

Minutes of the Meeting of Wyese Group Parish Council held in The Village Hall, Preston on Wye, on Wednesday 13th May 2015 at 8.00pm.

In attendance

Councillors J Dale, J Hughes, J. Newsome, A Clipson, S. Whittall, R Collins and A Rawstone plus Parish Clerk Mrs A M Wright, Ward Cllr. P Price plus one member of the public and PCSO Fiona Witcher for part

1. Co-option of councillors and Election of Chair

Cllr John Dale took the Chair. There were no co-options. The role of Chair was put forward as Cllr Owen Whittall, proposed by Cllr Clipson and seconded by Cllr Dale. Cllr Whittall had indicated his willingness to accept the role of Chair. There was a welcome and some introductions for the new councillor present, Cllr Roger Collins, who is representing Blakemere Parish.

2. Election of Vice - Chair

The role of Vice Chair was put forward as Cllr John Dale, proposed by Cllr Clipson and seconded by Cllr S Whittall. Cllr Dale accepted the role and signed his acceptance form. The Code of Conduct, as revised, was accepted by Councillors and it was resolved that the Code be adopted.

3. Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were apologies from Cllr O Whittall, who did call in at the end of the meeting to sign his forms, and from the Locality Steward, Linzy Outtrim. Cllrs Roper, Pugh, Price, Smith and Bowen were not present.

4. Declarations of Interest

None declared at this point.

Open Session

There were no matters raised.

5. To approve previous Minutes and matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 1st April 2015 were signed as a true and correct record of the meeting with one amendment on the footpaths in that under item 8 not all of the matters discussed had, in fact, been fully resolved.

6. Report of North Ward County Councillor

Ward Cllr P Price gave his report, which can be read in his separate report entry.

Cllr Price explained that there had been four candidates standing for the North Ward and that he had been re-elected to serve. The Parish Council re-welcomed and congratulated Cllr Price. Cllr Price explained that the seats on the Herefordshire Council were now as follows: 29 Conservative, 12 It's Our County (IOC) 8 Independents, 2 Liberal Democrats and 2 Green Party Members. There were a total of 53 member seats and the Conservatives held a majority and can consequently rule without a coalition of other parties. The newly elected council were undergoing meetings to elect officers and committees plus Chair and Vice Chair. The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee would be selected from one of the other, non ruling, parties to ensure transparency. An Agenda for the next Council Meeting on 22nd May was being set and it would be business as usual for the Council going forward with all of the ongoing issues to be dealt with.

There was a question about the Southern Link Road. Cllr Price said that an e mail should be imminent with details of the Planning Application. The Application Number was given as 151314. The Clerk requested a paper copy of the plans as they were likely to be difficult to assess on line and to look at them together in Council would be very useful. Cllr Price kindly asked for this to be

supplied. There was a brief discussion on the Core Strategy which was going forward. House building is core to the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework), the answer being “Yes” to housing if it is deemed “sustainable”.

PCSO Fiona Witcher joined the Meeting and presented the Annual Report plus crime trend statistics from May 2014 to May 2015: “The past twelve months have seen a few changes here at Peterchurch Police Station. In September the front counter service ended and Christine, our counter clerk for the past six years, went to work at Hereford front counter; she has since retired. PC Wendy Powell retired in April after having served with West Mercia for thirty years; PC Tom Milton is now the Safer Neighbourhood Officer for the Golden Valley. PCSO Katie Middleton has joined the police as an officer; she is currently undergoing training but will be based in Hereford from the beginning of June. PCSO Paul Davies has joined the team in her place; he was previously working as a PCSO at Redditch so a complete change of scene for him! Both Tom and Paul live in the Golden Valley so are already familiar with the area and may already be known to you – I’m sure you will get to meet them over the next few months if you haven’t already.

Our Inspector, Paul Crumpton, has also retired and our new Inspector is Bob Barnett. He is based in Ross on Wye and is responsible for neighbourhood policing in the whole of rural Herefordshire and all the market towns. Our sergeant, also based in Ross on Wye, is Dan Pilkington, and he is responsible for neighbourhood policing in Ross, Ledbury and Peterchurch.

Rural crime figures in the Valley have gone down slightly, and remain low compared to many other areas, but there are still thefts being reported, especially of farm equipment and shed burglaries. With this in mind we have held two very successful crime prevention events over the last year. Last September, in conjunction with Clifford Rural Watch we held a Community Safety Evening in Clifford Community Centre which was well attended; our colleagues from Trading Standards and Herefordshire Council’s Community Protection team gave presentations, as well as our own crime risk manager. A similar event was held at The Temple Bar in Ewyas Harold in February; the evening was again, well attended and we were fortunate to have Bill Longmore, the Police and Crime Commissioner and Barrie Sheldon, his deputy, in attendance.

We are currently working alongside the NFU rolling out the ‘Stop that Thief’ scheme which is aimed at protecting farms and rural businesses; several of our farms already have the equipment installed and more in the pipeline. Smart Water is continuing to be another valuable tool in crime prevention, with kits being sold across the county.

Poaching has always been a problem in the rural area; we have been working with our farmers and gamekeepers as well as the Duchy of Cornwall to reduce the instances of ‘lampers’ and other undesirables coming onto our area. More and more people are calling in with registration numbers of vehicles seen in suspicious circumstances – these reports are always followed up with letters or personal visits to the users of the vehicles. On some occasions the vehicles and items linked to poaching activities are seized and occupants arrested.

The regular briefing is still very popular and the number of people signing up to receive it is growing on a daily basis. It has proved to be a very useful tool in getting the message out there about crime trends, suspicious vehicles and scams to be aware of.

I will finish this report by saying that we, in the team, feel very fortunate to be policing such a fantastic part of the country. We very much appreciate the support that we are given by the residents of the Golden Valley and, with your assistance we will continue to provide as good a service over the next twelve months”.

The Parish Council had a brief discussion with PCSO Witcher, largely around the retention of stolen vehicles that, when impounded, costs could be incurred by the owners to retrieve them. A reminder of the non-emergency number to call – 101 was noted, with 999 for urgent assistance. There was an update on a case coming to court regarding animal cruelty being brought by the RSPCA. Thanks were recorded to PCSO Witcher and the Police Service for their continued input and support. PCSO Witcher then left the Meeting.

7. Planning

There had been no further applications received.

8. Neighbourhood Plan Meeting update and minutes of meetings

There had been two further meetings held, on the 8th and the 22nd April. A meeting on grant funding had been attended, by the Clerk and Cllr Rawstone, and some ideas of consultants to approach had

been obtained from colleagues who were also going through the Neighbourhood Plan process. These matters would be progressed by the Steering Group and the next Meeting would be held at Moccas, from 7.30pm, on the 20th May 2015. All welcome to come along as always. The Minutes of the Meetings held on the 8th and 22nd April were signed as true and correct records of those meetings.

9. Lengthsman – to advise of works for the Lengthsman

The Lengthsman had been undertaking his routine maintenance tasks. He was awaiting a contact call from the Locality Steward to talk through the issues of his “kit items” and their suitability, plus some highways matters which he wanted to discuss directly.

10. Roads - to report on highway issues including badgers at Pope’s Place

There had been a repair to the road outside Moccas Park but due to the ditch not being cut through the problem was returning. There was said to be a need for Balfour Beatty to be more proactive, if possible, in recognising where additional preventive tasks may be desirable. The Moccas Deer Park Road was a good example.

There was a need for Balfour Beatty to look at renewing the white lining, particularly at junctions, throughout the parish as the paint was wearing away and the junctions were becoming unclear, particularly when it is dark.

Balfour Beatty had contacted the Clerk to indicate that they would not be prepared to fund the licence request to possibly relocate the badgers at Pope’s Place. They had provided a web link for the Parish Council to pass to the homeowner should they wish to apply for the licence themselves. The Parish Council asked the Clerk to pass on the web link to the homeowner.

There were a number of road issues identified by the Bredwardine Parish Meeting including a request for the resurfacing of the Church Road at Bredwardine. These requests would be passed to Balfour Beatty.

11. Footpaths To report on footpath issues and elect Footpath Officer

Jeff Newsome kindly agreed to continue in the role of Footpath Officer and was proposed by Cllr Clipson and seconded by Cllr Collins.

There were no further items to report this time.

12. Correspondence

The items were noted as per the information sheet, including a “thank you” card on behalf of Blakemere Parochial Church Council for the donation made by the Parish Council towards the churchyard upkeep. There had been considerable other correspondence concerning the election process including a reminder for all councillors to return their election expenses forms even if submitting a “nil” return. Councillor Rawstone had done some research into voluntary transport options in the area. These options provided a lifeline for some users and several providers had been awarded donations by the Parish Council in the past to assist with their running costs. Community Wheels had taken 57 journeys on behalf of local residents and Dore Community Transport 81 journeys. This topic would be an important inclusion to the Neighbourhood Plan as reliable transport is a major concern for potentially isolated people. It was agreed that Cllr Rawstone should advise Community Wheels to submit a formal request to the Parish Council, via the Clerk, for there to be consideration of their request for financial support.

Cllr Rawstone went on to give an overview of the Tennis Club in Preston on Wye and encouraged people to join the Lawn Tennis Association on line where possible. This would add strength to the requests made for Wimbledon Tickets in terms of numbers allocated for the Club. The courts in Preston are open to all and several groups are regularly playing there. There are annual subscriptions, for the Preston Tennis Club, of £5.00 for those aged 25 and under and £15.00 for those aged 26 and over. The councillors were asked to “spread the word” to encourage people to join up and a flyer to advertise the Club was suggested. A leaflet may be delivered alongside the

Pump. Tennis Coaching was available from a bought in source and was proving a popular provision. **Please contact Cllr Andrew Rawstone on 01981 500650 for further details about the Preston on Wye Tennis Club.**

13. To approve accounts

It was resolved to approve the accounts and payments as detailed here. Proposed by Cllr S Whittall and seconded by Cllr. J. Newsome. Carried

Receipts: £0.00

Payments: Clerk £405.12 (salary £300.30, travel £76.14, home office £20.00, parking £2.20 stamps £6.48)

AON Insurance £654.84 (amended due to loyalty discount)

HALC subscription £414.96

Moccas Hall (room hire) £20.00

Contribution to Bredwardine/Brobury web £30.00

Balance of current account on last statement 26/03/15 £6838.67

NB. Since publication of the Agenda, the precept, lengthsman grant and reclaimed VAT had all been received.

The Meeting were advised that the Internal Audit would be carried out by John Entwisle who had kindly agreed to do this again for the Parish Council this year.

14. Matters raised by members for the next agenda

All usual items plus Preston on Wye Tennis Club update, co-option of councillor(s)

15. Date of next meeting

The next main meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Wednesday 3rd June 2015 at The Village Hall, Moccas, at 8.00pm

Meeting closed at 9.25pm

SIGNED

DATED