

BISHOPSTONE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday 20th September 2023 at 7.00p.m.
in Stretton Sugwas Village Hall

Web site address: bishopstonegrouppc-herefordshire.co.uk

PRESENT: Cllr. J Macklin (Chairman); Cllr. R Morgan; Cllr. M. Holmes; Cllr D Hadley and Cllr. L. Handscomb.

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs Lesley Hay (Parish Clerk)

Chairman welcomed those present to the September meeting. No members of the public present.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr S. Keefe; Cllr C Draper; Cllr L Goldwater; Cllr S Crump and Ward Councillor David Hitchiner.

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 website as well as the Herefordshire Council site - HALC are currently in dispute with Herefordshire Council regarding this issue.

In the meantime, the Clerk confirmed that a link is now available on the Bishopstone Group PC website referring the general public to the Herefordshire Council website (which is a legal requirement) but there is also a full list of Declaration of Interest forms available on the Bishopstone Parish website.

3. Ward Councillor's Report – apologies received. No report available.

3.1 Open Session

Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Grant (LEVI). An email had been received and circulated with regard to rolling out an Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure across Herefordshire with the focus on provision for those residents with no -off-street parking. After discussion, it was unanimously agreed that this was not an option that would be of benefit to the Bishopstone Group parishes at this time.

Resignation – Cllr Sharon Knights had sent in her resignation due to a move of house. The Clerk confirmed that she had notified the Election Officer and Vacancy Notices were now displayed on the Notice Boards and website.

Website address – the clerk quoted a note from the External Auditor:

We would like to draw your attention to a change within the Practitioners' Guide 2023 which is mandatory for the 2023/24 period. Paragraph 1.26 relates to the requirements in relation to Assertion 3 and states 'Email management - every authority should have an email account that belongs to the council and to which the council has access – this ideally would be a .gov.uk or .org.uk address or could be an address linked to the council website.' In order to answer yes to Assertion 3 in the 2023/24 Annual Governance Statement the local authority should ensure that it has an email address that complies with this requirement and if it does not already it should do so urgently.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that they had applied for a .gov.uk email address but, unfortunately, HALC had issued one with an incorrect address. The Clerk was asked to approach HALC and Mark Millmore (website co-ordinator) with a request for a new website with the address: – bishopstonegroupherefordpc.gov.uk.

3.2 The Chairman closed the Open session

4. Chairman's Report

I was sorry to receive Councillors Sharon Knight's resignation letter due to her moving out of the area, on behalf of the Parish Council I would like to thank her for representing Bridge Sollars and for her work for the parishioners especially in regard to obtaining a 40mph speed limit on the A438 Sharon served as a Councillor for many years over two periods representing both Bishopstone and Bridge Sollars We wish her all the best for the future.

I had a meeting with the lengthsman on July 19th to look at the issues raised at the last Parish Council meeting, the road surface and water damage on the U90012 by Byford Church is too big a job for him to tackle, it would need a investigative hole dug into the road and resurfacing work afterwards. He recommended contacting Balfour Beatty. The steps at Credenhill bridge is in his opinion in a safe condition although

the top rail on the style is missing it is easy to use, although the steps would be slippery in wet conditions.

A meeting was held at Byford on 26th July with locality Steward, Ward Councillor David Hitchiner, councillors David Hadley and Muriel Homes regarding the water problem, after a long discussion and inspecting the road surface it was decided it would be best to try and find the source of the water and stop this before carrying out repairs to the road, we looked at a well in the neighbouring property, the locality steward offered to test this water to see if it matched the road water, we await a report.

In regards to the spelling of Bridge Sollars around 20 years ago the Parish Council voted to use an A in the spelling, Herefordshire Council at the time would not use this form of spelling because the O/S map used an E. A local parishioner has carried out a historic search on the spelling and over many centuries the spelling has been used in both ways roughly half and half on all historic documents.

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

5.1 It was unanimously agreed to pay all outstanding invoices.

BISHOPSTONE AND GROUP PARISH COUNCIL
Schedule of Payments Required Date: August 23

PAYABLE TO	FOR	GROSS AMOUNT £	VAT £	NET AMOUNT £
Lesley Hay	Clerk's salary –	As per contract		As per contract
PAYE	PAYE	£70.00		£70.00
Expenses	Expenses	£18.75	£2.84	£15.91
Norton Security	Annual Norton security £100 divide by 4	£25.00		£25.00
D C Gardening	Lengthsman	£355.20	£59.20	£296.00

The Clerk confirm that the External Auditor have issues the Certificate of Exception. The Clerk confirmed that she will be arranging the 6 month internal audit at the end of September which will be in keeping with the Financial Regulations.

6. Correspondence

6.1. Police reports are circulated as received.

6.2 Following discussion regarding the correct Bridge Sollars (Sollers). Councillors had individually researched this and historically both spellings have been used but the legal document according to the Ordnance Survey data refers to the spelling as Bridge Sollers.

7. To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on

Wednesday 12th July 2023. 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:

8.1 Footpath Officer Reports – Kenchester KT1. The stile at the Credenhill end of this footpath is in need of attention and the briars need to be cut back – it was agreed the Clerk would liaise with the lengthsman.

The sign post the Kenchester end of the KT1 needs urgent attention as it has been damaged beyond repair. Cllr Hadley will obtain quotes for a replacement wooden figure pointer and post and will bring costings back to the next meeting. If agreed – this will be ordered and the lengthsman asked to erect.

Cllr Hadley reported a health and safety issue on the junction of the C1097 and C1099 – the direction sign pointers have been turned and are now pointing in the wrong direction. The post itself maybe in need of repair/replacing as it is rusty and very unstable. The Clerk will, in the first instance, liaise with the lengthsman but it maybe this will have to be reported to Balfour Beatty with a request for a complete replacement.

Following the resignation of Cllr Sharon Knights, Cllr Rosemary Morgan very kindly offered to monitor the Bridge Sollers footpaths until a new Councillor is elected.

8.2 The Clerk confirm that the application for match funding for this financial year 2023-2024 had been accepted.

It was agreed that the Chairman and D C Gardening would meet to plan possible drainage/ditching/lengthsman work to be covered by the £2044.00 (Balfour Beatty) x £2044.00 (Herefordshire Council) match funding. The Clerk reminded Councillors that the Parish Council would have to spend at least £2044.00 from their 2023-2024 Budget/Precept to be eligible to claim the match funding.

8.3 Sand Bags – Chairman will check current stock and Cllr Hadley offered to liaise with the residents of Bridge House, Kenchester to ask if they would like a delivery (a pallet is 50 bags) and if they have indoor storage facilities. Item to remain on the agenda for next meeting.

9. Planning application – The Old Nelson, Bridge Sollers, Hereford HR4 7JN.

An email had been received with regard to an application regarding Licensable Activities - Sale/Supply of Alcohol (consumption on and off premises). After discussion, it was unanimously agreed to support this application.

Further to a recent email received with regard to – National Effort to Protect Neighbourhood Development Plans - (circulated). It was agreed that the clerk would write to the Sir William Cash – expressing their total support for protecting Neighbourhood Development Plans and their concerns with regard to the issues raised by Chris Knight with regard to a housing development in Staffordshire that is in direct contravention to their 'made' NDP (Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston and Whitmore NDP) and a decision whereby the inspection effectively nullified the existing NDP.

Planning Application 232598 – Changing Rooms at Roman Park Playing Fields – after discussion, it was unanimously agreed to make a comment of – no objection.

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

11. Items for the Next Agenda (no discussion). Sand Bags. Possible co-option of Parish Councillor representing Bridge Sollers.

12. Date of the Next Parish Council Meeting as Wednesday 8th November 2023.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that this will be the budget/precept setting meeting for 2024- 2025. The Clerk will circulate provisional figures prior to the meeting.

Chairman closed the meeting at 8.10p.m.

Signed:

Date