

MATHON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Wednesday 5th May 2021 at 7.30 pm. (via Zoom)

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

In attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Co Cllr T Johnson

Election of Chairman – Cllr S Harte was elected Chairman. Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr P Davies.

The Chairman signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office & Code of Conduct

Apologies for absence – Cllr K Perkins, Mr D Baldwin (Malvern Hills Trust)

Election of Vice-Chairman - Cllr C Green was elected Vice-Chairman. Proposed by Cllr M Malsbury and seconded by Cllr N Walker

Cllrs were reminded of the need to update/complete their Register of Interests form.

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 an interest in Agenda Item No 19 as he was a Churchwarden

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 – none
- (b) **PCSO/Police** – PCSO Nick Ashby had e-mailed the Clerk a note drawing attention to the increase in theft of catalytic converters around Herefordshire as a whole. Nothing to report re Mathon.
- (c) **Herefordshire Councillor** - Co Cllr Tony Johnson reported that a new Chief Executive had been appointed – Paul Walker, who had a good record in safeguarding/social care. This was especially relevant as Herefordshire Council was involved with the death of a child whilst under the care of the Council. An Independent Board Order was likely to be issued, which would cost Herefordshire Council millions of pounds to implement. There were still one or two Covid spikes in the County. An additional 3,000 people had been added to the At Risk Register. 93% of the County was now connected to the Faster Fibre Broadband network, but there were still a few remote areas to be covered.
- (d) **Malvern Hills Trust** - No report

- (e) **Footpaths** - The Clerk reported that she had been contacted by a Mr Guy Vowels from the Long Distance Walkers Association. He reported a “Closed Footpath” sign on footpath MA12 which related to a broken plank bridge over the stream (by Badgers). This footpath (and bridge) forms part of the Wyche Way. This problem had been reported some time ago, and it appeared that Herefordshire Council/BB had just closed the footpath for safety reasons, but the bridge still needed repairing/replacing. As this was the responsibility of the County Council, the Clerk to liaise with Cllr Kate Perkins our Footpaths Officer and Neil James of BB to get this matter resolved as soon as possible. Cllr Kate Perkins had also reported to the Clerk a missing footplate on a stile on the MA8 footpath, in the fence of the Penley boundary going up the footpath from the Bosbury Road (B4220). The Council confirmed that the land belonged to Hollings Hill Farm. The Clerk to liaise with Kate about this.

The Chairman re-opened the Meeting

18/21 STANDING ORDERS - The Council noted the Standing orders (adopted 4th July 2018)

19/21 CODE OF CONDUCT

The Council noted the updated NALC/Herefordshire Council Code of Conduct 2018 (adopted 15th May 2019)

20/21 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Council noted the Financial Regulations (adopted in September 2016)

21/21 RISK ASSESSMENT

The Council agreed the Risk Assessment Schedule prepared by the Clerk and circulated to Councillors, subject to Covid 19 Checklist for meetings being added, and amendment to Low Risk re Declarations of Interest. Included in this schedule was Insurance Cover due for renewal at the end of May 2021.

22/21 ANNUAL INSURANCE REVIEW

The Council agreed to a new 3 year tie-in renewal quote received by the Clerk from Came & Co - £448.68. Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr S Harte.

23/21 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

- (a) Parish Council member – Mathon Parish Hall Committee. Cllr S Harte was proposed by Cllr C Green and seconded by Cllr M Malsbury
- (b) Mathon Parish Council’s representative on the Malvern Hills Trust Board - Mr David Baldwin was appointed at the Council meeting held on 4th September 2019 for a further extension (at the request of Malvern Hills Trust) to run from 1st November 2019 to 2023.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4th March 2021 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr P Davies and seconded by Cllr N Walker.

24/21 MATHON PARISH HALL

- (a) Parish Map – still being held in Cradley for the time being.
- (b) Cllr S Harte reported that the Parish Hall had been made Covid secure for the 6th May elections for the Police & Crime Commissioner.

25/21 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 M Malsbury :-

- (a) Clerk's Salary - April/May 2021 - £584.866 (net – new rate)
- (b) Rotary Printers Ltd – website updates – Feb/March 2021 - £24.00
- (c) Insurance Premium renewal (3 year tie in) Came & Co - £448.68
- (d) Marion Griffiths – payroll services 2020/21 - £80.00
- (e) Approval of Year End Accounts to 31st March 2021 (internally audited) had been circulated to Cllrs. These were approved. Proposed by Cllr C Green and seconded by Cllr S Harte.

26/21 APPROVAL OF ANNUAL AUDIT FOR ACCOUNTS TO 31st MARCH 2021

(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 N Walker and seconded by Cllr P Davies. 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 C Green and seconded by Cllr P Davies
- (c) **Section 2 – Annual Accounting Statement** (signed by Chairman & Clerk)
Proposed by Cllr P Davies and seconded by Cllr M Malsbury

27/21 GRANTS/DONATIONS

The Council considered the following grants/donations

- (a) Mathon Parish Hall – first half grant - £200.00. Cllr S Harte reported as Treasurer of the Parish Hall Committee that the Parish Hall did not need the Parish Council grant. The Committee had received a number of Covid grants from Central Government due to enforced closure of the hall.
- (b) Mathon PCC – After some discussion, the Clerk was asked to seek a legal clarification/confirmation letter regarding the advice she had received on the issue of graveyard maintenance. The PCC grant to be deferred until the July meeting.

28/21 HIGHWAYS

- (a) Blocked culvert – water running downhill the full width of the road between Burford Farm and Dobbins Farm. Ref: 11084836. Still outstanding (reported to drainage team) Neil James has raised a ditching job plus 3 blocked gullies.
- (b) Potholes at Rook Row – Cllr C Green reported that potholes had been filled in. Neil James was going to do another assessment regarding a joint project for resurfacing.
- (c) Tarmac erosion at the edge of stream near Stockton (reported by Cllr M Malsbury). Neil James had inspected. Still outstanding for action. Cllr M Malsbury reported that some warning signs had been put in place.
- (d) Blocked gully on the same side of the Cradley to Colwall Road as Mathon Church. Reported to Hfds Council/BB by Clerk. Ref: 11100714. This had now been fixed.

29/21 CLIFFE ARMS

The Council considered what further steps might be taken re The Cliffe. The Clerk to action.
Proposed by Cllr N Walker and seconded by Cllr P Davies.

30/21 CORRESPONDENCE - all relevant correspondence had been e-mailed to Cllrs.

31/21 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA - None raised

32/21 NEXT MEETING DATE - Wednesday 14th July 2021 at 7.30 pm.

..... Chairman

..... Date

