

MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

11 October at 19.45 – Local Residents Open Session (not part of the meeting) – As per Standing Orders – At the Chairman’s discretion, up to 10 mins will be allocated for the public to make representations, ask questions & give evidence in respect of any item on the agenda. Maximum of 2 mins per person per item is allowed. Item is not for comment on parish council discussions or decisions. Names will not be minuted and every effort will be made to keep personally identifiable data to a minimum, in compliance with GDPR and data protection. Bullet points on the topics raised are noted below to allow the council to address items either as part of appropriate agenda items or by adding to the agenda for a subsequent meeting:

- Body making decisions about new community facility should not be CFG but PC – confirmed that CFG recommends but PC makes decisions.
- What level of parish support is needed to go forward with project? – will be agreed at relevant time.
- Chair of PC is also Chair of CFG – noted.
- Laystone Bridge – understand some parishioners want a weight limit but be careful what wish for as would mean traffic coming through village and past school instead; ideally put a Bailey Bridge as new crossing and close Laystone Bridge to heavy traffic. Herefordshire CE will follow up issue tomorrow.

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 11 October 2021 immediately following the Local Residents Session at 19.45 in the Community centre hall

Present: Cllrs David Bennett (Chair), Kate Ryan, Rod Lees, Lesley Hayward, Paula Barrett (part), Richard Paske, Patrick Meredith, Chris Morgan and Mike Blake.

In Attendance: Herefordshire Council CEP Paul Walker; Ward Cllr Guthrie; Parish Clerk Alison Sutton; and 4 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence –** Cllr Kirsty Robertson.
2. **Declarations of interest and written applications for dispensation –** Cllr Lees DECLARED an interest in item 9.11. and left the meeting during the item.
3. **CEO of Herefordshire Council Paul Walker –** Discussion about Children’s Services in Herefordshire – recent court cases, admitted failings; Non-statutory Improvement Notice issued and dedicated Improvement Adviser appointed by government to support changes to address problems; OFSTED inspections raised issues since 2010, failure in Children’s Services long term, serious concerns about quality of practice, senior management, level of case load, recruitment and retention of staff; only 5 months into Improvement Plan but starting to see change, likely 3-5 years to make changes to improve OFSTED rating, working with Telford and Wrekin who have outstanding report and practice; addressing serious concerns about practice, management, case load; reviewing current 1,000 cases to make no sure no future failures; will get feedback from service users and those interested such as meeting tonight.
Points raised about Children’s Services – need culture open to criticism from outside; need secure appointments – Paul Walker agreed, good permanent staff attract good permanent staff; children outside system altogether living rough – need to be brought into system and cared for; many authorities across country have similar issues, needs national change as well as local change – need to work across boundaries and need national and local strategies.
Other questions and responses: not everyone in HC back at desks, prioritising Children’s Services staff etc to get back to office, many staff across council do not need to be in office every day but can come in 2-3 times/week; 2030 net zero carbon target very good but with new houses being built in county so what can HC do to get new development to have things like heat pumps etc – working on putting such things into HC council house building and then will work with developers etc through policies to move forward, Citizens’ Assembly in new year about moving to net zero carbon target.

4. Police and Ward Councillor Reports –

- 4.1. West Mercia Police – Contact details in Clerk’s Information Sheet and recent incidents NOTED. Clerk INSTRUCTED to add item on BT scam to next News & Views.
- 4.2. Ward Councillor – Laystone Bridge, will be raising with Cabinet Member and Herefordshire CEO will follow up; damage being assessed currently; reports of vandalism to bridge following bridge strike, stones have been pushed into river. NOTED Balfour Beatty considering CCTV to identify vehicles damaging bridge. Traffic calming within village, offering site visit with PC, HC highways officers and police to look at can be done, so PC can develop own ideas and scheme to address traffic problems – AGREED to discuss later on agenda. Increase in Covid cases – due to increase in infections in children and young people; low rates in Herefordshire to start with leads to increases seeming very high.

5. Minutes of the last meetings – 14 September 2021 ADOPTED and signed.

6. Financial Procedures – The balance of the current account of £121,227.19 as at 4 October 2021 was NOTED. Balance includes: committed reserves of 1. £6,659.15 for donations for Community Facilities (CF), 2. £41,328.61 for loan repayments/CF work, 3. £15,000 for village green, 4. £2,000 for replacement of notice boards, 5. £1,000 for Marden Recreation Ground Trust. External Audit Report NOTED. RESOLVED to: undertake virement of £1,000 from NDP to Website and communication for 3 yr email service; and undertake virement of £84 from Insurance to Fundraising Group. Actual payments, receipts and variance against budget REVIEWED and AGREED as in appendix attached when minutes adopted:

- 6.1. Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, Remembrance Day wreath, £150 – Paid online 28/9/21 following delegation at meeting on 14/9/21.
- 6.2. DC Gardening Services, Lengthsman and PROW for September, £300 (inc. £50 VAT) – Paid online 12/10/21 following delegation on 11/10/21.
- 6.3. Signworx Hereford Ltd, News & Views print October edition, £360 – Paid online 12/10/21 following delegation on 11/10/21.
- 6.4. Easyspace Ltd, 3 yr fee for email service from 8 November 2021, £1,765.73 (inc. £294.29 VAT) – Paid online 12/10/21 following delegation on 11/10/21.
- 6.5. Vincent + Partners, CF budget estimate for build, £1,980 (inc. £330 VAT) – Paid online 12/10/21 following delegation on 11/10/21.
- 6.6. Thornley & Lumb Partnership Ltd, CF mechanical & electrical estimate for build, £1,680 (inc. £280 VAT) – Paid online 12/10/21 following delegation on 11/10/21.
- 6.7. CBW Group Ltd, Architects fees, £3,600 (inc. £600 VAT) – Paid online 12/10/21 following delegation on 11/10/21.
- 6.8. Marden Community Centre, Room hire – no invoice received.
- 6.9. Alison Sutton, Salary, extra hrs, expenses, refund for items bought on behalf of PC, £2,398.00 – Paid online 12/10/21 following delegation on 11/10/21.
- 6.10. HM Revenue & Customs, PAYE paid on behalf of Clerk, £470.00 – Paid online 12/10/21 following delegation on 11/10/21.
- 6.11. Income from Herefordshire Council, Part 2 Precept, £25,750.
- 6.12. Income from New NRG, Solar farm payment, £727.50.

7. Business Plan Update and Budget & Precept for 2022-23 – RESOLVED to print and distribute to every property, following few minor amendments. Clerk INSTRUCTED to: obtain quote from PIP Printing Ltd; ask News & Views editors if deliverers will distribute document with November News & Views.

8. Planning Applications – To comment on applications to be determined by Herefordshire Council

- 8.1. NOTED P211793/F, Post Office, HR1 3EW – Demolition of existing stores and outbuildings, to be replaced by single storey addition to the rear of the shop. Part change of use from residential to retail floor space – Approved with conditions.
- 8.2. NOTED P212738/FH, Park Lodge, Litmarsh, HR1 3EZ – Proposed rear and side extensions to existing dwelling with single and 2 storey elements and internal work – Refused.
- 8.3. NOTED P211966/F, White Gate Farm, Litmarsh, HR1 3EZ – Proposed change of use from agricultural to residential and erection of new dwelling – Refused.

- 8.4. NOTED P210135/F, Land adjacent to The Old Council Houses, Burmarsh – Proposed erection of 3-bed dwelling with detached garage – Refused.

9. Parish reports and Issues –

- 9.1. Lengthsman Scheme, general maintenance and grass cutting – Report in Clerk's Information Sheet NOTED: work undertaken in September and work due in October as scheduled. Clerk INSTRUCTED to inform Lengthsman re strimming by Laystone Bridge suspended until repaired and reopened.
- 9.2. Parish Footpath Officer (PFO) – Report in Clerk's Information Sheet NOTED: various issues resolved by landowners; MR38 – black bags on kissing gate mechanism to reduce noise, Locality Steward reported grass cutting; MR22A – hedges cut; MR21 – concern over dog mess left in field with sheep in.
- 9.3. Environment and Sustainability Group –
- a) Report NOTED: successful day for launch of Great Collaboration Portal at September Spectacular; 40 people interested though not sure how many signed up, very positive feedback.
 - b) Next actions – article in News & Views; one page flyer to all properties to encourage sign up to Portal, Group will deliver. Clerk INSTRUCTED to print once copy sent by Cllr Lees.
- 9.4. Parish enhancement – Separate document and report in Clerk's Information Sheet NOTED. RESOLVED to support Gardener's enhancement group's request and purchase Gabion Benches for site opposite The Volunteer for £678 +VAT. Clerk INSTRUCTED to: order benches and contact landowner re donating paving slabs; order Christmas tree, as S&A has agreed sponsorship.
- 9.5. Community Facilities project – Report in Clerk's Information Sheet NOTED: worked with architect to finalise amended option B to go to planning for decision on whether non-material amendment or not; work on draft Business Plan and community event in December. RESOLVED to go forward with work and decide at next meeting on Business Plan and event details.
- 9.6. Traffic survey – Commissioning survey. RESOLVED to take up Ward Cllr's offer for meeting with HC officers and police to consider what traffic calming measures possible.
- 9.7. Village pond – Report in Clerk's Information Sheet NOTED: offer from landowner to sell pond for £30,000 but not able to allow anyone to maintain area or put seating by pond. NOTED would have to consider costs of insurance, fencing, benches etc if purchased area. RESOLVED that unable to take up offer as wrong time and have other priorities for funds with community building project, grateful if consider PC in future as a gift to parish.
- 9.8. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee beacon – Report in Clerk's Information Sheet NOTED: event on 2 June at 9.15pm, 3 types of beacon suggested. RESOLVED to ask for parishioners' views as consider beacon polluting and not good ecologically. Clerk INSTRUCTED to ask for views and ideas for other celebrations.
- 9.9. Update on Small Ashes – None available.
- 9.10. Setting up a parish hub – Setting up a hub. AGREED: to find out about benefits, how and what needed to make virtual hub work; Cllrs Lees, Ryan and Bennett to take forward. Clerk INSTRUCTED to set up a Zoom/in person meeting with Talk Community Development Officer.
- 9.11. News & Views costs – Report in Clerk's Information Sheet NOTED: large increase in costs of both A4 and A5 format from current printer, now under new management and known as Signworx; quotes obtained from PIP Print considerably lower and able to meet turn-round and deadline times; editors request move to PIP now, A4 format for November and December/January editions and A5 format from February 2022. RESOLVED to move printing to PIP. Clerk INSTRUCTED to: adjust budget in line with costs; ask editors to request parishioners inform them if have difficulties reading A5 format.
- 9.12. Parish noticeboards – Report in Clerk's Information Sheet NOTED: state of boards and posts, most in need of replacement; change of position needed for 2 sites, landowners will need to be approached; recycled plastic boards with cover so closed but not locked x5, board with

locked part and openable section x1; estimated cost for 6 boards, posts and delivery £3,487 +VAT. RESOLVED: to purchase 6 boards; use £2,000 committed reserves and take rest as required from uncommitted general reserves. AGREED that another board at BT box not required as boards within village at school and Rudge Grove. Clerk INSTRUCTED to: speak to landowners; write to The Amberley about changing boards (new board at this site not currently included) and ask about plans.

- 9.13. New Trustee for Marden Consolidated Charities – Support nomination. RESOLVED to support nomination of parishioner put forward by continuing Trustees.
- 10. Policies and documents** – Equal Opportunities, Staff Appraisal, Sickness and Absence, Disciplinary and Grievance, Health and Safety and Lone Working Policies – RESOLVED to adopt and sign policies dated October 2021.
- 11. Dates for meetings in 2022** – 10 January, 14 February, 14 March, 11 April, 9 May, 13 June, 11 July, 8 August (if required), 12 September, 10 October, 14 November, 12 December (if required) NOTED.
- 12. Correspondence** – List in Clerk’s Information Sheet NOTED.
- 13. Matters for next agenda or for Clerk’s action under delegated authority**
 Next agenda:
- Land behind Minimarket
 - Items for S&A Liaison Meeting
 - As above.
- Clerk’s action:
- Write to Herefordshire Council and Balfour Beatty re Laystone Bridge
 - Respond to letter re pond
 - As above.
- 14. Date of next meeting** – Monday 8 November 2021 at 19.45 in Community Centre hall.

This meeting was declared closed at 21.50.

SIGNED:

DATE:

Marden Chair