
Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

Draft Minutes

of the Ordinary Meeting of the Group Parish Council

Wednesday 20th March 2024 at 7.30pm in Risbury Village Hall

Present: Cllr. Hugh Fowler-Wright (Chairman)
Cllr. Tim Yair
Cllr. Derek Silk
Cllr. James Hinton
Cllr. Janette Fulwood
Cllr. Chris Marston
Cllr. Anne Grace

Ward Councillor: Bruce Baker
Clerk & RFO: Allan Drew

22/24 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. Rob Pugh, Cllr. Richard Thomas, Cllr. Richard Collins, Cllr. Anne Grace, Cllr. Ken Bemand.
Cllr. Fulwood gave her apologies for the next meeting.

23/24 Declaration of interests and dispensations

None received nor requested

24/24 Minutes of the last meeting

Cllr. Marston raised a point on the Clerk's pay award item (minute 9/24). The draft minute stated the Clerk would receive £1/hour when in fact the increase was £1/hour. The Clerk will correct this minute and, assuming this correction, the minutes of the meetings held on 17th January and 7th February 2024 were approved by Council and signed by the Chairman.

25/24 Matters for report arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

The Annual Parish meetings will be held on 15 May 2024 in Risbury Village Hall. The meeting will precede the Annual Parish Council Meeting on the same date but will start at 6.30pm. Refreshments will be provided and Cllr. Fulwood would arrange. A license would not be necessary since refreshments would be provided free of charge.

The content of the meeting would be a workshop style session to capture the views of residents on a number of topics (TBA) using flip charts with prompting questions.

The Clerk will promote the event in his Pump notes for May.

26/24 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman noted the success of the Cllr. training session held on 7 February and thanked those who attended.

27/24 Public participation

No members of the public were present.

28/24 District Councillor's report

Cllr. Baker reported that-

- He had visited the site of the Ford/A49 junction and had found no issues with the signage. He had however, raised the matter during a discussion with National Highways and the advice was to arrange for the landowner to cut the hedge later in the season to improve visibility.
- The funding of anti-terrorist bollards in Hereford was investigated and it appeared that this project was part funded by Government grant and the remainder came from the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

- Use of S106 monies was likely to change to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which would benefit smaller developments in smaller communities. With CIL all developments would attract a contribution from developers rather than when the threshold of 10 houses was reached. Further, if Parishes have an NDP they can retain 25% of the levy or 15% if they do not have an NDP.
- Planning consent had been granted to demolish The Three Counties hotel and build a Lidl supermarket.
- The Lengthsman scheme for 2024-25 will have more funding (almost double) than earlier announced.
- PROW funding would be available.
- There would be a new grant for drainage.
- There is hope that some re-surfacing of the A417 (Dinmore to Bodenham) would be undertaken in the summer using some money from a £10m road fund.

29/24 Planning Committee and planning applications update

a) The draft minutes of the planning meeting held on 6 March 2024 were agreed and signed by the Chairman. The Chairman explained some of the problems with the plans for Hathaway and these problems are highlighted in the Council comments.

b) *To consider:* new applications to be determined by Herefordshire Council

Ford & Stoke Prior There were no new applications

Humber There were no new applications

(c) *To note:* updates on current planning applications

Ford & Stoke Prior

240279 Land at Hathaway, Stoke Prior, HR6 0LR

Proposed demolition of existing dwelling and construction of replacement dwelling. **Undecided**

233624 Railway Meadow Bungalow Stoke Prior Leominster Herefordshire HR6 0LG

Proposed garden room extension and change of use of land from agricultural use to residential use to provide additional garden space (part retrospective). **Undecided**

233094 Priory Farm Stoke Prior HR6 0ND. The construction and retention of a rural worker's dwelling, seminar room and a range of eight stables with ancillary tack and hay store. **Undecided**

223610 Land north of Bowley Court farm Change of use from a water storage lagoon to a water and anaerobic digestate storage lagoon (retrospective). **Undecided.**

Cllr. Baker was concerned that the Bowley Court farm application would require some compelling arguments if he is to speak against this application. Council remained concerned that the application contained insufficient detail to make an informed decision on support/object and no further information has been forthcoming. The public interest dimension of this case is considerable. Cllr. Fulwood raised concerns about the suitability of the liner.

Humber.

240369 Great Marston Farmhouse, Farm Risbury HR6 0NJ

Proposed reconstruction of porch. **Undecided.**

212600 - Land adjacent to Risbury Cross Cottage, Risbury HR6 0NG

Approval of reserved matters following outline approval 181648 (residential development of 6 houses). **Undecided - on hold due to phosphates**

212473 Dev 1 Land adjacent to Risbury Cross Cottage Risbury HR6 0NG

Proposed permission for the siting of a caravan to provide accommodation on site during the construction of a dwelling on Plot 5 approved under application ref 181648. **Undecided- on hold due to phosphates.**

211802 - Land at Gob's Castle Risbury Leominster Herefordshire

Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 7 9 10 11 12 13 15 18 19 & 21 attached to planning permission 173687. **Undecided**

30/24 General Financial Matters

To receive: a report from the RFO
 To consider: payments for authorisation
 To consider: Setting the budget for 2024-25
 To consider: appointing HALC as the Council's internal auditor for 2023-24

The RFO reported that-
 Bank balance on 13 March 2024 is £9794.74

Income received since last meeting -

Date	Description	Amount £	Classification
25-1-2024	RHQ Lancs	100.00	Donation
14-2-2024	Margaret Brown	20.00	Pump postage
20-2-2024	S McCamley	20.00	Advert
	TOTAL	140.00	

It was not clear what the credit of £20 from "S McCamley" was for but it looked that it might be Pump related. The RFO had asked the Pump advertising manager if he could clarify the source.

Payments made since last meeting

The following payments were agreed at the 17th November 2023 meeting (minute reference 121/23) and have been made.

Description	Cost £	VAT £	Total £	
Herefordshire Council	293.13	0.00	293.13	Recharge for elections 4 May 2023
Barrington Print	489.00	0.00	489.00	Dec./Jan. Pump printing
Clerk's salary	346.73	0.00	346.73	December 2023
Clerk's salary	346.53	0.00	346.53	Jan 2024. Pay 25 Jan 2024
HMRC PAYE	260.00	0.00	260.00	Q3 PAYE
Autela	63.58	12.71	76.29	Q3 invoice for payroll services
HALC subscriptions for 2024-25	572.88	114.58	687.46	
TOTAL	2371.85	127.29	2499.14	

Payments for Authorisation

Description	Cost £	VAT £	Total £	
Barrington Print	460.00	0.00	460.00	Feb 2024 Pump
Barrington Print	448.00	0.00	448.00	March 2024. Pump
Clerk's salary	346.73	0.00	346.73	Feb. 2024
Clerk's salary	346.73	0.00	346.73	March 2024. Pay 25 March 2024
HMRC PAYE	260.00	0.00	260.00	Q4 PAYE (to pay on 6 April 2024)
D C Garden Services	1740.00	348.00	2088.00	Grant works
HALC training 7 Feb. 2024	229.36	45.87	275.23	Cllr. training
Parish Noticeboard Co.	440.00	88.00	528.00	2 nd payment on noticeboard
Drain Doctor	980.00	196.00	1176.00	Drain cleaning W/Barrow, SP centre, Heath
Drain Doctor	375.00	75.00	450.00	Root cutting Heath
Gareth Higgs tree surgeon	1200.00	0.00	1200.00	Removal of willow tree at W/barrow
Clerk's mileage refund	133.20	0.00	133.20	296 miles @£0.45/mile
Clerk's office contribution	50.00	0.00	50.00	As last year
TOTAL	7009.02	752.87	7761.89	

Cllr. Fulwood reminded the RFO that the village hall is expecting an invoice for their contribution to the new noticeboard.

Council agreed these payments.

Tony Ford at HALC had raised the matter of an unpaid invoice from May 2020! It is for internal audit work carried out for 2019-20. There is no mention of payment in the previous Clerk's records and it may be the invoice was actually never sent/received. No payment appears in the cash book, which reconciles with the bank balance so no payment was ever made. The work however, was carried out so Council should pay it (£200+VAT). Council agreed the payment should be made.

Draft Budget for 2024-25

		PREVIOUS YEARS		2024-25				NOTES FOR 2024-25 BUDGET
		OUTTURN 2022-23	OUTTURN 2023-24	BUDGET 2024-25	YEAR TO DATE	FORECAST OUTTURN	VARIANCE FROM BUDGET	
1	Precept	12289.00	15000.00	15344.00	0.00		-15344.00	1 As agreed at meeting 7 February 2024
2	Pump Advertising	575.00	2391.00	2500.00	0.00		-2500.00	2 With advertising rates flat prudent view holds budget as 2023-24
3	Pump Postage	40.00	40.00	40.00	0.00		-40.00	3 Nominal amount
4	Grants	0.00	7729.00	2400.00	0.00		-2400.00	4 Lengthsman scheme updated to include £1200 base grant & £1200 match funded Nominated Task
5	Other Income	115.12	108.06	500.00	0.00		-500.00	5 Misc. payments. Includes £400 SPVH contribution to noticeboard
6	VAT Reclaim	0.00	2751.62	2073.00	0.00		-2073.00	6 As 2023-24 outturn
7	CW Fundraising	2070.18	300.45	300.00	0.00		-300.00	7 Estimated as last year
8	Other Projects	2080.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	8 Projects not yet defined
9	TOTAL INCOME	17169.30	28320.13	23157.00	0.00	0.00	-23157.00	9
EXPENDITURE								
10	Clerk	4403.50	4343.36	4919.00	0.00		4919.00	10 2023-24 Salary award plus arrears
11	Administration	445.88	411.66	500.00	0.00		500.00	11
12	Insurance, audit, professional	887.38	1235.32	1200.00	0.00		1200.00	12 Increased payment to internal auditor (£50 up to £200).
13	Website & IT	155.00	451.99	500.00	0.00		500.00	13 Increased cost for .GOV website
14	Hire of Halls	200.00	167.00	200.00	0.00		200.00	14
15	Training and development	0.00	229.36	0.00	0.00		0.00	15
16	Equipment	1065.22	890.50	100.00	0.00		100.00	16 Nominal amount
17	Maintenance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	17
18	HMRC	733.60	1105.24	1300.00	0.00		1300.00	18 Increased due to salary award
19	Other	86.00	579.13	100.00	0.00		100.00	19 No election costs nor National events contribution expected
20	DAY TO DAY EXPENDITURE	7976.57	9413.56	8819.00	0.00	0.00	8819.00	20
PROJECTS								
21	War Memorial	5678.00	403.00	60.00	0.00		60.00	21 Engraving for S. Preece (Price)
22	Parish Pump	4260.00	5338.88	4000.00	0.00		4000.00	22 Costs have come down recently with fewer pages printed. Move towards online?
23	Lengthsman	6271.00	9095.00	5400.00	0.00		5400.00	23 £2400 grants + £3000 Parish spend
24	Community Week	1933.00	435.00	450.00	0.00		450.00	24 Estimate similar to 2023-24
25	Environment Project		0.00		0.00		0.00	25 No spend last year. Council to agree way forward on this project.
26	Website modernisation		500.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	26 Project closed
27	Welcome pack		516.40	0.00	0.00		0.00	27 Project closed
28	Project A			0.00	0.00		0.00	
29	Project B			0.00	0.00		0.00	
30	Project C			0.00	0.00		0.00	
31								28
32	PROJECTS EXPENDITURE	18142.00	16288.28	9910.00	0.00	0.00	9910.00	29
33	Reclaimable VAT on the above	2110	2072	1800	0.00		-1800.00	30 VAT reclaim forecast does not yet include any project work
34	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	26118.57	25701.84	18729.00	0.00	0.00	16929.00	31
35	SURPLUS	-8949.27	2618.29	4428.00	0.00	0.00	-4428.00	32

The RFO explained the detail behind this draft budget. Potential projects were discussed and the Chairman requested £500 for the trails booklet. A further project related to road safety involved data collection from sites which might be suitable for a speed indication device (SID). A budget of £2800 was suggested by Cllr. Marston (in the absence of Cllr. Grace) and there was some uncertainty about the contributions other Councils involved in the A44 would be making. The Traffic Management Plan project would be supported in principle but some Councillors felt that more information was required to finalise the budget allocated.

The Environment project is continuing and £1000 should be allocated.

For the present the budget was agreed with the additions for projects as described above.

Appointing HALC as the Council internal auditor.

The RFO asked if any Member knew a suitable candidate to become the internal auditor.

In the absence of any alternative Council must appoint HALC. The RFO will wait until 31 March for a candidate to come forward otherwise he will engage HALC

31/24 Lengthsman & PROW

At the January meeting Council discussed the chronic lack of maintenance to the drainage system and the Clerk received delegated authority to progress the projects Council had previously agreed. The major project was Wheelbarrow Castle but other more routine work arose which would also qualify for grant funding. Significant work (for a small Council) has been undertaken and a recent inspection shows it to be (so far) successful.

Following is a summary of work done and the associated costs.

Site	Work Done	Contractor	Price (ex-VAT)	Cost to Council	Cost to Herefordshire
Group Parishes	Annual Maintenance Plan	D C Garden Services	£1740		£1740
	Ditch digging Wheelbarrow	D C Garden Services	£550		£550
Blackwardine Crossroads	Cut back vegetation , replace rotten woodwork	D C Garden Services	£300	£150	£150
Wheelbarrow	Remove fallen willow tree blocking ditch	Gareth Higgs	£1200	£600	£600
	Suck silt from drains. Jet through.	Turnwater	£330	£165	£165
	Clear ditch at Cross Cottage	D C Garden Services	£760	£380	£380
Stoke Prior village centre	Suck and jet drains around War Memorial	Turnwater	£330	£165	£165
	Suck and jet drains around The Bury & church	Turnwater	£330	£165	£165
The Heath	Suck and jet 5 drains plus cross road drain and soakaway silt trap	Turnwater	£320		£320
	Root cut in cross road pipe	Turnwater	£375		£375
TOTAL			£6235.00	£1625.00	£4610.00
Funded by base grant				£213.00	£2772.00
Funded by matched grant				£1625.00	£1625.00

(Note Table amended on 21 March 2024 to include work at Blackwardine and ditching at Wheelbarrow. This is now the final statement which will be submitted to Herefordshire Council for payment of grant monies.)

Renewal of Lengthsman contract with D C Garden Services for 2024-25

Council agreed that the contract should be renewed for 2024-25 and a future Council meeting will discuss whether re-tendering should be undertaken.

There was some discussion about the state of Normans Lane and a resident has asked if the Council could undertake any repair work. The position is however, that the landowners have responsibility for the upkeep.

32/24 The Lamb Inn

Council had received the copy of the letter signed by the Chairman and the Clerk reported that the auctioneers had immediately amended the details of the sale. At the auction the pub did not sell and has been re-listed for sale at the reserve price of £540k.

33/24 Traffic Management Plan

Cllr Marston updated Council that a meeting with Callum Bush (responsible for traffic management improvements in Herefordshire) is happening in the next few days. The following areas will be inspected-

- Turn off A49 and Ford junction.
- Traffic management around Stoke Prior school
- A44 traffic around the Steensbridge.

Cllr. Grace had written to the Police & Crime Commissioner seeking grant funding to support this project but it was difficult to secure funding without support from other specialist bodies.

A few months ago, Ian Connolly, a Police representative had promised to supply useful forms for data recording but nothing had so far been received. However, Mr Connolly is now moving to a new role so the group is awaiting his replacement to raise the matter again.

Additionally, Cllr. Marston mentioned the new Local Plan for Leominster which included 2500 new houses and provision of a Greenway between Leominster and Bromyard.

34/24 Projects

To consider: projects to be undertaken during 2024-25.
These projects had already been discussed under the Finance report.

35/24 Matters for information and future business

To note: any other matters for information or future decision.

Date of next meeting

To note: the next scheduled meeting will be on Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7.30pm in Risbury village hall
The meeting closed at 9.50pm

Signed.....Chairman Date.....