

# MATHON PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL (via Zoom) PARISH COUNCIL MEETING Held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2020 at 7.30 pm.

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

**In attendance:** Mrs D Taylor (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Cllr K Perkins, Cllr C Green, Mrs S James(Footpaths), Mr D Baldwin & Mr C Rouse (Malvern Hills Trust)

**Due to the current coronavirus situation, Government legislation states that there is no lawful requirement to hold an Annual Council Meeting this year. All appointments agreed at the 2019 Annual Council Meeting or subsequent meetings held in 2019/20 year will remain in place until the start of the new Council year in April 2021.**

### **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 M Malsbury declared an interest in Agenda Item No 17(b) App No 193591 – The Barn, adjacent to Tadpole Cottage. This item was on the Agenda for information purposes only.**

**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** – the new PCSO Nick Ashby had e-mailed the Clerk reporting “No crime” in Mathon. However, Cllr M Malsbury informed the Council that an online Police Report showed 9 crimes committed in the Southend Lane area of the Parish – 8 violence & sexual offences and 1 criminal damage & arson. Cllr N Walker had reported a theft of wheelie bins from his home, but this and other wheelie bin thefts in the parish had not shown up in the PCSO report. The Clerk was asked to contact PCSO Nick Ashby about this.
- (c) **Herefordshire Councillor** - Co Cllr Tony Johnsons had forwarded a report from the Chairman of Herefordshire Council which the Clerk had circulated to all Cllrs.
- (d) **Malvern Hills Trust (MHT)** - Mr David Baldwin had e-mailed a report to the meeting at the request of the Clerk. The Trust was operating under its emergency contingency planning committee due to the Covid 19 restrictions. The first Board Meeting since the Pandemic was held by video conferencing on 11<sup>th</sup> June. Several items of interest arose from that meeting. Visitor numbers to the hills were vastly up compared to the same period last year. It seems that there were large influxes from the West Midlands and South West areas as opposed to local visitors. Consequently, litter rose by approximately 50% which also placed a huge demand on staff. The toilets on the hills were initially closed but these are all planned to open over the coming weeks. Anti-social behaviour saw a dramatic increase, particularly at Gullet Quarry and some of the car parks. The Police and Fire Services were called to several incidents. Other increases of bye laws took place such as driving and parking on the common, motorbikes on the hills, unauthorised fishing, metal detecting and other similar activities. Increased visitor numbers combined with a

sustained warm period meant that many of the crest-line pathways are showing signs of being parched and trampled, leading to erosion. The fire risk increased dramatically, especially from illegal barbeques and campfires. Several small fires were dealt with by the Fire Service. Completed projects include British Camp repairs, restoration of access paths, installation of cycle waymarkers, a veteran trees survey, car park ticketing, a new tractor purchased, Belvedere repair, repairs to the Old Hills car park, resurfacing of Gardiners car park, repairs to British Camp path, new power tools purchased.

- (e) **Footpaths** – Mrs Sam James had e-mailed a report to the meeting at the request of the Clerk. The metal fences under the bridge have gone (on land at the back of the church). The landowner had not moved them so they may have ended up elsewhere downstream. The stile which goes from the private road to Overly/Netherley onto the Hickmans land at the back of the church was broken/support post was falling over, so a temporary fix had been made. The landowners intend to undertake a permanent fix as they will be putting horses on the land in the future. Action still to be taken re footpath issue around MA35 (but no progress to date due to lockdown). Cllr N Walker asked about the plaque for Ted Stewart. He offered to speak to Mary Stewart about this, to agree the site for it and the wording on the plaque itself.

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

#### **19/20 STANDING ORDERS**

The Council noted the Standing Orders which had been adopted in July 2018.

#### **20/20 HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL – CODE OF CONDUCT 2018**

The Council noted the above Code of Conduct which had been adopted in May 2019

#### **21/20 MATHON PC - UPDATED FINANCIAL REGULATIONS – 2019**

The Council agreed to adopt the above Financial Regulations which had been circulated to Cllrs in the March meeting. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr M Malsbury.

#### **22/20 RISK ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE**

The Risk Assessment schedule was considered by the Council. Cllr M Malsbury requested that a risk assessment section covering Parish Council Meetings held in the Parish Hall (complying with Covid 19 Regulations) to be added. The Clerk to seek advice on wording from HALC on this matter.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr S Harte.

#### **23/20 MATHON PARISH HALL**

- (a) **Parish Map** - Cllr N Walker reported that all 9 pieces of map had now been laminated. The back panel had been made into 4 sections and the finished size was 8ft x 4 ft, with a timber frame. It was hoped that there would be no need for a plastic face over the laminated maps because of the weight and extra cost. It would be installed on site in the Parish Hall. Cllr N Walker to speak to Mrs M Ainscough about this.
- (b) Cllr S Harte reported that due to Coronavirus restrictions, the Parish Hall had been closed since 23rd March and still remained closed.

#### **24/20 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 P Davies

Cheques agreed for payment (via e-mail) after PC Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020 but requiring Minuted Approval:-

- (a) D W Taylor - Clerk's Salary - April/May 2020 - £503.96 (net)
- (b) M Griffiths – Payroll services 2019/20 - £80.00
- (c) Came & Co Insurance - £352.36
- (d) Rotary Printers Ltd - website updates - £90.00
- (e) Hadley Bros – Mowing & Strimming - £220.00

Cheques for approval at this meeting :-

- (f) D W Taylor – Clerk's Salary – June/July 2020 - £503.96 (net)
- (g) Rotary Printers Ltd – website updates - £25.00 + VAT = £30.00
- (h) Herefordshire Council – Elections charges May 2019 - £76.97
- (i) HMRC PAYE – April/May/June 2020 - £64.80
- (j) Duffy Regan & Co – Fee for internal audit of Mathon Year End Accounts 2019/20 - £60.00
- (k) Approval of Year End Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. These had been internally audited by Duffy Regan & Co and circulated to Cllrs. These were approved. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr M Malsbury.

#### **25/20 APPROVAL OF ANNUAL AUDIT FOR ACCOUNTS TO 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2020**

**(As an Exempt Authority)**

- (a) The Council **resolved** that as the income or expenditure of the Council was less than £25K p/a the Council met the criteria to be considered an “Exempt” Authority and did not have to forward a return to the External Auditors. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr N Walker. However, the Annual Return did have to be completed and signed, and posted onto the Parish Council website. The Statement of Exemption was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk to be forwarded to the External Auditors.
- (b) **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement** (signed by Chairman & Clerk)  
Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr P Davies
- (c) **Section 2 – Annual Accounting Statement** (signed by Chairman & Clerk)  
Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr P Davies

#### **26/20 GRANTS/DONATIONS**

- (a) Mathon Parish Hall Grant – first half - £250.00. After some discussion the Council agreed to defer the payment of this first half grant, and to review the situation at the meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020.
- (b) Mathon PCC - The Council approved a grant to Mathon PCC of £1,300. Proposed by Cllr S Harte and seconded by Cllr M Malsbury

#### **27/20 VILLAGE GREEN**

The Clerk reported that she had contacted Giga Clear re supplying some topsoil for the green, and this appeared to have been done.

#### **28/20 PLANNING**

- (a) App No: 191879 – Thumpers Patch, South Hyde Lane, Mathon. The Clerk had established that this had been approved by Herefordshire Planning in July 2019 and did not require Prior Approval or consultation with the Parish Council under the Agricultural & Forestry Building & Operations Regulations. However, the sudden appearance of this huge building had prompted enquiries from parishioners seeking further information as to why a building of this size had

been approved. It was evident that this building had been erected over the open air manege which had been approved by Herefordshire Council in 2011. Equestrian use is not part of Agricultural use as defined by Section 336 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990. The Clerk was instructed to write to the Enforcement Officer at Herefordshire Planning asking for an investigation and an explanation as to how this complies with Planning Regulations.

- (c) App No 193591 – The Barn, adjacent to Tadpole Cottge, South End Lane, Mathon WR13 5PB. Appeal against Herefordshire Council refusal of Planning Permission for conversion of Threshing Barn – Appeal Ref APP/W18509/W/3245541. Appeals Inspector Stuart Willis has **allowed this appeal and planning permission is granted for its conversion.**

**29/20 HIGHWAYS**

- (a) Ongoing problems with Potholes at the entrance to Rooks View at Moorend Cross. As requested, the Clerk had e-mailed Co Cllr Tony Johnson, who had forwarded it to Neil James, who was aware of the issues. Unfortunately even with a substantial contribution from Cllr C Green towards the cost of resurfacing, the view of Balfour Beatty (BB) was that they did not have sufficient funds available to undertake this work, but they were prepared to repair the potholes to maintain public safety.
- (b) Potholes – entrance to the Moat on the C117 Hackney Cross to Mathon Road – HC Ref: CAS-748259-B0BF4 – BB Ref: 11080970. These have now been repaired.
- (c) Potholes – below Wheatcroft towards Hackney Cross – HC Ref: CAS-754845-K9H2P0 – BB Ref: 11084835. This work is still outstanding.
- (d) Blocked culvert – water running downhill the full width of the road between Burford Farm and Dobbins Farm on the Colwall Road before Ham Green. HC Ref: CAS-754847-T8C5V0 – BB Ref: 11084836. This work has been referred to drainage.
- (e) Possible trees at risk in Harcourt Road (reported to Clerk by HW). Cllr S Harte to investigate.
- (f) Potholes in Harcourt Road – Clerk to report to BB/Hfds Council.

**30/20 CLIFFE ARMS**

The Clerk to contact Mark Haslam to seek advice re The Cliffe Arms.

**31/20 CORRESPONDENCE** - all relevant correspondence had been e-mailed to Cllrs.

**32/20 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA** - none raised

**NEXT MEETING DATE** - 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 at 7.30 pm

..... Chairman

..... Date

DRAFT

DRAFT