

## MATHON PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2015 at 7.30 pm. in Mathon Parish Hall

**Present:-** Cllr S Harte (Chairman), Cllr P Davies, Cllr N Walker, Cllr C Green and Cllr T Ainscough (after co-option)

**In attendance:** Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Mr Geoff Fielding (Footpaths), Mr David Baldwin (Malvern Hills Conservators)

**Public Attendance** – None **Apologies** – None received

Mr Tom Ainscough was formally co-opted onto the Council, and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office. He also completed his Register of Interests form. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr N Walker, with the unanimous agreement of the Council.

### **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.**

**A request had been received by the Clerk relating to an item on the present Agenda (Sec 33 of the Localism Act 2011). This was from Cllr T Ainscough in relation to any matters concerning Mathon Parish Hall on the Agenda from the present meeting until May 2019. This Dispensation was granted by the Council. Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr P Davies**

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

### **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

- (a) **Public questions** – The Chairman reported that he and the Clerk had looked into the problem of of Himalayan Balsam flowers, growing near to the river bridge by Ferney Cottage as previously reported by Cllr T Ainscough. It was considered that these flowers were extremely difficult to eradicate entirely, and it was inadvisable to cut them down until the Spring time. Cllr S Harte agreed to look into who was the owner of the site where these flowers were growing.
- (b) **PCSO/Police** – As requested, the Clerk had contacted Herefordshire Council re the possibility of Highways putting up warning signs for dangerous bends in Mathon. The response was that Highways would have to assess the road(s) in question regarding accident data etc. If there was an issue with accidents on the bends, then it could be added to the traffic engineering list. However, at this moment there was no funding available so it was unlikely any proposal would be progressed for some time. PCSO David Alexander had e-mailed to report that he now had a new PSCO working with him to cover the Ledbury area and surrounding villages (including Mathon). His name was Joe Barson and they would both be attending a PC meeting in the near future.
- (c) **Herefordshire Councillor** - No Report
- (d) **Malvern Conservators** – Mr David Baldwin reported to the meeting. He thanked the Council for his re-appointment to the Board of Conservators for a further 4 years. A new nominee for Mathon had also been appointed – Mr Chris Rouse from West Malvern. The Conservators Board was still searching for a new Director – five candidates had been shortlisted. The Board was also appointing a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman. A new Community Services Officer – Bec Baker – was now working to deal with different groups of hill users – i.e. cyclists, ramblers, horse riders etc. and undertaking a huge exercise to waymark permitted routes and encourage responsible cycling on the hills. More cattle had been purchased for grazing, and the Board was even considering putting a herd of goats on the hills. A tree management policy was now in

place with the aim of not only protecting trees for the future but also looking at all the issues relating to the health of trees on the hills. The Hackett (a Victorian Milking Parlour) had been completely refurbished and was well worth a visit.

- (e) **Footpaths** - Mr Geoff Fielding reported that now all contracts had been signed, work had finally started with Ted Stewart on the footpaths in the Parish. Geoff had worked out a schedule with Ted who would be reporting to him as and when he started work at each location. They hoped to finish all the routine work by the end of November. He had walked all the footpaths this year, and at the moment only two signposts needed repair. He would be attending an annual meeting hosted by Balfour Beatty (BB) and would be voicing his views on the total lack of support for Footpaths Officers since the start of BB's contract with Herefordshire Council, and the way the Lengthsman/P3 scheme had been put together.

### **The Chairman re-opened the Meeting**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr P Davies.

#### 1290 ACTIONS TAKEN FROM LAST MEETING

None to report which were not covered by the Agenda.

#### 1291 REPORTS

None

#### 1292 MATHON PARISH HALL

Parish Map - Cllr T Ainscough reported that he had been looking into the ways and means of maintaining the present good state of the Parish Map. The Map framework needed to be completely and properly sealed and need a special frame. A dehumidifier/cabinet would probably not be the answer. He would be looking to obtain quotes from reputable companies, and would report back to the next meeting. As Chairman of the Parish Hall Committee, the Committee would be prepared to fund half the cost of the work that had been undertaken so far on the map. The Clerk to liaise with the Treasurer on this. The Hall Committee was still looking for new members to help run the Hall. Cllr S Harte reported that the Hall finances were in very good shape.

#### 1293 FINANCE

To consider payment of Accounts:-

- (a) Clerk's Salary October/November 2015 - £302.40 (net) - Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr P Davies.
- (b) Hire Charges – Mathon Parish Hall - £90.00. Proposed by Cllr P Davies and seconded by Cllr C Green.
- (c) Clerk's Half Year Expenses April – Sept 2015 - £122.11 Proposed by Cllr P Davies and seconded by Cllr S Harte
- (d) Clerk's Office allowance/overheads – April – Sept 2015 £70.00. Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr P Davies.
- (e) Mr Ted Stewart – Footpath work for October 2015 £195.00. Proposed by Cllr P Davies and seconded by Cllr N Walker.
- (f) Half Year Accounts to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015. These had been circulated to all members present and were approved. Proposed by Cllr C Green and seconded by Cllr S Harte
- (g) Clerk's Salary Review - The Council considered the Clerk's Salary Review for 2016/17. The Clerk was on pay grade SCP 24 at April 2013 rates of pay. Her contract allowed for an upgrade each year on the SCP scale (subject to the approval of the Council). The Council approved an upgrade to SCP 25 from April 2016 which would be £11.29 per hour x 4 hours per week = £45.16

x 52 = £2,348.32 per annum. This equated to £195.69 per month (rounded down to £195 gross pay). PAYE to be paid quarterly to HMRC.

(h) Grants & Donations

(i) Second half of annual grant to Mathon Parish Hall - the Clerk had received a letter from the Secretary of the Parish Hal Committee stating that the Committee would not be requesting a second half of the grant, as the Hall's finances were in excellent order and did not require the second half of the grant this year. This was duly noted by the Council.

(ii) Donation Request from Age UK Hereford – this was turned down by the Council.

(i) Precept 2016/17 – The Council considered the precept figures prepared by the Chairman and the Clerk and approved a precept of £6,773 for the year 2016/17. Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr P Davies.

1294 TRANSPARENCY CODE – Grant Applications

The Clerk reported that it was possible to obtain a grant for equipment and services to comply with the code. She was planning to apply for a grant towards the cost of setting up the Parish Council website. The Council approved this action, proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr C Green.

1295 PENSION ENROLMENT

In view of further information received by the Clerk, she suggested that action was not required until nearer the staging date in March 2016.

1296 PLANNING

The Clerk had e-mailed the response from Herefordshire Planning regarding the access for Tree House Farm, Moorend Cross. The Clerk was asked to report back to Herefordshire Planning that this access was still being used.

1297 HIGHWAYS

The Chairman and the Clerk confirmed that a request for warning bollards had been sent to Herefordshire Council regarding the verge between Overley and Netherley junctions which was in a state of collapse. Warning posts had been erected, but in the wrong place. The Clerk to follow this up with Herefordshire Highways and Cllr S Harte agreed to put hazard tape in the correct location.

1298 CLIFFE ARMS

The Clerk had received an e-mail from Sarah Lowe, who was still investigating the current situation. She had promised to keep the Clerk informed of any developments.

1299 CLUSTER GROUP

The Chairman reported that the next meeting was due to be held on 16<sup>th</sup> November in Mathon Parish Hall.

1300 CORRESPONDENCE - The Council noted the correspondence.

1301 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

None put forward

1302 NEXT MEETING DATE - Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 7.30 pm

..... Chairman

..... Date





