

HOW CAPLE, SOLLERS HOPE AND YATTON GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

Held at 6.30pm on Tuesday 14th May 2024

At Brockhampton Village Hall

Present: John Jackson (in the Chair), Clerk Helen Tinson, Ward Cllr Barry Durkin and 4 members of the public.

1. Chairmans Welcome:

The Chairman opened the meeting and thanked everyone present for attending.

2. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Ed Rogers and Elizabeth Glover, and parishioners Rosalind Bodington and Stuart Donachie.

3. Minutes:

Those present considered and approved the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 7th May 2023 as a true record of the meeting.

4. Chairman's Report:

Cllr Jackson provided a report from the last twelve month. He extended his thanks to all Councillors who have served in the last twelve months, the Clerk, Ward Councillor Durkin for his ongoing support and PCSO Kirsten Kysow for her regular attendance at Parish Council meetings.

The Chairman reported matters that have progressed throughout the year:

- 4.1 A new defibrillator for community use has been installed at Wilmot House. The defibrillator was funded partly by grant funding, with the balance shared between a donation received from Hereford Cathedral School and the Parish Council. The Chairman extended his thanks to Wilmot House for hosting the defibrillator. It was noted that other local defibrillators are located at Brockhampton, Fownhope and Much Marcle. Although the defibrillator guides users through the process, a training session on CPR and defibrillator awareness will be held on Tuesday 16th July.
- 4.2 Three litter picking events were held in February and March 2024, one in each parish, and collected over twenty bags of rubbish. It was agreed that this was a good time of the year to collect the worst of the litter. The events were supported by councillors, volunteers and PCSO Kysow. A McDonalds bag was recovered on Barrel Hill and found to contain a receipt. This was subsequently reported to Herefordshire Council enforcement, who were able to track the vehicle registration and issued a £140 fine. Further fly-tipping of a large amount of insulation along Rattle Hill had been reported to Balfour Beatty and quickly attended to. It was reported that the company responsible has been identified and the director may be summoned to court.
- 4.3 A further grant has been secured from West Mercia's Police and Crime Commissioner for the purchase of a second Speed Indicator Device on the B4224. Work is ongoing with Herefordshire Council/Balfour Beatty to formalise the installation of both units.

- 4.4 Grants from Herefordshire Council were secured for drainage on C&U roads. The Chairman, Clerk and Lengthsman drove and walked the road network and, using local knowledge, identified defects and areas where improvements can be made. Each job was prioritised based on impact. Of note, work has been carried out around Barrel Hill Farm, between Churchfields and Fairview in Yatton, near Lyndalls Lane in Sollershope and at the Sollershope junction towards Foxhalls, though further work is required here. Further funding for 2025/25 has also been secured.
- 4.5 Three Parish Footpaths Officers have been appointed: John Reed for Yatton, Tom Coleman for How Caple and Mike Clarke and Enid Elliot for Sollershope. Mike and Enid will lead the team and the Chairman expressed his thanks to them all. Moving forwards, footpath grants will be applied for when they become available and used to prioritise improvements to the most used public rights of way.
- 4.6 A project has been launched to improve the Wye Valley Walk in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the walk in 2025, led by Wye Valley National Landscapes and Walkers are Welcome. The Parish Footpaths Officers will be supporting them by surveying the route as it passes through How Caple. The aim is to replace all stiles for stockproof gates.
- 4.7 In terms of administration, our Clerk has reviewed and published our policies and procedures, and continues to update the website regularly.
- 4.8 In terms of finance, the PC is in a good position with adequate reserves and budget versus spending is reflected and stable. The precept was increased to £9750, which looks large in terms of percentage but on an average band D property equates to £9.73 per year. The decision to increase the precept was taken after many years without increase, and to meet increased running costs.

5. Open Forum:

- 5.1 A parishioner commented on the increase in precept and expressed the view that most parishioners would be very happy with the Parish Council budget.
- 5.2 The level of communication and the various updates issued via the Parish newsletter were appreciated, as were the litter picking events.
- 5.3 It was felt that the roads are the main areas of concern. The Chairman requested that any areas of particular concern are emailed to the Clerk, but it was noted that the Lengthsman is not responsible for road surface. A parishioner reported that the road next to Whittlebury Barn towards Ashfield is in particular need of repair.
- 5.4 The Ward Councillor reported that drainage will be an area of focus for him this year and he is encouraging Balfour Beatty to engage with Parish Council's to create a map of all drains across the county. He is pushing Locality Stewards to not only carry out minor repairs but to also identify the cause of the problem and attend to it if possible.
- 5.5 It was noted that responsibility for ditches falls on the landowner for the downstream flow.
- 5.6 A query was raised concerning the discharge of water from land onto the highway. It was noted that this is also the responsibility of the landowner. Information on riparian responsibilities is available to view on Herefordshire Council's website.

There were no further questions or comments so the Chairman thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 7.15pm.

Signed _____

Date: _____