

MINUTES OF
YARKHILL PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday 15th May 2018

Present: Councillor Tom Misselbrook, Councillor Chrissie Dobson, Councillor Sarah Daw, Councillor Ian Carr, Councillor Jeff Hughes, Councillor Nick Nenadich, Ward Councillor Jonathan Lester and clerk Sallyanne Batchelor.

12 members of the public were present.

1. Election of Chairman. Councillor Jeff Hughes was proposed by Councillor Ian Carr and seconded by Councillor Tom Misselbrook. Councillor Jeff Hughes was unanimously elected.

Election of Vice Chairman. Councillor Tom Misselbrook was proposed by Parish Clerk Sallyanne Batchelor and seconded by Councillor Jeff Hughes. Councillor Tom Misselbrook was unanimously elected.

2. Election of Officers. Councillors Chrissie Dobson, Sarah Daw, Ian Carr and Nick Nenadich accepted office. Councillor Ian Carr stood down as Foothpath and Pond Officer but agreed to continue until a volunteer could be found. Peter O'Neill agreed to continue as Tree Warden.

3. Apologies for absence. Apologies received from Ward Councillor Jonathan Lester who expected to be delayed and apologies from Tree Warden Peter O'Neill.

4. There were no declarations of interest and written requests for dispensations

5. The minutes of the meetings on 13th March 2018 and 17 April 2018 were approved and signed.

6. **Open Session**

6.1 The Parish Clerk read out the report from Ward Councillor Jonathan Lester as follows: "Since March, under my leadership, Council has remained focussed on the task in hand which is to make the significant decisions that will improve the lives of Herefordshire's citizens. In March - Cabinet agreed arrangements for the provision of a new assessment and support service for young carers. The new service will support a children and young people who are day to day providing care to other vulnerable family members and will complement the services already provided by the locally based voluntary sector organisation Herefordshire Carers Support. In April - Cabinet focussed on the good work of Herefordshire's adults and children's safeguarding boards. Each board is independently chaired and the two chairs provided Cabinet with an overview of their work and the challenges being addressed. The key activities planned for 2018/19 in order to meet the priorities of the Council's four year Corporate Plan were agreed in the annual corporate delivery plan. This plan also provides the basis for our corporate performance monitoring arrangements so that we can understand our progress and take action where necessary to ensure delivery remains on track. Although the Council does not own housing stock of its own and doesn't make the decision about who is allocated a particular social housing property, we are responsible for establishing and maintaining the process for allocation, including the policy determining who among local people can gain access to social housing. Cabinet agreed a new policy and arrangements for the allocation of social housing in Herefordshire and will be working closely with the social housing providers to ensure the new arrangements can be implemented in the autumn. This month Cabinet approved the business case for a permanent extension of Marlbrook Primary Teaching School. The new building will provide improved facilities to support the expansion of this outstanding school

in a part of the city where additional primary school places are much needed. The project will also support transport access improvements reducing the disturbance to neighbours and improving safety for pedestrians. In the coming months Cabinet will be making important decisions regarding the future arrangements for library, museum and archive services in the county and regarding the preferred route for the long awaited Hereford Bypass. Cabinet will also be considering how the council can work collectively to continue to improve the way we work so that we can meet our corporate plan priority to secure better services, quality of life and value for money. We will be looking at our performance last year, the needs of the community as identified through Understanding Herefordshire, our joint strategic needs assessment, and the helpful recommendations from the recent Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge for what would help us to achieve more. Every elected member and every employee of the council contributes to the work we do, and I encourage you all to get involved in the discussions to shape our future. Lastly, we have recently confirmed that the sale of the council's smallholdings estate will net the council some £46m. This essential resource will be reinvested, in accordance with the medium term financial strategy agreed by Council in January, in the council and the county to support our economy and deliver greater returns for Herefordshire.

6.2 Councillor Ian Carr explained that over the past few months he and the Lengthsman have been working to improve the footpaths and rights of way. Balfour Beatty have replaced damaged signs on the road sides. New signage has been installed where signs were missing or damaged. Some signs still require correction or replacement and this work is in hand. Councillor Ian Carr asked that anyone experiencing problems with rights of way should contact him or the Parish Clerk.

6.3 The Tree Warden was not present but conveyed the message that there were no issues with trees at this time.

6.4 The Lengthsman was not present but the Clerk explained that the P3 Contract and the Lengthsman contract were both in place and we had used last year's surplus of the P3 grant to purchase signs and stiles for the rights of way.

6.5 Councillor Jeff Hughes detailed some of the issues which could affect our Parish in the coming year; financial restrictions on Herefordshire CC which would of course impact on all of us, traffic issues which have always been at the forefront of the Parish concerns and where inroads have been made thus far, planning matters, inadequate broadband, theft of tools and equipment from sheds and gardens and the increase in fly-tipping within the Parish. He asked that local people remain vigilant and if they see anything untoward or suspicious report it immediately to the police and the Parish Clerk so that steps can be taken to improve our community.

6.6. The Neighbourhood Development Plan is now at the formal examination stage. There have been some questions from the appointed examiner which have been easily answered. We are now waiting for the final report to be presented to Herefordshire Council. It is anticipated that the Parish referendum will take place in July. Councillor Tom Misselbrook reiterated the importance of voting in the referendum as the Neighbourhood Plan will carry weight when HCC are considering Planning Applications in our Parish.

7. Planning Matters

7.1 180237 – Land adjacent to Northcroft. The entrance to the proposed site has been amended by the applicant making it considerably safer. The developer has also proposed a footpath will be installed from the site to the crossroads. Although local feeling is that this

will be impossible given the room available, this is a problem for the developer and not the Parish Council. The other serious concern raised over this application was the disposal of waste water and the foul ditch running behind the property. This was brought to the attention of the Planning Authority by the Parish Council and the Planning Authority will take these points into consideration when making their decision. Councillor Jeff Hughes commented that there had not been many objections to this proposed development.

7.2 181584 – Land owned by Mr Fry at Newtown Cross. Councillor Jeff Hughes informed the meeting that the Parish Council has not yet submitted its comments to the Planning Authority but he confirmed that the Parish Council is not in favour of this development, for very much the same reasons as expressed for the original application. However, comments from tonight's meeting may add points which need to be raised. The Parish Council comments will be drafted and submitted following this meeting and it is hoped that by then the NDP will be past the examination stage – which in turn will give the NDP more weight with the Planning Authority. It is obvious there is very strong feeling amongst local people that this development should not be allowed to go ahead. Amongst the various objections are that the land has always been, and still is prone to flooding and there is already inadequate waste water disposal. The close proximity of the development to the main road is detrimental to road and pedestrian safety, the amenities outlined by the applicants agent are incorrect or non – existent. These include the public house (which no longer functions as such) the bus route which is far less frequent than implied and is used by school children leaving standing room only with the current bus users. The proposed green/play area is very close to the main road. The proposed development is on land that in previous years was a brick works which may have resulted in the land being contaminated. Councillor Jeff Hughes made the comment that anyone with objections to this, or any planning application, should make their own comments on the planning portal. Ward Councillor Jonathan Lester arrived at the meeting a little later on and reiterated that the main concerns with the proposed development are the suitability of the land as a development site, connectivity, safety and drainage. He explained that the more objections that were raised on the planning portal the more likely it was that he could intervene and request a special planning meeting where interested parties could make brief representation.

8. Update regarding Newtown Inn. Mr John Westwood came to the meeting to explain the intentions of the current owners of the property. The owners representative suggested that they had been told verbally by a Herefordshire Council representative that they could achieve change of use. Councillor Misselbrook informed the meeting that this has been investigated and refuted by Herefordshire Council. The change of use did not transpire and the end result is that the property is now the subject of an enforcement notice whereby the owners can only occupy the upstairs of the property. The property has been put back on the market but there has been little or no interest at the price asked. The owners now wish to apply for a change of use to residential status and as a matter of courtesy felt it would be sensible to air this proposal at the Parish Meeting. The feeling at the meeting was against the change of use. The main reasons given for the objection were that the community has lost a village pub and social meeting place and although the current owners have recently tried to sell the property, the price asked did not reflect the amount of work required to revert the property to a public house thus deterring potential purchasers. The other point raised was that the current owners purchased the property knowing it to be a licensed premises at a price which reflected that status and now wish to enhance the value of the property by change of use to residential status.

9. Ashperton NDP. Councillor Jeff Hughes pointed out that there was nothing within the Ashperton NDP that Yarkhill as a Parish needed to comment on. The Clerk confirmed she had responded to the Ashperton NDP group.
10. Parish Council Insurance Renewal. The Parish Clerk asked that the Councillors look through the quotations she had forwarded to them and confirm which option to renew.
11. Lengthsman and P3. The Parish Clerk confirmed that the Lengthsman contract and the P3 have been granted, although there is no grant for the Lengthsman for 2018/2019 but we have budgeted the same amount that we spent last year. The P3 grant has been approved and at this time the 2018/2019 amount is unused.
12. With regard to Data Protection the Parish Clerk recently attended a course on this subject and she will be posting the obligatory notice on the notice boards and before the deadline of 25th May. The notice will also appear in the next newsletter. As a small Parish the new Data Protection Act does not greatly affect us and we do not need to appoint a Data Protection Officer. The Parish Clerk will be happy to answer any questions or concerns from residents. It was also confirmed that the Parish Clerk should be copied in on any communications from Parish Councillors with regard to Parish business.
13. The 2017/2018 accounts have been prepared and the Councillors were handed a copy of the accounts. They are currently with the external auditor. As a small Parish we no longer have to go to the expense of employing an independent external auditor. The accounts will be published in the first newsletter following completion of the audit. It was also decided that in order to maintain complete transparency the Clerk would put together a resume of where the Parish Council money goes and how it benefits the community.
14. Covered in point 13.
15. Litter Picking. Councillor Tom Misselbrook expressed his disappointment at the lack of volunteers at the recent litter picking. He was in fact the only participant. We have now purchased our own litter picking equipment which is superior in quality to that provided by the HC. It was decided to advertise the litter picking more rigorously and more frequently and by way of posters in the Notice Boards.
16. Hereford Walking Festival. Councillor Ian Carr has agreed to provide tea and coffee for participants of this event. He has also had discussions with local people about arranging walks for the community. Anyone interested in this idea should contact either Councillor Ian Carr or the Parish Clerk.
17. Questions from the Floor. The question of Stokebridge Road was raised again and it was confirmed there have been 4 incidents on the road since Christmas. Some improvements have been made already but Ward Councillor Jonathan Lester informed the meeting that he had pointed out the unusually heavy use of the road by HGV vehicles and has suggested to Highways that they need to treat this C grade road as its usage dictates. This has been taken on board by Highways and we will await the results.
18. Payments made as follows:
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| 18.1 | Parish Clerk | £316.16 |
| 18.2 | Autela Group | £ 40.32 |
| 18.3 | Lengthsman | £360.00 |
| | Lengthsman | £809.28 |
19. Items for the next Agenda to be sent to the Parish Clerk by 29th June 2018
20. Date of the next meeting Tuesday 10th July 2018