

DRAFT
Great Comberton Parish Council

Parish Council Meeting - Minutes Monday 13th January 2025, 7.00pm Village Hall

Parish Councillors Present: K Collingwood (Chair), A Lavelle, G Hodgson, D Wilks & S Hickey.
County Cllr A. Hardman

Clerk/RFO: Nicola Harding

In attendance: Two parishioners

1. Apologies: Received from Cllrs Barnes, Hamilton, & B. Hardman.

2. Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations made.

3. Parishioner's Comments:

Two parishioners were in attendance to share comments regarding the character of Russell Street and its preservation within the village conservation area. The Chairman confirmed that an appraisal of the existing conservation area is currently in progress, with a character analysis due for completion. It was noted that although this will not prevent development, it may offer better future protection, as Cllrs agreed that cumulative effects of development in the area remain a concern. It was confirmed that District Cllr Hardman had liaised with the Head of Planning at WDC regarding a potential review of Great Comberton Conservation Area and proposals for its future definition and preservation. A parishioner present also confirmed interest in supporting the conservation area action group ahead of public consultation.

4. Minutes of meeting held on Monday 4th November 2024

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

5. Progress reports from Parish Activities: brief updates:

a. Lengthsman: Gully grates, verge grips and vegetation removal were attended to in December – it was noted that two drains are blocked which require attention: *Action: Cllr Collingwood to liaise with lengthsman for attention.*

b. WCC Highways: Drainage/Severn Trent/Footpaths: a road closure is scheduled for 17 February for pipe repairs by Severn Trent and a notice has been circulated. A public emergency closure notice has also been published for Footpath EK-521 Eckington & GC-506 Great Comberton as a result of a dangerous bridge. WCC have confirmed they have closed the route and discussed progression of works with the landowner on one side regarding a suitable replacement structure.
Action: Further updates to be circulated as received from WCC.

c. Police: Safer Neighbourhood Team – Cllr Collingwood had circulated updates from a site meeting on 15th November 2024. It was noted that speed data had not been received as requested, therefore it was agreed the Clerk would send a reminder email, in addition to forwarding details of key parish priorities, as per the last quarter.

Action: Clerk.

d. 'Our Community Can' WDC initiative – three taster sessions were held in Great Comberton village hall during December. The fitness and flexibility class was well attended in the village, to be continued in the new year, and a 'craft and chat' session is proposed to go ahead in Little Comberton and 'Dance Fit' in Elmley Castle. A possible bocchia set may also be offered for sharing amongst the three villages. Further updates will be available in due course following a progress meeting on Tuesday 28th January. The County Cllr agreed to pass on these updates to Cllr B Hardman who has led the initiative.

e. Water testing: WDC – Cllr Hodgson & Lavelle shared updates from the training event attended at Wychavon on 9th December, which demonstrated how to use the water testing equipment. One kit per parish should be provided in due course and it was agreed to request if Cllr B Hardman could pursue and provide any further updates.

Action: Cllr B. Hardman/Clerk.

f. Brailles Orchard: Updates regarding future maintenance was discussed and it was agreed that Cllr Collingwood would make further contact with a potential interested tenant. Suitable contributions to the Parish Council were also considered and agreed for possible future use of the field.

g. Disposal of dog waste: Following a recent suggestion from a parishioner regarding the potential re-siting of a litter bin to the village hall end of the village, it was agreed that this could prove costly and incur emptying charges from the local authority. This may, however, be reviewed in future, should the recreational use of Brailles increase. An additional parishioner's comment had been received regarding the use of litter and dog waste bins – following a discussion regarding current policy confirmed from WCC and WDC, it was agreed to provide an update regarding Wychavon's 'Any Bin will do' policy.

Action: Clerk to update parishioners.

h. Rooftop: No reports at present, however a fallen tree was noted near the recently renovated bench. As it was confirmed that this is not on Highways land, it was agreed to report this to Rooftop.

Action: Clerk/Cllr Barnes.

DRAFT

2025/02

6. District and County Councillor's reports:

District Cllr B. Hardman:

Cllr Hardman had forwarded an update regarding the devolution of County Council and District Councils, meaning that Wychavon will finish in approximately two years' time. The government are going to replace counties and district councils with unities and a mayor with special powers who will cover several of these. Further details will be shared as received.

County Cllr A. Hardman:

Finance: WCC continues to experience significant financial pressures, with government borrowing required for this financial year and next.

Flooding: Concerns have been received regarding icy conditions along Pershore Road due to outstanding water repairs – it was confirmed that this stretch had been gritted recently and Severn Trent attended prior to Christmas to complete an initial repair. Another fault was detected further down, and a subsequent repair has been scheduled for 17th February, as reported under item 5b, WCC Highways.

Wychavon Local Plan: An enquiry commences in March 2025.

7. Planning

W/24/01465/HP: Proposed single-storey extension; new dormers, roof lights, windows and doors; and new outbuilding to provide workshop and store: Hopestan House –this application has been approved.

W/24/02365/FUL: Associated Ref: W/24/02364/LB Conversion of outbuildings to multi-use annex incidental to Fern Cottage, for use as domestic accommodation, home office, and occasional holiday let accommodation, and addition of single storey extension. – Cllrs agreed that further clarification would be helpful in terms of the potential intended end use of this project, as this is unclear in the design and access statement. In addition, a request to review the proposed parking bays which could cause a potential disturbance to the property close by, would also be requested.

Action: Clerk to submit a comment on behalf of the Parish Council/District Cllr Hardman to relay queries with the planning officer.

W/24/02361/FUL: The Rickyard, Russell Street - Conversion of existing garage to 1no. dwelling – comments of objection were submitted to WDC on 22nd December and a decision remains pending.

8. Finance

a) Current Balances at 6th January 2025

Business Account:	£748.37
Community Account	£7,722.63
TOTAL	£8,471.00

b) Payments to report:

Royal British Legion: Remembrance wreath	£19.99
Salary: December 2024	£337.57
Salary: January 2025	£337.57
Expenses: Dec/Jan	£24.00
Postage: Nov 24	£6.60
TOTAL	£725.73

Income to report:

WCC: Lengthsman Aug/Sept/Oct 2024	£540.00
Barclays: Interest 5/9/24-2/12/24	£13.44
WCC: Lengthsman Nov 2024	£180.00

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

c) Bank reconciliation (iii) 18 December 2024: Documents had been forwarded to Cllr Lavelle ahead of the meeting and these were verified and signed. A January review of the 24/25 budget was shared and discussed with members.

d) Proposal to approve 2025/26 budget & resultant precept request:

Prior to the meeting, the Clerk and Cllr Hamilton had discussed & forwarded potential budget headings and a resultant 2025/26 expenditure budget – copies were made available at the meeting and likely income and expenditure in the financial year ahead was considered, along with current earmarked reserves. Future sponsorship of the parish defibrillator was also raised, given the ongoing financial commitment every 2 and 5 years for replacement pads and battery. A discussion ensued and potential precept options were considered - Cllrs voted on the following two precept options put forward:

- 10% increase – 1 Cllr in favour
- 12% increase – 4 Cllrs in favour

A 12% increase was therefore supported by the majority, resulting in a precept @ £5900 for 2025/26 and a band D levy annual increase of £4.33.

Action: Clerk to forward request to WDC ahead of 24th January 2025.

DRAFT

2025/03

9. Correspondence

WCC – Public Notice A notice had been received of an urgent closure of the highway, as reported under item 5b, WCC Highways Footpaths.

WCC Streetscape Design Guide A reminder that WCC's draft Streetscape Design Guide is currently out for public engagement from Monday 4 November 2024 to Monday 27 January 2025, closing at midnight. Survey and design guide links: <https://online1.snapsurveys.com/StreetscapeDG2024>
https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-11/Public%20Engagement%20-%20Draft%20Streetscape%20Design%20Guide_1.pdf

Pershore Education Planning Area Review An agreement has been reached to extend the age ranges of all the first schools in the Pershore Education Planning Area to become primary schools. The middle schools in Pershore will no longer have a point of entry into Year 5 for September 2025, and Pershore High School’s intake will be expanded to accommodate all Year 7 pupils in the area from September 2027.

SWDP Review Further to comments submitted in respect of the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review, the Secretary of State has appointed two planning Inspectors to conduct an examination into the soundness and legal compliance of the Plan.

WDC: A Parish & Town Council event will be held at WDC on Thursday 6th March at 6pm – details of proposed topics had been circulated in advance of the meeting and Cllr Lavelle expressed an interest in attending.
Action: Clerk to book a place.

10. Councillor’s reports and items for future agenda:

There were no additional items to report.

11. Date of Next Meeting: Monday 12th May 2025 at 7.00 pm

Signed

Date.....

Chairman