

Minutes from a meeting of the Parish Council, held via Zoom on Wednesday 7th April 2021 at 7pm **via Zoom**

PRESENT – Chairman C Rabbette, Vice Chairman L Haycock, Cllrs S Britten, N Jamieson, A Dermont, and P Morris, County Cllr A Hardman and District Cllr T Rowley

1. **APOLOGIES** – None received

OPEN FORUM: - There were no parishioners in attendance

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – None declared

3. **MINUTES** from the previous meeting of March 10th 2021 were approved, proposed Cllr Dermont, seconded Cllr Jamieson – all in favour

4. **PROGRESS REPORTS**

a) Highway Matters

- Patch Repairs, Elmley Road – some resurfacing had been carried but the finish was considered to be poor. The clerk had reported this to WCC and awaiting a response, but it is understood that surface dressing was due to be carried out.

b) Footpaths / Rights of Way – Cllr Jamieson reported that the stile (footpath from Great Comberton to Little Comberton – Pershore Road end) was extremely difficult to get over, particularly for disabled. The clerk reminded the council of previous discussion between the landowner some years ago, and there was no desire to change the stile with a ‘kissing gate’, but the clerk would speak to the landowner again. Cllr Jamieson also reported on the difficulties with crossing the bridge at the drainage ditch at Old House Farm, again restricting access for those less mobile. Cllr Britten offered to speak to Old House Farm, but did remind Cllrs that it is a landowners right to decide the type of access on any Public Right of Way

c) Lengthsman – Cllr Jamieson reported that he had met with the LM twice over the past few weeks. He has tried out a specialist paint on the white gates. If the finish is satisfactory, it was agreed we ask the LM to cost for the remaining gates. The clerk reported that the new contract from WCC had been received. There was no change to the budget provided by WCC.

d) BHCG – Cllr Britten had nothing to report – next meeting scheduled for April.

e) Ditches/ Water Courses – The LM had brought to our attention a drain at the bottom of the drive to Old House Farm. This has been reported to WCC for clearing but they advise it is on private land and not a County Council issue. Cllr Britten reported that WCC had put the drain in to assist with flooding issues and is to be reviewed.

f) Village Broadband / Website– Cllr Jamieson reported that he is waiting for new guidance to come through but feels confident that we are within the ‘qualifying window’. He would update all those that had signed up for the scheme. He also advised that there is a new ‘roll out’ expected in April.

g) Village Signs – The clerk has made a request from WCC for new village signs and awaiting a reply.

h) Dogs:

- Waste Bin at Memorial Garden – This bin has now been removed.
- Dog Waste Bin – the parish council are still investigating suitable locations for a new dog waste bin

i) Handyman – a village resident has kindly volunteered their services.

2021/12

5. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT – Cllr Rowley reported:

- SWDP Review Regulation 18 – Cllr Rowley congratulated Cllr Rabbette on the excellent comments she had put together on the SWDP sustainability review
- WDC Planning Committee – the next meeting is on 29th April – there are no applications affecting Little Comberton
- Wychavon Car Parks – the current free parking is under review, but no decision has yet been made

6. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – Cllr Hardman reported:

- Elections – he has submitted his nomination papers for the County Council elections in May
- Covid rates are down to 36 per 100,000 (*at the time of the meeting*), with 34 patients in local hospitals.
- Vaccine roll-out is having a very positive effect, although there are cases of Covid in eight care homes within the county
- Dog Waste Bin – A donation of £200 has been made towards the cost of a new dog waste bin (to agree location)
- Surface Dressing, Elmley Road – some surface dressing is due

7. PLANNING:

- 20/02607LB & 20/02606– The Old Manor House, erection of swimming pool enclosure – *awaiting decision by WDC*
- 21/00257 – the Old Rectory - Single storey extension to south east including a boot room and greenhouse. Erection of two storey structure to contain a passenger lift - *Since the meeting we have been advised that this application has been approved*
- 20/02826 – Tythe Court, Manor Lane – erection of Menage / Stables - following a site visit by two Cllrs, with a further inspection from the field to the rear, lengthy discussion took place. The parish council voted unanimously to object to the application for the following reasons:
 - The impact on the historical ridge and furrow field – The AONB discourages use of these field for horses.
 - The current SWDP Review comments: - SWDPR48 requires any equestrian development not to '*adversely impact upon the character, appearance or ecology of the landscape and / or any environmental, nature, planning, or landscape designation*' – In our opinion the proposed menage would impact on the 'ridge and furrow' field.
 - SWDP 23 - The Cotswolds and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty – (a) *Development that would have a detrimental impact on the natural beauty of an AONB (as shown on the Policies Map) will not be permitted, and (b) Any development proposal within an AONB must conserve and enhance the special qualities of the landscape.*
 - SWDP 25 – Landscape Character refers to '*protect and conserve key landscape features and attributes and, where appropriate, enhance landscape quality.*' – we do not consider menage would enhance the landscape quality.
 - Access – there is no mention as to how access to the menage would be managed – we consider that any access over the 'ridge and furrow' would cause further damage, or require a hardstanding / access road impacting in the character
 - Any activity other than grazing on this field, in our opinion, would require a Change of Use application, to that of recreational use.
 - Lighting – we consider that, whilst not for consideration on this application, there may well become a time when some sort of flood lighting would be required. This would impact heavily on the neighbouring properties, in a rural location with no street lighting.
- SWDP Sustainability Appraisal Consultation – Cllr Rabbette had prepared a brief paper on this, reporting that there was nothing specific affecting Little Comberton that needed to be responded.

8. FINANCE –

(a) Payments for approval / made since last meeting:

B Arrowsmith Feb / March	760	372.00
Weedkiller	761	50.00

Account Balances:

Current Account: £5,135.55 (less unrepresented cheques)

Deposit Account: £4930.63

Provisional year end bank accounts / balances had been circulated and were approved (subject to bank statement)

(b) SLCC – the clerk requested approval from the parish council to pay a part share of Society Local Council Clerks (to be shared between her other parish councils) – approx. £26 per annum. This was approved by all Cllrs.

9. HEALTH & SAFETY – Nothing to report

10. AGRICULTURAL CHANGES POST BREXIT – Cllr Dermont referred to a document published mid March 2021 by DEFRA focussing on three new schemes:

- **Sustainable Farming Incentive** - The Sustainable Farming Incentive will begin piloting in 2021 before it launches in 2022. It will gradually replace BPS (Basic Payment Scheme) payments. Farmers to apply by 11th April this year. The initial eight standards that DEFRA plan to take into the pilot are:
 - arable and horticultural land standard
 - arable and horticultural soils standard
 - improved grassland standard
 - improved grassland soils standard
 - low and no input grassland standard
 - hedgerow standard
 - on farm woodland standard
 - waterbody buffering standard

DEFRA will release further information to farmers in summer 2021, ahead of the scheme launch in 2022.

- **Local Nature Recovery** - The Local Nature Recovery scheme will pay for actions that support local nature recovery and meet local environmental priorities. The scheme will encourage collaboration between farmers, helping them work together to improve their local environment. The scheme will begin piloting in 2022, and launch in 2024.
- **Landscape Recovery** - The Landscape Recovery scheme will support landscape and ecosystem recovery through long-term projects, such as:
 - restoring wilder landscapes in places where it's appropriate
 - large-scale tree planting
 - peatland and salt marsh restoration

The scheme will begin piloting around 10 projects in 2022, and launch in 2024.

These 3 schemes are intended to support the rural economy while achieving the goals of the 25 Year Environment Plan and a commitment to net zero emissions by 2050.

2021/14

Through these schemes, farmers and other land managers may enter into agreements to be paid for delivering the following:

- clean and plentiful water
- clean air
- thriving plants and wildlife
- protection from environmental hazards
- reduction of and adaptation to climate change
- beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment

11. TREES:

- Barnie Court – The tree has now been removed and a replacement purchased – Red May
- Mistletoe – Thanks to a team of volunteers, almost all of the mistletoe has been removed. Grateful thanks were recorded to everyone that helped
- Tree Warden – A parishioner has kindly offered to assist a tree warden

12. CRIME – nothing to report other than we are still looking for a Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator

13. ITEMS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION / AGENDAS: Nothing raised

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Annual Parish Council Meeting Tuesday 4th May 2021 – via Zoom