

BROOME PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman – Cllr Nick Norton

Clerk – Mrs Bev Drew

Draft Minutes of the Meeting of Broome Parish Council Held on Wednesday 1st February 2023, 7:30pm, Broome Village Hall

Present:-

Cllr Don Billington (DB) (Vice Chairman)
Cllr A Allen (AA)
Cllr M Billingham (MB)
Cllr S Breedon (SB)
Cllr G Brown (GB)
Cllr W Edwards (WE)

Also, present were Mrs Bev Drew (Clerk) and Parish Lengthsman Mr Bill Waldron (BW)

1. Apologies:-

Apologies received from Chairman, Cllr N Norton due to commitments, Cllrs M Hart, I Hardiman due to attendance at another WFDC meeting and L Jones due to a hospital appointment. The Council consented to these absences. Apologies were also received from West Mercia Police.

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 7th December 2022:-

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

5. Police Report:-

It was agreed to keep policing priorities as previously;

Speeding
Burglaries and any other suspicious behaviour
Increased Police Patrols

Police report previously circulated;

00662_I_29012023 – Livestock theft - Yieldingtree, Broome

Between 18:30hrs and 23:35hrs on 29th January, two sheep have been stolen from a locked stable, footprint have then been followed and lead to the main road.

We would also like to make you aware that in other areas we have seen an increase in vehicle thefts. We encourage people to be vigilant with their vehicle security and follow the below crime prevention measures in an effort to deter potential thieves:

Ensure that all the windows and doors to your home are kept locked with keys removed, and put in a place where they can be accessed in an emergency, but cannot be reached by a potential offender

Install a high quality intruder alarm

Please consider your door locks and if necessary replace them with low profile anti snap lock

Install an exterior security light to both the front and rear of your premises

Keep your car keys/fobs and valuables out of sight, and make use of a faraday bag to place your keys into, this will help block its signal and prevent thieves from remotely accessing your vehicle.

Please also ensure any spare keys to your vehicle are also placed in a faraday bag

Lock your car away safely in the garage, if possible

Fit a high quality alarm to your vehicle

Use extra security systems; immobilisers and visible security locks

Lock gates, where possible.

Keep keys on your person when leaving the vehicle unattended

Secure all doors, windows, the boot and sunroof when leaving your vehicle

Add additional motion sensor lighting to areas where your vehicles are parked

For houses with multiple vehicles, make it harder for the car to be taken; park the lesser valued vehicle behind the more expensive one on the driveway

6. District Councillor's Report

Report had been circulated, Clerk 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.

District Issues

Wyre Forest House is open to the public through the reception facility only, Green Street Hub is not open as a walk in Hub, appointments must be pre-booked save for dealing with housing and homelessness applications and 'urgent' issues.

Proposals for new Parliamentary constituency boundaries in the West Midlands, 2023 Review.

The District Council welcomes and supports the Commission's decision and has abandoned the proposal to rename the constituency and instead proposes to retain the name of "Wyre Forest". The Council's view on this matter was shared by nearly all the respondents to earlier consultations. The Council welcomes that the Boundary Commission has reflected on the issue and changed its proposal. No change is proposed to the boundary of the constituency.

At full council 21 September councillors agreed a recommendation to increase all staff pay points by 5% with effect from 1 October 2022.

The Registrars are now based in Wyre Forest House in the Chaddesley Room. They will also be using the Wolverley Room. This is due to the Kidderminster Town Hall Renovations.

Work has commenced in Worcester Street and the Kidderminster Town Hall following the successful grant of Government monies from the Future High Streets Fund and the Levelling up Fund.

The District Council have completed grant application forms and are awaiting confirmation from the Legal Department to send them out to organisations. Grants will offer up to £1000 for organisations during this period to cover expenses of the Warm Spaces. The Council are also collating all the Warm spaces information to put on the website to promote for people in the local area.

Brent Metcalf joins the District Council as a Housing Project Officer. He will be leading on the delivery of the Sustainable Warmth grants. The grants help low-income homeowners in particular install energy efficiency measures.

If you, a friend or a family member are struggling financially, they can contact Rose Leonard or Sonia Stowe the District Council's Financial Inclusion Officers. Together they provide confidential and impartial financial advice, from housing, benefits and council tax to help with utilities. They have a wealth of knowledge and are available to help anyone who is struggling with the current cost of living crisis. The District Council also have lots of information and help on their website.

Green Street have launched a new "Thoughtless Dog Owners We are Watching You" dog fouling campaign across the district. We have forwarded the pack and poster to the Clerk and have asked for posters to be forwarded when they are available.

"A popular dog fouling campaign is coming to Wyre Forest this next week, aimed at those few dog walkers who don't scoop the poop. Wyre Forest District Council has joined forces with environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy in a bid to reduce dog fouling in key problem across the district. The campaign sets its sights on irresponsible dog owners, with recent research showing that dog walkers are more responsible and pick up after their dogs, when they think that they are being watched. In 2014 Keep Britain Tidy conducted a campaign pilot, funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), working with land managers across the country. This pilot saw an average reduction of 46% in the levels of dog fouling, with up to 90% reduction in some areas since.

Feedback suggests that dog fouling tends to occur at night time and during the months with shorter days, as some dog owners feel that they can't be seen 'under the cover of darkness'. Wyre Forest District Council has signed up to the edgy and uncompromising campaign to tackle dog fouling hotspots. The 'we're watching you' series of signs are visible after dark and use innovative cutting edge materials."

7. County Councillors Report:-

Report had been circulated, Vice Chairman read report.

Broome Issues

The drains along the A450 reported via Bill have all been reported for inspection and unblocking and having advised that these have been attended to, Bill kindly recently advised me that there were still issues with these 5 drains and I have escalated this again for urgent attention.

In respect of the accidents at the Hackmans Gate traffic light junction WCC highways have liaised with the police and I am chasing what WCC propose to do to improve issues at this location.

I have had the following response from the engineer:-

"Please find the below summary of speeds for the A450 which I find acceptable for the speed limit of 30 mph which is in a semi-rural wide main road without any bolstered gateway speed reduction features apart from 30 mile per hour repeater signs. Following a site visit with the Signal Manager it was noted that a traffic signal sign on the northbound approach was lacking and this has been ordered, also together with some visibility issues at the junction by overgrown foliage which is being investigated by the signal's team into land ownership with the maintenance section. It would appear that the last collision involved a van travelling at speed which lost control and collided with the signals infrastructure; this occurred before the early morning peak causation was driver error."

A450 Stourbridge Road, Hackmans Gate N

From 16/11/2022 To 23/11/2022	Daily Vol.	Mean Ave.*	85th %ile*
Southbound APPROACH	5,246	30	35

22000194

A450 Stourbridge Road, Hackmans Gate S

From 16/11/2022 To 23/11/2022	Daily Vol.	Mean Ave.*	85th %ile*
Northbound APPROACH	5,776	34	39

22000196

B4188 Hackmans Gate Lane, Hackmans Gate E

From 22/11/2022 To 29/11/2022	Daily Vol.	Mean Ave.*	85th %ile*
Westbound APPROACH	2,627	32	37

22000195

B4188 Belbroughton Road, Hackmans Gate W

From 22/11/2022 To 29/11/2022	Daily Vol.	Mean Ave.*	85th %ile*
Eastbound APPROACH	1,879	28	33

35, 39, 37 and 33 are the mph speeds for the 85th% ile speeds, that it is the top 15%.

I have said I am not happy with the 39mpn northbound and 37mph westbound have asked WCC to liaise with the police on this.

Regarding Redhall Farm Lane and any possible signage, the only sign that would have been possible is a No Through Road sign. This has been investigated and I have received the following response:-

"Sorry, there isn't a prescribed sign in the regulations we are permitted to use on the public highway. The problem is that often delivery drivers use post codes alone and, unfortunately, rural post codes can include properties over extensive areas. Accordingly, if these delivery drivers think that they're accessing the property that they're looking for, they won't take any notice of signage. Happy to discuss, but "Ignore Satnav" type signage isn't a prescribed sign in the national regulations, so we cannot place such signage in the public highway. The problem is that rural post codes cover houses spread over quite large distances. This means that drivers who follow them blindly think that they are in the correct place etc."

I did ask further again for the No Through Road sign and this is what I received:-

Further to my previous update, this is the response I have been given:

"Hi, sorry no. It's very difficult to prevent drivers using such rural lanes, particularly if they're delivering and believe that that they're in the right area. Ultimately, there are no prescribed highway signs that we can use for this type of concern."

Wyre Forest Issues

The planning application in respect of the Quarry at Lea Castle, Wolverley, which was refused by the WCC planning committee is now the subject of an appeal, the hearing of which is scheduled to commence on 28th February.

Strategic Issues County Wide

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.)

Here2Help is now also co-ordinating our Ukranian Refugee programme working with the 6 District Councils. We now have several hundred refugees in the County and a number of families have now come to the Wyre Forest and young people are taking up places in local schools.

The County Council has launched its draft budget for consultation. It is proposing a net revenue budget of circa £400.5million. We continue to face significant pressures in both children's and adult's social care. The Government has listened to lobbying from Upper Tier Councils and has funded an additional £26.3 million pounds to WCC, of which £19.5 million is specifically for children's and adult's social care. We are facing additional pressures of circa £67.9 million, largely down to:-

Pay Inflation (set nationally)	£11.6m
Inflation from 3rd Party Contracts	£17m
Rebase Budget for Energy from Waste Plant	£6.1m
Rebase Budget in respect of one-offs and reserves	£2.6m
Adult Social Care Demand Growth	£18.5m
Children's Social Care Demand Growth	£2.5m
Home to School Transport Demand Growth	£2.4m
Legal Services Demand Growth	£0.5m
Waste Services Demand Growth	£0.4m
Delivery of existing Capital Programme	£5.5m
Investment in Highways and Tree maintenance	£0.5m
Investment in other services	£0.3m

The additional £500k in the revenues budget for highways will greatly assist in getting minor tree works and other minor issues done.

Importantly, we are maintaining investment in the parish lengths man scheme and the local county councillor's fund for investment in local highways works and our £10,000 members divisional funding.

We are also investing £3.5m from earmarked reserves for public transport (buses) as it continues to recover from the pandemic.

The Government has capped council tax at 5% overall, 3% for general council tax and 2% for the adult social care precept.

We are proposing an increase as 4.94% overall made up of 2.94% council tax and 2% social care precept.

This will increase a Band D property's bill in 2023-2024 by £69 per annum or £1.33pence per week. I anticipate by the time the District Council, Parish Council, Police and Fire precepts are added in it will be an increase of circa £100 per year. The Government expects Councils to increase by the maximum. This will mean that WCC's bill was go from £1,396.78 to £1,465.78 for a Band D property. WCC will still be in the lowest quartile for council tax nationally.

We are plugging the £67.9m gap by:-

Government funding	£26.3m
Council Tax additional income	£14m
Earmarked Reserves	£5.2m
Savings, efficiencies and additional income	£22.4m

As at 31/03/24 we plan to have circa £70.4 m of reserves, £56.1 of earmarked reserves and £14.3 of unallocated reserves.

The dedicated schools grant will increase to £532,608.

The £400.5m overall budget is made up as follows:-

Adults and Communities	£160m
Children's and Schools	£111m
Environment and Infrastructure	£69m
Commercial and Change	£16.5m
Chief Executive Unit	£3.5m
Finance and Corporate	£40.5m

We will be spending circa 67% of the net revenue budget on vulnerable children and vulnerable adult. This will mean that the majority of our budget is spent on circa 5,000 residents out of a Worcestershire population of circa 600,000 residents.

We also have a capital programme of circa £413m, made up of a wide variety of infrastructure projects.

There will be a Parish Council consultation event on 31st January held virtually at 5pm. (which will have been held by the time of your meeting.)

Full Council will set the budget on 16th February.

8. To discuss new Vehicle Activated Sign and collection of speed data.

NN/DB have met to identify suitable locations for VAS to be sited at Hackmans Gate. Two possible locations were identified, Clerk to contact Highways Liaison Engineer for site meeting to agree most suitable location and get approval.

The VAS has been temporarily put on Broome Lane and data captured has been circulated by Clerk.

9. Parish Council Elections – 4th May 2023.

Clerk advised date of publication of notice of election 22nd March, nomination papers can then be received up to 4pm, 4th April. Clerk will obtain packs and circulate. Clerk will put article in Broadcast magazine.

10. To discuss Bin Emptying.

BW has agreed to empty bins once Cllr Norton finishes but requires a box to put sack in to avoid smell in car. BW to purchase and Parish Council to re-imburse. Clerk to obtain Black Sacks.

11. To discuss King Charles III Coronation.

County Councillor M Hart has offered up to £500 from his divisional fund towards any Parish Celebrations.

SB advised the coffee morning will be Coronation themed and GB advised he will do a small event in his field.

12. Lengthsman's Update

BW nothing to report.

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

The Planning Spreadsheet had been circulated and was noted.

AA expressed continuing concern with Planning case officers providing a lack of information on numerous applications. DB advised that any concerns/complaints should be made through the Parish Council.

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

14. Financial Report:-

a) Budget & Precept

Budget

The draft Budget had been previously circulated. DB explained all figures contained therein. The Budget as presented was unanimously agreed.

Precept

DB suggested an increase in precept of 5% which will show on the bill as 6.5% increase due to a reduction of 3 in the property base figure supplied by Wyre Forest District Council. This would result in a Precept of £6300.00, £30.43 per Band D property 2023-2024. This was unanimously agreed.

b) To agree transfer of funds from HSBC account

DB/MB suggested initially transferring £6800.00 from the HSBC account to leave a minimal balance of £215.04 just in case of any payments that go through and then it can be finally closed. DB to look into closure of the business money manager account.

c) 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 end of December 22 was £3742.24 (Lloyds Bank Treasurers Account) £7015.04 (HSBC Community Account) and £956.01 (HSBC Business Money Manager Account).

d) To agree payments to Broome Church and Broome Village Hall

All agreed to approve payment for this year - £250.00 to each.

e) To approve accounts for payment

All agreed;

Already Paid;

Transfer to Lloyds Bank	£5,000.00
Mr W Waldron – Lengthsman November 22	£80.00
House of Flags – Replacement Flag	£105.00
Print-Serve	£20.00
Mr W Waldron – Lengthsman December 22	£56.00

For Approval;

St. Peters Church	£250.00
Broome Village Hall	£250.00

f) Update on .gov.uk e mail addresses

Clerk advised that it is very easy and reasonably proceed to get a .gov.uk domain name however the Parish Council would need a recognised service provider to host the site. It was agreed to discuss again following the Election.

15. Correspondence.

Relevant e mails and correspondence are forwarded to Councillors. Noted.

16.Councillor's Reports.

- a) Footpaths – WE reported stile at 515C Broome Lane to Wheatlands has been replaced with a wishing gate.
- b) Flag / Flagpole - DB has new flag. DB /MB will clean and put up before the Coronation. SB to liaise with DB regarding plaque.

17. To confirm 2023 meeting dates.

10th May 2023 (After Election)

6th September 2023

6th December 2023

Meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

Signed.....(Chairman)

Dated.....