB has previously opened field at his property. DB advised that if the Parish Council support an event financially it would need to be open to everyone in the Parish. GB will report back at next meeting.

15.Councillor’s Reports.

a) Footpaths

WE is still keen to relinquish the role of parish paths warden. Issues raised last month were flagged on the portal at WCC but seem to have disappeared although not actioned. WE will check with Patrick White, Public Rights of Way Officer.

b) Bulbs

WW/NN planted daffodil bulbs following last meeting.

16.Update on Training.

Clerk circulates details of training from Worcestershire CALC. AA attended Planning Training, slides of presentation are available from Clerk.

17.To note dates of next meetings;

Wednesday 4th May 2022

Wednesday 7th September 2022

Wednesday 7th December 2022

Meeting closed at 8.35 pm.

Signed.....(Chairman)

Dated.....