

# DRAFT

## Great Comberton Parish Council

### Annual Meeting of the Parish Council - Minutes Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023, 7.00pm Village Hall

**Parish Councillors Present:** K Collingwood (Chair), S Hamilton, (Vice-Chair), A Lavelle, G Hodgson & D Wilks.  
District Cllr B Hardman

**Clerk/RFO:** Nicola Harding

**In attendance:** Two parishioners

*Ahead of the start of the meeting, Cllrs signed their declaration of acceptance of office, as newly elected Cllrs.*

**1. Apologies:** Received from Cllr Inglis and County Cllr Hardman.

**2. Declarations of Interest:** As newly elected Cllrs, members were reminded to complete a new register of interest's form circulated ahead of the meeting, to be forwarded to Wychavon District Council within 28 days.

**3. Election of Chairman:** Proposed Cllr Hamilton, seconded Cllr Lavelle, all in favour, to appoint Cllr Collingwood as Chairman. Cllr Collingwood signed the declaration of acceptance of office. Cllr Lavelle raised an idea in principle that the Council consider a potential change in Chair & Vice-Chair in 2024/25 and thereafter every two years, in order to spread expertise. This was noted as a proposal for discussion in May 2024.

**4. Election of Vice Chairman:** Proposed Cllr Collingwood, seconded Cllr Wilks, all in favour, to appoint Cllr Hamilton as Vice-Chairman.

**5. Casual vacancy:** Following the May election period, there is one vacant seat on the Parish Council. Given that the Council is quorate, there is no official limit in terms of co-opting an additional member, therefore co-option of a new Cllr can take place as soon as is practicable. *Action: Clerk to prepare wording to advertise the vacancy, to be advertised on the notice board and village email.*

#### **6. Parishioner's Comments:**

Concerns were raised regarding the condition of the road surface on the bends along Pershore Road, in addition to the verge side grips, resulting in vehicles travelling in the middle of the road at times to avoid holes and puddles. It was suggested that deeper holes be filled with soil to alleviate the problem and for the lengthsman to tidy the grips & gulleys. A suggestion was proposed to consider a one-way system for larger vehicles when patching and surface dressing works are scheduled, however it was noted that this could encourage speeding in the vicinity.

*Action: Clerk to report roadside holes to WCC Highways. Cllr Collingwood to request grips/gulleys be addressed by the Parish lengthsman in his next work plan.*

A concern had been received and circulated regarding the location and security of the play area. Following discussion of the issues raised, it was agreed that Cllr Hamilton would respond to the parishioner & Rooftop Housing Group on behalf of the Parish Council and update Cllrs thereafter.

*Action: Cllr Hamilton.*

#### **7. Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

Proposed Cllr Hodgson, seconded Cllr Wilkes, all in favour to approve the minutes as a true record.

#### **8. Progress reports from Parish Activities - brief updates:**

a. Community Speedwatch: Latest updates had been received and circulated from Cllr Inglis & the Safer Neighbourhoods Team, however there is no further progress to report at present. It was noted that speed checks appear to have been undertaken in the Parish recently, and the Clerk agreed to follow up a recent request for a current parish police report.

b. Brailles Orchard: It was noted that the recent works undertaken to fit and install support irons to the fencing require further attention and improvement. It was agreed to request that the contractor returns to tidy the fixings. *Action: Cllr Collingwood.*

c. Conservation Area Character Appraisal: Volunteers had attended their first meeting and following discussion, had agreed individual actions.

d. Rooftop Housing: KB had agreed to request any updates from Rooftop Housing Group to share with Cllrs, which would be circulated once received.

e. Broadband: A positive site meeting had taken place with Airband and parishioners in the vicinity of Main Street & Back Lane, concluding in an agreement of the positioning of poles to service properties. It was noted that connection to the village hall would be useful to hirers, which Cllr Hamilton agreed to pursue. It is unclear when final connections will take place.

#### **9. Model Calc Standing Orders and approved Financial Regulations:**

These were noted and accepted.

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## **10. Code of Conduct:**

Ahead of the meeting, Cllrs were circulated the latest 2020 Model Code of Conduct adopted by Wychavon District Council in 2022, as a reminder of the principles of conduct expected of all Cllrs and their obligations in relation to the standards of conduct. This was noted.

## **11. Councillor roles:** The following roles were agreed:

Finance: Cllr Hamilton

Village email: Cllr Inglis

Lengthsman liaison: Cllr Collingwood

Notice board: Cllrs Hamilton & Inglis – it was agreed that Cllr Hamilton would check keys held and forward to another Cllr when required.

## **12. District and County Councillor's reports:**

There are no reports at present, following the District Council elections.

## **13. Parish Lengthsman**

The lengthsman tasks approved by the WCC Parish Lengthsman scheme were shared with members as a reminder of those funded by the scheme. The 2023/24 lengthsman contract was discussed and hourly rate/working hours agreed at the current going rate for Parish lengthsman.

*Action: Clerk to forward contract paperwork to BA for completion and a signed copy for records, in addition to a copy of current public liability insurance and training. Cllr Collingwood to make contact to discuss the next work schedule.*

## **14. Open Gardens Committee:**

Given that the committee is no longer active, there had been recent communications with a committee member regarding potential ideas/projects for the use of previous funds raised. A discussion ensued and it was agreed that the Chairman would engage further about potential long term plans and how these may benefit the village. *Action: Cllr Collingwood.*

## **15. Planning:**

**W/22/01898/FUL: Newfarm House**, Russell Street - change of use of land for domestic purposes and retention of storage barn and container (retrospective.) A decision remains pending and it was agreed to forward the Parish Council's latest representation submitted to Wychavon District Council to Cllr B Hardman, for information.

**W/22/00611/FUL: Lower End Farm** Excavation of three ponds, a flood retention area and a ditch meander in two pasture fields. Removal of condition 3 on planning permission 21/02258/FUL - A Notification of Planning Appeal REF: APP/H1840/W/22/3308308 had been received and is currently live.

## **16. Finance**

a) Current Balances at 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Current Account: £4,082.73

Business Premium Account: £1,772.17

**TOTAL £5,854.90**

b) *Payments to report:*

\*Brailles fencing £1,300.00

\*GCSC: Coronation £200.00

Salary: March/April 2023 £604.50

Expenses: March/April 2023 & Postage £29.44

Internal auditor fee: 22/23 accounts £55.00

Insurance: 1/6/23-31/5/24 £177.59

Worcs Calc: Subscription 2023 £226.46

Npower: Kiosk electricity 1/4/22-31/3/23 £49.21

Lengthsman: March 23 £143.00

**TOTAL £2,785.20**

*Income to report:*

\*WDC: King's Coronation funding £200.00

WI funds (Gates: Brailles Orchard/War Memorial) £500.00

Precept (i) 23/24 £2,456.00

Council Tax Support grant (i) 23/24 £121.00

**TOTAL £3,277.00**

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**2023/10**

\*The Clerk noted to Cllrs that the payments highlighted had been approved ahead of the meeting and presented, given that the necessary grant funding had been received and credited. An additional payment had been received in relation to the Parish Council's March hall hire fee, which was approved as an additional expenditure item for consideration.

*Proposed Cllr Hamilton, seconded Cllr Wilks, all in favour to approve the payments presented.*

Following approval at the March meeting of the Parish Council for a request to arrange a monthly salary standing order, some information submitted to Barclays was highlighted as incomplete, therefore instructions were amended by signatories to be forwarded to Barclays for further attention.

- c) To approve and sign the Certificate of Exemption for the year ended 31 March 2023: The Clerk informed members that the Parish Council had been selected by PKF Littlejohn (external auditors) for an intermediate review for the 2022/23 reporting year, as part of the required 5% sample of those who would otherwise be subject to a basic review. As a smaller authority with income and expenditure below £25,000 for the last financial year, the Council were still able to approve and sign a certificate of exemption but would also be required to forward additional documentation to the external auditor, as prepared by the Clerk. The Chairman signed the Certificate of Exemption.  
*Action: Clerk to forward all documentation requested to external auditors by 30 June 2023.*
- d) Audited accounts & Annual Return: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 – internal audit report – this was shared and noted.
- (i) Proposal to approve and sign Section 1: Annual governance statement – the statements contained within were shared and agreed by all Cllrs.  
*Proposed Cllr Lavelle, seconded Cllr Hodgson, all in favour to sign as accurate by the Chairman & Clerk.*
- (ii) Proposal to approve and sign Section 2: Accounting statements – these had been circulated for information ahead of the meeting.  
*Proposed Cllr Lavelle, seconded Cllr Hodgson, all in favour to sign as accurate by the Chairman and Clerk.*
- e) To note the period of public rights to inspect the financial records of the Council, to commence on 5/6/23 – 14/7/23: this was noted and Cllr Hamilton agreed to publish on the notice board. *Action: Cllr Hamilton/Clerk to publish on WCC website.*
- f) Proposal to approve Parish insurance provision for the period 1/6/23 – 31/5/24 – this was agreed. The Clerk had requested an alternative quotation for comparison purposes, but it had been confirmed that the quotation prepared by the current providers was competitive.

## 17. Correspondence:

WDC – New Register of Interest form	Request after the 4 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 elections that every Councillor (new and existing) completes the attached Register of Interests form and returns it to WDC within 28 days. Cllrs are reminded that it is their personal duty to ensure the form is completed truthfully and correctly and that once it is lodged with WDC it will be a public document available via their website. If anything changes during a Cllr's term of office, a new form must be completed and returned within 28 days of the change.
WCC DG	Notice of road closure: Back Lane – 30 May 2023 for 4 days (Western Power cabling works) Details received of Swaffham Prior's heat network – request for consideration of feasibility in GC <a href="https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/climate-change-energy-and-environment/climate-change-action/low-carbon-energy/community-heating/swaffham-prior-heat-network/about-swaffham-priors-heat-network">https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/climate-change-energy-and-environment/climate-change-action/low-carbon-energy/community-heating/swaffham-prior-heat-network/about-swaffham-priors-heat-network</a>
Wychavon Sport	Parish Games 2023: Entry fees £10.00 per event, maximum fee of £80.00. payable by the Parish Council.

## 18. Councillor's reports and items for future agenda:

Cllrs agreed to clarify time scales for co-option to fill the casual vacancy on the Parish Council following the elections, in addition to acknowledging the many years of dedicated service to the Parish Council by Cllr H Peart, following his retirement from the Council.

Cllr Hamilton raised a concern regarding a recent spate of accidents involving cyclists at the dip near to the village hall, and proposed that appropriate signage be erected in the vicinity by Worcestershire County Council Highways as a warning. *Action: DCllr Hardman to explore with WCC.*

## 19. Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 7.00 pm - the following meeting dates were also agreed:

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023  
January 2024 – date to be confirmed  
Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Signed .....

Date.....

**Chairman**