

WALFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Walford Parish Council



Held on Wednesday 18th October 2023, 7:30pm
At The Inn on the Wye

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

In attendance: N Richmond (Clerk), and 8 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Apologies were received from Cllr Llewellyn – reason accepted.
2. **Written requests for dispensation and Declarations of interests:**
Declarations of interest were made as follows:
Cllr Evans Agenda item 10.1 Planning 232747 – non-pecuniary.
Cllr Petersen Agenda item 10.1 Planning 232747 – non-pecuniary.
No requests for dispensation were received.
3. **To consider minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 20th September 2023.**
The minutes of the meeting of Wednesday 20th September were approved and signed by the Chairman.
4. **Parish Councillor vacancy: To note the nominations if any for the upcoming election.**
The nominations of Yolande Watson and John Llewellyn for the election on 9th November were noted.
Notices have been posted in the parish, on the council website and facebook page.
5. **Public participation session:**
 - 5.1. **To receive an update from West Mercia Police.**
No member of the police was present.
 - 5.2. **To receive a report from the Ward Councillor.**
The Ward Councillor said there was nothing to report. The Chairman said that written reports that used to be provided were important but no report had been provided since the elections in May.
 - 5.3. **To receive a report from the Localities Steward.**
The weekly reports have been circulated. Cllr Akers asked the clerk to find out from Balfour Beatty if the reports could be downloaded onto the parish council website.
 - 5.4. **Public participation session: three (3) minute limit per person (15 minutes maximum)**
The first to speak was Grahame Morgan-Watson who enquired about the speed monitoring cables that had been deployed around the Leys Hill junction. The clerk advised that he had asked the Balfour Beatty engineer working on the traffic design for the junction if he knew about the cables and he said he did not. The clerk has also asked the Balfour Beatty Locality Liaison Coordinator but not received an answer so will chase this up. Next to speak was Sue Exton concerning drainage issues near her property being managed at the moment by sand bags. It was agreed that the lengthsman would be asked to resolve any issues. Susan Pearson from Atlas House complained bitterly that she and her husband felt harassed by the council over the depositing of soil on or near the boundary of the council land at The Dam. Cllr Akers asked the clerk to arrange a meeting with the Pearsons with herself, Cllr Simeon Cole and the clerk to discuss a way forward. Cllr Berry asked to be included in the meeting. Frank Myers then spoke, who questioning the procedures being followed by parish council in respect of the Howle Hill Memorial Project, stating that the working group was not meeting in public, advice received was not being followed, no risk assessments were being undertaken, that council were proposing to spend half it's annual precept on the project and that council's budget should not have been changed to incorporate the project. Cllr Berry advised that the project will be mainly funded by grant money, and that the council financial commitment was currently limited to £800. Cllr Barnett expressed the view that this financial commitment had been agreed by the Finance committee without approval by the full council. Cllr Berry however read the following from the signed and approved minutes of the full parish council meeting of 23rd August 2023 '**8.4.3 - To consider the budget and approve WPC expenditure up to £800. Cllr Akers proposed that council supports the project with expenditure up to £800. This was seconded by Cllr Berry and a vote taken with 8 in favour 4 against so was passed**'. Mr Myers then added two more comments, firstly that the proposed dwelling in planning application 232500 was not in a suitable location, and secondly he had noticed that it was often the case that proposals were made by the Chairman, expressing the view that the Chairman's role was to introduce items and allow discussion. The Chairman accepted his comments, and at the suggestion of Cllr Berry the clerk is to contact council's internal auditor

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regarding in year changes to the budget. The clerk will in the meantime add comments to the accounts to show the grant funding income relating to the Howle Hill Memorial Project, which will not proceed in it's current form without the grant funding.

6. Finance:

6.1 To receive an update from Cllr Berry regarding PKF Littlejohn AGAR investigation fees.

Cllr Berry advised that no response has been received from HALC regarding the fees being charged. Cllr Vine as council's HALC representative is to take this matter up with HALC. It was proposed by Cllr Berry that council continue to not pay the PKF outstanding balances. This was seconded by Cllr Simeon Cole and all voted in favour.

6.2 To approve the payments on Appendix A.

Cllr Simeon Cole proposed that the payments to Autela Payroll Services and Walford Village Hall be paid. This was seconded by Cllr Berry and all voted in favour. Cllr Terry proposed that the payment to HALC be approved. Cllr Vine seconded this and all voted in favour except Cllr Simeon Cole who abstained saying he should declare a pecuniary interest, however it was felt that he did not need to leave the meeting.

6.3 To ratify the payments on Appendix A.

Cllr Evans proposed that the salary payments were authorised. This was seconded by Cllr Vine and all voted in favour.

6.4 To consider year to date accounts.

The year to date accounts were noted, together with the need for explanatory notes particularly in respect of HHMP.

6.5 To consider the budget for 2024-25 following the meeting of the finance committee.

The draft budget will be updated for consideration at the November parish council meeting.

7. Kerne Bridge Canoe Launch: To receive reports and consider any actions:

7.1. KBCL Maintenance Co-ordinator report.

Cllr Petersen reported on the very detailed form required by Natural England to work on the railway buttress as a SSSI which he will continue to work on. He has provided the Environment Agency with an update on the riverbank revetment work with which they were very happy. Cllr Akers pointed out that council had agreed to plant wild flowers at the site. Cllr Simeon Cole requested a list of bulbs which he will obtain and arrange to plant. Action Cllr Simeon Cole.

7.2. To consider proposed improvements to access the permissive footpath (from Kerne Bridge to the Canoe Launch) directly from the Inn on the Wye.

Cllr Simeon Cole reported that he has sent details of where the proposed entrance in the fence is to be created opposite The Inn on the Wye to the appropriate person in Herefordshire Council to obtain permission to proceed. He added that it may require the creation of steps down to the path.

8. Projects: To receive written reports from the following projects and working groups and consider action:

8.1. Community Support Scheme Coordinator

The report from the scheme coordinator was received and noted. Cllr Akers is to arrange a working group meeting and again stressed the need for more volunteers.

8.1.1. To consider the implementation of a contract with Walford Village Hall in respect of The Hub.

Cllr Berry reported that he has received a response from the village hall to the draft agreement. Further discussions will take place until a final version will be brought to council for approval.

8.2. Police Liaison.

Cllr Corbett said the police had been busy with a spate of burglaries in Ross. No more dog attack incidents have been reported at Priory Lea however the police are awaiting the intervention of the Dogs Liaison Officer.

8.3. Safety & Environmental Working Group

8.3.1. To approve expenditure of £500 to set up solar panels to operate the defibrillators at Howle Hill and Bulls Hill.

Cllr Berry proposed that the expenditure be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Evans and all voted in favour. Action Cllr Akers to arrange the installation.

8.4. Howle Hill Memorial Project

8.4.1. To consider a planning application to move the memorial stone.

This will be considered at the next meeting. The clerk is to investigate the cost of an application.

8.4.2. To consider a press release to local papers.

Cllr Petersen proposed that the press release be issued as drafted. This was seconded by Cllr Berry and a vote taken 9 in favour 2 against so was passed. Action – the clerk.



8.5. To consider a Parish newsletter.

Cllr Akers advised that she would finalise the newsletter items by the end of October.

8.6. To consider a Parish Calendar for 2024.

Cllr Simeon Cole proposed that council proceed with the calendar and ask Walford School to see if they could provide drawings. This was seconded by Cllr Sandra Cole. Cllr Akers commented that it was already too late to produce a calendar by December and we should plan for a 2025 calendar by putting it on the July/August 2024 agenda. A vote was taken on the proposal 4 in favour 6 against so was lost. A budget line of £2,000 to be included in the 2024/25 budget.

8.7. To consider taking on the maintenance of the horse trough on Bulls Hill that has recently been cleared by a resident.

Cllr Vine commented that the trough should be included in the council assets register. Cllr Warburg commented that the trough required stonemasonry work to restore it. Cllr Berry proposed that council take on the maintenance of the horse trough. This was seconded by Cllr Warburg and a vote taken 10 in favour 1 against so was passed, and will be considered at the next meeting.

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

9.1. PROW officer

Cllr Evans reported on the serious accident that occurred on WA66 to a horse rider, advising that she had reported this some time ago and had now reported the dangerous state of the bridleway again.

9.2. Lengthsman Co-ordinator.

Cllr Simeon Cole advised that the lengthsman is working on Bulls Hill and Leys Hill and will report on what is required at Hom Green. Cllr Warburg requested that the lengthsman talk to him about Bulls Hill when there as he wishes his input to be considered.

9.3. To consider a Lengthsman Parish Plan for 2023/24.

Before a plan can be developed Cllr Simeon Cole is to obtain confirmation that the parish lengthsman is permitted to work on B roads in the parish. Action – Cllr Simeon Cole.

9.4. To consider a Lengthsman contract.

The draft lengthsman contract having been circulated, Cllr Simeon Cole proposed that it be agreed and presented to Terry Griffiths Contracts. This was seconded by Cllr Terry and all voted in favour. Action – the clerk.

9.5. To consider the expenditure of the £ 4,046.00 available under the Lengthsman Scheme.

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

Both these items will be taken forward to the next meeting in connection with agenda item 9.3.

9.7. To receive an update on the repairs to the Coughton bus shelter.

The bus shelter has been made safe to use and the clerk awaits quotations for a permanent repair.

9.8. To consider speeding in the 30mph zone through Walford on the B4234.

This item will be taken forward to the next meeting.

10. Planning:

10.1. To comment on applications for determination by Herefordshire Council - see Appendix B.

232500 Land opposite and east of Caenwood, Howle Hill. Cllr Vine said the application was excellent but noted some objections on environmental matters that should be addressed. Cllr Petersen said it was a fabulous application and should be supported. A vote was taken 6 in support of the application 2 against and 3 abstentions so is supported.

At this point having reached 9.30pm Cllr Akers proposed a 15 minute extension. This was seconded by Cllr Evans and agreed by all.

Cllr's Evans and Petersen left the room.

232747 New Buildings – proposed stables block. Cllr Warburg said the application should be supported. Cllr Akers said it was exactly what was needed. Cllr Vine said she supported it with some reservations over the ecological impact. A vote was taken 8 in favour 1 abstention so is supported.

Cllr's Evans and Petersen rejoined the meeting.

11. Leys Hill junction: To provide an update.

Following the SEWG meeting the clerk wrote to Balfour Beatty expressing the concerns over the Tapley meter tests which they said indicated that the bends can be comfortably negotiated at 40mph. The response was received just before the meeting the gist of which was that nothing more

Joanne Akers

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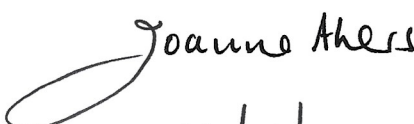


would be added to the design and they are asking for an instruction from parish council to proceed with installation. The next parish council meeting can consider.

12. **The Dam: To receive an update.**
See agenda item 5.4
13. **Daycroft Lane: To receive an update.**
The survey of the drainage system was carried out by Williams Water Services. The clerk has asked for a written report after consideration of which further action can be taken.
14. **HALC Executive Board Representation: To consider the HALC Executive Board election and nomination processes as necessary.** Cllr Simeon Cole explained the process of application to be on the board if a vacancy existed but Cllr Akers called upon the clerk to seek clarification from HALC over the process.
15. **To consider correspondence received.**
Hedge at Walford Court Barns. The clerk is to seek clarity of exactly where the problem lies.
Howle Hill Memorial Project. See agenda item 8.4.1.
16. **To consider a request from Ross Town Council for a contribution to the proposed provision of an outreach in Ross-on-Wye to the Herefordshire Veteran Support Centre.**
It was proposed by Cllr Terry that council give a grant of £500 to the scheme. This was seconded by Cllr Simeon Cole and a vote taken with 10 in favour and 1 abstention. Cllr Berry advised that the conditions of the council grants policy be met prior to payment being made. Action – the clerk to contact RTC.
17. **WPC policy review update.**
Ongoing according to councillor time and will be taken on the next agenda.
18. **Items for next meeting agenda: (No discussion)**
 - 18.1. Leys Hill Junction
 - 18.2. The Dam
 - 18.3. Daycroft Lane drainage.
 - 18.4. WPC policy review.
 - 18.5. HC Lengthsman scheme
 - 18.6. Additional £3k for drainage.
 - 18.7. Defibrillators
 - 18.8. Coughton Bus Shelter
 - 18.9. RTC veterans outreach scheme
 - 18.10. Planning application to move the Howle Hill Memorial Stone.
 - 18.11. Parish Council budget 2024/25 and Precept request.
19. **Next WPC meeting: Wednesday 22nd November 7.30pm Bishopswood Village Hall .**

The meeting finished at 21.46 pm.

Signed by the Chairman.


DATE 22/11/23