



Minutes are draft until approved at  
the following meeting

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Longdon, Queenhill and Holdfast Parish Council held on Monday 4 July 2022 at Longdon Village Hall**

Present: Chair Cllr Mullins, Vice-Chair Cllr Gray, Cllr Davey, Cllr Unwin

District Councillor: Cllr Behan (until agenda item 10)

In Attendance: Bill Austin, Deb Gray (until agenda item 10); Dave Mullins

1. **Apologies:** Apologies were received from Cllr Cook and Cllr Faram. Cllr Davey was formally welcomed to the Council.
2. **Declarations of Interest:** No declarations of interest were made.
3. **Consideration of any dispensation requests:** There were no dispensation requests.
4. **Public Session:** The members of the public did not wish to make any representation.
5. **Minutes:** The minutes of the previous meeting of the Council held on 14 June 2022 were considered and unanimously approved as a correct record. Cllr Gray was thanked for the excellent chairing of the meeting at short notice.
6. **Progress Reports:**
  - a) **Bear Lane Play Equipment Safety Inspection:** Cllr Unwin had inspected the play equipment and tightened bolts. He commented on the poor condition of the goal nets. Cllr Gray agreed to explore the cost of new netting for consideration at the next meeting;
  - b) **Lengthsman Scheme:** The Lengthsman had informed Cllr Unwin that, due to the delay in his payment, he had not undertaken any tasks in June. As a result, the agreed work to check the condition of noticeboards and clear around signs had not been addressed. He had now signed the annual Lengthsman Scheme contract from Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and, in addition, had submitted a request to increase his charges to the Council. It was agreed this would be discussed under agenda item 12d;
  - c) **Heart Start Malvern Course:** Four individuals from the parishes had attended, with positive reports. No charge would be made for the course and the Council agreed unanimously to donate £40 to Head Start Malvern;



- d) **Clerk Vacancy:** No progress. Cllr Mullins would remind CALC about the outstanding query relating to appropriate Clerk salary level;
- e) **Village Hall:** This update was deferred until agenda item 9;
- f) **Community Website:** Cllr Gray was in discussion with the former Council 'webmaster' about setting up a new site. This had been delayed but would be progressed to allow costs to be presented at the next meeting;
- g) **Meeting with West Mercia Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner:** The Chair and Vice-Chair will meet the Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner (APCC). In preparation for this meeting, Cllrs were invited to consider the main parish policing matters to be raised with the APCC. Cllr Behan commented on the Local Policing Community Charter and the opportunity to invite a representative to discuss policing at a Council meeting. It was noted that Cllr Gray had invited a representative of the Upton Safer Neighbourhood team to come to a Council meeting. It was agreed to invite parishioners' suggestions of topics for discussion with the APCC via the WhatsApp Groups. Cllr Mullins would circulate the Local Policing Community Charter to Councillors.

**7. Report from District and County Councillors:** Cllr Behan reported:

- South Worcestershire Development Plan – publication and the opening of public consultation had been further delayed (completion date now July 2023). The Place and Economic Development Paper for Malvern would be available for discussion in October;
- NHS Integrated Care – the Longdon, Queenhill and Holdfast parishes were now part of the Hereford and Worcestershire Integrated Care System. An intent in the new plan was to create acute care hubs in the two counties;
- Boundary Commission – the review of Malvern Hills District Council wards no longer proposed to separate the parishes of Queenhill and Holdfast from the parish of Longdon. New proposals were being put forward by the Boundary Commission with a closing date for comments of 8 August.

**8. Update from the Pathway Warden:** Deb Gray reported on her first year as Pathway Warden for Longdon. This is a voluntary role, and is not a Council function.

- Parish pathways had been in a poor state of repair - a focus has been on the creation of circular routes that are clearly waymarked and not blocked by fences, overgrown vegetation etc;
- A good relationship had been developed with the County Council pathway lead – the County Council had interactive maps on which pathway concerns can be raised;



- Groups of residents, facilitated through a Whats App group, had supported pathway clearance and individuals could offer to maintain nearby paths.

The Council thanked Deb Gray for taking on this role and for facilitating significant progress. The Council is open to requests for assistance.

**9. Update on the Village Hall:** Cllr Gray had informally explored next steps with some of the Village Hall Committee. The Council unanimously agreed his proposal to circulate a letter (via Whats App, Parish Magazine, website and notice boards - draft tabled) to parishioners to invite individuals to become involved in the Village Hall in any capacity. Cllr Davey shared ideas of a breadth of increased usage of the facilities. Outstanding maintenance tasks had previously been identified but no progress had been made on the urgent tasks. It was agreed unanimously to actively explore potential contractors. Cllr Gray would circulate the appeal for volunteers and set out maintenance opportunities on the WhatsApp groups.

**10. To confirm the Standing Orders of the Council for the year ending 31 March 2023:** The approved Standing Orders were confirmed by the Council.

**11. To confirm the Financial Regulations of the Council for the year ending 31 of March 2023:** The approved Financial Regulations were confirmed by the Council.

**12. Finance:**

- a) The Council received and unanimously approved a report on the financial position on 30 June 2022. A Quarterly Reconciliation had also been prepared setting out Council's expenditure to date for the first quarter of the financial year together with a future outturn for the year's expenditure. Issues highlighted included the reduction in Clerk costs (due to the vacancy), the significant increase in electricity costs for the single streetlight and the potential for overspend for work under the Lengthsman Scheme. These issues would be included in the discussion of the next annual precept in the autumn;
- b) Council approved the payment of fees and invoices as presented. As the Chair was effectively acting as Responsible Financial Officer (in the absence of a Clerk) and the Vice-Chair was conflicted with some payments, the invoices were signed by an alternative authorised signatory;



<b>Invoice:</b>	<b>Amount (£):</b>
Jubilee celebration expenditure – paper plates (Deb Gray)	20.13
Jubilee celebration expenditure – wooden cutlery (Deb Gray)	5.29
Jubilee celebration expenditure – strawberry jam (Deb Gray)	19.40
Jubilee celebration expenditure – clotted cream (Deb Gray)	47.43 <sup>1</sup>
Jubilee celebration expenditure – bunting etc (Tewkesbury Cards and Gifts)	19.25
Google Workspace 1 Mar – 31 Mar (Andy Young)	28.98
Google Workspace 1 Apr – 30 Apr (Andy Young)	28.98
Google Workspace 1 May – 31 May (Andy Young)	28.98

- c) The consideration of the establishment of a Finance Subcommittee was deferred;
- d) Lengthsman Scheme – the lengthsman had requested an increase in his charges to Council for the work undertaken for both the Lengthsman Scheme and for grass cutting. Council members were sympathetic to an increase in rates and agreed the proposed increase in the charges for the Council-funded grass cutting. However, it was noted that the total cost that could be reimbursed to Council under the Lengthsman Scheme was capped by WCC. As had been highlighted by the Quarterly Reconciliation, it was likely that, even at current rates, there would be an overspend on the lengthsman’s work. Any increase in costs would exacerbate this and thus an increase in rates would necessitate a decrease in the number of hours worked. Cllr Mullins would update the Lengthsman on the meeting discussion. Cllr Unwin would meet with him to discuss how to achieve a reduction in the volume, scope and timing of activities to match with the WCC ceiling on costs.

**13. To consider the adoption of the MHDC Councillor Code of Conduct:** Due to the volume of other Council business, it was agreed to defer discussion until the next meeting.

**14. 20’s Plenty Draft Motion:** Due to the volume of other Council business, it was agreed to defer discussion until the next meeting.

**15. Future meeting schedule:** The date of the next ordinary meeting of Council was confirmed as Monday, 5 September 2022. The dates of upcoming meetings were:

3 October 2022

<sup>1</sup> This is a correction from the meeting paper that recorded a payment of £47.73



7 November 2022  
No meeting in December  
9 January 2023

It was agreed that a meeting of the Parish Council Acting as Sole Trustee will be arranged to which the Village Hall Committee will be invited. It was planned this would take place at the beginning of the September Council meeting (5 September).

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.

Signed: .....  
Chairman, Longdon, Queenhill and Holdfast Parish Council

Date: .....