**MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 9th MAY 2022**

Present

Councillor Mr M Huskinson Chairman

Councillor Mr M Simpson Vice Chairman

Councillor Mr D Fellows

Councillor Mr A Medcalf

Councillor Rvd P Hughes

Councillor Mrs Jane Hadley-Roberts

Councillor Mrs Barbara Hill

Mrs G Hollick Clerk

District Councillor Mrs K Wells

County Council Footpath

Liaison Officer Mr D Furlong

1. **Apologies**

County and District Councillor Mr Tom Wells

1. **Election of Officers**
   1. Cllr Fellows proposed that Cllr Huskinson should be reappointed to the Chair of the Parish Council. This was seconded by Cllr Hadley-Roberts and agreed unanimously
   2. Cllr Hadley-Roberts proposed that Cllr Simpson should be reappointed to the role of Vice Chair. This was seconded by Cllr Fellows and agreed unanimously
   3. Planning Committee: The Chair and Vice Chair are ‘ex-officio’ members of the Planning Committee. Cllr Huskinson proposed Cllr Hadley-Roberts to the Planning Committee. This was seconded by Cllr Simpson and agreed unanimously. Cllr Huskinson proposed Cllr Rvd Hughes to the Planning Committee. This was seconded by Cllr Simpson and agreed unanimously.
2. **Public Question and Answer**

There were no members of the public present

1. **Code of Conduct and Declarations of Interest**
   1. Parish Councillors were reminded that, as required by the Parish Council Code of Conduct Order 2001, revised 2020, they should notify the MHDC Monitoring Officer of any changes to their Register of Interests or the receipt of any unrecorded gifts or hospitality. They should also declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any of the items of this meeting.
   2. There were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interest.
2. **The Race Relations and Crime and Disorder Acts**

Parish Councillors were reminded that all the business carried out and decisions made at this meeting must observe the requirements of the above Acts.

1. **Acceptance of Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14th March 2022**

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Guarlford Parish Council held on 14th March had been circulated and read prior to the meeting. The reference at item 13.2 to the defibrillator/first aid training event should refer to it taking place on 18th May 2022 and not 19th May 2022. There were no matters arising not already on the Agenda of this meeting. Cllr Medcalf proposed that, with the above amendment, these should be signed as a true record. This was seconded by Cllr Rvd Hughes and agreed unanimously. The Chairman then signed the minutes.

1. **Report on local crime statistics**

The Clerk informed the meeting that she now received emails detailing crimes which had taken place in the Malvern and Upton district. Any information relating to Guarlford would be circulated to Councillors but to date none had been received. The Clerk had received a quarterly newsletter which summarised policing priorities in the district. These included traffic offences, theft of metal and fuel, drug and alcohol related anti-social behaviour and youth engagement. The community officer for Guarlford continues to be PC Dee Stanley

1. **Report by District County Councillor Kathy Wells**

Cllr Wells informed councillors that conclusions on the boundaries review were expected in July but that it was not anticipated that there would be any changes to the proposals submitted for consideration. The publication date for the SWDP had still not been set. As the expectation was for the development of new settlements rather than new houses to be added to existing settlements, this required far more evidence which has led to the process taking longer than previously expected. This delay might mean that the area was vulnerable to speculative development which might not be in accordance with the SWDP

1. **Report from the Village Hall.**

A written report had been submitted by Mrs Cameron, Chair of the Trustees – see attached. In summary, as part of a regeneration project, the village hall committee were working towards raising £150,000 through grant applications and fund-raising events.

1. **Report from the Footpath Warden**

The Chairman introduced Mr David Furlong who had been registered with Worcestershire County Council to be Guarlford’s link with the authority in respect of any footpath issues. Mr Furlong explained that as he had always enjoyed walking the local footpaths he had approached WCC to be a volunteer and undertaken the necessary induction process. Cllr Fellows had met with Mr Furlong prior to the meeting and discussed the relevant footpath issues in the Parish. Cllr Simpson contributed that although the Parish Council would be grateful for Mr Furlong’s support he considered that the County Council should have informed the Parish Council of his appointment. The Chairman thanked Mr Furlong for pro-actively contacting the Parish Council and said that councillors were grateful to Cllr Fellows for agreeing to liaise with Mr Furlong who would be able to refer issues directly to Mr John White at WCC and expedite any actions required. The Chairman felt that this way of dealing with matters would be in the interests of the residents of Guarlford and the Parish Council. This was proposed by Cllr Huskinson, seconded by Cllr Hughes and agreed unanimously. Mr Furlong agreed to inspect the steps at Clevelode and canvas for the installation of gates to replace stiles throughout the Parish. Mr Furlong also agreed to provide reports for future meetings.

1. **Report from Tree Warden** 
   1. Cllr Rvd Hughes informed the meeting that he was still getting to grips with the role of tree warden but to date there was nothing of significance to report
   2. Cedar Tree. Cllr Hill reported that at a recent meeting of the Parochial Church Council it had been agreed to remove the cedar tree from St Mary’s churchyard which was overhanging Rectory Lane, as advised by their tree consultant. However as this would cost in the region of £12,000 it may take up to 8 years to raise sufficient funds to do so. Councillors discussed their concerns about the delay in removing the tree due to health and safety considerations. Cllr Rvd Hughes agreed to discuss matters with Chris Lewis Farley, landscape officer at MHDC and seek advice.
2. **Malvern Hills Trust Report** 
   1. Cllr Fellows reported that to date there had been no progress with the private bill to reduce the number of councillors on the Trust board. Mary Turner had been elected for the Chase Ward to replace Graham Crisp. Cllr Fellows also reported that as far as he was aware there had been no further progress with the proposed easement at Mill Lane.
   2. The Clerk informed the meeting that she had corresponded with Jonathan Bills at MHT concerning the grass triangle in Rectory Lane. Mr Bills had confirmed that the initial plan to plant a Black Poplar is being reconsidered following information provided by the Parish Council. It is now planned to install stobs with reflectors once they have been designed and ordered. It is expected that this will take place over the summer.
3. **Local Traffic Management Sub group update**
   1. The Rhydd. Cllr Simpson stated that he had visited the junction and agreed that there was too much tree canopy to install a solar powered road sign. Councillors discussed the improved road markings and considered that these have led to an improvement as there had not been an accident since they have been in place. Cllr Hill drew the councillor’s attention to the development work which is currently taking place on the Upton approach road which adds to the dangers at this junction. Cllr Fellows and Cllr Huskinson agreed to arrange with Cllr Simpson a suitable time to carry out another site visit.
   2. Blakes Lane. Cllr Hughes informed the meeting that the verge master posts were still effective and Blakes Lane had been re-surfaced. Unfortunately the lane is not wide enough for two cars to pass each other just before the turning into the car park for The Plough and Harrow. However there does not appear to be a solution to this and drivers have to reverse when necessary.
   3. Signpost on Rhydd Road (opposite Priestfields Lane) This has now been repaired.
   4. Grass triangle by the phone box Rectory Lane. Cllr Fellows had been approached by a resident who was concerned about the access to the east side of this triangle. This is very narrow and causes vehicles to wait on the main road if another vehicle is driving out of the lane to turn right. Cllrs on the traffic management sub-group agreed to look at this junction at the same time as visiting the Rhydd road junction and report back at the next meeting.
4. **Parish Environment**
   1. Lengthsman The Clerk confirmed that she had asked Jeremy Moore, Lengthsman, to begin grass cutting when he visited the village later in the week. In particular the grass on the triangle by the telephone box and around the entrance to Priestfield’s road was now impairing visibility.

The Clerk informed the meeting that she had contacted WCC highways regarding the lack of kerb stones along the footpath adjacent to the B4211 between St Mary’s church and the western end of Rectory Lane. This had been expedited and the Clerk agreed to follow up at regular intervals. District Councillor Kathy Wells asked the Clerk to forward details to District and County Councillor Tom Wells so that he could investigate further on behalf of the Parish Council.

* 1. Telephone kiosk. Cllr Rvd Hughes informed the meeting that he had visited the telephone kiosk with the Clerk and taken measurements so that he could install shelving and generally improve both the appearance and function of the kiosk.
  2. Cedar tree – This has been discussed at 11.2
  3. Defibrillator training. The Clerk presented a leaflet which she had produced to advertise the defibrillator training booked for 18th May. The Clerk agreed to distribute the leaflet locally.
  4. Industrial Scale Solar farms. The Chairman wished to bring to councillors attention that correspondence had been received from an organisation offering to support villages who may be over-whelmed by applications for large solar farms in their parish. Councillors discussed some of the relevant factors to be considered regarding solar installations.

1. **Planning**
   1. It was noted that the planning application in respect of Honeypots Farm, Priestfields Lane was still pending and awaiting more information from Worcester Wildlife Trust.
   2. It was noted that the planning application in respect of Woodside Farmhouse had been approved on 26th April 2022.
   3. It was noted that there had been an updated planning application in respect of The Meadows, Alpacca Tearooms. This revised application showed a change to the entrance location with a new driveway across the landowners property. This application was ‘pending’ awaiting further measurements and consideration from Highways.
   4. It was noted that the application for a non-material amendment by Gammonds to change the colour of the cladding on the new building from green to grey had been refused on 25th April 2022.
   5. SWDP; this had been discussed at item 8
2. **Liaison with other bodies**
   1. The Clerk had received information from Age UK about a programme aimed at people experiencing mild dementia. This would be displayed on the village noticeboard.
   2. Platinum Jubilee. The Clerk had produced a draft invitation for the Jubilee. Councillors asked the clerk to distribute the invitations to Guarlford residents.
3. **Finance** 
   1. Account Balances

Bank statement as at 9th May 2022 £ 7130 (including first half of precept )

Minus value of unpresented cheques £1031.79

Total in Treasurers account **£6098.21**

Total in Deposit Account **£ 677.74**

Charity Account **£ 108.64**

Cheques not showing on the bank statement

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 31/3/22 | 566 | J Moore Lengthsman April hours | 124.00 |
| 1/5/22 | 567 | Zurich Municpial Annual Insurance | 286.63 |
| 9/5/22 | 568 | G Hollick Wages April | 261.04 |
| 9/5/22 | 569 | Atkinson & Co maintenance of payroll | 54.00 |
| 9/5/22 | 570 | CALC /NALC Annual fee | 182.12 |
| 9/5/22 | 571 | J Moore Lengthsman April hours | 124.00 |

Money which has been claimed but not yet credited to account

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| WCC Lengthsman scheme reimbursement for February 22 | 118.00 |
| WCC Lengthsman scheme reimbursement for March 22 | 118.00 |
| WCC Lengthsman scheme reimbursement for February 22 | 124.00 |
| TOTAL | **360.00** |

* 1. **Internal and External audit**.

Prior to the meeting, the Clerk had circulated the end of year accounts to councillors. Cllr Medcalf, the internal financial monitor, had declared that the accounts were in order. Subsequently the Clerk had presented the accounts to Mr Peter Hughes of Madresfield who had carried out the annual audit and signed the annual internal audit report. The Chairman proposed that the meeting approve an application for exemption from external audit. This was seconded by Cllr Simpson and agreed unanimously. The Chairman, proposed that the accounting figures and governance be accepted, this was seconded by Cllr Simpson and agreed unanimously. The Chairman then signed the accounting figures, the annual governance statement and the certificate of exemption, The Clerk was asked to post the notice of public rights and publication of AGAR for the period Monday 13th June 2022 – Friday 22nd July 2022.

* 1. **Approval of cheques raised since last meeting**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date of cheque | Chq no | Payee | Amount |
| 31/3/22 | 563 | G Hollick re-mbursement MacAffe Anti virus | 89.99 |
| 31/3/22 | 564 | G Hollick re-imbursement postage stamps | 7.92 |
| 31/3/22 | 565 | G Hollick re-imbursement Auditor gift | 15.75 |
| 31/3/22 | 566 | J Moore Lengthsman March hours | 118.00 |
| 1/5/22 | 567 | Zurich Municpial Annual Insurance | 286.63 |
| 9/5/22 | 568 | G Hollick Wages April | 261.04 |
| 9/5/22 | 569 | Atkinson & Co maintenance of payroll | 54.00 |
| 9/5/22 | 570 | CALC /NALC Annual fee | 182.12 |
| 9/5/22 | 571 | J Moore Lengthsman April hours | 124.00 |

The cheques raised since the previous meeting were approved by Cllr Fellows, seconded by the Chairman Cllr Huskinson, and agreed unanimously.

1. **Items for the Next Meeting**

Following a request from a resident The Chairman asked councillors to consider the merits of placing ‘Hedgehog’ signs around the village to protect the local resident hedgehogs from night time drivers.

1. **Date of Next Meetings:-** Monday 12th September 2022

Monday 12th December 2022

**Signed ………………………………………….**

**Cllr Michael Huskinson**

**Chairman**