

**DRAFT**  
**Great Comberton Parish Council**

**Parish Council Meeting - Minutes Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 7.00pm Village Hall**

**Parish Councillors Present:** K Collingwood (Chair), S Inglis, A Lavelle, S Hickey, G Hodgson & D Wilks.  
District Cllr B Hardman & County Cllr A Hardman  
PC Molly Keeler (Pershore Rural Safer Neighbourhood Team)

**Clerk/RFO:** Nicola Harding

**In attendance:** No parishioners

**1. Apologies**

Received from Cllr Hamilton.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations.

**3. Parishioner's Comments**

One comment had been received, as reported under item 7c, Footpaths/PRoW.

**4. Safer Neighbourhood Team & Community Speed watch**

PC Keeler (Pershore Rural Safer Neighbourhood Team) was in attendance, to provide updates regarding eight incidents reported in the last quarter and future road safety measures proposed for the parish. The meeting was informed that the Police and Crime Commissioner has released a new budget, the majority of which is focused upon road safety. Funding will therefore be available and utilised towards three mobile speed boxes, one of which will be sited in Great Comberton over a two-three week period.

Road safety surveys are also currently being undertaken, to be completed imminently, in order to establish the most suitable location for a community speed watch scheme. Cllrs were assured that more regular patrols of the village will be carried out in the coming weeks, with Community Support Officers conducting speed monitoring twice a week over a ten-day shift period.

Cllrs reported that speeding incidents increase during periods of Eckington bridge closures, therefore it was requested if monitoring could be focused at these times to establish the extent of the problem. A summary of results from recent speed monitoring was requested and it was confirmed that one vehicle was detected travelling at 34mph, with all other vehicles below this speed.

Areas where speeding is more prevalent, in addition to suitable locations for the siting of a police vehicle, were also suggested and noted and it was agreed that a police report will be created after future enforcement checks, in order for an accurate interpretation of data to establish the extent of the issue.

Cllrs were reminded that the Parish Council's initial enquiry regarding a potential parish Community Speed watch scheme was 18 months ago, therefore it is hoped that positive progress will now be made, given the updates received by the Safer Neighbourhood Team.

**5. Wychavon District Council Community Officer**

In the community officer's absence, District Cllr Hardman provided updates regarding support available to councils in pursuing grant funding streams and completing applications. It was recommended that Cllrs prepare a 'wish list' in advance of future applications, especially given the short time scales in which to complete some applications. It was also encouraged to explore projects that other councils both locally and nationally are involved in for positive ideas and to consult Community First for potential grant funding available in the district.

It was proposed for each Cllr to consider an idea for development to share at the May meeting. *Action: All Cllrs.*

**6. Minutes of meeting held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

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

**7. Progress reports from Parish Activities: brief updates:**

a. Lengthsman: A parishioner had reported debris in the ditch attached to Brailles Orchard, causing flooding down the main road – the Lengthsman has attended and cleared the blockage, in addition to digging out the grips at Ashbed's bends.

Cllr Hodgson reported a blocked drain outside Hawthorn House and it was noted that the best method of addressing such drainage issues is to report online via [Report drainage and flooding on a highway | Worcestershire County Council](#)

*Action: Cllr Hodgson.*

b. Highways: WCC Highways have inspected the kerb sides along the main road near to the war memorial and were directed to where surplus cobbles are collected for use. A works order will now be raised to re-set missing cobbles, using the surplus stock in the village.

c. Footpaths/PRoW/Trees: Footpath markings have been completed by WCC, ahead of scheduled repairs along main street in the new financial year

A request had been received from a parishioner seeking clarity over maintenance responsibilities of their boundary and footpath from Back Lane to the Church. Ownership of footpath 517B has been checked with WCC senior rights of way officer & details circulated to Cllrs for information. WCC confirmed that landowners are responsible for any boundary/overhanging vegetation clearance and the County Council is responsible for the maintenance of any vegetation growing from the surface. Although the section of path is not currently included on any

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cutting schedules, it can be included on an ‘as and when’ basis by reporting online during the strimming season.

It was noted that as this is a well-used footpath with overgrowth becoming problematic for users at the sides, this should be reported later in the year when the growing season is underway.

*Action: Report online as required.*

Trees: Overhanging branches reported on the tree opposite Bank Cottage have been removed by a working party of Cllrs.

d. Quay Lane: the reinstatement of a bollard at the top of the slope was discussed and actioned under item 8, County Cllr Hardman’s report.

## 8. District and County Councillor’s reports:

### District Cllr Hardman

- *Bio-diversity action plan:* Cllrs were informed of the current consultation on a bio-diversity strategy paper in which Worcestershire Wildlife Trust are supporting Worcestershire County Council. A survey is available online, for completion by 10 March 2024.

On behalf of the District Council, Cllr Hardman reminded Cllrs to request any support or help they may need and she will be happy to assist.

### County Cllr Hardman

- *WCC budget:* The 2024/25 budget was approved in February, with aspirational ‘transformation’ projects earmarked for the next three years.
- *Road safety in the parish:* Temporary traffic lights in the parish during Eckington bridge road closures have been discussed with WCC Highways, however these are considered unworkable. As members agreed that keeping any street cluttering to a minimum is desirable in a rural location, Highways have suggested the potential option of white lines in order to emphasise pinch points in certain areas, thereby encouraging straight driving and reducing traffic speed. Views were varied regarding the potential effects white lines may create in slowing vehicles, with allowing for some vegetation overgrowth another option considered. It was confirmed that chicanes are methods suitable only in urban areas, given that lighting is a requirement and additional signage creates clutter. Cllr Lavelle drew attention to short poles and markings used to create pinch points in Feckenham, and it was agreed to circulate an image for consideration by Cllrs. *Action: Cllr Lavelle.*

Given that the main issue of speeding in the parish arises from frequent closures of Eckington bridge, the meeting agreed that the main problem to be addressed is the bridge itself. Cllr Hardman confirmed that a feasibility study to raise the causeway either side of the bridge is currently being undertaken and considered by WCC, with a report likely in the Summer. It was recommended therefore that a positive action the parish council could undertake is to write to local MP Harriet Harman to outline the increasing negative impact which bridge closures have upon the parish, and the following action was agreed:

*Action: Cllrs to consider potential white line markings and location for further discussion. Cllr Inglis to draft a letter to the local MP & villagers for circulation, liaising with Cllr Collingwood.*

The poor state of the road verges along Pershore Road was also raised by Cllrs, as these have increased in size and are a safety hazard when vehicles approach in the opposite direction. It was agreed to report these to WCC Highways for attention.

*Action: Clerk.*

- *Quay Lane:* The surface of the track down to the Quay was noted, as this has eroded due to the water flow. It was also requested if WCC might reinstate a bollard at the top of the slope in order to deter vehicles down the lane, as one recently became stuck in the verge. Cllr Hardman agreed to explore the possibility of installing an oak post with WCC. *Action: Cllr A Hardman.*

## 9. Planning

**W/23/02366/CLE** Mill Croft: Lawful Development Certificate to confirm that a meaningful start has been made to secure the present planning permission for demolition of garage and erection of new detached garage and extended drive service 20/02678/HP – the application has been approved and a certificate of lawfulness granted.

**W/24/00060/HP:** The Pound - Addition of solar panels to one slope of existing garage roof. Plans circulated 20<sup>th</sup> February – there were no comments to submit ahead of the close of consultation on 11<sup>th</sup> March.

## 10. Finance

a) Current Balances at 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Current Account:	£5,297.57
Savings Account:	£1,789.04
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£7,086.61</b>

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b) Payments to report:

Lengthsman: December work-plan	£180.00
Lengthsman: January work-plan	£172.50
Clerk’s salary: February 2024	£302.25
Lengthsman expenses (paint for cable ties)	£16.00
Clerk’s salary: March 2024	£323.92
Village hall: Hire Nov 23/January & March 24	£42.00
Fisher German: Brailles Orchard rent (ii)	£112.50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,149.17</b>

Income to report:

WCC: Lengthsman (December 23)	£180.00
*Salary over-payment	£302.25

\*as emailed to Cllrs 6/1/24 and confirmed by the Clerk to the Chairman, 4/3/24.

*Proposed Cllr Hickey, seconded Cllr Lavelle, all in favour to approve the payments presented.*

Cllr Lavelle raised the annual subscription fee increases for Worcestershire Calc’s membership for consideration. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that Calc offer a supportive service to Clerks and Cllrs and the Council is therefore happy to continue with membership for 2024/25.

## 11. Broadband

There were no new updates to report at present, although it was noted that there have been continued issues with the roll out of Airband in the district and there also appear to be frequent dips in internet connection locally.

## 12. Correspondence

- WCC Footpath PS-561 Pershore and GC-500 Great Comberton: a closure notice has been received and advertised via the village email.
  - WDC The Latest Parish Matters newsletter has been received & circulated.
  - Pershore Training has successfully been delivered at Pershore Number 8 for the U3A annual meeting &
  - Community First there is now an offer to widen training to the local communities. The team introduce themselves and the support work they offer and follow that with AED and CPR training. It was agreed that future training provision would be a positive opportunity for parishioners in the village.
- Action: Clerk to establish further details to share at the next meeting.*

## 13. Councillor’s reports and items for future agenda:

There was no additional business to report, however Cllrs revisited the topic of future meeting schedules. It was agreed to now meet quarterly in principle, to revert back to bi-monthly meetings if considered necessary and to discuss and agree the next meeting date at the annual meeting of the parish council.

## 14. Date of Next Meeting: Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 7.00 pm

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held at 7pm, to be followed by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

Signed .....

Date.....

**Chairman**