

WELLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held at 7.30pm
on Thursday 11th May 2023 in the Community Centre

Item	Minutes																	
	Present: Parish Cllrs: Mr Stephen Crane (Chair), Ms Kim Parker, Mr S Marron, Mr B Prince, Also in attendance: Ward Cllr Pauline Crockett, Mrs Chris Bucknell (Parish Clerk) and 12 members of the public – including Jen Jarrett (CLP Group), Nigel Cooper (Play Area Project), Jules Shaddick (Brook Officer) and David Wood (Wellington Pub Group). It was confirmed that all Councillors had signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office in front of the Clerk before the start of the meeting.																	
1.0	To Accept Apologies for Absence – none																	
2.0	To Elect Chairman/Sign Declaration of Office Cllr Crane was proposed by Cllr Parker and seconded by Cllr Marron. All were in favour and Cllr Crane was elected as Chairman of the Parish Council and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office in front of the Clerk.																	
3.0	To Elect Vice Chairman/Sign Declaration of Office Following discussion Cllr Prince suggested, because of the low numbers on the Parish Council, not appointing a Vice Chairman at this stage but to move forward with only a Chair. This was agreed on the basis that the position would be reviewed in a few months’ time.																	
4.0	To Receive Declarations of Interest – None 4.1 To Consider Written Requests for Dispensations - There were no requests for dispensation																	
5.0	To Elect Other Officers, Committees and Working Groups <table><tr><td>Finance Working Group</td><td>Cllr Marron and Parish Clerk Cllr Langford used to carry out in-year financial scrutiny. As this would no longer be carried out the Financial Risk Assessment would be amended to reflect this.</td></tr><tr><td>Planning Working Group</td><td>Cllr Marron assisted by Cllr Parker</td></tr><tr><td>Footpath and PROW Officer</td><td>Cllr Crane</td></tr><tr><td>Balfour Beatty and Lengthsman Liaison</td><td>Cllr Prince</td></tr><tr><td>Social Media and Website</td><td>Cllr Parker and Parish Clerk</td></tr><tr><td>Data Protection Monitor</td><td>Cllr Crane and Parish Clerk</td></tr><tr><td>Representative on WCA</td><td>Cllr Parker would liaise with the Chair of WCA</td></tr><tr><td>CLP Implementation Group Liaison</td><td>Cllr Marron and Parish Clerk</td></tr></table>	Finance Working Group	Cllr Marron and Parish Clerk Cllr Langford used to carry out in-year financial scrutiny. As this would no longer be carried out the Financial Risk Assessment would be amended to reflect this.	Planning Working Group	Cllr Marron assisted by Cllr Parker	Footpath and PROW Officer	Cllr Crane	Balfour Beatty and Lengthsman Liaison	Cllr Prince	Social Media and Website	Cllr Parker and Parish Clerk	Data Protection Monitor	Cllr Crane and Parish Clerk	Representative on WCA	Cllr Parker would liaise with the Chair of WCA	CLP Implementation Group Liaison	Cllr Marron and Parish Clerk	
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6.0	To Adopt the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 6th April 2023 Resolved: The Minutes were confirmed and signed by the Chair.	
7.0	To Re-Adopt the Standing Orders and Code of Conduct These had been circulated to all Councillors in advance of the meeting. The Code of Conduct reflected the updated version adopted by Herefordshire Council which, it was felt, was best practice. It had been confirmed by Herefordshire Council that Councillors did not need to re-complete their Declaration of Interest Form unless their interests had changed from when it was last submitted. Resolved: To Adopt the Standing Orders and Code of Conduct	Clerk
8.0	To Receive Brief Reports 8.1 Ward Cllr Pauline Crockett Ward Councillor Pauline Crockett said there had been no Leader's newsletter because of the elections and no decisions had been made on any issues because of pre-election rules. There was not a majority following the local elections and discussions were currently taking place as to whether the way forward would be to form a coalition and, if so, with whom. A decision would be made the following week and a Leader and Chairman of Herefordshire Council would be voted in. Cllr Crockett was still working on the road issues in Mill Lane but stressed that as it was a U road it was not seen as a priority when budgets were low. However, she had escalated it because of the bus route and the risk to residents and road users and it was hoped something would be done. She had also escalated the Play Area and had spoken to Darryl Freeman who was Director of Children's Services about the queries regarding the fence. It was hoped he would speak to Quinton Mead to get the issue agreed so that the project could move on. A question was asked about speed monitoring on the A49. Cllr Crockett said that Richard Timothy (National Highways) had not responded to her, but the Safer Roads Partnership had said that the monitoring was taking place and Ian Connolly was going to update her once the data had been collected. This would be followed up. Cllr Prince suggested that it may be worth considering double white lines to stop the overtaking. Cllr Crockett said this could be passed on to Richard Timothy. 8.2 Herefordshire Wildlife Trust Cllr Crane said that, following the Annual Parish Meeting where the team from Queenswood presented, there was discussion about, amongst other things, why so many trees had been cut down. This prompted a suggestion that there could be a group formed including the Parish Council and interested residents to work with Queenswood on this topic. Cllr Crane suggested that an initial group, including the CLP Environment Team, could meet to work out how this would operate, and it was felt that it would be a good opportunity to take forward something that was of concern to residents. This would be followed up.	
9.0	Communication with Parishioners and Updates 9.1 Update on Play Area Nigel Cooper gave an update on the Play Area, reporting that they were working through the 9 points raised by Gillian Garlick from Herefordshire Council, which they needed to address before Herefordshire Council would grant the WCA a lease. Some of these issues were simply a matter of assembling existing information, however, Gillian also wanted estimates of expenditure and sources of funding and Fran White was working on the costing for the project. Quentin Mee of Herefordshire Council had told the Chair of School Governors that he had rescinded his requirement that WCA pay and erect all the safeguarding fence and WCA would now only be concerned with the fence that directly affected the play area.	

	Funding was problematic as the value of S106 funds had eroded considerably since they were awarded to the Play Area project and Nigel enquired if the Parish Council was in a position to offer funding and if so what order of magnitude it could be. The Parish Council said they could not comment on this until they had seen a formal application including a cost plan showing known funding sources and Nigel Cooper agreed to submit an estimate for the next meeting. The Parish Council felt their ability to contribute was limited due to funding and restraints on spending imposed by not having the General Power of Competence (due to the low numbers of Councillors). However, it was agreed this would be put on the agenda for the June meeting. 9.2 Update on Community Pub David Wood gave the following update on the background to the application • Choice Circle's architects, Synergy, sought pre-application advice from Herefordshire Council about building a house on the garden of the pub • Synergy wrote their application based on the advice received, to meet the national and local planning legislation. • The consultation process revealed a number of issues raised by residents, experts and CAMRA. The consultation process was due to close by 10 December 2022 • Armed with knowledge gleaned from the consultation, Synergy have had further correspondence with Herefordshire Council • The Pub Group have considered the reply letter from Synergy to Emily Brookes – Senior Planning Officer, dated 13 April. On the Planning Portal, initially the letter was under the heading of 'supporting documents'; it has now been moved to the list of representations, so it is not so immediately obvious • Synergy have now amended their application to try to address the issues raised in the consultation • Herefordshire Council have issued a re-consultation When Choice Circle, based in Rugby, bought the pub over a year ago, Mr Evans explained to David Wood that his intention was to get planning permission for a house on the garden and the car park and then sell the land with planning permission, with an expectation that it would realise £250,000. He also said that they intended to open the pub and had got tenants lined up, but this didn't appear to have progressed. In the meantime, Mr Evans had passed on but the company continued to try to get planning permission. David Wood said that the letter sent from Synergy to Emily Brookes (Herefordshire Council Planning) contained inaccuracies and could not be backed up by hard facts. David Wood reported that the letter from Synergy Architects referred to an email to them from the Planning Office which contained their response to the issues raised. Although some of their points could be argued and potentially overcome through design, phosphate credits and highway improvements, the most important issues that they list, cannot be mitigated, and deserve to be evidenced. The main points of Synergy's response were • Principle of housing development at this location • Design and impact upon conservation area • Amenity - The impact of noise upon the house • Impact upon a community facility David Wood reported that the response from the Pub Group on the re-consultation would cover a number of points • The Inspector's ruling in the Rose Garden case and the professional opinion of the CAMRA officer, both in that case and his representations • Photographic and other evidence to rebut Synergy's contention that the pub garden is only occasionally used and that its present size is a luxury which is not needed for the operation of	Clerk
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the pub. There are comments in some of the representations made by villagers that the garden is a prime reason for family custom of the pub

On the amenity issues, the following points would be raised

- A given number of people in a much-reduced area will concentrate noise levels
- The Southbank property is separated from the pub garden by a 2m+ high thick Leylandii hedge which provided screening and fencing would not achieve the same level of noise abatement.
- On the impact on a community facility point, apart from the arguments deployed by CAMRA, the Pub Group will re-iterate that using the front of the pub could not compensate for the loss of the garden. It was noted that is now not planned to remove the conservatory

In conclusion David Wood summarised that Synergy's arguments were not backed by hard facts. There was evidence that the pub did operate successfully in the past; subsequent poor trading performance was not down to the pub itself or lack of custom. Professional opinion from experts in the field supported the case and argued that there ought to be a presumption in favour of retaining the status quo and not jeopardising the viability of a community asset for the sake of questionable developer gain.

David Wood thanked the Community and Parish Council for their support.

10.0 **Open Time - To Note Matters Raised by Local Residents Relevant to the Parish**

Cllr Crane said that at the March Parish Council meeting Cllr Parker referred to a neighbour dispute with reference to a sign being erected referencing her role as a Parish Councillor. The Parish Council cannot involve itself in neighbour dispute but on this occasion, as the Parish Council had been mentioned, Cllr Parker felt it appropriate to bring it to the attention of the Parish Council.

Cllr Crane had been approached by the complainants who originally asked to speak at the Parish Council meeting regarding Cllr Parker's statement in March. The Parish Council originally agreed to this but after Cllr Crane spoke at length to the residents, it was agreed that they would submit a statement to the Parish Council as evidence for their complaint, but this would not be read out at the meeting and would be held by the Parish Council, not to be used in any other debate or action.

There were no other issues raised.

11.0 **Financial Matters**

11.1 **To Receive a Report from the RFO**

Bank Balances: Treasurer's Account £23,139.48, Business Instant Access £64,144.67.

Income since the April Meeting

May Shop Rent - £700 Precept part 1 - £12,250 Interest - £40.60

VAT Reclaim up until 31/03/23 - £1,629.37

The Lengthsman Grant of £1,308.00 was invoiced for on 14th March and awaiting payment.

11.2 **To Approve Invoices Paid Since April Meeting**

Expenditure	Amount
D C Gardening invoice SI-1548. Grounds Maintenance work for April £465 + VAT	£558.00
Reimbursement to Cllr Crane for Wacker Plate Service for Footpath Work	£73.62
Public Works Loan Board Payment	£6,546.75
Zoom Subscription for May £12.99 + VAT	£15.59

Resolved: All payments noted and approved

11.3 **To Agree Payments of Outstanding Invoices**

Payment	Expenditure	Amount
BACS	Theo Ashton cleaning of Parish Room, toilet and foyer for April 2023	£50.00

Resolved: Payments noted and approved

Clerk

Cllr Marron gave an overview of the application, highlighting some queries he had about the application and information included. The Clerk noted that Mark Roberts from Wellington Chapel had indicated that he was willing to meet with Parish Council representatives to discuss the application and/or to answer any queries raised. Following discussion at the meeting, the response below was put together and, once agreed by all Councillors, would be discussed with the Chapel representatives.

That the Parish Council could **support** the granting of approval subject to satisfactory responses and/or conditions with respect to:

- Demonstration that the materials and surface finish of the extension, and the combination of those materials with the original building, provide an acceptable visual appearance for the overall result given the prominence of the site within the conservation area
- Demonstration that the signage, and specifically the proposed archway, provide an acceptable visual appearance given the prominence of the site within the conservation area
- Provision of a drainage and storm water run-off plan demonstrating that the development will not increase the flood risk of neighbouring properties or public roads and paths
- That suitable screening is provided and maintained on the eastern boundary to minimise disturbance to neighbouring properties
- That the applicant considers whether and how the extension can be used to improve the energy efficiency of the building
- Provision of a lighting plan that minimises the lighting impact on neighbouring properties and the public road to the front

Reference Number	Application
222734	The Wellington, Wellington – re-consultation on proposed new 3 bed dwelling and partial change of use of pub garden from sui generis to class C3a. Proposed demolition of conservatory to make way for outdoor seating area.

See also minute for item 9.2.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council proposed to continue with its objection to the planning application and Cllr Marron would work with the Pub Group to put together a paper which repeated and strengthened the original objection. This would be circulated to the Parish Council for approval before submission.

12.2 To Note Any Decisions/Notifications Received

Reference Number	Application	Decision
230982	Ravensholt, Wellington – Tree Works	Approved
224058	Wellington Quarry, Hayward Lane, Wellington - Proposed northwest quarry extension and consolidation of existing permissions	Awaiting Decision
223767	Honeysuckle Cottage, Poultry Lane, Auberrrow - Demolition of existing dwelling and proposed replacement dwelling	Awaiting Decision
220769	Land East of the A49 south of Hayward Lane, Wellington - proposed restoration of the site to wetlands habitat and construction of a mineral processing plant.	Awaiting Decision
220652	St Margaret's Church, Wellington – proposed change of use from agricultural land to burial ground.	Awaiting Decision

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Clerk

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	Reference Number	Application	Decision
	210381	Chiropodist Surgery, Marsh House Farm, Wellington. Retrospective change of use of surgery and office to holiday let.	Awaiting Decision
	213456	Maple View, Wellington – additional tree works application – Removal of Walnut tree to the front of the house due to damage being caused to our property and vehicles. Additionally, trimming of oak tree which is along our drive which is encroaching into neighbours' property and also causing their smaller tree to suffer due to the oak tree shading it and overpowering it.	Awaiting Decision
	192810	Land at Yew Trees, The Row, Wellington – Dwelling with detached garage and vehicle access. Re - Consultation	On hold due to Phosphates
	182878	Land Adjacent to Graveyard, Wellington – proposed erection of 15 dwellings. On hold due to Section 106 and Phosphates	On hold due to Phosphates
13.0	12.3 To Consider any other Planning Issues Update Section 106 Funding – no further update		
	To Consider Highways Issues 13.1 A49 Issues 13.1.1 Road Safety Issues on Dinmore Hill 13.1.2 Update on Speed Monitoring These items were covered by Cllr Crockett in her report and minuted under agenda item 8.1		
	13.2 To Receive any other Highway Issues Update on Mill Lane – Cllr Crockett was continuing to follow this up (see minute 8.1). Cllr Crockett reiterated that Herefordshire Council recognised that this was a stretch of road which needed repair but that there was not enough funding to cover all the required highways work across the county.		
	Wild Flower Verges and Verge Cutting Programme This planting had now taken place on Mill Lane and at Auberrow. Cllr Prince asked that in future he be copied into any discussions that took place so that, as Highways Officer, he knew what was being undertaken. It was noted that the wildflower planting was agreed at a meeting between the Chair and Phil Pankhurst at a time when Cllr Prince was away and was designed as a way to stabilise the bank.		
	Identification of Work to be Carried out and Any Other Issues A resident pointed out that there were significant amounts of weeds in the gutters and on the edges of paths, particularly Vinery Corner and up by The Mill. Cllr Crockett said she would raise a request for the road sweeper to come into the village.		
	Another resident raised the issue about the pavements which do not get swept and felt this needed addressing, although this would not be covered by the road sweeper. It was also noted that the pavements were breaking up and Cllr Prince said he would discuss both these issues with Phil Pankhurst.		
	The Clerk had had a report from a resident that there was overgrowing bushes and branches on the pavement between Church Close and the Cemetery which was causing a hazard to pedestrians. D C Gardening had been asked to cut this back on his next visit.		
	Cllr Crockett stressed that any safety concerns needed to be reported online as that would get the quickest and most direct response.		

BP

14.0	Report on Footpaths Update on Footpath Maintenance Cllr Crane reported that the ground was starting to dry out and this was making the paths more accessible. Two finger posts had been replaced and there were new dog fouling signs which had been provided by Herefordshire Council. At the moment Cllr Crane only had 3 of these signs but another 5 had been ordered and these would be fitted across the network.	
15.0	Wellington Brook 15.1 Brook Officer's Report Jules Shaddick gave the following report. A sewage smell had been noticed on Ford Meadow, in the vicinity of the brook and foot bridge. Jules had spoken to the CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) who regularly tested the brook water and it was confirmed that the nitrates at this location were very high compared with those at The Mill. The CPRE officer also stated that the amount of foliage around the brook by the bridge and further downstream was more than would normally be expected at this time of year which was more evidence that they were being nourished. It was therefore concluded that there appeared to be sewage getting into the brook somewhere between The Mill and the bridge. After speaking with Wellington's liaison at the RLIDB (River Lugg Internal Drainage Board) the Environment Agency was contacted in order to ascertain which properties along that stretch of the brook had a Discharge Licence and therefore had a septic tank/a small sewage treatment plant, in order to do further investigation work. This was ongoing. Jules continued with her report saying that during the night of 7/8 May someone dumped a broken trailer just up from the Ford by the gate to the field by Wellington Court and also a boat into the Brook just downstream of the Ford. With the help of a couple of local residents the boat was removed from the Brook and secured to the Ford marker post, it being too big and heavy to move any further. Arrangements were made for highways to come and deal with them. However, that evening two male adults had untied the boat and pushed it back into the brook. This then wedged itself between the banks across the brook further downstream causing a potential flood issue. Yesterday thanks to the RLIDB, the boat was removed from the brook and village. Jules believed that the trailer was left on highways land. Cllr Prince said he would follow this up with Phil Pankhurst. The tree debris on the brook bank behind The Chapel is still there and the Clerk was asked to remind them of their legal responsibilities as a Riparian Owner. This was done and the Chapel confirmed that they were arranging to have the debris moved as soon as possible.	BP
16.0	Community Led Planning Group 16.1 Update on Projects and Activities Jen Jarrett gave the following report. Community Library - The library is now well established with a great team of volunteers. We have increased our number of members ie borrowers and provide books, discussion on books and coffee to a steady stream of people calling in when they see us open. It was for an experimental 6 months but because of the support it looks like we will be extending that time scale. Coffee Mornings – These are going from strength to strength with over 50 attending the 1st Anniversary celebration in April. We were only going to give it a try for a couple of months! We have regular raffles, we have a swap table, the older children come in to chat to the coffee drinkers or just sit in a corner watching the proceedings. Tomorrow we are celebrating the new King with lots of bunting. It is a donation only event with all funds going to the Royal National College of the Blind of whom the King is the Royal Patron. Wildlife App - Several events have taken place during the month including a Dawn Chorus Walk, Moth Identification, Wild Flower Identification, Collection of data on insects on gardens for the	

17.0	Hereford Biological database and a very wet day collecting water life in the brook to test its cleanliness. Many of these activities and some of the wonderful pictures will be on display at our stand on the 27th May supporting the church's "Our Natural World" event. Community Speed Watch - The Community police have now dealt with all the formalities and are at the point where they can provide training. There are currently 8 volunteers signed up but more were needed. 16.2 Report from the Green Team Shirley Edgar was not present at the meeting and there were no updates 16.3 To Consider Wi Fi in the Parish Room Jen Jarrett presented the following options proposal to provide WiFi access to the Parish Room using the Seed Funding Grant from Talk Community. The Issues • The Parish room does not exist as a separate entity. It does not have a post code or a UPRN in its own right (this defines different premises within the same post code). • The Premises do have a superfast fibre connection to the shop and the Post Office but Openreach will not extend this to a part of a premises that does not have a UPRN, which may take months to obtain. The Options Piggyback on Shop - The shop's contract did not use the superfast fibre connection and if they upgraded not only would the cost go up from £48 per month to £62 but it would mean renewing the contract for another 3/4 years. To "guest" on the existing WiFi may bring the data speeds down even lower if several devices are being used and could present an increased security risk to the shop's system. When the shop's contract was at an end and a new one in place we could investigate a more secure way of using the fibre connection into the building Use a 4G Mobile Network - The router acts the same as a router on the fast fibre but is linked to the mobile 4G network. It can be run on a battery or be plugged into a wall socket and will support up to 32 devices of all types. The current 4G strength in the building varies from download speeds of 44mps and upload 19mps and it was felt this would be adequate as there was no plans to stream videos etc. Quotes were requested for a 12-month contract which would give time to register the UPRN and then look for fast fibre linkages. BT would not quote and the best quotation from other providers was Vodaphone who offered a • 12 month contract with 30GB data download £18.69 per month (Inc VAT). Total Cost £224.28 (inc VAT) • 24 month contract with 30GB data download £17.00 per month (Inc VAT). Total Cost £408 (inc VAT) There was no up-front cost for router and a 14-day Network Guarantee This was discussed and it was agreed to opt for a 24-month contract with Vodaphone. The Clerk asked Jen Jarrett to check if the 24-month payment could be made in advance as the grant money needed to be committed and expenditure evidenced by 31 August 2023. Community Hub 17.1 Replacement of Benches and Tables Cllr Crane was proposing replacing the current wooden tables with some made with recycled plastic, accessible for wheelchairs and pushchairs. Because of the space required for the wheelchairs and pushchairs the 2 existing benches that currently sit 8 people would be reduced to 6 seats on the new design and so it was being proposed that the 2 benches were replaced with 3 which would	
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	maintain the number of available seats. A new bin and planters were also being considered, all made from recycled plastic. 2 quotes had been obtained, one for £3,656 inc VAT and one for £2,524 + VAT. Cllr Crane favoured the cheaper quotation as he felt that company were more able to supply all the items in the format that was required. It was felt that brown may be the better colour option. It was agreed to purchase the tables, bin and planers from Earth Anchors Ltd whose quotation was £2,524 + Vat = £3,259.20. All expenditure would be covered by the Community Lottery Grant (£5,500) awarded in 2022. 17.2 To Consider any Other Issues or Expenditure There were no further issues or expenditure 18.0 To Note the Information Sheet (May 2023) and any other updates Resolved: The Information sheet was noted. 19.0 To Raise Issues for the next Regular Meeting of the Parish Council (no discussion) There were none raised. 20.0 To Note Date and Time of the Regular Meeting of the Parish Council Thursday 1st June 2023 at 7.30pm in the Community Centre. The meeting closed at 21.46  Signed Chairman of Wellington Parish Council 1st June 2023	SC/ Clerk
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