

KIDDERMINSTER FOREIGN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held in Trimpley Village Hall on Monday 20th January at 7.30pm

Present Councillor Mr. B. Phillips Councillor Mr. C Holford Councillor Mr. S. Leigh Councillor Mr. C. Grainger <i>4 members of the public were present.</i>	Councillor Mr. R. Roberts Councillor Mrs. S. Thompson Councillor Ms. R. Norton <i>District Councillors P Harrison & J Byng Mrs E Whitehouse (Clerk)</i>
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Police Report:
The police were unable to be in attendance, but advised that there had been no reported crime in the parish during the past month.
Public Open Forum – Nothing raised.

1. **Apologies For Absence:** Apologies received and approved from County Councillor I. Hardiman

2. **Declarations of Interest/Dispensations:** Interests as previously minuted and declared on central register.
Cllr. Ms. R. Norton expressed an interest in respect of 24/0782/FUL (Revised plans) at The Stables, Hoarstone, and would leave the room when this was discussed.

3. **Approval of the Minutes** The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council Meeting held Monday 16th December 2024 were approved and signed.

4. **County and District Councillors' Reports** -
County Cllr. Hardiman was not present, but had sent the following report.
Local Issues:
Since the December 16th Parish Council, Barry Barnes, Highways Engineer and I met with Chairman Cllr Ben Phillips and Lengthsman Chris Bunn in the Parish; I am pleased to update as follows:
Low Habberley Gullies not performing adequately: *A Highways Works Order has been raised and jetting carried out 3rd January; This will now be monitored.*
Road Verge edging overgrowth / Grips Removal? *Opposite /below entrance to Habberley Trail: Barry Barnes has asked WFDC to mechanically sweep the road edge; he is seeking advice regarding the concrete spillways removal.*
Property Yew Tree Cottage flooding: *Barry Barnes states that WCC Site Survey Engineers attended 19th December; The results were passed to North Worcs Water Management to deal with. This indicates a private drainage issue such as blocked or undefined ditches!*
Trimpley, Around the Corner towards Shatterford- Regular Flooding: *WCC Engineers have jetted but the pipe in the field has blown a hole! further investigation is being carried out here,*
3 Gullies reported by Chairman at Location *__headlight.sleeping.gripes .An Investigation will be carried out here.*
Upper Birch Lane Junction with A442, Mud & Leaves: *I requested help from WFDC who have attended to this.*
Hollies Lane Drainage Issues: *A works order has been raised to clean/jet the gullies and a catch pit here. WCC Drainage Team are aware of issues with the Aco Drain across the drive and have requested a new system be developed. No dates yet set.” (this matter was further discussed with the public present, including where spoil was to be disposed of.)*
Crundalls Lane, Vehicle Speeds: *The only new signage agreeable will be an additional sign warning people of horse riding, near to the Grey Green Lane junction.*
Other Issues outstanding are: *Illegal Signs in Verge outside Habberley Trail./ Buses too Big./ Concrete Backs to Gullies in Hoarstone Lane.*
COUNTY WIDE ISSUES:
Worcs County Council has responded to the Government’s requirement for the District (6) Councils to be abolished along with the County Council to enable the establishment of a Unitary Council; it is likely that the County Elections planned for May this year will be cancelled and that May 2026 will see Elections for shadow coverage of a Unitary Council operating until May 2027 when Worcestershire will be administered fully by a Unitary only.
WCC has now published its draft budget showing a net revenue budget of £495million, the highest ever! Council Tax is proposed to be an increase of 2.99% / Adult Social care levy of 2%. WCC will not receive a penny of a new £600million pot for councils (recovery Grant) - the money will instead be diverted to urban metropolitan areas!
Due to Social care funding pressures Home to School Transport and SEND will have a funding gap of circa £33million. This year WCC will have to use £22million of Reserves to balance the budget. This is not sustainable!”
Clerk was instructed to send an email to both Cllr. I Hardiman and Barry Barnes from Worcestershire County Highways to thank them for coming out on 23rd December (so close to Christmas) for a site meeting to view problems in the parish.
District Councillors Report: - A discussion took place concerning the Unitarisation of the County, where District Councils will be disbanded. County Elections are likely to be postponed. This will have major effects on how local areas were managed.
It was noted that Habberley Lane would be closed from Trimpley crossroads - 25th and 26th Feb, for works by Severn Trent.

5. **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL:**

a) **New Planning applications:**

24/0844/FUL Change of use of agricultural building for general industrial purposes (Use Class B2) at Northwood Farm, Northwood Lane, Bewdley, Worcestershire

(Clerk had already shared 2 letters received from parishioners in connection with this application)

Comment: *"The Parish Council wish to object strongly to the proposed change of use.*

We object to the terminology "General Industrial Purposes" since this could cover many future uses, apart from the small scale shed production proposed. Also, we are concerned that the size of production may increase considerably in the future, since the applicant has a full scale shed production facility in the West Midlands, and any permission granted limiting future size of production at this site would be difficult to enforce by condition. This site is entirely rural in nature, and unsuitable for such an enterprise.

We also object most strongly on grounds of access along the very narrow Northwood Lane. This lane is unsuitable for deliveries of an industrial nature, however infrequent it is claimed these would be. The proposed use would undoubtedly increase traffic, and in particular vehicles of a large nature, and we would be fearful that any permission granted, with conditions limiting type and frequency of access, would be difficult to enforce. We would remind the Planning Authority that prior to the unauthorised dog breeding usage at this site, and some years ago, our councillors have recollections of a different property on this lane being refused planning permission for such usage on grounds of access along Northwood Lane. The Parish Council have also been made aware of instances, in recent times, of emergency vehicles blocking access, when attending incidents, and residents being unable to pass to their properties along the lane – such is the narrow nature of the lane.

We would also be disinclined to support such a use from these premises, since there appears to be little regard for current noise nuisance issues to local residents, since WRS have already issued Notice in respect of noise from barking dogs. This problem is still currently on-going, and therefore any noise from a new industrial usage may also be treated with such lack of regard for local residents.

We therefore recommend that this application be refused for these reasons."

24/0782/FUL (Revised plans) Installation of ground mounted solar panels in field adjacent, including associated infrastructure at The Stables, Hoarstone Court, Hoarstone Lane, Trimpley

(Cllr. Ms Norton declared an interest and left the room).

Comment: *"We appreciate the Planning Officer's comments and answers to our questions in respect of this application, and also commend this conversion to "green energy". We understand that the Planning Authority are minded to give approval in this instance, and so therefore would make the following observations to be clarified and incorporated into any permission granted.*

a) *We understand that the County Archive and Archaeology Service have been consulted, and have no objection to the installation, as being far enough away from the listed building(s) to cause no appreciable harm.*

b) *If permission is granted, we would like to see a Condition that a new screening hedge is planted so that the panels would not be obtrusive to those accessing the properties adjoining this site.*

c) *The revised plans indicate an area adjacent to the panel site for Biodiversity Net Gain. With new Scoping Planning Regulations requiring this percentage Net Gain, a full condition must detail how this is to be achieved, how it will be assessed, and also how it will be monitored, and by whom, over the required ensuing 30 years.*

If all these conditions can be met and an enforceable plan drawn up to ensure monitoring and compliance of these conditions over the period of time, then we would offer no further objections."

(Cllr. Ms. Norton returned to the room).

b) Update on Previous applications:

23/0538/SCR Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion at Trimpley Reservoir, Eymore Green, Trimpley, Bewdley - Pending Decision.

24/0322 & 3/HOU Reconstruct former dovecote with glazed lean-to to create annex accommodation, including link extension to main dwelling at: Hoarstone Farm Trimpley, Bewdley – Pending Decision

24/0654/PNR – Barn at Park Attwood Farm, Trimpley Lane – Change of use from Agricultural to Residential Permission granted

24/0720 - Replacement visitor centre in association with Habberley Trail including demolition of existing visitor centre, at Outdoor Adventure Centre, Habberley Road, Low Habberley –Pending Decision (Clerk advised that this was to be considered tomorrow at District Planning meeting with an officer recommendation for approval).

24/0767/FUL Change of use of land to form extended domestic curtilage and erection of garage extension at 4 Honeybrook Cottages, Bridgnorth Road, Kidderminster – Permission Refused

24/0782/FUL Installation of ground mounted solar panels in field adjacent, including associated infrastructure at The Stables, Hoarstone Court, Hoarstone Lane, Trimpley – Pending Decision (see revised plan)

c) Compliance Issues/Appeals and other planning matters –

i) **Oak Meadow Farm (Off Honeybrook Lane) - Appeal 24/008 Lodged re Enforcement Notice served – Decision awaited**

ii) It was noted that the **Lea Castle Quarry appeal** in neighbouring Wolverley and Cookley parish had been dismissed.

6.	<p><u>Progress Reports and other Outstanding Items</u> <u>Highway Matters .</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VA Signs – New pole now installed in new location, and VA Sign erected. Minute closed. • District Council Promotional Assistance – Clerk had drawn up a rough outline of artwork for the rear wall of the purchased gazebo, showing a view of the reservoir and had also incorporated the logo sent by Wyre Forest District Council. She had also chased up payment of the 50% contribution offered by WFDC, and had been advised that this was being processed, and should shortly be transferred. • Drainage area behind Ferndale – to be dug out by Blakeways – Cllr. Grainger would follow up. • Roadside Hedges – Habberley Lane – still not cut back. It had been left for this matter to be sorted out between developer and County Highways. Clerk to follow up as it appeared a stalemate had occurred. • Bus Service (297) through Trimpley – (size of buses) – no progress made. • Hollies Lane Sump Spoil –As reported in County Councillor I Hardiman’s report. • Water Hydrants - Minute closed. • Sewage leak – near to Park Attwood – Although reported, it was decided not to follow up until better weather had arrived, showing a more obvious flow. • Open Reach – Clerk was asked to report a cable down and resting on top of hedge in Hoarstone Lane.
7.	<p><u>Severn Trent Works (and associated traffic) in Trimpley</u> The lack of signage re heavy goods usage, the damage to verges and grips, and in particular the muddy state of the roads, was discussed at length. Clerk was to contact STW again, with further pinch points where disruption to passing traffic and residents was being caused, including temporary work sites opposite Rosemary Cottage, at Park Attwood, and near to Myndholm. She would also ask if an assessment at the end of the contract could be undertaken with the Parish Council to highlight some of the areas which had been damaged, and would also ask if there was to be any community grant funding available from STW to help rectify the impact on the parish.</p>
8.	<p><u>Roadside Drainage/flooding at Yew Tree Cottage – Eymore Lane</u> (see County Cllr. I Hardiman’s report) that despite inspection this was considered to be a private matter. Chairman would report to householder.</p>
9.	<p><u>Approval of New Documents – Asset Register for 2025 and Risk Management</u> Clerk had revised these documents, and they were approved by Councillors.</p>
10.	<p><u>Lengthsman and Footpath Clearance Matters</u> a) Lengthsman – Invoice for December work had been circulated and was approved by Councillors. b) Rights of Way – The ROW reported flooded by the stream (Easthams area) at the last Parish Council meeting was still flooded, but would be monitored. The ROW Warden also advised that paths near to the River also remained blocked by fallen trees.</p>
11.	<p><u>Financial Reports –</u> a) Ratification of payments to be made – a) Payments confirmed – Lengthsman Work Dec 24 – C. Bunn - £ 214.50; EM Davis Industrial – Lettering for Roll of Honour Board, S. Thompson - £10.00 (Lettering left with the Chair) Councillor to authorise: Cllr. Richard Roberts. c) Electronic Banking – No further progress. Cllr. Thompson said she was awaiting a card, and would chase this up. c) Precept Setting for 2025/26 - After much discussion, including the implication of Local Government Reform, and devolution, and possible affect this may have on Parish Councils’ responsibilities and expenditure in the future, it was decided that there would need to be a considerable increase from what had been the lowest parish rate in the District. Also, at the moment there was no cap on the Precepting of parishes, which may be introduced by the Government in the future, on a percentage basis. On a vote therefore, it was decided to increase the precept by 20% to £6263.40pa. Clerk to advise the District Council by the deadline of 7th February.</p>
12.	<p><u>Worcestershire CALC Reports & County and District & other Correspondence –</u> District Council – Planning Obligations – Scoping Paper – Clerk had already asked for clarification from the District Councillors about this new paper, which would require comment before the next Parish meeting. Much seemed to be focused on BNG (Biodiversity Net Gain) and the monitoring of this after applications had been approved. Wyre Forest Clerks’ Gathering (Bewdley) focusing on Government Re-organisation – Clerk advised that she felt she should attend this free meeting at the end of January, to gain an insight into forthcoming legislation and moves towards Unitary Local Government. Councillors agreed that she should attend and report back.</p>
13.	<p><u>Road Accident Record –</u> None known. One “near miss” was reported by one councillor, involving his own vehicle and meeting the bus, which was travelling too fast for the narrow road.</p>
14.	<p><u>Other Matters</u> 80th Anniversary of VE Day – Cllr. Grainger advised that he did not think he would be able to organise a beacon as in past celebrations, and a short discussion ensued as to how to mark the occasion locally. Noticeboards – a general discussion took place re the backboards in noticeboards to make them more user friendly when sticking in drawing pins. Clerk would look at sourcing a suitable material.</p> <p>Also a short discussion took place concerning the removal and re-distribution of top soil and what regulations were involved.</p> <p>Next Meeting Confirmed – Monday 17th February 2025 The meeting closed at 9.43p.m. Chairman _____</p>