WALFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Walford Parish Council

Held on Wednesday 28th June 2023, 7:30pm
At The Inn on the Wye

Present: Councillors Akers - Chair, Evans, Vine, Petersen, Berry, Terry, Corbett, Cole Simeon, Cole Sandra, Llewellyn, Barnett, Barley, Warburg.

In attendance: N Richmond (Clerk), and members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence:** None received.

2. **Written requests for dispensation and Declarations of interests:**
Declarations of interest were made as follows:
Cllr Simeon Cole Agenda items 10.2 WA50 pecuniary
Cllr Sandra Cole Agenda item 10.2 WA50 pecuniary
No requests for dispensation were received.

3. **To consider minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 17th May 2023.**
The clerk advised that the minutes having been received from Lynda Wilcox three e-mails had been forwarded to her suggesting amendments. The amended minutes have not yet been received and the clerk cannot amend them himself as he was not present at the meeting and they are not his minutes. Cllr Akers asked that it be reported to Lynda that the delays are not acceptable.

4. **Public participation session:**
4.1 No representative from West Mercia Police was present so there was no update.
4.2 Ward Councillor Cole advised that technical problems had prevented him from issuing a report but he would do so soon.
4.3 Reports from the Locality Steward had been circulated.
4.4 Public participation session: three (3) minute limit per person (15 minutes maximum)
Several members of the public wished to speak. The first was Chris Barron who handed a letter of complaint to the clerk and chairman concerning work carried out by the parish lengthsman at Sharman's Pitch on 1st June which he considers endangers his property to flooding. He explained the circumstances and said that he wanted an apology and reversal of the work that had been carried out. Cllr Akers said that his letter would be circulated to councillors and investigated for reporting back to the next meeting.
The next to speak was Tim Miller who spoke in support of council applying for a premises licence to sell alcohol at KBCL. He congratulated Riversea Holdings for the conduct of the mobile bar during the coronation weekend and for the 'clean bill of health' following the recent completion of the performance management checklist.
Following this Grahame Morgan-Watson spoke against the idea of council applying for the premises licence on the basis that it is inappropriate for council to sanction the mixing of canoe activities with alcohol, that there was no financial benefit to council, and would cause disturbance to neighbours. He further said that if it did go ahead all the designated dates should be known in advance, any TENS should be at Riversea Holdings expense, and that council should charge a £30 fee for each day the mobile bar was used. He added also that the RPI method of calculating the management fees should not be changed to CPI to the benefit of Riversea Holdings,
Bob Puzey then spoke in support of a council application for a premises licence. He referred to a letter containing 82 signatures in support of the mobile bar, which would be of benefit to the local community outside of normal canoe business hours. He suggested that a long term development plan be drawn up to preserve the nature of the KBCL site.
Guy Smith then spoke asking if it was morally right for council to serve alcohol to people swimming in the river. He said that people had been there until 1am when residents should be entitled to peace and quiet.
Rosemarie Morgan-Watson spoke requesting clarity and openness over the premises licence, enquiring if the licence would be for regular or one-off occasions, that a fee should be charged in lieu of a share of the alcohol receipts and that council should ensure that all liabilities were covered.
James Haden spoke in support of the premises licence application, saying that little noise came from the site in fact more noise came from the road and wildlife, that he considered that no adverse effects had occurred from the coronation weekend opening of the bar, just positive involvement of the community.
Sian Green commented that the nearest residents to the site had not been approached to sign the letter

mentioned by Bob Puzey and that it was therefore unrepresentative.
Charlie Baker of Riversea Holdings was asked to comment by the chairman. He said that Riversea Holdings contributes in excess of £10k annually to the council, that someone swimming at the time the mobile bar was open had no connection with the bar, and encouraged local residents to come and talk to him over any concerns about how the site was run.
Cllr Akers pointed out that several recent e-mails concerning the mobile bar had been circulated to councillors, and suggested that agenda item 8.6 be considered now in view of the number of contributors that had spoken in the open forum on this subject. This proposal was agreed.

8.6 **To consider applying for a~~n annual alcohol~~ premises licence to allow council to approve applications by Riversea Holdings to operate a mobile bar for a maximum of 28 days annually between 2pm and 8pm only.**
Cllr Simeon Cole explained that due to capacity constraints at Herefordshire Council applications for TENS (Temporary Event Notices) could not always be granted in time, leading to the suggestion from HC that parish council applies for a premises licence to sell alcohol allowing for a maximum of 28 days in any given year when a mobile bar may be operated (above 28 days requiring full planning permission). Cllr Akers advised that council would have full control of when those days were, as Riversea Holdings would have to apply to council for permission each month they wished to operate the mobile bar. Cllr Terry suggested that, given the divergence of opinion the matter might be resolved by a poll of residents. Cllr Berry countered this by saying that councillors were voted on to the council to make decisions on such matters taking all opinions into account. Cllr Akers advised that the agenda item was only to consider applying for a licence not how it would be controlled. Cllr Vine asked if it was known what the cost of applying was. This was not known although Cllr Simeon Cole advised that a 'pre-app' was in the region of £190. It appears in any case that Riversea Holdings would re-imburse council for the cost of the licence, and it was confirmed that a personal licence to sell alcohol was held by Charlie's partner Boo. Cllr Warburg suggested that a 'pre-app' was not necessary and council should go straight for a premises licence. It was proposed by Cllr Simeon Cole that council applies for the licence. This was seconded by Cllr Llewellyn and a vote was taken, 9 voting in favour with 4 against so the proposal was **AGREED.**
Cllr Akers advised that Riversea Holdings should submit a proposal containing dates of operation, a risk assessment, evidence of insurance cover specifically covering the sale of alcohol and the general management of the operation.

5. **To appoint representatives to the Community Engagement Working Group.**
Cllr Akers advised that the main purpose of the group was the production of the parish newsletter keeping parishioners informed of actions undertaken by council, and she asked for volunteers to join the group with her. No councillor volunteered nor any member of the public.

6. **To appoint a Resilience Co-ordinator and a Facebook Administrator.**
Cllr Akers suggested that the previous Resilience Co-ordinator Cllr Petersen continue in this role. He agreed to do so on the understanding that Cllr Berry would support him particularly with the admin side of the role which Cllr Berry agreed to. Cllr Akers then asked Cllr Llewellyn being the youngest if she would administer the facebook page. She agreed to do so provided the information given to her was correct.

7. Finance:

7.1 **To consider and approve the payments on Appendix A.**
Cllr Berry suggested that item 7;4 be taken first as it might affect approval of the payments which was agreed.

7.4. **To receive a report from Cllr Berry concerning the PKF Littlejohn AGAR investigation charges.**
The report having been circulated Cllr Berry advised that he had looked at the breakdown of the 35.8 hours worked by PKF and found no reason to dispute them. Cllr Cole made the point that Lynda Wilcox had offered to 'sort the matter out' and Cllr Terry thought that not all the relevant information was available. The clerk advised that the breakdown had been circulated to all councillors in January but no-one had picked up on it. Cllr Berry proposed that council should now negotiate a reduction in the total charges as the £355 per hour charged should apply only to the lead investigator and the senior manager hours should be charged at £210 per hour resulting in a reduction of £ 3,500 which if agreed by PKF should then be paid. This was seconded by Cllr Akers and voted on 7 in favour, 5 against and one abstention so was **CARRIED.**

JA

7.1 As a result of the agreed negotiation with PKF Littlejohn it was proposed by Cllr Berry that the balances of their invoices not be paid and the two remaining invoices (to Adrian Hope Tree Services and Metric) be paid. This was seconded by Cllr Terry and agreed unanimously. Cllr Evans pointed out that the cost of the Ash tree invoice would be offset when the resulting wood was sold.

7.2 The year to date accounts were noted. No questions arose.

7.3 The AGAR sections 1 & 2 were approved and signed by the clerk and the chairman. The dates for the exercise of public rights were agreed as 30th June to 14th August.

7.5 It was proposed by Cllr Cole that two authorisations be required for payments created by the clerk on the Unity Trust bank account. This was seconded by Cllr Barnett and all voted in favour.

7.6 The new bank mandate was signed.

7.7 Cllr Terry advised that RPI was no longer considered a valid method of measuring inflation, and that the Government had moved to CPI and would phase out RPI by 2030, and he proposed that council moved to CPI in the calculation of the annual management fees charged to Riversea Holdings Ltd in respect of KBCL. This was seconded by Cllr Cole and all voted in favour. It was agreed that Cllr Berry would draw up an amended contract.

8. **Kerne Bridge Canoe Launch: To receive written reports and consider actions.**

8.1 KBCL Maintenance Co-ordinator.
Cllr Petersen reported that the willow revetment work was performing well and that Cllr Cole had spread the new gravel to good effect. He advised that the next project that required action was the renovation of the old railway buttress, a part of the history of the area in need of restoration. He is to write a report for council to be circulated. Cllr Vine advised that a wildlife survey was required as there may be nesting birds.

8.2 KBCL Performance Management Checklist.
The recent inspection and report were noted. Cllr Warburg questioned the statement in the report that the sole right of access was to Bishopswood Village Hall, pointing to the path running behind it. Cllr Evans advised that this was not a right of way but a permissive path, but this could be reviewed if Cllr Warburg could provide evidence of it being a PROW.

8.3. It was agreed that the clerk would circulate the report provided on additional tree works sent by Adrian Hope in 2022.

8.4 Kerne Bridge bus shelter.
The clerk reported that the council's insurers had still not made a decision on it's claim despite all the evidence provided, quotations both for replacement and repair, and had now asked for a contractor's report detailing the repairs despite the quotation for repairs including statements to the effect that repairing the structure was inappropriate. The chairman is to write to the insurers demanding a decision, and if none is forthcoming by the time of the next meeting a decision may be made to proceed with replacement. In the meantime Cllr Cole will put tape around the bus shelter given the safety concerns expressed by the contractor quoting for it's repair.

8.5 To consider proposed improvements to access the permissive footpath (from Kerne Bridge to the Canoe Launch) directly from the Inn on the Wye.
Cllr Akers suggested that the fence opposite the Inn on the Wye be opened to make it obvious to those coming from the Inn on the Wye that the permissive path is over the road such that people don't endanger themselves by walking along the road. Cllr Cole will have discussions with Balfour Beatty concerning this.

8.6 see above.

8.7 To consider Kerne Bridge maintenance.
Cllr Akers brought to the attention of council the weeds growing out of the bridge which if unchecked will undermine its structure. The bridge is Grade 2 listed and it's 200 year anniversary is in 2028. The clerk is instructed to contact Goodrich Parish Council to begin a discussion on how best to tackle it's conservation. Cllr Cole will discuss with Balfour Beatty.

8.8 Phoenix Meadow access.
Cllr Evans introduced this item as information had come to light that the access had been used in contravention of council's letter to Luke Freeman advising that farm machinery no longer had access across the council's land. Given the long history of this issue that new councillors would not be aware of Cllr Akers suggested that this item be held over to the next agenda by which time the issues involved could be set out for them and this was agreed.

The time having reached 9.30pm Cllr Akers proposed that the meeting be extended for a further 15 minutes which was agreed by a vote of 5 in favour and 3 against.

JA

Cllr Akers then proposed that council consider agenda items 10 & 11 and hold over all other items to the following meeting, which was also agreed.

10. Highways and public rights of way: To receive written reports and consider actions

10.1. PROW officer.

Cllr Evans proposed that council subscribe to the Open Space Society to provide support and advice on keeping footpaths open. This was seconded by Cllr Akers and all voted in favour.
Cllrs Simeon Cole & Sandra Cole left the meeting.

10.2 To consider the report on WA50

It was agreed to hold this item over to the following meeting.
Cllrs Simeon & Sandra Cole rejoined the meeting.

10.3 Lengthsman Co-ordinator.

Cllr Cole reported that the lengthsman has been working at Leys Hill and Bulls Hill and will report on any outstanding issues. The bus shelter at Coughton is on his list of jobs.

10.4 To consider lengthsman expenditure including planning and management of works and quality control.

It was agreed to place this item early on the next agenda.

10.5 To consider a proposal to approve expenditure of an additional £3k for drainage work.

It was agreed to hold this item over for the next agenda.

10.6 To consider maintenance of Coughton bus shelter (incorrectly named Walford in the agenda).

Cllr Akers proposed that the lengthsman be instructed to clear back ivy from Coughton bus shelter and clear all leaves. This was seconded by Cllr Petersen and all voted in favour.

10.7 To consider a request to Herefordshire Council/Balfour Beatty to install HGV kerbs along the section of the B4234 at Kerne Lodge where the cage work is being completed.

The work having been completed and the road resurfaced this item was no longer relevant and will not be taken forward.

11. Planning:

11.1 To comment on applications for determination by Herefordshire Council:

P231552 Woodlands Coughton. Proposed swimming pool and pool house (part retrospective).

Cllr Warburg commented that the application appeared to be considerate of the environment. Cllr Vine commented that council does not like to see retrospective applications, and that there was inadequate information in the application, A vote was taken with 8 supporting the application, 3 against, 1 abstention and Cllr Simeon Cole not taking part.

20. Items for next meeting agenda: (No discussion)

20.1 Lengthsman expenditure and additional £3k for drainage work.
20.2. Leys Hill Junction.
20.3. The Dam.
20.4. KBCL premises licence and operational plan.
20.5. Sale of KBCL timber.
20.6 Community Support Scheme.
20.7 Project and Working Group Reports.
20.8 Report on WA50.
20.9 Daycroft Lane drainage.
20.10 Phoenix Meadow access.
20.11 Councillor gov.uk e-mail addresses

21. Next WPC meeting: Wednesday 19th July 2023 Bishopswood Village Hall.

The meeting finished at 21.45 pm.

Signed by the Chairman.

Joanne Akers