

MATHON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Wednesday 7th MARCH 2018 at 7.30 pm. in Mathon Parish Hall

Present:- Cllr S Harte, Cllr R Lawrence, Cllr N Walker

In attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Mr David Baldwin, Mr C Rouse (Malvern Hills Trust)
Co Cllr T Johnson

Apologies for absence - Cllr C Green, Cllr P Davies (due to holiday commitments)

DECLARATIONS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPI) or other DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS falling within the terms of para 12(4)(b) of the Code of Conduct.

Cllr N Walker declared a disclosable interest in item 11(i) on the Agenda

Written Requests from Councillors for the Council to Grant a Dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) - No requests had been received by the Clerk relating to any items on the present Agenda

The Chairman adjourned the Meeting for Public Question Time/Participation.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- (a) No public questions
- (b) **PCSO/Police** – No crime to report.
- (c) **Herefordshire Councillor** - Co Cllr T Johnson reported that he would be standing down as Leader of Herefordshire Council from 8th March, after being Leader for five years. Her would be staying on as a Ward Councillor and would be seeking re-election in May 2019. A Peer Review Challenge of the Council had taken place and as a result Herefordshire had come out quite well. The Secretary of State had made the decision to close the Roberts Owen Academy School in Hereford. Overall the Council's finances were looking a lot better than expected, with reserves of around £14M. By 2020 Local Authorities will lose central funding altogether, although there would be other avenues of support. The sale of smallholdings would raise about £50M, with the Council retaining a few sites. The Council had won its action against Amey, which would also improve finances. However, the Council needed to grow the economy to keep pace with the demographics of the County. By 2030 one third of the population would be over 60. At the present time for every £1 the Council spends 76p. on social care. The University project was going very well, and sites were being earmarked for student accommodation. As a Ward Councillor he would be pushing for better communication with Parish Councils, and would endeavour to ensure that grants such as the P3 for footpaths would be retained and if possible increased. However, the County Council had to weight up the priorities in spending.
- (d) **Malvern Hills Trust** - Mr David Baldwin and Mr Chris Rouse reported to the meeting. The Trust had been working on a Brief for mountain biking on the Hills. The Trust would be shortly publishing a book called "The Nature of the Malverns" The Trust was working on the new GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) and reviewing their Health & Safety Policy. Susan Satchell was looking into the possibilities of using the spoil coming off the rockface of the hills.

The Chairman re-opened the Meeting

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3rd January 2018 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr R Lawrence. The Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 21st February 2018 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr R Lawrence.

11/18 RESIGNATION

Due to health problems Cllr T Ainscough had submitted his resignation to the Council on 21st February. The Council wished to record their appreciation of the work Cllr T Ainscough had done for the Parish Council during his time in office – not least as Footpaths Officer and for safeguarding the Parish Map. The Clerk was asked to write to Mr Ainscough expressing the gratitude and appreciation of the Council.

12/18 FOOTPATHS/P3

Due to the resignation of Cllr T Ainscough a discussion took place regarding a suitable replacement Footpaths Officer, without which the Council could not continue with the P3 scheme for 2018/19. Cllr N Walker agreed to speak to a prospective candidate for this position.

13/18 REPORTS

The Clerk had previously drawn the attention of the Council to the change of the laws relating to Data Protection which would come into force in May 2018. One of the requirements was for the Council to appoint a Data Protection Officer (DPO) which could not be the Clerk. She had received an offer of DPO services from Diane Malley of DM Payroll Services who had a Certified General Data Protection Regulation Practitioner included on her staff. The fee would be £250 for Mathon, with a reduction if another Council came on board. After a short discussion, the Council agreed to the recommendation of the Chairman and Clerk to appoint a DPO from DM Payroll Services. Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr R Lawrence.

14/18 PARISH HALL

Nothing to report at the moment on either the Parish Hall or Parish Map.

15/18 FINANCE

To consider payment of Accounts:-

- (a) Clerk's Salary - February/March 2018 - £357.90 (net) Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr S Harte
- (b) HMRC PAYE – (Jan/Feb/March 2018) - £95.40. Proposed by Cllr R Lawrence and seconded by N Walker
- (c) Mr E Stewart (Footpaths) Invoice ES 008 Sept/Oct 2017 £594 (paid on 29/01/18 but to be approved) - Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr R Lawrence
- (d) Mr E Stewart (Footpaths) Invoice ES 009 Feb 2018 £60.00 – proposed by Cllr R Lawrence and seconded by Cllr N Walker.
- (e) HALC Subscription & NALC affiliation Fees 2018/19 - £340.98. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr N Walker
- (f) Hire Fees – Mathon Parish Hall - £48.00. Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr R Lawrence
- (g) Clerk's Office – 1st October 2017 – 31 March 2018 - £70.00. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr N Walker
- (h) Clerk's Expenses – 1st October 2017 – 28th February 2018 - £107.92. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr N Walker

- (i) Donations/Grants to PCC re graveyard maintenance. The Clerk had received advice from NALC (National Association of Local Councils) stating that in their view it may not be legally valid for Parish Councils to give financial assistance to property, buildings or land relating to the affairs of the Church. This would mean that the Council would be unable to give the annual grant to Mathon PCC for the maintenance of the church graveyard (unless it was a closed churchyard). However, through the good offices of Cllr N Walker, advice had been sought from a retired Circuit Judge who lived in Mathon. He had studied all the details of the NALC document and had concluded that “it was lawful for the PC to give financial assistance to the PCC to contribute to the expenses of providing a cemetery in which residents in the PC’s area may be buried.” In view of this advice, the Council agreed to continue to fund graveyard maintenance. A full transcription of this advice to be filed in the Minute Book.
- (j) Internal Audit Review & Appointment of Internal Auditor - the Clerk had circulated a Review which was agreed by the Council. The Council also agreed to appoint Mr Hugh Wagstaffe as Internal Auditor for the Council. The Clerk to write to Mr Wagstaffe. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr R Lawrence.

16/18 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Clerk reminded the Council that the Annual Parish Meeting date had been set for **Wednesday 2nd May at 7.00 pm** in the Parish Hall. A request had been received from Malvern Hills Trust for Board Members to give a presentation to the Council and members of the public at that meeting. The Council agreed to this request.

17/18 PLANNING

The Council discussed the merits of an “Overview” of Planning to be taken into account when considering planning applications. In accordance with comments made by Mathon PC to Herefordshire Council in April 2015 (modifications to the Herefordshire Core Strategy Plan) the Council felt it important to record :-

1. Priority should be given to dwellings linked to agricultural interests in the Parish
2. A preference for the re-use of redundant buildings
3. Any new builds would have to be dwellings within the footprint of the village

18/18 HIGHWAYS

- (a) Harcourt Road - The Clerk had requested the resurfacing of the road. Ref: CAS-643465-J8G3K1. Potholes were again resurfacing
- (b) Hackney Cross/Ditch by Stubby Pleck - The Clerk had received an e-mail from Neil James who would be investigating this problem. Ref: CAS-658355-V4M1C4
- (c) The Chairman & Clerk had reported to Hfds Council that at the back drive to Mathon Court there was very little road verge, and the road is on the edge of a stream. If vehicles go off the edge of the road, they would land up in the stream. A request had been sent in for verges/vegetation to be trimmed back and perhaps markers put in place.
- (d) The Clerk & Chairman had reported to Hfds Highways map re the culvert, pipework and ditches near to the tennis club in Harcourt Road which appeared to be blocked. Water was flowing across the road. So far no response had been received.
- (e) Overhanging trees – Harcourt Road. The Chairman to investigate this further.

19/18 CLIFFE ARMS

Nothing to report at the moment

20/18 CORRESPONDENCE - all relevant correspondence had been e-mailed to Cllrs.

21/18 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

None proposed

22/18 NEXT MEETING DATE - Wednesday 2nd May 2018 - Annual Parish Meeting at 7.00 pm followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting at 7.30 pm.

..... Chairman

..... Date

