

Llanwarne & District Group Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Llanwarne Village Hall on

Thursday 6th October 2022

Present: Councillors: Jason Pacey (Chairman), Rowena Williams, Rick Guest, Pat Roberts and James Roberts

Ward Councillor Toni Fagan, Terry Griffiths (Lengthsman), Elizabeth Malcolm (Footpaths Officer) and Mark Hearne (Parish Clerk).

1. **To receive apologies for absence** –Councillors Rosey Price, Paula Snow, Brian Goodwin and Harry Holt.
2. **To receive declarations of interest & written requests for dispensation** – None.
3. **Co-option** – Mr Anthony Snell was co-opted onto the Parish Council and duly signed his “Acceptance of Office” form. Councillor Snell questioned the rationale for his disqualification from the Parish Council earlier in the year. The Chairman reminded Councillor Snell that should a Councillor not attend any meetings in a six-month period they will be automatically disqualified unless there are compelling and mitigating circumstances.
4. **To consider the minutes of the meeting held on the 21st July 2022** - It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes as a true record and these were duly signed by the Chairman.
5. **To note the status of Resolutions passed at the meeting held on the 21st July 2022.** The Clerk provided an update on resolutions passed at the last meeting and specifically commented on the following issues:
 - 5.1. Lengthsman Contract – The Clerk reminded the Lengthsman that his signed contract has yet to be returned.
 - 5.2. Suspected drug activity in the carpark. The Clerk confirmed that the issue was reported to the police who agreed to monitor the situation. Councillors were unaware of any continuing problems.
 - 5.3. White lines at Pencoyd Crossroads – The Clerk reported the issue to Herefordshire Council , but it was not known if any action has been taken.
 - 5.4. Drainage Grant – This issue will be covered later in the meeting.
 - 5.5. Footpaths – The Clerk confirmed that he has written to two landowners regarding the need to maintain footpaths that traverse their land, but no reply has been received.
6. **Open Session** - To receive views from residents on parish matters. The following issues were raised.
 - 6.1. Details of an overflowing clothes bin in the carpark was raised but it transpired that it has recently been emptied.

- 6.2. Ward Councillor Fagan mentioned the dog litter bins situated in Llanwarne. It was noted that Balfour Beatty will only empty those bins listed on their schedule which includes the one on the Green. Any bins recently installed by the Parish Council such as the one in the carpark will not be covered. The Lengthsman confirmed that he will add the dog bin in the carpark to his schedule and it was suggested that the bin will be emptied fortnightly in the first instance, but this will be subject to review. The Lengthsman advised that the cost of emptying the bin is £5 plus the cost of the replacement bags. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk writes to the Lengthsman to confirm the arrangements.
- 6.3. Councillor Snell questioned whether it was understood which materials are suitable for recycling. Councillors noted that residents will be advised if inappropriate materials are placed in the recycling bin.

7. Reports and Updates

- 7.1. Ward Councillor Fagan raised the following issues:
- 7.1.1. Residents have raised concerns over speeding traffic on the A49 at Harewood End which seems to have worsened since Covid 19 receded as an issue. Ian Connolly (Road Safety Officer) will resume traffic surveys and contact will be made with Richard Timothy (National Highways) to gauge whether any action can be taken. There was discussion on the value of introducing a 20mph speed limit on this stretch of the A49 but the consensus was that this would be impracticable. Councillors considered increased signage may offer a more effective measure.
- 7.1.2. The Ofsted report has assessed the performance of Children's Services in Herefordshire Council as "inadequate." The Department of Education has appointed Eleanor Brazil to work with Herefordshire Council to consider the measures necessary to improve the performance of Children's Services. Ms Brazil will report her findings later in the year.
- 7.1.3. Efforts are being made to establish the status of the Environmental Land Management Scheme.
- 7.2. Locality Steward - No defects which need to be reported to the Locality Steward were identified.

8. Lengthsman

- 8.1. Lengthsman Report – The Lengthsman reported that in the recent dry months only routine maintenance has been undertaken.
- 8.2. Drainage Grant – The Lengthsman expressed disappointment over what he regarded as a flawed methodology used by Balfour Beatty in distributing the drainage grant across those Parish Councils who bid for funds. The Clerk commented that an explanation for the approach used by Balfour Beatty for distributing the funds has been provided previously to Llangarron Parish Council and it was RESOLVED that this will be shared with the Lengthsman. The Lengthsman added that the four projects to be funded through the drainage grant are progressing despite Balfour Beatty hindering some of the work. Ward Councillor Fagan agreed to raise this specific issue with Mr John Harrington (Herefordshire Council).
- 8.3. In answer to a question from the Lengthsman the Clerk was able to confirm that Herefordshire Council have authorised a release of further funding for Lengthsman work for use in 2022/23 with further details to be published in due course.

9. Footpaths Officer Report

- 9.1. The Footpaths Officer reported that she had attended a recent meeting arranged by the PROW team at Herefordshire Council who assumed responsibility from Balfour Beatty on 1 April 2022. There will be little change from the procedures used previously by Balfour Beatty, but a lack of staff will have an impact on the service they provide to Parish Councils. The Footpaths Officer considered that Parish Councils will be expected to undertake more PROW related work and urged Councillors to make suitable provision in the budget in 2023/24 .
- 9.2. The Footpath Officer commented that in general the condition of the PROW network was satisfactory but did highlight a problem at TM3 which will need to be addressed with the landowner and added that the steps on a PROW at Michaelchurch will need to be reinstated.
- 9.3. The Footpath Officer advised that, despite a letter issued to two landowners by the Clerk, there has been no change in the condition of the PROWS which cross their land.

10. Environment

- 10.1. Councillor Guest reported that a company has been identified who, subject to funding becoming available, will be invited to conduct a full survey of the Gamber and Garron catchment area. Work has already begun on identifying funding streams for the survey.
- 10.2. The recent dry weather has meant that the efficacy of the attenuation pool installed in Llanwarne has not been fully tested.

11. Planning – To consider the following planning consultations to be determined by Herefordshire Council. No planning applications have been submitted for consideration. The Chairman took this opportunity to urge Councillors to offer comments on planning applications when responses are sought between meetings. In response to a question posed by Ward Councillor Fagan the Clerk agreed to check if the Parish Council was included as a consultee for a proposed development at Wormelow.

12. Finance

- 12.1. The bank balance at the end of August 2022 was £11,946.35
- 12.2. Councillors approved the following payments:
 - 12.2.1. Clerk's salary for August and Sept 2022.
 - 12.2.2. PAYE – August and Sept 2022 (£394.00)
 - 12.2.3. Clerk's travel costs - £19.80
 - 12.2.4. Clerk's storage costs - £15.00
 - 12.2.5. Postage - £8.16 – This payment prompted discussion on the benefit of moving to electronic banking and it was RESOLVED to investigate this further.
 - 12.2.6. Renewal of Microsoft 365 personal - £49.99 (ex VAT)
 - 12.2.7. Replacement parts for two defibrillators - £234.95 (ex VAT)
 - 12.2.8. Autela Payroll Services - £44.40 (ex VAT)
 - 12.2.9. HALC Internal Audit - £220.00 (ex VAT)
 - 12.2.10. PKF Littlejohn (External Audit) - £200.00 (ex VAT)
 - 12.2.11. Terry Griffiths Contracts (TGC2023) - £400.00 (ex VAT)
- 12.3. Financial Monitoring and Bank Reconciliation 2022/23 – The Clerk had circulated a spreadsheet which suggested that at year end the Clerk expected to see reserves in the region of £8,500.

13. Change of Name – The Clerk reported that no volunteers have offered to attend the information evening being arranged by HALC on the 1st November 2022 to discuss the process for changing the name of the Parish Council. Councillor Williams agreed to attend but the Clerk will check with HALC that it is still intended to hold the event at which point the invite will be circulated to Councillors.

14. Working Groups – Further to the discussion at the previous meeting Councillors were invited to comment on the value, or otherwise, of establishing working groups to focus on specific areas of Parish Council's business such as planning and environment. The consensus suggested that the current working practices operated effectively and there was no appetite to move towards formal working groups for a range of topics, but it was RESOLVED that Councillors Williams and Snow lead on planning issues. Ward Councillor Fagan recommended that training in planning issues would be invaluable for the Parish Council.

15. Defibrillator – It was noted that the model of defibrillator deployed in the parish is no longer being manufactured which complicates the procurement of spare parts.

16. Smartwater Presentation – It was noted that the Smartwater presentation is now expected to take place during the meeting in November 2022, but it was RESOLVED that the Clerk seeks confirmation that a representative will be available to attend. Councillor Williams agreed to produce a poster advertising the event.

17. Items for the Next Meeting

- 17.1. Smartwater Presentation
- 17.2. Precept/Budget 2022/23
- 17.3. Financial Regulations/Standing Order/Risk Management
- 17.4. Feedback from "Change of Name" information evening.

18. Date of the Next Meeting – The next meeting will take place on Thursday 17th November 2022 in Llanwarne village hall beginning at 19.30hrs.

Meeting closed at 21.02.

Signed

Date