Walford Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting of Walford Parish Council

Held at Bishopswood Village Hall
Wednesday 15 January 2020 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: Monica van Lienden (Chair), Joanne Akers, Simeon Cole, Eric Drummond, Heather Evans, Bob Puzey, Guy Smith
In attendance: Richard Abolins (Parish Clerk) and 6 members of the public.

1. **Apologies: -** Councillors Karen Chinn (family engagement), Ruth Dolman, (leave), Elizabeth Jordan (other engagement), Sian Newbert (other engagement),

2. **Declaration of interests:** – none

3. (error on agenda – no item 3)

4. Adoption of Minutes of previous meetings:
It was **resolved** to adopt the minutes of the meeting on 18 December 2019 as a true record of the meeting. The Chair signed the minutes.

5. Public participation session:
5.1 A member of the public asked if item 15, Howle Hill War Memorial, could be moved up the agenda. The Chair saw no problem with this, and it was agreed to take this item next.
Another member of the public wished to draw attention to the Council the dangerous state of the road in Deep Dean. The passage of commercial and agricultural vehicles had effectively narrowed the road and the deep ditches at either side made it hazardous. The problem had been exacerbated in recent weeks with the amount of rainfall. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the Locality Steward to set up a site meeting. **Action – Clerk**

15. Howle Hill War Memorial: - it was **resolved** to contact Herefordshire Council to request an asset transfer of the memorial site. **Action – Clerk**

6. Planning: -
6.1 The summary of planning applications was noted.

7. Highways and footpaths: -
7.1 The drainage on Howle Hill was being attended to and the Ward Councillor was approaching Herefordshire Council to obtain a maintenance grant.
7.2 The Rights of Way Officer was concerned that she couldn't get a response from the Locality Steward for any issues that she was raising. The Clark was asked to make contact and establish how communications should be handled. **Action – Clerk**
A specific issue for clarification was who was qualified to erect finger posts – the lengthsman or Balfour Beatty **Action – Clerk**
A complaint had been received that horses were being ridden on footpaths and, in this extremely wet weather, turning them into a quagmire. It was felt that most experiences riders would not do this, but word would be passed around the horse riders. Additionally, it was suggested that a horse riders' Facebook page might help spread the word.
7.3 Following discussion about the quality and ownership of grit bins in the parish, the Clerk was asked to ask Balfour Beatty for a schedule of all grit bins. Only when that was established could the Council begin to ascertain what was required going forward. **Action – Clerk**

8. **Finance: -** The draft budget had been circulated prior to the meeting and the Finance Committee recommended that the precept be increased by 5%. It was unclear whether the potential Smartwater project would need to be included but recommended that any changes to the budget and precept should be finalised in the February meeting**.** It was **resolved** to accept these recommendations.

9. **Neighbourhood Development Plan steering group:**

9.1 There were no questions on the update reports.

9.2 There were no questions on the Core Strategy meeting report. The following recommendations were considered.

9.2.1 It was **resolved** to ask the steering group to draft a response to the Herefordshire Council questionnaire for approval by the Council.

9.2.2 It was **resolved** to ask the steering group to continue to attend Core Strategy briefings

9.2.3 It was noted that the NDP may need to be reviewed on a biennial basis.

9.3 It was **resolved** to appoint Leigh Russell to the steering group as financial controller

9.4 It was **resolved** to approve seeking confirmation that previously offered development sites are still available

9.5 It was **resolved** to approve publicising that further offers of potential development sites will be accepted until the end of February

9.6 It was noted that the Steering Group is actively seeking new contributors and the Community Engagement working group were asked to help publicising this.

Action – Community Engagement working group

10. **WCSS working group: -**

10.1 There were no questions on the update report.

10.2 The current thinking was that the hours required for the role of co-ordinator could be reduced by 25%. A meeting was being arranged with the scheme volunteers to draw up a job requirement and this would lead into a recruitment strategy.

11. **Community engagement working group: -**

11.1 There were no questions on the update report.

11.2 There were two vacancies on the working group and Facebook skills were being sought. Cllrs van Lienden and Cole put themselves forward and it was **resolved** to appoint them to the working group.

11.3 It was **resolved** to approve re-starting administration of the Facebook page.

12. **Safety working group: -**

12.1 The deadlines for the Smartwater project need to be established in time for approval of the final budget in February.
The group is planning to meet in the Kerne Bridge car park to look at safety requirements before making recommendations to the Council.

12.2 The appointment of Cllr Newbert as co-ordinator was noted.

12.3 Cllr Akers put herself forward to fill a vacancy on the group and it was **resolved** to appoint her to the working group

13. Environmental working group: -

13.1 There were no questions on the update report.
13.2 It was **resolved** to increase the number on the working group to 8.
13.3 It was **resolved** to approve the appointment of Cllr Evans and Bridget Vine to the working group
13.4 Whilst acknowledging the need to maintain visibility at junctions and narrow stretches of road, it was **resolved** to accept one cut a year for verges.

14. **Working group meeting locations: -** Where working group meetings were open to the public, several councillors were uneasy with holding meetings in private residences. With the cost of room hire being relatively inexpensive and in the spirit of transparency, it was **resolved** to continue holding all meetings in public rooms.

16. **Items for next meeting agenda: -**

16.1 Budget and precept 2020/21
16.2 To receive recommendations for SmartWater scheme
16.3 To receive recommendations for Kerne Bridge toilets
16.4 To consider the state of noticeboards around the parish.

17. **Next meeting: -** Wednesday 19 February 2020 at 7.30pm in Bishopswood Village Hal

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:48.

SIGNED Monica van Lienden DATE 27 February 2020

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