

WELLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Regular Meeting of the Parish Council held at 7.30pm
on Thursday 1st February 2024 in the Community Centre

Item	Minutes	
	Present: Parish Cllrs: Mr Stephen Crane (Chair), Ms K Parker, Mr S Marron, Mr B Prince, Mr A Spittle, Mr C Williams Also in attendance: Ward Councillor Pauline Crockett, Mrs Chris Bucknell (Parish Clerk) and 7 members of the public including John Hayward (CLP Group), Shirley Edgar (Tree Warden) and Nigel Cooper (Play Area Project) 1.0 To Accept Apologies for Absence –Jules Shaddick (Brook Officer), Jen Jarrett (CLP Group) 2.0 To Receive Declarations of Interest – None 2.1 To Consider Written Requests for Dispensations - There were no requests for dispensation 3.0 To Adopt the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 7th December 2023 Resolved: The Minutes were confirmed and signed by the Chair. 4.0 To Receive Brief Reports 4.1 Ward Cllr Pauline Crockett Cllr Crockett gave the following report Ongoing Consultations: County Plan 2024-2028 Have your say on how we shape the County Plan. Concludes Thursday 8th February 2024. https://consultations.herefordshire.gov.uk/consultations/article/107/county-plan-2024-28-consultation Renewal of Public Space Protection Order. Have your say on the renewal of the Public Space Protection Order (PSPo) for dog control. 15 January to 26 February 2024. See also item 8.4 https://consultations.herefordshire.gov.uk/consultations/article/108/renewal-of-public-space-protection-order-pspo-for-dog-control-consultation Full Council Meeting is next week, Friday 9th February 2024 Agenda for the Budget Meeting includes • Council Tax Premiums on Second Homes and Empty Properties - To confirm the Council's policy on the levying of empty homes and second homes Council Tax Premiums • 2024/25 Council Tax Reduction Scheme - To approve the 2024/25 local Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme. • 2024/25 Capital Investment Budget and Capital Strategy Update - To approve the revised capital investment budget and capital strategy for 2024/25 onwards. • 2024/25 Budget Setting - To approve the 2024/25 budget and associated Medium Term Financial Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy. Cllr Crockett said that, locally, she had continued to support the long overdue Play Area project, (see also item 5.1) and had continued to note and report any highways issues that were brought to her attention, one being the fallen tree in Mill Lane	

	Cllr Crane asked whether there was any update on the relocation of the Library. Cllr Crockett said the debate was ongoing but it looked as if the Library would be going to the Shire Hall. A decision would be made at the March Council Meeting. Cllr Prince mentioned the car parks, particularly the one in Kyrle Street which was used by those visiting the hospital, both payment machines being out of order. Cllr Crockett said she had no update but that the car park was private and not the responsibility of Herefordshire Council. Cllr Spittle asked about the pumping station at The Marsh saying he had contacted Welsh Water who had said they were going to investigate the sewers. Cllr Crockett said she had no update.	
5.0	Communications and Updates 5.1 Update on Play Area Nigel Cooper reported that a draft heads of terms lease had been received before Xmas. He had attempted to clarify a number of points but had been told by Gillian Stratford (Estates Management Officer) that she had only just been made aware of the requirements of the Secretary of State, going back from 23rd April 2023. The revised draft now included these updated terms including a requirement for a 20-year renewable term rather than a single 30-year one which was not renewable. Nigel said that once this lease has been finalised the group will be in a good position with all the required approvals in place. Thanks were given to Cllr Crockett for all her input. 5.2 Update on Community Pub Marc Willimont had taken over from David Wood as Chair of the Pub Group. He was not at the meeting but had sent the following update, which was read out at the meeting: Since our last update the Community Pub Group released a survey online which closed on 31st January. This was accompanied with a Facebook campaign supported with posters around the village and hard copies available from the shop. We are still assessing the responses, of which there are more than 250 and, to date, responses seem encouraging. The Committee next meets on 5th February to determine whether or not there appears to be enough pledged support to repeat the previous share offer in the hope to (1) purchase the property at an agreed market value, and (2) consider if this share offer is likely to raise enough surplus to then repair and improve the building (an amount previously estimated to be similar to the purchase price). If (1) is met, but not (2), the Committee will decide to continue or not with a share release. If it does, additional funds may potentially need to be raised either through further share sales or perhaps grants and donations. However, the committee is yet to consider the responses made to the survey and decide on the way forward. The pub was put on the market in early January for £295,000 (£5,000 less than last time) and 4 members of the Committee were given a guided tour by the Estate Agents. It was noted that the condition has worsened with water ingress in the kitchen and stairwell area. The pub is protected as an 'Asset of Community Value' which means that if the group decides to make an offer, we must notify Herefordshire Council of this intention by 22nd February (6 weeks from our notification). If a bid is agreed we estimate that we have until 11th July before the owner can sell to any group other than our Pub Committee or other such local community group. 5.3 Update on Annual Parish Meeting 2024 This would take place on Tuesday 16th April and Cllr Parker had booked 4 speakers for the evening.	
6.0	Open Time – to Note Matters Raised by Residents Relevant to the Parish Nigel Cooper stated that at the latest School Governors Meeting Section 106 came up with the school wanting to use £50k of the grant to pay for the fencing in preparation for the handover to the Academy. Quentin Mee had said that the grant should be used to benefit the children rather than repair the fence. The Clerk was asked to check this with Andrew Houston and the Section 106 Team.	Clerk

Keith Brimley asked what had happened to the central lining on the village road which had not been reinstated. Cllr Crockett said that Councils were tending not to do this now unless there were specific safety concerns that needed to be managed.

7.0 Financial Matters

7.1 Report from the RFO

Bank Balances as at 04/12/23: Treasurer's Account £20,471.15, Business Instant Access £64,144.67.

Income since the December Meeting

January and February Shop Rent - £1,400 Interest (2 months) - £139.36

Invoice 02/23 – Payment from PCC for Cemetery Maintenance - £1,054.50

7.2 To Approve Invoices Paid Since December Meeting

Payment	Expenditure	Amount
BACS	Clerks Qtr 3 net salary	£1,355.20
BACS	HMRC Payment related to Clerk's Qtr 3 salary	£388.80
BACS	Bradfor's invoice 235/11044037 Kissing Gate for WG9 £496.29 + VAT	£595.55
BACS	Isabelle Barton Cleaning of Parish Room for December	£30.00
BACS	WCA – Hire of Community Room for October/November/December	£45.00
BACS	Gift Voucher for Pam Peters (see December minutes 7.6)	£20.00
BACS	Zoom Subscription for January £12.99 + VAT	£15.59
BACS	Clerks SLCC Membership (73%)	£133.59
BACS	Reimbursement to Jan Lyke for printer ink for Information Pack	£32.97
BACS	BGS Door Solutions invoice 031278 £120 + VAT	£144.00

7.3 To Agree Payments of Outstanding Invoices

Payment	Expenditure	Amount
DD	Airband invoice 666271 WIFI for Parish Room – 18 months £375 + VAT (to come out of CLP Seed Funding Grant). See also item 14.2	£450.00
BACS	Zoom Subscription for February £12.99 + VAT	£15.59
BACS	Isabelle Barton Cleaning of Parish Room for January	£20.00

Resolved: All payments noted and approved

7.4 Lengthsman Grant 2024/25

The Lengthsman Grant for 2024/25 will be £834 and a further £834 available for match funding making an overall total of £2,502 (which includes £834 from the PC in terms of match funding). Confirmation from Herefordshire Council is awaited.

8.0 To Consider Planning Matters

8.1 To Consider New Planning Applications

Reference Number	Application
233651	Kingcup Cottage, Wellington - Proposed erection of a two-storey extension to include demolition of the integral double garage with room above.

Cllr Marron had produced an information sheet showing all the details of this and previous applications; this had been circulated to all Cllrs in advance of the meeting. Cllr Marron gave a presentation to the meeting and the issues raised were discussed at length. The following submission was agreed.

Clerk

The Parish Council does not accept the applicant's assertion that the site is in Flood Zone 1, it is demonstrably in Zone 2, confirmed by EA mapping. Neither does the PC accept the applicant's assertion that "the development of the site is preferred by local and national policy" nor that the application should be approved under the principle of sustainable development.

The PC considers the development to be contrary to National Policy Guidelines, and HFC Core Strategy because the proposed development is in an area not just at risk of flooding but with a past and recent history of repeated flooding. The most recent flooding of neighbouring properties occurred in January 2024 and a larger number of neighbouring and adjacent properties were flooded in February of 2020.

The Environment Agency modelling "Extent of flooding from surface water" shows the risk of surface water flooding at this site.

The PC accepts that, because the application is for extension of an existing building, guidance for selection of an alternative location is not appropriate.

The PC is concerned at any development that could exacerbate the existing risk of flooding for properties at Wellington Marsh. The risk is real; significant flooding of these properties has already occurred on previous occasions. The risk in the future of flooding for the application property, and for neighbouring properties, is forecast to increase both in frequency and extent.

The application as presented contains no consideration of the risk of flooding, neither for the property itself nor for the neighbouring properties, nor does it contain any measures to mitigate or ameliorate those risks.

*This is not acceptable. For the reasons above, the PC **OBJECTS** to this application as it stands and requests that it be refused.*

The Parish Council does not object in principle to an extension of the living space of the property provided that this can be constructed in a way that demonstrably:

- *Does not generate additional flood risk for the extended property*
- *Does not add flood risk to neighbouring properties and buildings*
- *Remedies any flood risks which have arisen from the clearance of trees and vegetation, ground works and the formation of access ways, hard surfacing and hardstanding recently carried out around the property*
- *Includes a plan for landscaping and vegetation to replace the bio-diversity loss from past and recent clearance activities at the property*
- *Does not impose additional hazards at the access point to the A49*

The applicant should be required to demonstrate clearly in the proposal for development how each of these issues will be dealt with and what commitments will be required to ensure that those actions are followed.

If, despite the PC's objections, the application is to be approved, the PC asks for the following conditions:

1. *That site work, including ground works, be halted and no further work be carried out until a comprehensive flood risk assessment of the overall site, the construction proposals and the impact on neighbouring properties has been completed*
2. *That, using the outcome of that assessment, a fully developed plan for storm and surface water drainage of the overall site, (to include access ways and hard standings as well as the proposed buildings), is provided and approved by HFC and by RLIDB*
3. *That the applicant's proposed design resolves the conflict between the requirements for subsidiarity and those measures needed to ameliorate flood risk, eg the raising of floor levels above projected surface water*
4. *That the applicant provides a plan of all external lighting for the site including buildings, access ways and hardstandings, demonstrating no negative impact on neighbouring properties and wildlife*

5. *That a vegetation and planting plan is produced that provides for the replacement and on-going maintenance of all previously removed trees, hedgerows and vegetation*

Clerk

8.2 To Note Any Decisions/Notifications Received

Reference Number	Application	Decision
233560	Flambards Wellington - Works to 8m high (estimated) walnut tree whose trunk is located 1m from the Northern boundary of the property and 9m from the main part of the house (7m from the conservatory). It is too large for a tree so close to the house. The works proposed are a crown reduction of 30-40%.	Approved
233513	The Laurels, Wellington – The holly tree in the front garden requires cutting back to allow light back into the house. The rear boundary would also benefit from height reduction at the request of neighbours whose light is impacted. The height reduction would also benefit an adjacent specimen Tulip Tree (unusually the variegated leaf variety) as more light will be permitted.	Approved
232143 232144	Crossfield, Bridge Lane, Wellington - Proposed new extension, vehicle access and parking area- planning permission and listed building consent.	Refused
192810	Land at Yew Trees, The Row, Wellington – Dwelling with detached garage and vehicle access. Re-Consultation	Approved with Conditions
182878	Land Adjacent to Graveyard, Wellington – proposed erection of 15 dwellings.	Approved with Conditions
233093	Wellington Quarry, Haywards Lane – approval of details reserved by conditions 11, 14, 17 attached to planning permission 224058.	Awaiting Decision
231088	Wellington Chapel, Wellington – Proposed single storey extension and application of render to existing south (front) elevation.	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
210381	Chiropodist Surgery, Marsh House Farm, Wellington. Retrospective change of use of surgery and office to holiday let.	Awaiting Decision

8.4: To Consider any Other Planning Issues

Concern over Condition of Buildings in Bridge Lane – the response circulated at the last meeting has been followed up and an update requested.

Post Meeting Note: Cllr Crockett followed this up and received the following response from Jason Steeple (Enforcement Officer)

In respect of the untidy bungalow, I revisited after I had asked for it to be tidied up, I can confirm that this work has now been completed and the property is a lot tidier / in an acceptable state. Pictures were taken and placed upon my case file. I contacted Building Control for the Listed Barn to be assessed as to whether the current state of it was a danger / posed a risk. They updated me a few

	<i>weeks back to say someone will be out to assess, not heard back as yet. In the interim period of me asking building control, I emailed Debra Lewis, to ask if she had any further information. And she advised me that a Pre-app was in place with a view to making acceptable repairs.</i> This was the followed-up response from, Debra Lewis (Principal Building Conservation Officer) <i>In respect of the listed building I can confirm that discussions with the owner had taken place in 2022, and a pre-planning application enquiry application has now been submitted to discuss the details of the repair and reuse of the building which is currently being considered, and hopefully this will then be followed by a listed building consent application for its repair and re-use.</i> Surface water from the Dingle on Bridge Lane Cllr Crane noted that water was coming off the fields above the Dingle and being pushed down the Dingle by the drainage, which was in need of some fundamental restructuring work. The water then hit the road, taking debris with it. Cllr Crane noted that the application for Crossfield had been refused, one reason being the driveway would put further water onto the Lane and if the application was resubmitted this needed to be given serious consideration. Cllr Crane was currently in consultation with Herefordshire Council Footpaths Team about the issue. Cllr Crane noted that the work done by the bridge to open up the gully had worked well and had addressed the issue of water pooling by the bridge. The sump was working well when there was not a lot of water but being only a 10" pipe it would not be effective in dealing with large amounts of water. Herefordshire Council Local Plan Priorities – see item 4.1. Update on PSPO Spaces –The red line area shown on the map was the part of the school's play area that contained existing play equipment, and, like the school premises was contained within a fence that excluded dogs. It had been understood that once the new village play area was completed it would be included in the dog exclusion area. The Clerk was asked to enquire whether the red perimeter line on the map could be amended to include the new play area but was told that any changes needed to be retrospective once the village play area was in situ. Update on Section 106 – a question was asked about the longevity of grant and the time left to spend it. The Clerk was asked to look into this.	Clerk
9.0	To Consider Highways Issues 9.1 A49 Issues –Cllr Crockett reported that she had attended an exit meeting with Richard Timothy (National Highways) and all outstanding issues had been logged with National Highways but not yet progressed. Road Safety Issues on Dinmore Hill – There had been a minor accident at the bottom of Dinmore Hill, there was no further information. 9.2 To Receive any other Highway Issues – there were no other issues 9.3 Commercial Notices being put up in the Village Following the December meeting the Clerk had been in touch with the ex-owner of the Moreton Fish Bar (the contact on the website) who considered that putting up fliers or leaflets around the village could only benefit local businesses. He felt that raising the issue was uncalled for, saying that the community should work together to enable entrepreneurs to thrive for the benefit of themselves and, most importantly, the communities they provided for. 9.4 Identification of Work to be Carried out and any other Updates Cllr Prince had arranged a meeting with Dave Campbell and the following work agreed. The gullies to be cleaned out on the top road where the spring comes out and the road floods – the ones at the top of the Dingle to the top of Mill Lane. No work on Mill Lane was deemed necessary. Cllr Prince said the biggest job was going to be Auberrow crossroads where the ditch was full of saplings. It was felt this should be cleaned out and dug deeper on both sides. Care must be taken	

	not to affect other areas as there was potential for the water to go down the A49 and into the buildings. Dave Campbell was also considering work on a couple of the village drains. The Dingle had been looked at where trees falling into the Brook had dammed the water up, helping to slow the water down. Cllr Crane said the roadside opposite The Mill needed to be shovelled out as it was full of debris and there were lots of potholes on the road from The Vinery to Xmas Tree Farm. Cllr Prince said Phil Pankhurst (Balfour Beatty) had included this in his latest drive around.	
10.0	Report on Footpaths 10.1 Update on Footpath Maintenance Cllr Crane said, as agreed at the December meeting, a kissing gate had been purchased to replace the stile. Cllr Crane said the landowner was going to delay the installation a little while until the ground dried out. Cllr Crane had received a report about WG25 (path from Auberrow Common to Marsh) which was very muddy due to the ditches being filled in. All other paths were still muddy but drying out well. SC would look at it along with the other paths which he said were still a bit muddy but drying out. Cllr Prince commented about the pedestrian gate on the land by the footpath from the Mill to the Brook, saying it did not separate the field and could be better used elsewhere. Cllr Crane said it needed to be remembered that if people chose not to follow the public footpath that was their choice but as a Parish Council it was necessary to make paths more accessible.	SC
11.0	Wellington Brook 11.1 Brook Officer's Report Jules Shaddick was not at the meeting but had sent the following report about the potential to close off the Ford when needed. There were incidents when drivers attempted to cross the Ford when the brook was too high and their vehicle ended up getting stuck, requiring either local assistance with being pulled out or the attendance of the fire brigade. As happened in November, it can end up with the vehicle being swept downstream. Personal safety was the main issue but having a small bridge downstream of the Ford brought other concerns. A vehicle could block the bridge and potentially cause flooding issues as well as the dangers associated with a vehicle hitting the gas pipe attached to that bridge. Jules had been in contact with Jennifer Allen, the Assistant Drainage Engineer at Balfour Beatty and she had sent the following response <i>We are still working hard to get this up and running in certain areas of the county and in order to prepare for bringing the scheme to Wellington, I will need the following information:</i> • <i>Names of the volunteers</i> • <i>Confirmation of where the signage will be kept</i> • <i>What are the trigger points for closing the road</i> <i>The Volunteers would be registered under HC Volunteer scheme. Therefore they are Volunteers and would not be held responsible if the lane was not closed off in time.</i> In her report Jules asked for the Parish Council to consider the following • Names of volunteers who would be able to put out and put away the signage. • Where signage would be kept – two locations, one either side of the Ford will be required as signage could not be taken over the stile. • Trigger points for closing the road – for example, a certain height of the water on the depth markers	

12.0	Cllr Crane said he had received an email from a resident concerning the flow of water from Mill Lane where the pavement was dropped. Cllr Crane and the resident had been to look at the site and felt that this needed to be taken up with the River Lugg Internal Drainage Board, with maybe a ditch being installed to make water flow more easily to the Brook. Community Led Planning Group 12.1 Update on Projects and Activities Jen Jarrett was not at the meeting, but John Hayward gave an update saying that all activities were continuing well. 12.2 Speed Watch Cllr Williams reported that he had put a notice into Welcome asking for volunteers but to date no one had come forward. To date there were 4 trained people and others were required to undertake the training. There was a national grant for speed calming measures which could be applied for, and Bill Wiggin MP had forwarded all the documentation together with a letter of support that could be included with the application. This had been passed to Cllr Williams. 12.3 Report from the Green Team There were 4 sites around the village where structures had been put up to hang bird feeders and a group of volunteers were regularly filling these up and making daily records of what birds were there and what they had eaten; this was called the FINCH project. At the beginning of March the Green Team should receive 105 trees from the Woodland Trust which will be planted to fill in gaps along the football field and other areas. Some Woodland Trust donations may be used for planting in the gaps of the hedgerow behind Almshouses on A49 and other areas, for example along the A49 towards the Alms Houses. Thanks were given to Bridge Farm who had donated chippings which could be used to mulch around some of the saplings. 12.4 To Approve any Expenditure – there was no expenditure Community Hub 13.1 Update on Community Lottery Project - there was £2,625 remaining which needed to be spent by March 2024. Cllr Crane asked for suggestions about what this could be used for and it was suggested that the wooden fencing may need treating along with the benches which had been donated. Cllr Prince said he would look into this. 13.2 Update on Proposal for WiFi in the Parish Room Jen Jarrett was not at the meeting but had sent in a report. On 2nd January AIRBAND had connected a router to the Parish Room in the Community Hub, this was completely separate from the shop supply. All fixtures and fittings were provided free by AIRBAND. The contract is for 18 months and is in the name of the Parish Council. Cost is £25 per month and the Talk Community Grant has been used to pay for 18 months up front. The router is sited in the corner of the Parish Room between the french windows and the main window over the carpark. It needs to be sited at eye level on a shelf and perhaps enclosed in a small cupboard and this needed to be looked into. Jen Jarrett was querying whether certain sites, such as Amazon or You Tube should be restricted. The Clerk said this may depend on whether there was a download limit on the contract, this would be brought up with Jen Jarrett. It was noted that the installation of the internet had already been well received by several of the regular users of the Parish Room.	BP
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	Security - The internet could be accessed if seated outside but it would require passwords and it is not a "Hot Spot", thus ensuring the security of the supply. Jen Jarrett has the main password for the router. Currently 3 Guest Passwords could be set up and there is one set up for the Library use. Jen Jarrett said the options were 1. One guest password that is pinned up in the room but changed at regular intervals. 2. Each regular user is given their own password 3. When booking the room a password is given to the user 13.3 To Consider any Other Issues or Expenditure There were no other issues or expenditure	
14.0	To Note the Information Sheet (February 2024) and any other updates Resolved: The Information sheet was noted. There were no other updates.	
15.0	To Raise Issues for the next Regular Meeting of the Parish Council (no discussion) Funding for the Wildlife Group to carry out a survey on the Brook	
16.0	To Agree Date for May 2024 Annual Meeting of the Parish Council The first Thursday of May had been booked for the PCC elections. It was therefore agreed to hold the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on 9th May 2024. It was noted Cllr Parker would not be present.	
17.0	To Note Date and Time of the Regular Meeting of the Parish Council Thursday 7th March 2024 at 7.30pm in the Community Centre.  Signed Chairman of Wellington Parish Council 7th March 2024	