

BISHOPSTONE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday 12th October 2022 at 7.00pm
in Stretton Sugwas Village Hall

“It was with great sadness that Bishopstone Group Parish Council acknowledged the recent death of her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and extended their sincere condolences”.

PRESENT: Cllr. J Macklin (Chairman); Cllr. R Morgan; Cllr L Goldwater; Cllr M Geary; Cllr. Muriel Holmes; Cllr S Crump and Cllr Sarah Keefe.

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs Lesley Hay (Parish Clerk)

Chairman welcomed those present to the October meeting.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr C Draper; Cllr. S. Knights; Cllr. L. Handscomb and Ward Councillor David Hitchiner.

2. To receive declarations of interest or written requests for dispensations. None declared.

3. Report from local Police Officer. No representative present. Emails circulated as received.

4. Ward Councillor's Report

Herefordshire Council Leader's report will be circulated when available.

Re: Children's Services – Ofsted Report – email circulated.

OFSTED published their report on the Council's Children's Services which identified that the local authority is inadequate in all aspects of the service.

The Secretary of State for Education has issued a statutory declaration appointing a commissioner to review the service and report in three months on the actions the department should take.

An Extraordinary Full Council Meeting was held on Friday 30 September regarding the Ofsted Report. The full report can be viewed online at: <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50192875>

The Council is already working hard to put things right and it is hoped that the improvements really make a difference for families, children and young people living in Herefordshire.

4.1 Open Session – no issues raised

4.2 Chairman closed the open session

5. Chairman's report

I was sorry to hear Kevin Smith had resigned as Councillor representing Kenchester, Kevin always made a positive input to all the Parish Council decision making, during the time he was a Councillor and on behalf of the Parish Council I wish him all the best in the future.

I have had three enquires from Parishioners and a Councillor since the last PC meeting, firstly a resident living on Church Lane Bishopstone rang to say a road closed notice had appeared at the end of the road. I made contact with the Locality Stewart who found out that Herefordshire Council had appointed Owen Pell to carry out road repairs. I passed on this info to those concerned. A resident from Bishopstone made a complaint that the footpath BN8 to Bishon Common had become overgrown, I contacted the Lengthsman to ask him to cut back the undergrowth next time he was in the parish. This he carried out along with cutting Kenchester triangle on 26th September.

Kenchester Councillor Serena Crump rang in regard to an email she had received from a house owner who lives at the bottom of Kenchester Lane, the house owner had several issues in regards to household waste bins and other matters with a request it should be discussed by the Parish Council at our next meeting. I have looked at the boundaries on the parish and ward map it shows both of these properties fall outside our boundaries and are within Brinsop Parish.

Clerk asked to liaise with resident.

I confirm the Defibrillator is checked regularly and all in working order.

John Macklin - Chairman

6. To consider Delegated Powers for the clerk:

The Clerk clarified issues concerning "Delegated Powers": "Section 101 (of the Local Government Act 1972) allows a council to delegate the power to make decisions to an officer. Standing orders may require decisions to be taken after consultation with two councillors (including the Chairman) but the decision remains with the officer. Most importantly, the council must not allow delegation to a single councillor not even to the Chairman. Ideally, all financial transactions should be reviewed and approved by full council, for which they've had 3 clear days to consider their payment. When this is not possible:

6.1. Delegated powers to allow the clerk, working within budget, to make those payments as and when necessary. Resolved unanimously.

6.2. Delegated power to allow the clerk to comment on planning applications when necessary. Resolved unanimously.

6.3 Delegated powers to liaise with the lengthsman as and when necessary. Resolved unanimously.

7. To consider adopting the following circulated revised policies:

7.1 Amended Standing Orders – copies had been circulated and were adopted

7.2 Revised Financial Regulations 2020 – copies had been circulated and were adopted

7.3 Risk Assessment schedule – to be further discussed – deferred to next meeting.

Copies of these amended official policies are available on the website.

8. New Bridge Community Centre – letter circulated

The Parish Council had received a letter from Bridge Sollars PCC dated August 2022 with regard to the possibility of using the space within the church for meetings; events etc. Within discussion, it was acknowledged that addressing the heating of the building was top priority

before the facilities could be offered for hire. However, it was agreed that if the facilities were opened early next year – then the Parish Council would consider holding their meetings in the church as a show of support.

9. Planning:

9.1 No 221822 Stoke Lea – circulated – after discussion – no objection raised.

9.2 Planning Consultation - 222763 - Former Lord Nelson Inn, Lord Nelson Antiques Centre, Bridge Sollars, Herefordshire, HR4 7JN – after discussion – no objection raised.

10. To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 13th July 2022. It was unanimously agreed that these were a true record and voted they be adopted and signed by the Chairman.

11. Highways and Environmental Matters:

11.1 Footpath Officer Reports:

11.1.1 KT1 - there is a new stile erected.

11.1.2 BS1 – there is a fallen gate – Chairman will do site visit.

Cllr M Holmes reported that she had attended a Parish Footpath Officers meeting - called by the Herefordshire Council Highways Team - to update on the recent changes in managing the PRow service and to engage in taking the service forward, understanding what HC and the PFO can do to enhance the service.

The meeting was held at the Town Hall in Hereford on Wednesday, 28th September 2022. A report outlining details of the meeting will be available but not received as yet.

11.2 Village maps – the clerk distributed boundary maps for each parish.

11.3 Byford Common – footpath signage – see recent email received:

Would it be possible for the parish council to do something about the signs on BY31? There is no clear sign when entering the footpath from the Byford Common end, a sign (falling off) on the field gate from the sheep field into the paddock (which isn't on the ROW) no sign on either side of the kissing gate (which is on the ROW) and the kissing gate is hidden by overhanging foliage so people don't notice it. If the route is clearly signed it will be easier for people to walk and also for land owner to know where to put (or not put) his electric fences. across his paddock.

Cllrs Geary and Holmes confirmed they had done a site visit.

This email was discussed at length and it was agreed that the land owner does try to keep a right of way open at all times and he does offer alternative routes. To keep a watching brief.

11.4 Update on proposed grant-funded drainage work – work to go ahead within the budget of £4333 but D C Gardening to come back to the meeting if there were still urgent issues – the Parish Councillors would then consider topping up the grant.

11.5 Jubilee trees – there are approximately 30 varieties of healthy trees – some of which could be planted out this Autumn, others would benefit from waiting another year in situ. Cllr Lewis Goldwater will liaise with Cllr Holmes and all Councillors to consider areas where these may be planted and bring back suggestions to the next meeting.

11.6 Bus Stop – Byford. Cllr Geary is liaising directly with the bus company. No further action required from the Parish Council.

11.7 Signage indicating no access to cross the river. This issue was discussed and it was agreed to ask the Locality Steward to come and meet Chairman and Byford Councillors to discuss this in more detail. Clerk to liaise with Locality Steward.

11.8 Update on A438 speed limit restrictions – deferred to next meeting.

12. Finance: Schedule of payment sheet (circulated). Account's sheet (circulated)

12.1 Agree payment of outstanding invoices. It was unanimously agreed to pay all outstanding invoices for September and October.

12.3 The clerk will prepare the budget figures for 2023-2024 and these will be discussed at the next meeting with a view to adopting and submitting a precept request before the end of December.

13. Processes to be considered following HALC training:

13.1 It was agreed all Parish Council Business to go through the Clerk

13.2. It was agreed to creating Working Groups when necessary.

13.3 Consider business signatures – discussed but a decision was deferred.

13.4 The Chairman will be the spokesperson on behalf of the Parish Council.

13.5 Participatory budgeting - after discussion it was unanimously agreed not to go ahead with this scheme during this financial year.

13.6 The Clerk has drawn up a draft risk register which had been circulated. It was agreed to review at the next meeting.

14. To consider a .gov website (HALC and SLCC requesting urgent attention to:

14.1. After discussion it was unanimously agreed to change the current website to a .gov website. Clerk to liaise with HALC who will liaise with Mark Millmore. Mark Millmore to liaise with Cllr Keefe who manages the current website.

14.2. Consideration to the provision of .gov emails for all Cllrs and Clerk. It was agreed that the clerk should have a .gov.uk email address but the Councillors voted not to have personal .gov. uk email addresses at this time.

15. Neighbourhood Development Plan

The current Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in 2019 and since that time has been reviewed on one occasion. As this review was some time ago, it was suggested the Councillors again revisit the current Plan to familiarise themselves with the content. The Chairman will speak with S Hubbard to ask whether she would be prepared to give advice – if Councillors have any questions at this time – and if she would be prepared to act as consultant when the plan needs to be reviewed. However, it unanimously agreed not proceed with any serious review at this stage but to wait for the Herefordshire Local Plan to be finalised and published.

16. Date of next Parish Council meeting:

Wednesday 9th November 2022 – 7.00pm in the Stretton Sugwas Village Hall

Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45p.m.

Signed:

Date: