

KIDDERMINSTER FOREIGN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting
held in Trimpley Village Hall on Monday 19th May at 7.30pm

	<p>Present Councillor Mr. B. Phillips Councillor Mr. C Holford Councillor Mr. S. Leigh Councillor Mr. C. Grainger 2 members of the public were present.</p>	<p>Councillor Mr. R. Roberts Councillor Mrs. S. Thompson County Councillors J. Shaw and D. Morehead Mrs E Whitehouse (Clerk)</p>
	<p>Police Report: PCSO Jeni Bray had advised that the police were unable to attend and sent apologies. She also advised that she and PC Marc Ginder had done several evening patrols at the reservoir car parks but have not found anything of note. PC Ginder carried out speed enforcement on the 19th April at Low Habberley, and one speeding offence was reported.</p> <p>Public Open Forum – A member of the public commented that the Jacob’s Ladder Bridlepath that comes out at Habberley Trail entrance had been cut back very well, and he was very pleased to report this. However, there remained on the path at the Easthams Lane end one tree with a very low branch that needed cutting back, as it was an height impediment to horseriders, on safety grounds.</p>	
1.	<p>Appointment of Chairman for 2025-26 It was proposed, seconded, and unanimously agreed for Cllr. Phillips to carry on in the role of Chairman for a second year. Cllr. Phillips accepted the appointment, and duly signed the acceptance of office form.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies For Absence: Received from Dist. Cllr. J. Byng.</p>	
3.	<p>Declarations of Interest/Dispensations: Interests as previously minuted and declared on the central register. Cllr. Holford declared an interest in ROW creation at Low Habberley and would leave the room when the item arrived for discussion.</p>	
4.	<p>Approval of the Minutes The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Wednesday 16th April 2025 were approved and signed.</p>	
5.	<p>Appointment of Vice Chair for 2025-26 It was unanimously decided and RESOLVED that Cllr. Holford be appointed as Vice Chair. Cllr. Holford accepted office.</p>	
6.	<p>Appointment of PROW Warden for 2025-26 It was unanimously decided and RESOLVED that Cllr. Roberts should continue in office. Cllr. Roberts was happy to continue.</p>	
7.	<p>Appointment of CALC Representatives for 2025-26 It was unanimously decided that Cllr. Holford should continue as CALC Representative, and he was happy to do so. Clerk drew members attention that the Parish could and indeed should appoint 2 representatives, although no other councillors wished to stand in this role at the current time. It was agreed to appoint a further representative at a later date.</p>	
8.	<p>Appointment of Tree Wardens and regular Lengthsman Liaison It was unanimously decided that Helen Ralls and Martin Delayhay should continue in office. Clerk to contact them, and thank them for previous work, and it was further unanimously RESOLVED that Cllr. Phillips should continue to liaise with the Lengthsman.</p>	
9.	<p>Appointment of Village Hall Representatives and Blount Charity Representative It was unanimously RESOLVED that Cllr. Leigh should continue as Village Hall representative for 2025/26. Following the resignation of Becci Norton from the Parish Council there was a vacancy for a further representative, which it was agreed should be appointed at a later date.</p>	
10.	<p>Annual Chairman’s Report for 2024/25 – Cllr. B. Phillips - It was agreed that Cllr. Phillips would table this at the next meeting. Clerk to place on agenda.</p>	
11.	<p>County and District Councillors’ Reports - The two new County Councillors covering our now warded parish were Cllr. J. Shaw, and Cllr. D. Morehead, and they were in attendance. The Chair welcomed them to the meeting, but as new to the positions they had no report to present at the moment. Cllr. Grainger drew C. Cllr. Morehead’s attention to HGV’s accessing Bewdley via Grey Green Lane, which was causing traffic problems. These vehicles were thought to be going to the Bewdley Bridge repair works, and they were taking that route to avoid temporary lights at Catchems End. District Councillors’ Report: No District Councillors were present.</p>	
12.	<p>PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL: a) New Planning applications: 25/0372/CLE Certificate of Lawfulness for Existing use as non-agricultural dwelling since 2015 – Hoarstone Lodge, Hoarstone Lane, Trimpley Comment: “We have no knowledge to either prove or disprove the continuous occupation in contravention of Condition 2 of KR/0025/67 which is being claimed, nor does the application documentation submitted give satisfactory evidence to this fact. Provided the case officer can be fully satisfied from evidence which should be produced for them, before determination, that this has been the case, we would offer no objections.” 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 – “Not Proceeding”. (Closed).</p>	

	<p>Clerk advised that an unresolved discrepancy regarding ownership had led to the District Council closing this.</p> <p>c) Compliance Issues/Appeals and other planning matters –</p> <p>i) Oak Meadow Farm (Off Honeybrook Lane) - Appeal 24/008 Lodged re Enforcement Notice served – Decision awaited</p> <p>ii) 4 Honeybrook Cottages, Bridgnorth Road, Kidderminster – Appeal Ref APP/R1845/W/25/3359910 against refusal of 24/0767 Change of use of land to form extended domestic curtilage + garage extension – Decision awaited.</p> <p>iii) Enforcement matters in respect of Northwood Farm – Nothing further to report.</p> <p>iv) Northwood Farm Matters – It was reported that there were still on-going issues concerning water supply to some of the residences on Hill Farm. Severn Trent would not intervene, as this is on private land. The previous landowner had been contacted, and had knowledge of weak points in the water system. However, the supply of water, or lack of supply, on this site is a civil matter, in which the Council could not intervene, being on private land.</p>
13.	<p><u>Progress Reports and other Outstanding Items</u></p> <p><u>Highway Matters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KFPC/District Council Gazebo Purchase + Promotional banners – Cllr. Holford had purchased the District Council promotional banners to fix to the gazebo. It was agreed to reimburse the cost of £9.60 • Roadside Hedges – Habberley Lane – The hedge had still not been cut back. • Bus Service (297) through Trimpley – (size of buses) – no progress made. • Backing Boards for noticeboards – A vote of thanks was given to Cllr. Roberts and his wife Janet who had sourced, painted and fitted the metal backing for the Trimpley and Low Habberley noticeboards. This had been a great improvement. In addition he had also had extra sets of keys cut, as only one set seemed to exist for each board, and total reimbursement costs of £215.82 were approved to be paid. • Severn Trent Reinstatement Works – Clerk had received an email from STWA concerning the road edge surfaces and hedgerow reinstatement. They denied that the damage done to the road edge was entirely due to their contractor's traffic, but it was felt by councillors that even if this was the case, it had most certainly hastened the road's deterioration. In respect of hedgerow reinstatement, and concern expressed that this was the wrong time of year to be planting whips, it was noted that STWA had undertaken to reinstate everything to as before construction, no construction accesses will be left as permanent, and our land agents are aware of this if landowners raise this question. Some landowners had taken issue with concrete (inspection?) chambers which had been installed in the middle of fields causing inconvenience to local farmers. • It was also noted that there had been Extra pipes installed at the sludge pool. No one present had any definite answer as to what this was for, but assumed that it was associated with the cleaning out of the sludge pool.
14.	<p>Community Governance Review – A poll had taken place within the parish concerning change of boundary to exclude the Habberley Park Development, and move the parish boundary back to the next hedge line in the direction of Low Habberley village. The result had been 158 in favour – 75 against, and so steps would now be taken by the District Council to implement this change. Further details were awaited to be confirmed once the full Council at Wyre Forest had discussed the poll result.</p>
15.	<p>Casual Vacancy – Clerk advised that following the requisite period of time, no poll had been claimed in the parish, and so the Council could now move to co-opt to fill the vacancy. Clerk had already circulated draft copies of an application form to councillors, and now provided a hard copy to each councillor. Further copies could be downloaded from the Parish website from a link on the homepage. Clerk also provided hard copy notices for the parish noticeboards. It was decided that although a closing date of 13th June had been put on paperwork by the Clerk, that if no applications had been received by this date, that the closing period be left open, so as not to deter applicants, and in that case, Clerk would prepare new paperwork for the next meeting..</p>
16.	<p><u>Lengthsman and ROW Matters</u></p> <p>a) Lengthsman – Clerk had circulated the Lengthsman's invoice for April which was approved for payment. She had also received the Parish Contract from the lengthsman duly signed for 2025/26, along with a copy of his public liability insurance.</p> <p>Bus shelters</p> <p>In respect of possible preservative work to the bus shelters, and noticeboards, the Clerk had received advice from Ade Williams, (who built the shelters) who had stated that the bus shelters were made of cedar, which really did not require preservatives. A light clean may be in order with soapy water. If you really must use a preservative he suggested a water based one or. Alternatively, apply a protective coat of oil, Osmo for example. No decision to undertake any work in this respect was taken.</p> <p>With regard to the Noticeboards –it was decided that the two in Trimpley and the one in Low Habberley would perhaps benefit from a revarnish, but it was decided to leave this for a further 12 months. Councillor Grainger advised that the Noticeboard at Crundalls Lane did not require any maintenance at the moment.</p> <p>b) Rights of Way –</p> <p>Seasonal Growth Clearance – Clerk had received an email from the Countryside Service concerning the growth clearance this year on the list of PROW provided by Cllr. Roberts, which stated</p> <p><i>"We have asked the contractor to do your parish earlier in the season so it's likely we are looking at May/early June. The parish can of course also trim paths via the lengthsman so that might be useful later in the season if some would benefit from a second cut."</i></p>

It was noted that many of the paths had already been cut. Some may require a second cut, but if the lengthsman was to be used to do this, then it would either have to come out of the lengthsman's annual budget set aside for the highways, or be funded by the Parish Council.

Creation of Several New Footpaths to the rear of Ferndale and houses in Low Habberley – Ref M-2066

Cllr. Chris Holford left the room.

Clerk had submitted the following comment which had been agreed by councillors

"The existing official definitive Rights of Way on this land are not often used. They cut diagonally across farmland and are frequently covered by crops, which are not kept clear of planting by the current farmer, and so the public tend to use the field edges to walk, which is probably mutually beneficial, although also technically trespass. Also, field hedges that previously existed are no longer present.

Being adjacent to the built-up area of Kidderminster, there is a lot of unofficial use of these fields and has been for many years, by walkers, joggers, and dog-walkers, and the Parish Council would like to see this officially recognized. However, we have a little concern about privacy issues for residents whose gardens back on to this field, and hope that local residents have been given ample opportunity by the County Council to comment if this impacts on them.

We do also feel that the number of paths proposed is a little excessive, although all are, and have been walked for some time, and if not incorporated into the definitive map, will continue to be used unofficially. Are there any proposals to close the existing Rights of Way – as some do form a link to other definitive paths further afield, and these links may thus be lost?

*If the decision is made to create these paths, then they should be **very clearly marked** with signage, and in addition have signs asking walkers to keep both themselves, and any accompanying dogs to the definitive path route, and not to stray, or let animals loose to stray, across the field and any crops planted there, and disturbing resident wildlife – e.g. hares, ground nesting birds. We do feel very strongly about this, since there have been incidences of dogs disturbing wildlife in the middle of these fields. Signs requesting dogs should be kept on leads at all times, and dog faeces cleaned up would be advised.*

As a postscript, this field has been identified by the District Local Planners as potential development land in the future, and should this arise, our Parish would most certainly oppose this encroachment of Kidderminster Town towards the village of Low Habberley. In this respect, it is perhaps of benefit to local people to make these routes, currently being walked unofficially, as officially recognized definitive rights of way, to preserve them from being lost to future development should this occur, and also to create a green definitive break to try to prevent further encroachment on the village of Low Habberley."

It had been confirmed by the Countryside Service at the County Council that our comment had been received and attached to the file. However, it seemed that there may be quite a long delay before any decision is reached.

Cllr. Chris Holford returned to the room.

Flooded path near to Easthams It was reported by a member of the public that Jon White from the Countryside Service had been out and agreed works with the landowner, and included in the discussion was the affect it may have on fish further down the stream. The Landowner had agreed to undertake the necessary works to get the stream to flow in normal conditions. As this was part of a circular recreational route, it was hope that the works would soon be instigated.

17. **Financial Reports –**

- a) **Ratification of payments to be made – a) Payments confirmed –** Lengthsman April Invoice - £204; Reimbursement to Cllr. Holford for Gazebo sign - £9.60 ; Reimbursement to Cllr. Roberts re materials required for work to Noticeboards - £ 215.82; Zurich Insurance – Annual premium - £420.76; T. Stanley – Internal Audit Fee - £75. Councillor to Authorise: Cllr. S. Thompson. (Clerk to offer assistance if necessary).
- b) **Audit Details –** Clerk had submitted the (small parish) exemption certificate to PKF Littlejohn, and had arranged the internal audit with Mr. T. Stanley. This had been completed with no issues raised, and the Clerk presented the Internal Audit report to Councillors. Clerk had also provided copies of notices in respect of period for public to exercise their Right to Inspection, and kindly requested that these be displayed on the noticeboards, as well as provided as links on the Council website (as was required by law).
- c) **Insurance –** Clerk advised that Personal Accident Cover for Councillors did not apply to Councillors over the age of 75 whilst on council business. Public Liability Cover however covered councillors to the age of 90. Cllr. C Holford asked the Clerk to forward a copy of the policy to him..
- d) **Electronic Banking –** no further progress made.

18. **Worcestershire CALC Reports & County and District & other Correspondence –**

- a) **Digital and Data Compliance –** Clerk had received a quote for the transition from Vision ICT, our current website host and support. She circulated details of this to all councillors present. It was RESOLVED to proceed with the Domain Change for the Website (@ £125) plus on-going domain renewal @ £65 every 2 years, plus email migration of the existing Clerk Gmail account to the new .gov.uk address – with a £35 one-off cost.
- b) **Parish / District Forum Dates –** these had been advised from District as being **Monday 8th September 6.30 – 9.30pm 2025 via Zoom** and **Mon 16 Mar 2026 18:30 – 21:30 via Zoom** (this latter date would clash with our arranged PC Meeting).
- c) **SVR – Embankment Fires –** Clerk had contacted the company asking what measures were being taken to avoid these, particularly in the recent dry and hot conditions, and was awaiting a reply.
- d) **Defibrillator provision – Low Habberley –** Clerk had received an enquiry from a resident at Fountain Court to see if a defibrillator could be provided in Low Habberley. A site suggested by the resident was near to the bus shelter. However, although grants and deals could perhaps be found for a conventional

defibrillator, these required a power supply, which had to be paid for. The power supply suggested was perhaps from the removed telephone kiosk, but this was no longer in situ, and also the power would be an on-going cost. Clerk would check to see if there would be the possibility to install a solar-powered machine – but it was thought that these were much more expensive. The Clerk also suggested that perhaps enquiries could be made at the Habberley Trail for provision of a machine site. [More information was to be acquired for a discussion at a subsequent meeting.

- e) **Green belt / Gray belt** – a discussion had taken place at the last CALC meeting in connection with these zone allocations, and a report circulated by Cllr. R. Drew from Wolverley and Cookley was to be circulated to all councillors

19. **Road Accident Record** – No new accidents reported.

20. **Other Matters**

Road VA Sign at Hoarstone Lane – Cllr. Roberts presented data collected from the VA Sign (in a 40mph) showing a lot of vehicles travelling at 60mph+, some at 70mph+ and one at 80mph. The timing of the worst speeding occurred between 4 – 6p.m. at night. The positioning of this sign was to slow down traffic on approach to the crossroads at Trimpley, where it was particularly hazardous for people exiting from Halls Farm Lane. County Councillor Shaw asked if the information could be shared with her and with police, and she would make enquiries about a radar box provision from the County Council. Another solution, suggested by Cllr. Morehead was to set up a Community Speed Watch scheme. The Clerk advised that the Parish had looked into this for Low Habberley, but due to the red tape and regulations involved meant that it never came into being.

A discussion took place also about whether the 20mph areas in local towns and also parking on pavements was enforced.

Next Meeting Confirmed – **Monday 16th June 2025**

The meeting closed at 9.30p.m.

Chairman

