

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF DRAKES BROUGHTON AND WADBOROUGH WITH PIRTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 6th JULY 2023 AT 7.30 PM AT DRAKES BROUGHTON VILLAGE HALL.

PRESENT: Cllr J Butterworth (Chair), Cllr T Pell, Cllr D Skeys, Cllr R Bessant, Cllr J Murphy, Cllr M Williams, Cllr R Roberts, Cllr Turner, Cllr Booker, Cllr S Roberts & Cllr Abercrombie.

IN ATTENDANCE: County Councillor L Robinson, District Councillor Rob Adams & Mrs N Nicholson (Clerk)

PUBLIC: 2 Residents in attendance.

1) APOLOGIES: District Councillor Liz Turier, County Councillor Linda Robinson was arriving late & Cllr Small.

2) CO-OPTION OF NEW MEMBERS TO REPRESENT WADBOROUGH WARD.

Mr L Abercrombie and Mr S Roberts were co-opted onto the Council to represent Wadborough ward. The Co-option forms were signed in front of the clerk, Cllr Abercrombie and Cllr S Roberts were welcomed to the meeting.

3) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

The Chair closed the meeting for representations from the public:

A resident from Drakes Broughton raised her concerns regarding the safety of the ford in Walcot Lane for motorcycles. As an experienced motorcyclist her and her husband had had a very near accident and fell from their motorbikes due to the slippery surface on the bottom of the ford. She suggested gravel or rough/ridged surface could be introduced to create a non-slip base. She also suggested warning signage re slippery road and or unsuitable for motorbike signage should be installed.

District Councillor Adams advised that a petition from local residents regarding the safety of the ford had been raised and with his backing would be presented to County Council the following week.

The Chair advised that the Parish Council was working with County Councillor Robinson to improve signage and safety at Walcot Lane ford and thanked the resident and assured her that this would be raised to County Councillor Robinson under agenda item 10.

4) VACANCIES FOR MEMBERS TO REPRESENT PIRTON WARD AND DRAKES BROUGHTON WARD.

The Chair advised that the two vacancies remained and were widely advertised.

5) MINUTES

The minutes from the meeting held on 8th June 2023 were proposed by Cllr Pell, seconded by Cllr Williams, agreed by all and signed by the Chair as a true record.

6) MATTERS ARISING

None

7) FINANCE

The monthly bank reconciliation for May & June was completed by Cllr Skeys and Cllr Murphy.

It was proposed by Cllr Pell and seconded by Cllr Murphy to authorise the following payments:

a) Mrs. N Nicholson – Clerk Salary – S/O May	£559.64
b) Mr B Arrowsmith – Lengthsman Services – May	£260.00
c) SSE – monthly Streetlighting electricity	£TBC
d) Mr B Arrowsmith – reinstate damaged Play Park sign	£48.00
e) Smart Cut Ltd – Grass cutting & Play Park strimming & blowing.	£631.02

Remittance: WCC Grant for Parking Buddies £466.74

County Councillor Robinson joined the meeting.

8.) PLAYPARK and PLAYING FIELD – Progress update on Open Space phase 2, Play Park annual safety inspection, football garages and more vandalism.

The Chair drew attention to details regarding the open space master plan that had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chair advised that each item needed reviewing and agreeing as the next stage would be to engage One Ltd to draw up the final master plan.

The Chair advised that the cycle track would be moved more to the middle/right of the field as suggested in the proposal. It is thought that this would reduce opportunity for potential disturbance to those residents at the rear of the Playing Field, however it is noted that there concern was that it have a negative impact on the view from The Village Hall veranda.

The Amphitheatre would be removed from the proposal to allow the cycle track to be moved. Ambition for a continuous track all the way around the field, width and safety of bikes and pedestrians using the same path needed to be considered.

Moving the service gate was discussed. Cllr Booker advised this would require Highways agreement and thought it should be set back into the field and could include a kissing gate at the pedestrian entrance to prevent the current situation of pedestrians stepping straight out into the road.

The removal of the flooding shed was discussed, Cllr Roberts raised concerns regarding storage of the items which were available to the community should flooding occur. The Chair advised that none of the equipment had been used in at least 8 years and that careful review of the need for the flooding equipment was required before new storage within the Village Hall could be discussed.

The Chair advised that it was proposed to reduce the width of the footpath to 1.8m members raised queries regarding if this was wide enough for wheelchair users and passing those pushing buggies, it was thought 1.8m was the recommended width.

Following the discussions above, all members agreed to the changes and agreed that One Ltd be engaged to draw up the final master plan that would then be used to approach WDC to release the allocated 106 money.

The Chair advised members that the annual safety inspection of the Play Park had taken place – the report and resulting actions had not yet been received.

The Chair advised that the football garages currently sitting on Village Hall land would need addressing within Open space phase 2.

The Chair advised that another of the Play Park entrance signs had been uprooted during the month. Brian Arrowsmith had reinstated it with even more concrete in the hope that it will now be way too heavy to get out of the ground!

9.) ROAD SAFETY – Speed Watch

Cllr Bessant advised that some vetting forms had been lost and her vetting still hadn't been completed, Cllr Bessant advised of her frustration on getting the Community Speed watch up and running. The Chair agreed that three years and the series of mishaps that were not of Parish Council doing has been shocking! There was a general discussion on how to move things forward, it was suggested by County Councillor Robinson to contact Paul Middlebrough from the Police and Crime Commissioners Office, Cllr Bessant advised that this had already been done. Another suggestion was to contact the Chief Inspector, Dave Wise.

The Clerk advised that she had received notification that PC Julie Pardoe had resigned and was not longer our police contact.

10.) WALCOT LANE FORD

The Chair advised County Councillor Robinson that a member of the public had attended earlier regarding the danger at the ford to motorcyclists and explained the resident had requested signage to advise of the danger.

County Councillor Robinson advised that the scheduled work to the fords gabian baskets had not taken place due to the ford water being too high and it was rescheduled for next week, however further rain would delay this further.

County Councillor Robinson advised that Rachel Benson Head of Highways & Transport Liaison , Transport operations at WCC Highways had been a reviewed things at the ford and had reported disappointment at the current signage. County Councillor Robinson advised that she had observed that from the Pershore approach there was no easy way to turn around if one arrived at the ford and thought it too deep to pass through, she advised one may feel pressure from drivers behind to just go through.

County Councillor Robinson advised that an action group had a petition and had booked a slot at the next weeks County Council meeting, it was currently unclear the exact objectives, but suggested that closing the road during winter months maybe was one proposal.

County Councillor Robinson agreed that much better signage was required.

11.) PIRTON POLLING STATION

The Chair advised that the resident from Pirton who raised the issue of the removal of Pirton Polling station based on wrong information, was very unhappy with the response from WDC. District Councillor Adams asked the Clerk to confirm that the Parish Council had definitely not been consulted prior to the decision in November 2022 – the Clerk confirmed she had checked back through all correspondence and the Parish Council had not been consulted or even informed of the decision.

The Chair and Cllr Skeys advised that having a consultation pending whilst the removal of the polling station remained in place was not acceptable. A general election could be called at any time and the polling station would be 8 miles away in Drakes Broughton.

The principal of making a decision based on totally false information was raised and that the first action should be to reverse the decision, prior to holding any consultation on the removal of the polling station. Cllr Skeys advised that the sheer weight of feeling in the village was strong on this but in politeness, residents were allowing one resident to correspond with WDC on their behalf. If a show of numbers was needed, this can be obtained.

Attention was drawn to the Electoral commissions objectives to allow easy access to as many as possible to vote, and removal of a well-established polling station in a rural community with no public transport links was not acceptable or in the interests of democracy.

12.)REVIEW UPDATED ASSET REGISTER

The Chair thanked all members for reviewing items on the asset register. The Chair thanked Cllr Roberts for co-ordinating the Drakes Broughton review.

The main actions required were sanding and varnishing of the wooden assets, benches, and notice boards in the Parishes. It was felt that village volunteers in Wadbrough would address their notice board and benches and volunteers in Pirton will look after the bench. Cllr Butterworth and Cllr Murphy would confirm and co-ordinate. The Clerk was asked to get a price for Drakes Broughton notice board and bench and the Pirton notice board.

The disrepair and age of the well-used but PC owned bus shelters on the B4084 was discussed and before getting a price to refurbish it was thought that there was some 106-money allocated to WCC from local developments for bus shelters and new bus shelters were certainly desirable. The Chair and County Councillor Robinson would investigate this.

13.)REVIEW ANNUAL RISK ASSESMEMT

The Chair drew attention to the new risk assessment document she had created using advice/examples from CALC. Members discussed the register and Cllr Abercrombie advised that some of the wording and categories such as terms like significant or moderate were arbitrary. Cllr Abercrombie advised that his employment was creating robust risk assessment, and it was agreed that he would work with the Chair to review the document to tighten up the terminology and this would be reviewed again by members at the August meeting.

14.)PIRTON PLAYING FIELD

The Chair drew attention to a request received from the Pirton Village Committee. The request was for the village committee using national lottery funding to do the following works at Pirton Playing field:

Gates – Replace both gates – secure the playing field.

Fencing - Refence the front and carry out repairs around the perimeter to secure the field.

Entrance - Reprofile the entrance to level out the ruts and lay anti slip mats.

laying field - Reprofile the undulations of the field to create a safe and level surface for the elderly to walk, children to play and villagers to enjoy exercise and recreational activities.

Drainage – We are not proposing alterations to the surface structure i.e., grass will be reinstated.

Playing field surface – To be levelled before reseeding or turfing.

Subject to PC approval the village committee would request recommendations of methodology and gain quotes from independent professional teams.

The Chair gave an overview of the history of how Pirton Playing field came to be leased to the Parish Council. The Chair advised that after several years of peppercorn rent the Playing Field was now under an RPI linked lease which cost the PC circa £160 last year and of course will be more this year. The current lease for 25 years, has 8 years left to run. Concerns were raised regarding a 3rd Party obtaining the grant and getting the work done on land leased directly to the Parish Council. Concerns were raised regarding any obligation to reinstate by the landlord, and concerns were raised re timescales linked to the lottery grant. Cllr Skeys confirmed that the grant stipulated that their needed to be public use of the facility for at least 5 years from grant approval. So, the land hits that criteria, just. The members discussed renewing or asking the landlords to review the lease for another 25 years now.

District Councillor Adams suggested the Playing Field could be registered as an asset of community value. This could protect the field for the community to use into the future.

Following all the discussions the Clerk was asked to approach the landlord in the first instance and ascertain their thoughts on the works and if they would be willing to allow it.

15.) REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS – Reports from County Councillor Robinson had been circulated prior to the meeting.

County Councillor Robinson gave a summary of her report. She advised that the Boundary review consultation had been extended and encouraged members to review the proposals and make comments.

County Councillor Robinson asked how the footbridge at Beech Ave had been reported as she couldn't find it on the portal. The Clerk advised it had been reported directly to F Argyle by her. It was noted that using the portal allows tracking and follow up by the County Councillor. Cllr Pell advised that it was a well-used footpath, and the bridge was rotten and needed urgent remedy.

Cllr Skeys drew attention to infrastructure worries regarding building a secondary school near to the hospital and how traffic could move smoothly into and out of the hospital that was already struggling with traffic capacity.

District Council report

Cllr Adams drew members attention his circulated overview and explained that he is a representative for veterans of which there are a number that face all sorts of difficulties from accessing housing to public transport.

Cllr Abercrombie asked if Cllr Adams knew how many veterans there were in our parishes, Cllr Adams didn't have the specific numbers for our Parish – Cllr Abercrombie advised he was a veteran himself.

Members Reports

Cllr Bessant advised that visibility was being obscured to the right at the Stonebow/B4084 junction by an overgrown hedge. Cllr Roberts was asked to report to WCC Highways. The Clerk advised that Cllr Bessant also reporting this could potentially get a swifter response, the more the public report issues themselves and the volume of reports can have an impact on the priority given to the action required.

Cllr Bessant advised that her investigation regarding the planning being sought on 'Josie's Orchard' had revealed an ecology report that had not been in the public domain. Sadly, the report was commissioned after the soil was stored on the orchard destroying much of the ecology. Cllr Bessant is still investigating avenues to purchase the land as a community, but she is finding it hard to get information on how to make than happen.

Cllr Williams advised that WCC Highways had addressed the drain she reported on the B4084.

Cllr Murphy advised that the Highways Liaison officer had visited her property to review where the contractor had cut the telephone cables and apologies for the inconvenience cause.

Cllr Murphy advised that a Wadborough resident had raised a concern regarding building happening to a bungalow in Wadborough that potentially is not complying with the planning permission.

Cllr Skeys advised that the work continued in preparation for Heritage Open Days 8/9/10th September at Pirton Church which is showcasing a steam train reenactment from the old Pirton to Wadborough stations.

Cllr Skeys advised that Pirton Christmas Tree festival would be held 15/16/17 December. It was approx. £15 to sponsor a tree to decorate; Cllr Skeys wondered if Drakes Broughton School would like to sponsor one.

16.) WORCESTERSHIRE BOUNDARIES COMMISSION REVIEW CONSULTATION

The Chair advised that the consultation had been extended until September. She encouraged members to read the County Councillor report on this. It was thought the review would even up the numbers of residents represented by a County Councillor. Consideration of where our parishes would be bundled needed review and would be discussed further at the August meeting.

17.) PERIODIC HIGHWAYS REVIEW

The Chair thanked Cllr Roberts for his continued work in reviewing the Highways and reporting local issues.

18.) VILLAGER SUBMISSION

The update would be submitted by the Clerk tomorrow.

Cllr Williams advised that Worcester Road residents were not receiving copies. The Chair advised Cllr Williams to contact the editor, it was thought maybe lack of delivery volunteers was the reason.

19.) PLANNING

Joint Parishes meeting – Cllr Williams and Cllr Murphy gave an overview of what was said by the developer that had attended. The developer has been employed to work for 3 out of the 7 landowners involved in the Parkway town development. It was noted that the plans/images that had been on show to residents were referred to as a concept plan and the likely town may not resemble that at all. It was noted that they would not build infrastructure such as doctors' surgery/schools etc. until after occupation. The area adjacent to Wadborough appeared to no longer be designated for building. The Joint Parishes Committee will write to the MP to voice concerns about this development. The JPC are developing a formal petition for people to sign which will be submitted by the Joint Parishes Committee to the inspector of the SWDPR proposal regarding infrastructure requirements. There is a huge concern about healthcare provision and in particular that the hospital has no room to expand and is already beyond capacity.

Neighborhood Plan - The Chair advised that she had reviewed the Neighborhood Plan and suggested some changes to wording at point 8.45 as direction for 106 money spending was out of

date. The Chair advised that she was working with legal officers at WDC on how the changes were reviewed. The preference would be to update the plan without the need for a referendum and a meeting to talk things through is being arranged.

- a) Comments made on planning applications to Wychavon: W/22/02403/LB Pool Cottage, Hill Road, Pirton. Replacement of 15 rotten windows to match existing and installation of 10 new lights (retrospective) No objection.
- b) Applications Approved: N/A
- c) Applications Refused: N/A
- d) Applications Awaiting comment: N/A
- e) Planning correspondence: N/A

20.)CORRESPONDENCE

- Cllr regarding damaged lamp post – repaired.
- Resident regarding weedkilling of verges in Pirton – The Clerk asked District Councillor Adams to confirm WDC involvement or not to WCC to proceed with investigation.
- West Mercia Rural Beat
- SLCC Renewal letter – The Chair advised that now the Council had joined CALC it was thought to be able to manage without SLCC membership.

21.)INFORMATION AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Parish Council will be meeting on **Thursday 3rd August 2023** at 7.30pm at Drakes Broughton Village Hall

Meeting closed 21.55.