

WELLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Regular Meeting of the Parish Council held at 7.30pm
on Thursday 11th July 2024 in the Community Centre

Item	Minutes	
	Present: Parish Cllrs: Mr B Prince (Vice Chair), Ms K Parker (after item 1), Mr A Spittle, Mr C Williams Also in attendance: Mrs Chris Bucknell (Parish Clerk) and 9 members of the public including Nigel Cooper (Play Group), Jen Jarrett (CLP Group), John Hayward (CLP Group), Viv Quinn (Wildlife Group), Shirley Edgar (Tree Warden).	
1.0	To Accept Apologies for Absence – Cllr S Crane, Cllr S Marron, Ward Cllr Pauline Crockett The Clerk confirmed that with 3 Councillors in attendance the meeting was quorate. In the absence of the Chair, Cllr Prince led the meeting, paying tribute to Lesley Brimley who had sadly passed away, saying how very much she had achieved for the village, particularly the church, and her sterling support of the British Legion. She was a regular attender of the Parish Council meetings and would be very much missed. Cllr Parker joined the meeting at this point	
2.0	To Receive Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest	
	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 6th June 2024 Resolved: The Minutes were confirmed and signed by the Vice Chair.	
4.0	To Receive Brief Reports 4.1 Ward Cllr Pauline Crockett Ward Cllr Crockett had recently suffered an accident and was not in attendance but had submitted a report which was read out at the meeting. Herefordshire Council - Cllr Crockett congratulated Cllr Ellie Chowns on her resounding win in the election, saying she was sure she would work hard for the residents of North Herefordshire. The Hereford Public Art Collection and Trail - the Trail is an easy 2-mile loop of Hereford which takes about 1 hour to complete at a moderate pace. Maps can be download from the Herefordshire Council website hereford-public-art-trail-map (herefordshire.gov.uk) The Cost of Living – support remains available through Herefordshire Council. There is help, advice and further information on the Talk Community directory or by contacting the Talk Community Helpline. 01432 260027 or by calling into Blueschool House in Hereford. Free School Meals - The Council continues with free school meals support for Herefordshire children this summer. Over 4,700 Herefordshire children are set to receive free food vouchers for the school holidays, this is possible due to a DWP grant, further information and criteria is available on the HC site. Local interest Cllr Crockett continues to support the Play area project in Wellington and is lobbying for the resurfacing of Mill Lane U72630 through the ‘announcement’ of additional monies for C & U road	

	use. There is still slow movement on planning applications, and Cllr Crockett is following up several that are very overdue with the new Head of Department. There were no questions and Cllr Crockett was wished all the best for a speedy recovery and thanked for all her input into the Parish. 4.2 West Mercia Local Policing Team Update Adam Westlake (not present at the meeting) from the Herefordshire Rural North Team had reported that they were still treating Wellington as a high priority following the latest reported incident where window was damaged at a vacant property. It was noted that there had been criminal damage at the Football Club and Social Club and the Clerk encouraged anyone who had either suffered from, or who had any information on who was responsible for the vandalism, to report it via the website https://www.westmercia.police.uk/ro/report/ or email PC Adam Westlake on adam.westlake@westmercia.police.uk	
5.0	Communications and Updates 5.1 Update on Complaint from Resident The complaint had been withdrawn 5.2 Update on Play Area (see also item 7.4) Nigel Cooper thanked Cllr Crockett for her ongoing help with Play area. An initial draft lease had been issued which subsequently had to be withdrawn and amended. Cllr Crockett was looking into it. 5.3 Representative on WCA This had not been covered at the May meeting as Cllr Parker had not been present. Cllr Parker said she was willing to attend the WCA meetings to represent the Parish Council, but it seemed this required her to be a Trustee and she could not attend in any other capacity. It was agreed to leave this for now and to try and work out a way to liaise with the WCA which did not require a Councillor to become a Trustee. 5.4 Parish Newsletter It was agreed this item would be deferred until all Councillors were present 5.5 Agree Date for Annual Parish Meeting 2025 Cllr Parker proposed either Wednesday 19th March 2025 or 16th April 2025. It was agreed that due to the proximity of the April date to the Easter break it would be better to have the meeting in March. This would be confirmed once Cllr Crane's availability was known. <i>Post Meeting Note: The Annual Parish Meeting has been confirmed for Wednesday 19th March 2025.</i> 5.6 Queenswood Arboretum Open Day and Review of 10-year Management Plan This had been planned for 6th August but it was now uncertain whether this could still take place and Cllr Parker was seeking an update. Information, once known, would be emailed out to Councillors and residents. <i>Post Meeting note: The 6th of August has now been confirmed and posters advertising the event distributed.</i>	SC/ KP KP
6.0	Open Time – to Note Matters Raised by Residents Relevant to the Parish A resident who was not present at the meeting had contacted the Parish Council regarding a concern relating to hedges throughout the village a number of which were becoming overgrown and impinging upon, and restricting, the usable width of the footpath. The Clerk noted that the Parish Council had recently written to 3 residents regarding overgrown hedges and this concern had also been put on Facebook, asking that residents and landowners kept hedges cut back where possible. See also item 11.2 where Shirley Edgar outlined the guidelines for cutting back hedges. Cllr Parker asked, as a resident, if it was normal for debris from hedge cutting to be strewn along the road, citing specifically Mill Lane which had recently been trimmed and large sections of branches and foliage left across much of the road. Cllr Prince said he would ask Connexus to trim the trees back and would mention to Phil Pankhurst about the debris being left of the road.	SC BP

7.0	Financial Matters
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7.1 To Receive a Report from RFO

Bank Balances: Treasurer's Account £19,876.47, Business Instant Access £64,144.67.

Income since the June Meeting

July Shop Rent - £700 Interest - £73.11 Wayleave - £3.55

7.2 To Approve Invoices Paid Since June Meeting

Payment	Expenditure	Amount
BACS	Gift Card for Internal Auditor	£80.00
BACS	Wellington Community Centre invoice 2023-210 and 2023-219 Rent for Community Room	102.50
BACS	Clare Lloyd – cleaning of parish room, toilet and foyer and cleaning supplies	47.30
BACS	D C Gardening invoice SI-1935 Grounds Maintenance for June £705 + VAT	£846.00

Resolved: All Payments noted and approved

7.3 To Agree Payments of Outstanding Invoices

There were no outstanding invoices

7.4 To Consider Request for Grant Funding for Play Area

Nigel Cooper's application for financial support of the Play area had been circulated to all Councillors in advance of the meeting and is outlined below.

Provisional yearly ongoing costs:

- Grass cutting, edge strimming to the foot of fencing and disposal of cuttings: assuming 1 hr/week @ £20/hr for 30 weeks = £600
- Inspection and cleaning of play area: (ie removing & disposal of rubbish etc on ground) 2 visits a week for 52 weeks year = 104 visits @ £15 per visit = £1,560
- Play equipment check: monthly by volunteer from WCA by trustee, Football Club or other responsible person
- Independent annual inspection by accredited inspector required to meet terms of insurance and comply with play equipment guarantee. eg Fran White £100 no VAT
- Fund for replacement and parts: say £200 /yr to build up to £2,000 fund, then topped up as used
- Insurance: paid by WCA as extension to existing playing fields and buildings policy
- Sub total above £2,460 plus allow 3.5% contingency £86
- **Total requested from the Parish Council in the region of £2,546 annually**

It had been decided that a decision on this would not be made until all Councillors were present.

Nigel Cooper gave a brief update saying that the total capital spend would be in the region of £100,000, 50% of which would be covered from Section 106 funding and the remaining £50k from various grant applications.

Nigel Cooper was confident that the capital requirements would be covered but was concerned about the annual costs which, he said, the WCA did not have the funds to cover. The Clerk noted that when the project was first mooted it was made clear that this would be a WCA project and not a Parish Council commitment as the Parish Council did not have the resources for the ongoing management, inspections and upkeep. The Clerk's view was that the Parish Council would be willing to make a one-off donation but not commit to ongoing costs when it was not their project. Cllr Prince raised concern that the Parish Council may not be able to fund a third-party organisation (WCA) on a regular basis and asked that the Clerk enquire about the legalities and practicalities of what was being suggested and this would be brought back to the September meeting.

Clerk

Clerk

8.0

To Consider Planning Matters**8.1 To Consider New Applications**

Reference Number	Application
241315/6	Bridge Lane Farm, Bridge Lane, Wellington. Repairs to collapsing grade II listed smithy, with proposed extension to rear. Photovoltaic solar panels to roof.

The applicant was at the meeting but did not wish to say anything about the application in advance of the discussions. Cllr Marron had prepared a detailed overview of the application which had been circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting, this is summarised below together with the agreed comments from the Parish Council.

Sustainable development

The application is for the rehabilitation and reuse of an existing Grade II listed building, (said by the applicant to be a late 17th century former Smithy). The Smithy is within the conservation area and was first listed in 1985. The building is in a very poor state and the previous application, (refused), was for demolition and replacement. This application is for the rehabilitation within which is the extension of the footprint of the building to allow space for a garage at the lower level and storage at the upper level. The rehabilitation of a listed building by virtue of its conversion to alternate uses can be considered sustainable development provided the conversion maintains the essentials of the original building. The application includes a comprehensive architectural and structural study of the requirements for the rehabilitation of the building and the basis of the proposals for bringing it back into use. The inclusion of solar generation is a positive aspect with respect to the sustainable nature of the application.

Preservation of Character

The application includes a well described overview and comprehensive details regarding the preservation of the large part of the building's character.

Precedent

If granted, approval of the proposal would show a beneficial precedent for the preservation of other listed properties in poor condition.

Relationship to the Adjacent property

The application includes the excavation of the ground behind the property to simultaneously protect the rear wall of the Smithy from ground pressure and to provide the space for the garage extension. There is a significant difference in levels with the Smithy being lower than the adjacent building. The potential impact on the neighbouring property of removal of the built up ground and the construction of the extension is not specifically addressed in the application.

Agreed: Parish Council Submission:

The PC welcomes the intention to rehabilitate the building and the comprehensive and detailed nature of the design statement accompanying the application. The PC accepts the proposal to extend to the rear to provide a useable space and hence for the applicant to benefit from the restoration work.

The PC supports the application with the request that the applicant addresses specifically the issue of the possible impact on the neighbouring property of the reduction in ground levels required to stabilise the rear walls of the Smithy and provide space for the extension.

At the meeting the applicant responded saying that the soil would be excavated in sections and buttressed by panelling while the replacement wall is put in. The applicant said that the soil, which was mainly thick clay, would be packed in the small gap behind this and would not impact on the neighbouring property. The Parish Council noted this, and it was subsequently agreed that this affirmation would be added to the comment.

Clerk

Reference Number	Application
241548	The Harbour, Wellington. A reduction in height of an existing boundary Yew and Hawthorn hedge.

The Tree Warden had been to the site, spoken to the applicant. On her recommendation the Parish Council agreed to support the application.

Reference Number	Application
241329	Land at Southwood House and land at Southwood, Dinmore - proposals to mount 10 photovoltaic panels on the south-end of the property.

Cllr Marron had prepared a detailed overview of the application which had been circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting, this is summarised below together with the agreed comments from the Parish Council.

Sustainable Development

The application is for the installation of 2 sets of solar panels. The scale/area of each set of panels is below the threshold for concern. However, HFC Ecology have raised concerns because the 2 sets **when taken together** exceed the nominal extent allowed without a habitat survey.

The application area is indicated as 2x 20m2 = 40m2 which is greater than the 25m2 statutory BNG exemption. The development sites are existing natural habitats. Relevant information on baseline habitats with degradation/loss due to the solar panels, proposed habitat enhancements to deliver 10%, a 30-year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan and relevant Small Site BNG Metric is requested.

In this concern no consideration had been given that the application is for one set at each of two properties. The sets are physically separate, at different locations and, if applied for individually, each would be within the BNG exemption.

The purpose of the proposal is entirely beneficial, the curtilage of each property is sufficient so that loss of area is not a material concern. The presumption in favour of sustainable development should apply.

Agreed: Parish Council Submission:

The PC welcomes the intention to install solar panels and supports the application.

8.2 To Note Any Decisions/Notifications Received

Reference Number	Application	Decision
241279	Dernside, Bridge Lane, Wellington - Proposed removal of fir tree as it encroaches on growth of Silver Birch and Leylandii either side of it and also two apple trees in garden on opposite side of drive.	Approved
240520	Bankside, Wellington – proposed erection of an extension, introduction of 2 dormer windows and external application of render	Approved with Conditions
240856	Hill Cottage, Derndale Road, Wellington - Proposed partial demolition and extension of existing garage and erection of three cabins, change of use for retreats and holiday lets, domestic polytunnel, deer fence and ponds.	Awaiting Decision

	Reference Number	Application	Decision
	241259	Jahili, Wellington - Proposed internal and external alterations.	Awaiting Decision
	240679	Bankside, Wellington – proposed stables, tack room and store with riding arena, much store and associated hardstanding	Awaiting Decision
	240825	Parks Farm, Canon Pyon – proposed addition of 2 shed buildings to provide outdoor storage with solar panels. New hedges proposed along the boundary.	Awaiting Decision
	210381	Re-consultation of Chiropodist Surgery, Marsh House Farm. Retrospective change of use of surgery and office to holiday let.	Awaiting Decision
	220769	Land East of A49, East of Haywards Lane - PENDING S106 AGREEMENT - Proposed extraction of sand and gravel and the restoration of the site to wetland habitats, formation of a new vehicular access from Haywood Lane, construction of silt/water management lagoons, weighbridge, weighbridge office (portable cabin), welfare building (portable cabin), perimeter screening bunds and construction of a mineral processing plant.	Awaiting Decision
	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, Auberrow - Demolition of existing dwelling and proposed replacement dwelling	Awaiting Decision
	220652	St Margaret's Church, Wellington – proposed change of use from agricultural land to burial ground.	Awaiting Decision
9.0	8.3: To Consider Other Planning Issues Herefordshire Local Plan and Implications for NDP There was no further update and it was noted that there may be further changes following an announcement by the new Home Secretary regarding the NPPF and its relationship with NDPs.		
	Update on Planning Process for 1 Wellington Court Barns It was stressed once again that the query raised at the June meeting was about the process for agreeing the application not the content in terms of what was being proposed. Cllr Crockett had been in touch with the Planning Team and Jack Dyer, Senior Planning Officer had responded that prior notification applications considered very specific criteria that the development either met or did not meet. None of the criteria mentioned conservation areas and so this status did not impact upon how applications were determined.		
	It was agreed that there were no ongoing issues of concern about how the application had been decided and this item would be taken off the agenda.		
	Update on Section 106 Funding There was no further update.		
	To Consider Highway Matters 9.1 A49 Issues There had been no further accidents, but Cllr Spittle told of an incident he had experienced when travelling towards Leominster when a Hereford Quarries lorry pulled out of the turning, crossing the		

	dual carriageway, nearly causing an accident. The same lorry was also driving dangerously at speed up Dinmore Hill. This was reported to Tarmac who were looking into it. Road Safety Issues on Dinmore Hill There were no further issues 9.2 To Receive any other Highway Issues There were no further issues 9.3 Identification of Work to be Carried out and any other Updates There were no issues reported. The Clerk noted that there may be a further Drainage Grant available later in the year.	
10.0	Report on Footpaths 10.1 Update on Footpath Maintenance Cllr Crane was not at the meeting and there was no update 10.2 PROW Grant The Parish Council had not applied for a PROW Grant in 2024/25. It may be that a further grant becomes available, and this will be considered when details are known. 10.3 Update on Accessible Footpath Project The Clerk had agreed with the Community Lottery Fund that the £2,525 outstanding from the shop seating project could be transferred to the accessible footpath project that Mike Lyke pioneered. The expenditure cannot be extended any further than the 14th November although they were happy for the work to continue past that point. Mr & Mrs Rees were present at the meeting and noted that their hesitancy to move forward with the project on their land stemmed from the fact that increased usage of the footpath may result in more dog excrement and other issues. They agreed that they were willing to continue the discussions with Jan Lyke and Jen Jarrett and it was hoped that a mutually acceptable solution could be agreed, which would maximise the use of the Lottery Grant. The Parish Council expressed their gratitude for this.	
11.0	Tree Warden 11.1 Tree Warden Role Shirley Edgar said that the Tree Warden position was to support the Parish Council but also to work with the Tree Council who provided training and guidance in planning and tree and hedge planting. Shirley wanted the Tree Warden role to provide a resource for the village, delivering help and advice to residents. It was agreed that Shirley would put something in writing that could then be put on noticeboards and on social media, letting residents know that help and advice was readily available if they needed it. 11.2 Update on Hedging Rules Shirley Edgar had attended a lecture on the new regulations relating to hedges which came into being at the end of May and will be punishable from the end of July. These required a 2-meter buffer strip on both sides, from the centre of the hedgerow, which needed to be maintained. There should be no cultivation or crop spraying within this 2-metre strip with cutting and trimming banned from 1st March to 31st August unless there were issues of safety, for example visibility splays or line of sight. These rules related to agricultural land not residential, but everyone needed to think carefully and sensitively when cutting back hedges, taking nesting birds into account. The Clerk noted that over the past fortnight 3 residents had been contacted about hedges that were causing issues to those using footpaths and everyone was asked to ensure that paths were kept accessible, particularly for those with pushchairs or mobility aids. A question was asked about trees with Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) with reference to a conker tree at Watermill. Shirley said that there were 2/3 Yew trees with a TPO but she was not aware of any others and none were showing on the Herefordshire Council map.	

12.0 13.0 14.0	Wellington Brook 12.1 Herefordshire Flood Group Meeting A meeting had been arranged for Parish Councils, residents and anyone who was interested in setting up a Flood Prevention Group on Tuesday 16th July at Greyfriars Rowing Club. A report would be given after the meeting. It was noted that Anne-Clare Landolt of IDB was in contact with residents regarding not storing garden waste too near to the Brook. 12.2 Community Flood Signage Scheme A Community Flood Signage scheme was being piloted in the village of Orleton, the aim being to prevent vehicles driving through flood water, as well as preventing accidents, breakdowns, and damage to properties caused by the water. Balfour Beatty have asked if there is a local contact they could work with regarding rolling this project out. This still had to be established. Community Led Planning Group 13.1 Update on Projects and Activities Jen Jarrett reported that the group were particularly active during the Fun Week. As well as doing the usual Coffee Morning and Library sessions they also ran a D Day Coffee Morning with a collage of pictures of friends and family that had served during the Second World War and in particular those involved in D Day. Pictures were also put on display in the Church during Fun Week. Funds raised were donated to the Picnic in the Park. The Group helped organise and put on a folk music night at the Social Club and ran a photographic competition. 13.2 Speed Watch Cllr Williams was still waiting for an update on when this could take place. It was suggested that this project, as it was being managed by the Parish Council, would be better placed under Highways. 13.3 Report from Green Team Shirley Edgar reported that the Green Team had spent an evening clearing up rubbish from the football field and removing growth of nettles etc to ensure newer plants that have been put in thrive, noting that planting in trays with mulch were a better way to support new growth. Bulbs had been purchased for planting in the autumn and the group were open to suggestions about where people would like to see them. 13.4 Wildlife Group Jen Jarrett reported that the Wildlife Group had run several well attended walks around the area including a dawn chorus walk. 13.5 To Approve any Expenditure There was no expenditure Community Hub 14.1 Update on Community Lottery Project This was covered under item 10.3 14.2 Update on WiFi in Parish Room This was now up and running and was being used by the Library and other groups. 14.3 To Consider any Other Issues or Expenditure Cllr Prince noted that a beeping noise had been reported and, on investigation, it had been found that this came from the camera system which was locked in the cupboard. This system had been in place from 2011 and was not monitored, the same area being covered by cameras recently installed by the shop. Cllr Prince had subsequently disconnected the two cameras and was confident the same area would be monitored with the shop cameras.	Clerk
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15.0	To Note the Information Sheet (July 2024) and any other updates Resolved: The Information sheet was noted. There were no other updates.	
16.0	To Raise Issues for the Regular Meeting of the Parish Council (no discussion) Police SmartWater Project, Parish Newsletter	
17.0	To Note Date and Time of the Regular Meeting of the Parish Council Thursday 5 th September 2024 at 7.30pm in the Community Centre. There will be no meeting in August.  Signed 5 th September 2024 Chairman of Wellington Parish Council	