

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Wyeside Group Parish Council, held via Zoom Platform (during Covid 19 virus pandemic), on Wednesday 3rd November 2021 from 7.30 pm

In attendance on Zoom were:

Councillors: D. Gurney, C. Chu (Chair), O. Whittall, J. Darbyshire, H. Light, S. Russell, D. Roper, A. Rawstorne, J Dale (from 8.06 pm) and A Smith, plus Parish Clerk Mrs A. M. Wright and Ward Cllr Jennie Hewitt. There were no members of the public present.

The first Zoom session ran from 7.30 – 8.10, the second session from 8.15 to 8.55 and the third from 9.00 to 9.38 pm

Cllr Chu (Chair) welcomed everyone to the Meeting.

1. Open Session with any parishioners who have joined the Zoom Meeting

There were no topics raised during the Open Session.

2. Co-option of Councillors (2 x vacancies – Preston on Wye and Moccas)

No candidates were presented for co-option.

3. Apologies for absence

Cllr Hughes had sent his apologies.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

5. To approve previous minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6th October 2021

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, held on 6th October 2021, were approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.

6. Report of North Ward Councillor

Ward Cllr. Hewitt was in attendance on Zoom. The Ward Cllr presented her report. The report had been circulated that evening. The Ward Cllr highlighted issues about bus transport and rural isolation/poverty. A new model for public transport was being explored. The Ward Cllr answered a question about the progression of the University. An intake of 21 students had been received. A larger campus for the University was being constructed at the Skylon Park site. Questions were asked about the bypass and traffic congestion options. The Council were exploring the feasibility of an eastern river crossing to try to reduce the “log jam” in the city.

The Ward Cllr commented on the parking situation at Brobury and Bredwardine. The site was still very busy with parking at peak times. The Brobury side was commented as being the current issue side for possible additional yellow lines?

The parish council thanked the Ward Cllr for attending, as she was most unwell and suffering from a heavy cold.

The Ward Cllr left the meeting at the end of Zoom session one 8.10 pm.

7. Roads/Lengthsman To report on highway issues including any update re signs

The Lengthsman has carried out an inventory of all of the road signs in the group of five parishes. He had been out and cleaned, straightened, strimmed round and repaired the existing signs around the group. He had one 40 mph sign to replace for Blakemere which has been completely smashed off. It was found in the adjacent hedge.

The Clerk had sent you a list of signs that the PC may wish to consider replacing as they have gone past their sell by date. A reply from Balfour Beatty gave some indication of the likely cost. This would be looked at during a future meeting.

There was still an issue with a blocked culvert and drains/ditches on the boundary between Moccas and Preston on Wye by the orchards. They required digging out and clearing where the ditch goes into the drain just before Bycross. There was a regular flooding issue being experienced at the location. The Moccas culvert had seen a ditch filled in on one side of the road but the culvert was still blocked under the main road.

The ditches in Blakemere had been dug out by the "Plough". Cllr Rawstone reported having seen a bowser/tanker pumping out a flood at Ploughfield recently.

Clerk would check why the "Moccas 2 miles" directional sign on the turnpike at Bredwardine had been removed.

8. Footpaths and Tree Warden – To appoint new officer(s) and report of footpaths and trees

New people were required for both roles. Cllr Chu and Cllr Light would make some enquiries regarding possible candidates.

9. Correspondence – Refer to information sheet

The contents of the sheet were noted and included:

Talk Community Newsletter 1 November 2021

Talk Community Newsletter 21 October 2021

Talk Community Newsletter 8 October 2021

ROAD CLOSURES - NOVEMBER - 26.10.21

Road Closure Notification - C1192 Village Hall Preston-On-Wye to Brook At Owlswood House, Preston-On-Wye from 1 November 2021.

10. Planning – to consider any applications with a view to comments

There were two new applications for consideration of comments:

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: Planning Consultation - 213745 - Land Adjoining Greystoke, Moccas, Herefordshire, HR2 9LQ

DESCRIPTION: The erection of a two-bedroom, single-storey dwelling house.

GRID REF: OS 335763, 242712

APPLICATION TYPE: Outline

The Wyeside Group Parish Council considered all aspects of the application 213745 and found it to be in conformity with the aspirations of the Wyeside Group Neighbourhood Development Plan for the area. The Parish Council supported the application.

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: Planning Consultation - 213723 - Lane Cottage, Bredwardine, Hereford, Herefordshire HR3 6BZ

DESCRIPTION: Variation of conditions 2 & 3 of planning permission SW 2001/0264/F (Building to form replacement hobby studio/garage) - Condition 2 - to alter the internal layout and the elevations to better suit the needs of the new owners. Condition 3 - To vary this condition to regularise changes to the use of the building that were carried out by the previous owners of the property. For the use of the first floor as annexed living accommodation.

GRID REF: OS 331801, 244272

APPLICATION TYPE: Planning Permission

The Parish Council considered the proposal in application 213723 and resolved to support the application.

11. Finance and Policies To approve accounts and note balances

(11.1) To note bank balance: The bank balance was noted as £16782.56

(11.2) To resolve to accept payments, as per listing

Payments were resolved to be paid as follows:

Mrs A Wright paid in accordance with contract for November 2021	
HMRC (Tax)	£89.40
Longfield Services (Lengthsman)	£146.25

11.3) To consider PC meeting arrangements for 2022 and onwards

The Chair and Clerk had reacted to concerns raised by two councillors following the October Meeting. The length of time available for discussion had been extended from 80 to 120 minutes and this would continue if on Zoom. The Chair suggested that it was good practice for councillors to familiarise themselves with the meeting topics so that things could run as smoothly as possible during the meeting. Two councillors volunteered to talk with a councillor, who was not currently linking in via remote connection and was, therefore, not attending the meetings. There was a lengthy discussion about meeting arrangements altogether. Concerns were raised about both Zoom in regard to not all councillors being able to attend and also about possible exposure to infection with Covid 19 if meeting in a hall. A previous poll of opinion on this topic had resulted in only some councillors responding but, of those that did respond, the vote was a majority for meeting on Zoom. Strictly, in law, the Government did not extend the temporary licence for parishes to meet remotely, after May 2021, but they were also asking people to act cautiously and responsibly about mixing, and face to face contact, so there appeared to be a conundrum on this. The Chair went round the councillors who were in attendance and asked for their opinions individually. Overall, whilst most people wished to be meeting in person, if it were safe to do so, they also acknowledged the risks and opted to stay with Zoom - but with a rolling review of the situation. As soon as warmer and lighter evenings returned meeting outside would be a good compromise. The parish council resolved to continually review their position in regard to how they would meet. No-one wished to compromise their own safety or that of their families and others.

There was a brief heated exchange concerning the late arrival of the Ward Cllr's report. The Clerk had circulated the report as soon as she had seen it, 37 minutes after it's arrival, but, because this was only just before the actual meeting, people had not had the chance to read it and one Cllr in particular was not happy about this. Cllr Rawstone left the meeting at 9.34 pm.

12. Matters raised by members for next Agenda

Usual items would be included. PC ongoing meeting arrangements, grass mowing honoraria, finalisation of PC response to the new Core Strategy consultation. A detailed discussion would be required and an interim meeting would be held on 24th November 2021 for all PC and public to meet and discuss responses (details would be published). The topics would look at village boundaries, environmental issues and also light pollution and the "darker skies" policy. Possible purchase of new road signs for village entrances etc. would also be on the Agenda for December.

12. To confirm date of the next Ordinary Meeting as Wednesday 1st December from 7.30 pm

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 1st December 2021 from 7.30 pm and would be held on Zoom, unless notified otherwise.

The Meeting closed at 9.38 pm

SIGNED

DATED