

HOW CAPLE SOLLERSHOPE AND YATTON GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Held on

Tuesday 14th November 2023 at 7pm

At Brockhampton Village Hall

Present: Councillors: John Jackson (Chairman), Hugh Bodington, Brendan Beal and Elizabeth Glover.

In attendance: Clerk: Helen Tinson. PCSO Kirsten Kysow.

Members of Public: 1

1. To receive apologies for absence:

Cllr Ed Rogers; Ward Cllr Barry Durkin

2. To receive declarations of interest and written dispensation requests:

Cllr Brendan Beal declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 5.1.1 (planning 232355).

3. To consider the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 12th September 2023:

It was RESOLVED: to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair.

4. Public Participation:

4.1. To receive report from the Ward Councillor:

It was reported that Cllr Durkin remains on medical leave and therefore there was no report. Members wished to record their best wishes for a speedy recovery.

4.2. To receive report from PCSO Kirsten Kysow:

There was nothing to report in terms of crime in the area. The Local Policing Team are continuing to concentrate on speed enforcement and community engagement and are actively targeting offenders and encouraging the surrender of knives during Anti-Knife Crime Week. PCSO Kysow is planning to run some informative events on cyber crime in the New Year.

Members received a brief introduction on Smartwater, an initiative promoted by West Mercia Police to reduce burglaries. To become a Smartwater Village, 80% of residents must agree to take part. Smartwater Kits cost £8.00 per unit; the PCC will subsidise 25% but the Parish Council would need to pay the remaining 75%. The 'We Don't Buy Crime' Team are available to give a parish talk to explain how the system works. It was noted that the three parish churches and some local residents already have Smartwater in use.

PCSO Kysow left the meeting.

4.3. To receive representations from the public on parish matters:

There were no representations from members of the public.

5. Planning:

5.1. Members noted the following planning consultations decided by Herefordshire Council:

5.1.1.232355: The Old Forge, How Caple, HR1 4TE. Conversion and extension of the existing studio/barn attached to the main dwelling house (revised scheme of previously submitted application 200856). Approved with conditions.

5.1.2.232220: Land at Foxhalls Farm, Sollers Hope. Proposed erection of an agricultural workers dwelling, including a new garage and associated works. Refused.

6. Finance:

6.1. Finance Report: Members received a financial report, attached to these minutes as Appendix A, and a review of Income/Expenditure Actual vs Budget at the end of Quarter 2, attached to these minutes as Appendix B.

6.2. Draft Budget 2024/25: Members considered the draft budget prepared by the Finance Working Group for 2024/25, attached to these minutes as Appendix C. It is proposed that, in order to meet increased costs and to balance the budget, the precept is increased to £9750. This would result in an increase of approximately £10 per household per year for Band D or equivalent properties.

It was RESOLVED: to approve the draft budget for public consultation, and to consider comments and set the precept at the January meeting.

6.3. Bank Mandate: Members were informed that Cllr John Jackson, Cllr Elizabeth Glover and the Clerk now have online access to the Lloyds account. A mandate was signed to add Cllrs Hugh Bodington and Brendan Beal as signatories with online access. Members noted that payments approved at the meeting would be drawn from the NatWest account, and were asked to agree a transfer of funds from NatWest to the Lloyds account in readiness for the transfer of accounts.

It was RESOLVED: to approve a transfer of £5000.00 from NatWest to Lloyds, and to transfer the remaining balance and close the NatWest account in January or once all cheques issued have been cashed.

6.4. Defibrillator at Wilmot House: Members were informed that Wilmot House have approached the Parish Council asking for a financial contribution via an available grant towards the purchase of a defibrillator to be sited on the external wall of Wilmot House. The defibrillator would be available for community use at all times. The Clerk has submitted an Expression of Interest for £750 of grant funding and will report further in due course. Members considered future installations of one defibrillator per parish, possibly sited at each Church, but agreed to defer further discussion to another time.

6.5. Clerk Laptop: Members were asked to consider costs of £75.00 plus VAT to service the laptop used by the Clerk in order to extend its lifespan; and an annual subscription to Microsoft 365 at a cost of £59.99 plus VAT per year in order to access additional features including 1TB of cloud storage to ensure all files are backed up and accessible remotely. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the service at a cost of £75.00 plus VAT and the purchase of Microsoft 365 at a cost of £59.99 plus VAT.

6.6. Payments: Members considered payments made between meetings:

It was RESOLVED to ratify the following payments:

6.6.1.Helen Tinson, Clerk Salary (September), in accordance with contract

6.6.2.HMRC, PAYE/NIC Q2, £222.20

6.7. Payments: Members considered invoices due for payment:

It was RESOLVED: to make the following payments:

6.7.1.Helen Tinson, Clerk Salary (October), in accordance with contract

6.7.2.Helen Tinson, Reimburse Clerk Expenses: HP Instant Ink/Postage, £13.72 inc £1.83 VAT

6.7.3.Autela Payroll Services, Q2, £57.98 inc £9.66 VAT

6.7.4.Terry Griffiths, Lengthsman TGC 2446, £528.00 inc £88.00 VAT

6.7.5.Terry Griffiths, Lengthsman TGC 2447, £960.00 inc £160.00 VAT

6.7.6.Terry Griffiths, Lengthsman TGC 2448, £1080.00 inc £180.00 VAT

6.7.7.Terry Griffiths, Lengthsman TGC 2449, £840.00 inc £140.00 VAT

6.7.8.Terry Griffiths, Lengthsman TGC 2471, £1140.00 inc £190.00 VAT

7. Highways:

7.1. Highways:

7.1.1.Members received a report as attached to the minutes as Appendix D.

7.1.2.Members considered concerns about flooding on the B4224 near Chantry Farm, Perrystone. It was noted that this section of the B4224 is in the parish of Brampton Abbots and Foy, but that residents of How Caple and Sollershope Parishes are regularly affected by it. The flooded section causes cars to swerve onto the other side of the road on a blind bend. The Locality Steward has noted the area in his weekly report on a number of occasions and has previously put-up flood warning signs. However, members felt that a full investigation to establish the cause of the flooding followed by appropriate remedial action should be carried out as soon as possible. Members also raised concerns about leaves blocking the grate at Stocking Cottage.

It was RESOLVED: that the Clerk write to the Locality Steward/BBLP on both matters.

7.2. SID's: Members considered communication from BBLP concerning the SID base. BBLP have stated that in order to quote for the installation of the base, they need to confirm the exact size of the pole as this will dictate the socket size and hole. They wish to send their Design Team to survey the site and calculate the appropriate sizes of the base hole, pole and socket at a cost of £265.88.

It was noted that the original quotation had specified a 76mm post but that the SID manufacturer stipulate the post should be between 90mm and 120mm. The Clerk reported that a local company who manufacture posts will survey prior to fabrication to ensure the post is the correct size for the hole.

It was RESOLVED: to ask BBLP to proceed with the hole at 120mm in width; and to engage Ward Cllr Durkin's support if BBLP continue to request further payment for an assessment. Cllr Jackson will investigate options for sockets at 120mm and Cllr Brendan Beal offered to underwrite the design using a pole between 90-120mm under his professional indemnity insurance if required by BBLP.

7.3. Lengthsman: Members were informed that the Lengthsman has carried out the four drainage jobs identified as High Priority – Job 1: Yatton C1262 Barrel Hill Green to U70008 junction; Job 7: Sollershope C1298 near junction with U70012; Job 8: Yatton U70008; and Job 9: Sollershope near Lindells Lane. Members had received maps with their meeting papers showing the locations of all drainage works identified.

It was RESOLVED: that the Clerk will ask Clays Estate to clear some mud off the road at Job 8, U70008 Yatton.

It was RESOLVED: that the Clerk will publish the maps on the website.

8. Policies and Procedures:

8.1. 4-Year Parish Council Plan: Members were asked to review the draft 4-year Parish Council Plan and feedback thoughts to the Chairman/Clerk. Initial thoughts included identifying priorities and resources; partnerships and links to community groups; developing a team of volunteers; supporting biodiversity in particular in relation to the River Wye; social action to support those in need; and developing improved communication with parish residents.

It was RESOLVED: that the Clerk would work with the Chairman to update the draft document in line with feedback and table an agenda item for further review at the next meeting.

8.2. Process of Publication of Councillor Declaration of Interests: Members considered correspondence received from Herefordshire Council (HC) and Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) concerning a change in the process of publishing Councillor Declaration of Interests (DoI's). It was noted that the Clerk has already published redacted copies of the DoI's on the website in line with HC's request in order to ensure members' compliance with the Localism Act 2011.

It was RESOLVED: that, although members agree with HALC's position, the DoI's continue to be published on the Parish Council website.

8.3. Delegated Authority: Members considered HALC's advice that any authorities delegated to the Clerk are renewed every four-year term.

It was RESOLVED: to renew the delegated authority for the Clerk as follows:

1) To respond to planning consultations between meetings, if necessary, in accordance with

- a decision reached by a quorum of the Planning Working Group;
- 2) To make payments between meetings within budget as required up to £500;
 - 3) To make payments to respond to an emergency up to £1000 in conjunction with the Chairman and/or Vice Chairman.

8.4. Policies: Members considered the following policies and procedures:

8.4.1. Complaints Procedure:

It was RESOLVED: to adopt the Complaints Procedure with a renewal date of 4 years or on election.

8.4.2. Training and Development Policy:

It was RESOLVED: to adopt the Training and Development Policy with a renewal date of 4 years or on election.

8.4.3. Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures Policy:

It was RESOLVED: to adopt the Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures Policy with a renewal date of 4 years or on election.

8.4.4. Dignity at Work, Harassment and Bullying Policy:

It was RESOLVED: to adopt the Dignity at Work, Harassment and Bullying Policy with a renewal date of 4 years or on election.

9. Community:

Members considered a draft 4-page newsletter to be printed and delivered to all residents of the three parishes. Some amendments were proposed and agreed.

It was RESOLVED: that the Clerk would amend as proposed and send a draft via email for final approval.

It was RESOLVED: to print 150 copies at a cost of £118.62.

It was RESOLVED: to hand deliver as many copies as possible, asking for email addresses in order to build the digital newsletter subscription base.

10. Training:

Members considered the latest HALC Training Schedule but noted only one session of a relevant topic remained for November. The Chairman suggested councillors might like to consider the Leading Lights session when future dates are released.

It was RESOLVED: not to book training for this quarter.

11. Next Meeting: Tuesday 9th January 2024, 7pm, Brockhampton Village Hall.

Agenda Items:

- 11.1. To approve the draft budget and set the precept for 2024/25
- 11.2. To consider a timeline to review the NDP in line with the Herefordshire Local Plan
- 11.3. To receive feedback on the 4-year Parish Council Plan and agree next steps
- 11.4. To identify poor road surfaces for submission to HC

The meeting closed at 8.37pm

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

Appendix A: Finance Report (by Clerk/RFO)

Bank Balance @ 10th October 2023:

NatWest: £14,291.59 (excluding payments to be approved 14.11.23 and any cheques unrepresented at that time)

I can confirm that NatWest bank statements are now being sent to my address.

Bank Reconciliation: A bank reconciliation is carried out at each statement date and will be passed to the FWG to verify at the meeting.

New Lloyds Account: Is up and running. John, Liz and I have online access (me to set up payments, John and Liz to authorise them). An application to add Hugh and Brendan as full signatories with online access is ready to sign and submit.

Finance Working Group Report: The Finance Working Group met on 9th October to review the actual vs budget income and expenditure at the end of Q2 23/24, and to consider the draft budget for 24/25.

A year end position was forecast based on either year-to-date figures (ie the actual expenditure for the first six months anticipated as being similar to the second half of the year); a monthly average based on the budget; or flexed forecasting based on known income and expenditure expected during the second half of the year.

The positive anticipated end position reflects the Lengthsman and Drainage funding received during the year. The Lengthsman funding is guaranteed for the next 4 years (24/25 is year 2 of a 5-year scheme), but the matched funding is not guaranteed and has therefore not been included in the budget.

As the precept has not been increased in line with inflation over recent years it is proposed to increase it to £9750. The Parish Tax Bases for 24/25 have not yet been released but the following calculation has used the current year figures (Band D and equivalent properties):

Parish Tax Bases 23/24:

How Caple, Sollershope & Yatton Group Parish
Council 159.37

£9750 divide 159.37 = £61.18 per property per year

£8200 divide 159.37 = 51.45 per property per year

Proposed increase equates to an additional £9.73 per property per year

Please note: the draft budget does not allow for any projects or capital purchases, for example a defibrillator, second SID, benches, bins etc or for general maintenance (ie painting railings).

PROW has been increased to £1520 to cover additional cutting back of overgrowth. It is also worth considering that funding is available via Wye Valley AONB and FiPL (Farming in Protected Landscapes) for improvements to access, which could be replacing stiles with gates.

Reserves: Once the Lloyds current account is fully operational, I recommend we consider opening a Reserve Account to take advantage of higher interest rates.

Lengthsman Funding: As previously reported, we have been awarded £2842.00 towards Lengthsman work (ie routine maintenance days) and £2000 towards drainage projects, with £2000 to be matched by the PC.

Terry has now carried out drainage Jobs 1, 7, 8 and 9 – all of the jobs categorised high priority. The invoices for Jobs 1, 7, 8 and 9 and the routine maintenance day invoice have been submitted to HC for reimbursement.

Appendix B: Q2 Review

	April	May	June	July	August	September	Q2 Actual	October	November	December	January	February	March	Projected at Year End	Grants Approved	Grants Claimed	Budget	Anticipated End Variance
EXPENDITURE	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual		Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast			yr 31.3.23	
Clerks Salary inc PAYE pd quarterly	556.40	296.50	296.30	587.33	296.30	518.40	2,551.23	370.50	370.50	370.50	370.50	370.50	370.50	4,774.23			3,500.00	1,274.23
PAYE Admin	£ -	£ -	£ -	£48.32	£ -	£ -	£48.32	£48.32	£ -	£ -	£48.32	£ -	£ -	£144.96				£144.96
Clerks Home Allowance	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£100.00	£100.00				£100.00
Clerks mileage	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -				£ -
Stationery	£ -	£ 4.99	£ -	£15.36	£ -	£6.58	£26.93	£5.00	£1.99	£5.00	£1.99	£1.99	£5.00	£47.90			£180.00	-£132.10
Audit	£ -	£200.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£200.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£200.00			£100.00	£100.00
Insurance	£ -	£270.58	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£270.58	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£270.58			£300.00	-£29.42
Subscriptions (HALC)	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	425.00	£ -			500.00	-£75.00
ICO	£ -	£40.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£40.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£40.00				£40.00
Website/Computer Costs	£ -	£ -	£ -	£55.00	£ -	£ -	£55.00	£ -	£ -	£100.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£155.00			£200.00	-£45.00
Meeting Hall Hire	£ -	£ -	£ -	£100.00	£ -	£ -	£100.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£100.00			£120.00	-£20.00
Training	£ -					£ -	£ -			£100.00			£100.00	£200.00				£200.00
Lengthsman/P3	£ -	£124.00	£ -	£440.00	£ -	£815.00	1379.00	£ -	£ -	3350.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	4729.00	4842.00		2500.00	2613.00
Winter Gritting	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -				£ -
Traffic Calming (SID Exp)	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -				£ -
Parish event/Comm Engam't		£304.43			£ -	£ -	£304.43	£ -						£304.43			£130.00	£174.43
S137 Donations	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -				£ -
Church Donations x 3	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£525.00	£525.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	-	-	-	£525.00			£525.00	£ -
Contingency	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-	-	£ -	£ -	-	-	£ -	-	-	£ -			£145.00	-£145.00
VAT		£16.84		£110.33	£ -	£164.00	£291.17							£291.17				
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		1257.34	296.30	1356.34	296.30	2028.98	5235.26	423.82	372.49	3925.50	420.81	797.49	575.50	11750.87			8200.00	3550.87
INCOME																		
Precept	4100.00					4100.00	8200.00							8200.00			£8200.00	£ -
VAT Recoverable		£415.24					£415.24							£415.24				£415.24
Lengthsman grant	£ -			£ -				£ -			£ -		4842.00	4842.00				4842.00
Donations & Grants														£ -				
TOTAL RECEIPTS	4100.00	415.24	£ -	£ -	£ -	4100.00	8615.24	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	4842.00	13457.24				

Appendix C: 2024/25 DRAFT BUDGET

	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Expected
EXPENDITURE	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	
Clerks Salary inc PAYE	£395.00	£395.00	£395.00	£395.00	£395.00	£395.00	£395.00	£395.00	£395.00	£395.00	£395.00	£395.00	£4,740.00
PAYE Admin	£ 50.00			£ 50.00			£ 50.00			£ 50.00			£ 200.00
Clerks Home Allowance	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 100.00	£ 100.00
Clerks mileage (emergency)	£ -	£ 10.00	£ -	£ 10.00		£ 10.00	£ -	£ 10.00		£ 10.00	£ -	£ 10.00	£ 60.00
Stationery	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 5.00	£ 60.00
Audit				£ 150.00									£ 150.00
Insurance	£ 350.00		-										£ 350.00
Subscriptions (HALC)										£ 425.00			£ 425.00
ICO	£ 40.00												£ 40.00
Website/Computer Costs	£ 145.00	£ -	£ 55.00	£ -	£ -	£ 100.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 300.00
Meeting Hall Hire	£ -	£ 25.00	£ -	£ 25.00	£ -	£ 25.00	£ -	£ 25.00	£ -	£ 25.00	£ -	£ 25.00	£ 150.00
Training	£ 100.00					£ 100.00							£ 200.00
Lengthsman/P3			£ 880.00			£ 880.00			£ 880.00			£ 880.00	£ 3,520.00
Winter Gritting	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Traffic Calming (SID Expenses)	£ 100.00					£ 100.00							£ 200.00
Parish event/Community Eng		£ 150.00			£ -	£ 250.00	£ 150.00						£ 550.00
S137 Donations	£ 500.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 500.00
Church Donations x 3	£ 525.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-	-	-	£ 525.00
Contingency	£ 100.00	£ -	£ -	£ 100.00	-	-	£ 100.00	-	-	£ 100.00	-	-	£ 400.00
VAT													£ -
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 2310.00	£ 585.00	£1,335.00	£ 735.00	£ 400.00	£1,865.00	£ 700.00	£ 435.00	£1,280.00	£ 1,010.00	£ 400.00	£1,415.00	£12,470.00
INCOME													
Precept	£ 4,875.00					£4,875.00							£ 9,750.00
VAT Recoverable													£ -
Lengthsman grant			£ 710.50			£ 710.50			£ 710.50			£ 710.50	£ 2,842.00
Donations & Grants													£ -
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 4,875.00	£ -	£ 710.50	£ -	£ -	£5,585.50	£ -	£ -	£ 710.50	£ -	£ -	£ 710.50	£12,592.00

Appendix D: HIGHWAYS REPORT

BBLP: Locality Steward

Following a recent assessment by John, the poor condition of Foxhalls Rattle Road U70009 has once again been reported to BBLP. You may recall that last month Neil advised that he had wanted to close the road because of its poor condition. He had met with the assets team who advised against closing it preferring to improve it instead. He has reported it again and has responded as follows:

“Thank you for your email, and the photographs which you have kindly attached for my perusal.

Just to make you aware, I conducted an annual inspection which encompassed this road in October. As a result of that inspection, I noted a number of edge of carriageway and pothole defects that were raised for the reactive team to address.

As you recall, I conducted a site inspection with members of the assets team back earlier last year because I wanted to close the road due to its condition. However, they suggested keeping the road open with signage, which is placed at either end of the feature, with a view to some works taking place.

Obviously this hasn't happened to date but the works have been identified but as yet have not been programmed. I have chased up the asset team but as yet a time frame for the works still isn't known.”

Forthcoming Road Closures:

As reported via email:

BT OpenReach: Crossway Rattle Hill from C1262.

ROAD CLOSURE REQUIRED TO ALLOW ENGINEER TO WORK IN UNDERGROUND STRUCTURE &
FOR TREE CUTTING

27-11-2023 to 29-11-2023

HC Funding for Road Resurfacing:

Herefordshire Council have published the first batch of roads that will be resurfaced and improved following £2.5 million additional investment (as shared on email 8/11/23).