

MATHON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Wednesday 4th MARCH 2020 at 7.30 pm. in Mathon Parish Hall

Present:- Cllr S Harte, Cllr N Walker, Cllr C Green, Cllr M Malsbury. Cllr P Davies

In attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Mr D Baldwin & Mr Chris Rouse (Malvern Hills Trust)
Mrs Sam James (Footpaths), Mr Mark Haslam (CAMRA)

Apologies: Cllr K Perkins

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 –
None declared.

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) Public questions - Mr Mark Haslam from CAMRA gave a brief overview of the situation re The Cliffe Arms.
- (b) **PCSO/Police** – PCSO David Alexander had e-mailed “Nothing to Report” to the Clerk.
- (c) **Herefordshire Councillor** - No Report
- (d) **Malvern Hills Trust (MHT)** - Mr David Baldwin reported to the meeting on the background to the Hay Slad Spout in the Malvern Hills. The Clerk had contacted him as she had received a message from the Senior Technical Officer at Environmental Health for Worcs County Council (WCC) concerning this spring water supply. He had found a Newsletter dated January 2015 published by the Friends of Malvern Springs & Wells which stated that under the 1896 Malvern Link Water Act of 1896 Malvern Hills Council was obliged to provide compensation water to Colwall. As a result of this and subsequent Acts, under the provisions of the Malvern Water Act 1905 26(1) Mathon Parish Council was responsible for monitoring the quantity of water released at the spout (which should be at the rate of at least 2 gallons per minute). He was trying to establish who was responsible for the water supply at the Spout as a member of the public had become ill through drinking the water. As the Clerk thought it might be Malvern Hills Trust (MHT - formerly the Conservators) she had contacted David Baldwin for further information. David had taken considerable time and trouble to investigate, but stressed that MHT was not responsible for any of the springs and spouts on the hills, which in fact had a network of pipes running round the hills to feed the reservoir. The water from the springs and wells was not safe to drink without being boiled, but unfortunately notices warning of this tended to be removed by members of the public who filled up their containers with spring water. The spring water at the Hay Slad spout was stored in a tank behind the spout, and sediment in this tank was possibly contaminating the water. David stated that Severn Trent Water was responsible for the quality of the water in all the spouts/springs. Over the years the boundaries had changed, and the Hay Slad Spout was now in West Malvern Parish, not Mathon Parish as in the past.
- (e) **Footpaths** – Mrs Sam James reported to the meeting. She was still willing for the time being to stay on as Footpaths Officer for Mathon despite other commitments. The Clerk would be

completing the P3 Expression of Interest form, even though there was no funding attached to it, it still provided support from BB/Hfds Council. A letter had been circulated from the Herefordshire Local Access Forum (HLAF) AWG regarding improving access to PROW in the county. To improve access there would be the need for removal of obstructions such as stiles, narrow kissing gates, steps and narrow bridges. These could be replaced by self closing metal pedestrian gates and bridges with a minimum width of 100 cm, metal R.A.D.A.R. kissing gates, and using materials such as scalplings to create hard wearing ramps rather than steps. Mrs James suggested that any local landowners looking to replace gates and stiles might be able to access help and funding through AWG. (Accessibility Working Group). She had reported the rotting bridge over Cradley Brook (near the Cliffe Arms) which had been closed for some months. However, due to recent severe flooding in the county, she doubted this would be a priority for the “repairs team” at the moment. Cllr Sam Harte to speak to Mrs Stewart re the siting of the memorial plaque. The bridge behind the church – gates still not cleared, or they have re-loosened. Follow up process to be agreed. The new owners of The Barn at the back of Mathon Lodge had decided to apply for a footpath diversion to overcome the problems they were having.

The Chairman re-opened the Meeting

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 15th January 2020 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr C Green.

10/20 MATHON PARISH HALL

Cllr S Harte reported that at the AGM of the Hall Committee Cllr C Green had been appointed Chairman; Mrs Sam James appointed Secretary and he had been appointed Treasurer. The Council noted a letter from Mr David Armitage stating that the Parish Hall Committee was not in need of the grant from Mathon PC for the year 2019/20.

(a) **Parish Map** - Cllr N Walker reported that he and Jeffrey White from Cradley Heritage Centre had inspected the original Parish Map, which was in a very poor condition. The map was made up of 9 pieces, would be very expensive to be properly repaired and could not be laminated. A solution had been found by purchasing copy maps in 8 sections covering the same geographical area from the National Library of Scotland (NLS). These would be pieced together by Jeffrey White and then laminated and framed. The finished product would be 7' x 4'8" - slightly smaller than the original map. The costs of doing this should be within the budget of £500 plus VAT agreed at the previous meeting, and would include a donation to Cradley Heritage Centre. The Chairman and Council thanked Cllr N Walker for his work and that of Jeffrey White to come up with a cost effective solution to the Parish Map problem.

11/20 FINANCE

The following payment of Accounts as per cheque list signed by the Chairman (attached to the Minutes) was approved :- Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr C Green

- (a) Clerk's Salary - February/March 2020 - £415.86 (net)
- (b) HMRC – PAYE – Jan/Feb/March 2020 - £54.60
- (c) Rotary Printers Ltd – updates to website – Jan/Feb 2020 - £78.
- (d) D W Taylor – Clerk's Office – 1st Oct 2019 – 31 March 2020 - £70.00
- (e) D W Taylor – Clerk's Expenses – 1st Oct 2019 – 29th February 2020 - £127.36
- (f) National Library of Scotland (NLS) - £161.40 (paid but to be approved) (parish maps)
- (g) HALC subscription 2020/21 - £365.98
- (h) The Audit Review statement for 2019/20 was noted by the Council and signed by the Chairman.
- (i) The Chairman and the Clerk had produced an amended version of the new Financial Regulations 2019 for adoption at the Annual Council Meeting in May. All amendments/deletions had been

made to construct Regulations better suited to a small Parish Council. These had been highlighted for the information of Cllrs and for their consideration prior to the May meeting.

12/20 REPORTS

Cllr M Malsbury reported on her attendance at the Herefordshire Green Network – Great Collaboration Workshop on 20th January. The aim for Herefordshire was to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2030. Although aimed primarily at larger Councils than Mathon, a range of actions to achieve this target were being promoted – i.e. community energy generation; new homes to be zero carbon rated; car share app; farming – wild flowers/tree planting/reduced pesticide use. She would let the Clerk have a list of 100 things to do to improve your carbon rating, to post onto the Council website.

13/20 REVIEW OF RURAL FACILITIES

After consultation with the Council, the Clerk to complete and return this Review to Herefordshire Council

14/20 HIGHWAYS

- (a) Blocked ditches – South End Lane (Ref: 11074337) The Clerk reported that as instructed she had written to the landowners about the fallen tree blocking one of the ditches. So far she had not received a response.
- (b) Ongoing problems with Potholes at the entrance to Rooks View at Moorend Cross. The Council agreed with Cllr C Green that three fixes in the last 12 months was not value for money. The Clerk was asked to write to County Councillor Tony Johnson asking what the County Council policy was on this matter, and to try and get a costing for resurfacing work to be done, particularly as Cllr C Green had offered to contribute towards the cost.
- (c) Potholes – in the middle of Mathon opposite Badgers - Ref: 11077041 – These had now been fixed.
- (d) Potholes – entrance to the Moat on the C117 Hackney Cross to Mathon Road. The Clerk had reported this – Ref No 11080970 – it was on the schedule for repairs.
- (e) Potholes below Wheatcroft towards Hackney Cross – Clerk/Chairman to report this.
- (f) Blocked culvert on the Colwall Road just before Ham Green – Clerk/Chairman to report this.

15/20 CLIFFE ARMS

The Clerk had contacted the case officer at Herefordshire Planning, who confirmed that the closing date for Appeal against the Refusal of Planning Permission was six months from the decision date of 10th October 2019.

16/20 PHONE BOX AT THE CLIFFE

The Clerk had chased Herefordshire Council about this box. They had objected to the removal of the phone. Their understanding was that as they had heard nothing from BT (and neither had the Clerk) the phone would remain in use for the time being.

17/20 CORRESPONDENCE - all relevant correspondence had been e-mailed to Cllrs.

18/20 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA (a) Financial Regulations

NEXT MEETING DATE - 6th May 2020 - Annual Parish Meeting 7.00 pm followed by Parish Council Meeting

..... Chairman

..... Date

