

BISHOPSTONE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday 12th July 2023 at 7.00p.m.
in Stretton Sugwas Village Hall

PRESENT: Cllr. J Macklin (Chairman); Cllr. R Morgan; Cllr L Goldwater; Cllr. S. Knights; Cllr. M. Holmes; Cllr S. Keefe; Cllr D Hadley and Cllr S Crump.

ALSO PRESENT:

Ward Councillor David Hitchiner; Mrs Lesley Hay (Parish Clerk)

Chairman welcomed those present to the July meeting.

1. Apologies for absence were received from a Cllr. L. Handscomb and Cllr C Draper.

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

2.1 The Clerk explained that following a request to include the Declaration of Interest (DoI) forms on the Bishopstone Group Parish Council Parish Council site as well as the Herefordshire Council site - HALC have now suggested that the Parish Council websites provide a link to the Herefordshire Website – this will fulfil the legal requirement and will prevent duplication and/or conflicting information. The Clerk confirmed that a link was now available on the Bishopstone PC website. However, the Clerk did point out that some of the information currently available on the Herefordshire website is out of date but hopefully this site will soon be updated and will display the newly elected Parish Councillors Declaration of Interest forms.

3. Ward Councillor's Report.

The local Ward Councillor David Hitchiner thanked the electorate for re-electing him for another four years. It was noted that he was no longer Leader of the Council but was Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee and a member of the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee. .

Ward Councillor commented on the recommendations to be put to Cabinet cancelling the library move to Maylords which he did not support.

Ward Councillor also reported that Natalie Jay was now the Locality Steward. He would liaise with the Chair with a view to meeting with her in Byford to discuss drainage issues.

Ward Councillor Hitchiner referred to the TRO outside the former Lord Nelson pub on the A438 which, despite previous requests to BBLP, had not been phased with the recent dressing of the road surface.

TRO A438 – Cllr S Knights asked why the TRO work is not planned to be done at the same time as the resurfacing work - as part of the resurfacing work will involve repainting the road markings. If the TRO work is not done at the same time then surely this is duplicating work and wasting public money at a time when the council is looking to save money.

Ward Cllr Hitchiner said he would again take the query forward to Tracy Morriss - Stakeholder Manager Balfour Beatty Living Places Herefordshire and report back to the Council.

3.1 Open Session

The Clerk referred to items outlined in the recent HALC Information Sheet.

HARD COPY MINUTES. Parish Councils are being urged to maintain folders of hard copy signed minutes for the benefit of future generations. Whilst documents are currently viewed via websites, nothing beats the actual hard copy for future legal disputes or historical record. To ensure the safety of signed minutes, is for the Clerk to retain hard copies going back five years and deposit those from six years ago and beyond in the local records office (HARC) at Rotherwas. HARC will give you a receipt for all minute books/folders and financial books. Anyone may view these records at HARC and they will enable photocopies to be made.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS. The current Model Financial Regulations are about to be totally revised and a consultation document is scheduled to go out at the end of this month, with an end date of 27th October, to enable all PCs to comment at their September parish council meetings. The revised document will take into account all comments received and will be in place for the next four to five years. Clarification will be forthcoming on procurement, data protection and delegation to officers, amongst many other aspects

CO-OPTION. Herefordshire Council has introduced a new online form for clerks to notify them of a co-option. The Clerk confirmed she has this template but had confirmed with the Elections Officer that Declaration of Interest forms still need to be as a paper copy and sent to the Monitoring Officer at Plough Lane.

3.3 Close Open session

4. Chairman's Report

The last couple of Months have been relatively quiet, the Parish council received 2 planning applications relating to our parishes which will be discussed at this meeting.

Councillor Holmes contacted me on Sunday 18th June to report flash flooding outside Downhill House Bishopstone that made the highway impassable, on inspection the next morning we discovered that the gully drains and pits were blocked with mud, Councillor Holmes her spouse and a local resident cleaned out the pits, it was agreed that the Parish Council should ask the Lengthsman to add inspecting and cleaning these drains to his regular maintenance plan.

John Macklin

5. Finance: Schedule of payment sheet (circulated).

5.1 It was unanimously agreed to pay all outstanding invoices.

BISHOPSTONE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL
Schedule of Payments Date: June 23

PAYABLE TO	FOR	GROSS AMOUNT £	VAT £	NET AMOUNT £
Lesley Hay	Clerk's salary – June 23	As per contract		As per contract
PAYE	PAYE – June23	£70.00		£70.00
Expenses	June Expenses	£17.00	£2.42	£14.58
D C Gardening	June lengthsman	£235.20	£39.20	£196.00

The Clerk confirmed that the External Auditor has acknowledged receipt of the Accounts.

6. Correspondence

6.1. Police reports are circulated as received.

6.2. The Clerk explained that in future Parish Council clerks have been informed by the Elections Officer that, following the notification of a casual vacancy in the parish ward, they complete a "Notice of Vacancy" template online. This is then emailed to the Elections Officer who, in turn, will confirm the dates etc and email back and then the Notice can be displayed. This will save time and mean vacancies can be filled quicker.

7. To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Annual Council Meeting held on Wednesday 17th May 2023. The Clerk highlighted a small amendment to item 7.1. Whilst Cllr S Crump is very willing to offer support - it is Cllr D Hadley who is the officially elected Footpath Officer. With this amendment noted, it was then agreed that the minutes were a true record and unanimously voted they be adopted and signed by the Charman.

8. Highways and Environmental Matters:

Ward Councillor Hitchiner explained that Bishopstone Group now have a new Locality Steward – Natalie Jay. The Clerk will write to welcome Natalie as Bishopstone Group's Locality Steward.

8.1 Footpath Officer Reports – Kenchester KT1. The steps at the Credenhill end of this footpath are in need of attention – it was agreed the Chairman would liaise with the Locality Steward. Ward Cllr Hitchiner explained that he had a meeting with the new Locality Steward provisionally booked for the 26th July and he would see if they could link in Byford/Bishopstone. Ward Cllr Hitchiner will report back.

The reflective bollards at the bottom of these steps have been damaged and need replacing – the clerk will report to the PRoW Team – Crispin Abel.

8.2 Lengthsman Scheme 2023-2024 – Declaration of Interest has been submitted and acknowledged.

After discussion it was agreed to sign the Contract between Herefordshire Council /Balfour Beatty and Bishopstone Group Parish Council which would support match funding for 2023-24.

8.3 Lengthsman's insurance cover – the required cover to support this Contract of £5m is in place - certificate on file.

8.3 Milepost/stones - Cllr L Goldwater queried who cleans/preserves the old/ancient milestone markers. The Clerk will ask the lengthsman what happens in other parishes and report back.

9. Planning application – 231817 – Mansell Gamage – proposed garage and new access to include change of use of land to residential garden.

Cllr L Goldwater had prepared a very detail response to this planning application which had been circulated prior to the meeting. After discussion, it was unanimously agreed to submit this in full under the heading 'objection in its current form'.

Planning application – 231821 – The Yard, Land at the rear of plot 1 to 3 Byford Common – propose change of use of agricultural land to residential use of three dwellings.

Unfortunately, prior to the meeting, full details of this application were not available on the Planning website.

It was agreed that Councillors, would look at the full application (when available) and if they had a comment they would circulate. If the Clerk had received no notifications within 24 hours – it was unanimously agreed to make no comment.

10. Making space for Nature in our Parish – all well – nothing to report.

11. Items for the Next Agenda (no discussion).

12. Date of the Next Parish Council Meeting as Wednesday 20th September 2023.

To be confirmed - David Bailey and his Colleagues, Iain Carter, Countryside Manager and Anna Watts, Estate Manager, both work for the National Trust in Herefordshire - they are to talk about their plans for The Weir. This will be an Open meeting with refreshments. It was acknowledged that this is likely to be a lengthy meeting and the Clerk will review the agenda nearer the time as it might be necessary to reschedule the Parish Council meeting.

Chairman closed the meeting at 8.10p.m.

Signed:

Date