



ORLETON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Of the meeting of Orleton Parish Council Held on Thursday 15th February 2024 at 6:30pm at the Village Hall

PRESENT: Councillors – Colin Mitchell (in the Chair), Veronica Bishop, David Lane, Ron Gittings and Barry Rogers.

IN ATTENDANCE: Olena Barrett (Clerk), Cllr Dan Hurcomb (Bircher Ward – Herefordshire Council), Steph Harper (PCSO, Police, Leominster Team) and 3 members of the public.

MINUTES

1. To receive apologies of absence.

RECEIVED from Cllrs: Simmons (away) and Powell.

2. To consider any declarations of interest and written requests for dispensation on agenda items.

Cllr Gittings **DECLARED** a personal interest in item 7.4 of the agenda and left the meeting for the duration of that item.

3. To approve Minutes of the meeting held on 18th January 2024.

The Minutes were **APPROVED** as true and accurate record and duly **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

4. Open session (limited to 10 minutes)

To receive views of local residents on items set out in the agenda and other parish matters proposed for inclusion in future agendas.

PCSO Steph Harper of the Safer Neighbourhood Leominster Police Team, updated the meeting with the Team's recent activities:

- New member of the team – 5 in total;
- Recent operations – Night Owl (poachers, drivers, etc) & Stop That Sheep (agricultural transports checks, animal welfare);
- Fly tipping;
- Police Academy Sports Stars;
- Upcoming surgeries in Orleton (Village Hall, during and after the Coffee Morning meetings);
- Traffic enforcement recently carried out in Orleton Parish;

The Chairman thanked the PCSO for her attendance and update.

5. Finance.

5.1 To note the bank balance – 31st January 2024

NOTED - £22,325.11

5.2 To note end of 3rd Quarter finance report

5.2.1 *To receive the appointed Member's report on the verification of the 3rd Quarter and YTD bank reconciliations.*

Pursuant to Financial Regulation 2.2 the appointed member REPORTED the conclusion of verification of accounts, financial statement, and bank reconciliation as prepared by the RFO for the 3rd Quarter and YTD 2023/24. No errors or irregularities were discovered. Relevant documents were duly **SIGNED** as evidence of verification.

5.2.2 *To receive and note the appointed Member's budget monitoring report as on 31st December 2023.*

It was REPORTED by Cllr Gittings and the RFO that there are no substantial changes since the Council considered the budget at its previous meeting and no areas of concern regarding budget overspend. The report was **NOTED** by the Council.

5.3 *To consider and approve the finance report & bank reconciliations for the 3rd Quarter and YTD, as produced by the RFO and verified by the appointed Member.*

The Council considered the 3rd Quarter & YTD finance report & bank reconciliations, as produced by the RFO and verified by the appointed Member. It was moved by Cllr Mitchell, seconded by Cllr Rogers and unanimously **APPROVED**.

5.4 Budget Working Group

To review the Budget working Group's Terms of Reference and confirm that, having fulfilled its primary purpose, it is now disbanded.

It was **RESOLVED** that, having fulfilled its primary purpose the Budget Working Group is now disbanded.

5.5 To consider and approve the following (but not limited to) outstanding invoices for payment:

Following invoices were **APPROVED** for payment by BACS:

- 5.5.1** Herefordshire Association of Local Councils, affiliation subs 2024/25 - £880.81
- 5.5.2** Leo Pest Control, January 2024 - £85.20
- 5.5.3** Village Hall, room hire Sep-Dec 2023 - £120.00
- 5.5.4** Village Hall, room hire Jan-Mar 2024 - £90.00
- 5.5.5** Andrew Deptford, defibrillators supplies (pads + batteries) - £856.80
- 5.5.6** Microsoft 365 operating system licence renewal - £59.99
- 5.5.7** PFO, expenses - £36.11
- 5.5.8** Travel & admin expenses - £13.68 + £21.04
- 5.5.9** PC Telephone - £10.00

5.6 To note following payments made:

5.6.1 Clerk's salary for January 2024
NOTED.

6. Lengthsman

6.1 To consider and approve schedule of works for March:

- Scraping of drain tops throughout the parish.

APPROVED.

7. Planning

To consider the following planning applications for determination by Herefordshire Council.

7.1 [233783](#) - Pavilion At The Recreation Ground Orleton Village Hall, Millbrook Way, Orleton, Ludlow, Herefordshire SY8 4HW - Proposed upgrade works to the existing Pavilion at Orleton Recreation Ground, including re-cladding of building, installation of new windows and doors, and creation of a new ramp access and associated safety rails.

NO OBJECTION.

7.2 [233625](#) - Manor Ground Farm, Orleton, Ludlow, Herefordshire SY8 4JJ - Proposed manure storage barn.

NO OBJECTION.

7.3 [240299](#) - The Farm, Kitchen Hill Road, Orleton, Ludlow, Herefordshire SY8 4HW - Cypress hedge (a) - Reduce overgrown hedge height by 40% to previously topped height of approx. 3 Metres. Hedge (b) consisting of Spindle, Holly, Hazel, Blackthorn, - Lay overgrown hedge traditionally in the 'midland style'- section to be laid. Austrian Pine (c) Power company work to clear overhead lines has much decreased amenity value, also tree causes severe shading to 3 neighbour's gardens - Fell to the ground. Cypress (d) Low amenity value and poor stability due to old age and multi stem form, previously branches have fallen on to the greenhouse below. Also the tree causes shading- Fell to the ground.

NO OBJECTION.

7.4 [240193](#) - 2 Ashley Walk, Orleton, Ludlow, Herefordshire SY8 4HD - Propose to remove Magnolia tree and stump and replace it with an alternative.

Cllr Gittings left the room for the duration of this item.

NO OBJECTION.

Cllr Gittings rejoined the meeting.

8. Planning enforcement

To receive an update on an ongoing planning enforcement case:

395372/ENN – Unauthorised material change of use, unauthorised caravans and use at Everalls Contractors, The Grove, Portway, Orleton, SY8 4HG.

The Clerk REPORTED that, following the receipt of complaints from members of the public a planning enforcement case has been opened, as above. An inspection of the site has been carried out by the Planning Authority and the landowner's explanation is awaited. This is an ongoing case and the PC will be updated in due course.

9. D-Day 80 – commemoration

To consider an invitation to take part in the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the D-Day - beacon lighting, 6th June 2024 at 9:15pm and reading of The Tribute, and agree next steps as appropriate.

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllrs: Gittings and Rogers to explore the possibilities for an Orleton commemoration and report back to the PC at the next meeting.

10. Defibrillators

- 10.1** *To consider accepting Shropshire Homes donation of a defibrillator machine and adopting it as the PC asset. The new unit to be located at the Boot Inn with the permission of the landlord and installed by Shropshire Homes. The PC to accept responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of the machine.*

Cllr Gittings REPORTED that the landlord's permission for the location of the new de-fib has been obtained, however, the installation will now be carried out by the landlord with the PC's support.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the new unit as PC asset and assume the responsibility for its ongoing maintenance.²

The PC expressed thanks to Shropshire Homes for their generous donation and to the Boot Inn landlord for housing the machine at their premises and facilitating its installation.

- 10.2** To appoint a member to be responsible for regular inspections of the defibrillators in the village and determine an appropriate frequency of such inspections.

Cllr Lane nominated Cllr Gittings, seconded by Cllr Bishop, it was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Gittings as the member responsible for periodic inspections of the defibrillators in the village (No. 3) and reporting any issues to the PC. Frequency of the inspections was set at every 3 months, with visual inspections to be carried by all members of the PC when in the vicinity.

The Chairman expressed the Council's gratitude to Cllr Gittings for taking on the task and carrying out the recent inspections, as well as his liaison with the Shropshire Homes and the Boot Inn and finalising the acquisition of the new machine.

- 10.3** *To receive Cllr Gittings report on the maintenance of the two existing defibrillators, located at Doctor's Surgery, Millbrook Way and Primary School, Kings Road.*

It was **REPORTED** that the recent round of inspections is now finalised with the replacement new batteries and pads now installed. The machines have now been registered with the national Circuit. The access codes are available on phoning the emergency numbers (999 or 112), from the Clerk or one of the Councillors. It was also reported that in case of an emergency the ambulance crews take any machine which has been used, which then needs to be recovered; for that purpose Cllr Gitting's details have been registered on the central register and he will facilitate any recoveries, if required.

The ancillary equipment will be due for replacement as follows:

Batteries – February 2026.

Pads – February 2026 (or after next use of a defibrillator).

11. Sewage and drainage

To authorise Cllr Lane to enter into correspondence with any appropriate organisation for the purpose of determining whether Severn Trent Water is meeting its obligations to cleanse, maintain and effectually drain the village of Orleton. Such correspondence to be overseen by the Clerk.

Following and during the recent storms and flooding events, foul water discharging reports have been received by Cllr Lane, which were then inspected and witnessed by him. It was established that the inspection chambers have been overwhelmed by the conditions and serious concerns about all sanitation systems in certain locations in the village ceasing to function have been raised. The capacity at the pumping station being an

ongoing problem and concern, with it not being no longer fit for purpose. With the expected new housing developments to be proposed in the village in near future this is a major concern, as the existing systems are not sufficient even at this stage and could not accommodate additional households. It was REPORTED by Cllr Lane that a breach of S64 of the Water Industry Act is very likely and needs to be established.

It was, therefore, **RESOLVED** to authorise Cllr Lane to enter into correspondence with all and any agencies and stakeholders for the purpose of determining whether Severn Trent Water is meeting its obligations to cleanse, maintain and effectually drain the village of Orleton. Such correspondence to be copied to the Clerk and reported to the PC as appropriate.

12. Road safety

To receive a report from Cllr Bishop.

Cllr Bishop reported that zebra crossing by the Primary School has been rejected by the Highways Authority due to lack of street lighting on the Kings Road. Other traffic calming options are being considered in consultation with the Highways Authority. Cllr Bishop held a meeting with a representative of the HA and a detailed plan of traffic calming solutions, to be delivered within the S106 monies, will be presented to the PC at a later date.

The Clerk reported that an application for the Safer Roads grant of the Police and Crime Commissioner John Campion has been submitted and an outcome is expected by mid-March. PC to be updated.

13. Village Hall

To consider the new room hire tariff for the PC meetings and agree next steps.

In view of the recent increase of the Village Hall's room hire rates it was **NOTED** that the PC needs to support the village's organisations.

14. Dog waste management

To review and, as necessary, modify the current provision for dog waste managed by the Parish Council.

Cllr Lane reminded the Cllrs of the necessity to report to the Clerk when the dog waste bins are close to capacity or overflowing for the current arrangements approved by the PC to work.

It was **RESLOVED** to continue with the current arrangement as increasing the frequency of scheduled pick-ups permanently would represent a significant increase in the cost. Cllrs to make a concerted effort to monitor the bins and report to the Clerk when additional collections are required.

15. Annual Meeting of the Parish Council & Annual Parish Meeting

15.1 *To review the scheduled date for the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and consider rescheduling to Thursday, 9th May 2024.*

It was **APPROVED** to reschedule the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council to 9th May 2024 and hold it directly after the Annual Parish Meeting at 7pm.

15.2 *To consider and schedule a date for the Annual Parish Meeting, including time and venue of the meeting. To consider arrangements for the provision of refreshments at the meeting.*

It was **RESOLVED** that the Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday, 9th May 2024 at 6pm in the Village Hall, small room. Refreshments to be provided and suitable arrangements for volunteers to be made closer to the date. Clerk to liaise with the Chairman regarding the Agenda for the meeting.

16. Parish Tree Officer

To authorise the Clerk to advertise and submit nominations to the Committee for the role of Volunteer Parish Tree Officer.

It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Clerk to advertise for the position of volunteer Parish Tree Officer via the PC's website, Nextdoor and Grapevine. Nominations to be submitted to the Council.

17. Parish Footpath Officer

17.1 *To consider Herefordshire Council's PFO register and guidance scheme proposal and consider its implications regarding the Council's relationship with the PFO, including implications for the Footpath Working Group's Terms of Reference and insurance.*

It was **RESOLVED** to register the Parish Footpath Officer under the HC scheme but to reject the proposed Guidance and terms in their current form and inform the Local Authority accordingly. PC to review its position should different terms and funding be offered at later stage.

It was **RESOLVED** that the PC & PFO maintain a working relationship with the Local Authority's PROW team and notify the PROW team on any PROW issues outside of the scope of the service provision by the PC.

17.2 *To consider the PFO registration of the Working Group with Ramblers Association and determine an appropriate relationship of the PC Working Group with the RA.*

It was **RESOLVED** as follows:

The Council **NOTES** the AFWG registration with the Ramblers Association and reiterates the approved Terms of Reference for the WG, in particular that the WG acts strictly under the auspices of the Parish Council and at its direction, that the WG volunteers are insured under the PC insurance policy and that any activities and actions outside of the Terms of Reference and undertaken at the direction of another organisation fall outside of the scope of the Working Group.

17.3 *To consider issuing an identification document for the PFO to be used in the course of their duties.*

It was **RESOLVED** that the PC issues an ID document for the PFO, to be used by the PFO in the discharge of his duties.

18. Equipment provision for the PC Working Groups

18.1 *To agree what categories/types of equipment may, from time to time, be provided to Land Drainage Volunteers and Adopt a Footpath Working Group by the Parish Council.*

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council, in light of identified risks and potential liabilities, considers the use of power tools as falling outside the scope of the work supplied by the PC volunteers, with only light maintenance jobs, using simple hand tools and with observance of strict health & safety practices approved under the auspices of the PC Working Groups. Clerk to enquire with the insurer whether tools like a drill would be covered under the current policy.

It was further **RESOLVED** that the Council will appoint an appropriate contractor to carry out ad hoc maintenance jobs, as and when required, to carry out clearance of overgrowth on and around the local PROW network. The jobs to be notified to the Clerk by the PFO and/or the Cllrs co-ordinators of the PC.

It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Clerk to instruct the chosen contractor, as and when required, up to the limit of £250 per job to carry out ad hoc jobs on or around the local PROW network and other locations consulted with the Lead of the PC's Working Groups. Clerk to approve the works between the PC meetings under a delegated power, to expedite the carrying out of required works and support the operation of the PC Working Groups.

18.2 *To note the informal grant application made by the PFO on behalf of the AFWG (Adopt a Footpath Working Group) and consider Clerk's recommendations.*

The PC **NOTED** the informal grant application made on behalf of the AFWG. In light of the resolutions made under item 18.1 of the agenda and the statutory constraints of S137 funding under which the PC's Grants Scheme functions, it was **RESOLVED** that the PC's Working Groups are not eligible to make grant applications under the PC Community Grants scheme. The Leads of the WGs to be advised accordingly. All funding of the PC Working Groups should fall under the respective heads of expenditure, as defined by the PC in its annual budget and requests for funding should be made by the Leads of WGs according to rules set out in their respective Terms of Reference.

19. Town and Parish Charter

To consider an invitation from Herefordshire Council to participate in the drafting of new Town and Parish Charter, setting out the relationship between the County Council and Parish Councils in Herefordshire and consider nominating a representative to sit on the Charter Working Group. The Working Group is to be convened by the County Council, with 8 representatives from the County parishes. Nominations of Councillors and Clerks are sought by February 23rd, participation at meetings in Hereford will be required.

It was **RESOLVED** to submit no nominations to the Charter Working Group.

20. To receive updates and agree next steps, where appropriate:

20.1 Village Hall – to receive an update from Cllr Gittings.

Cllr Gittings reported that grant applications to the National Lottery and another body were recently submitted. A written report of the VH Cttee meeting was distributed to the Members – APPENDIX 1

20.2 Orleton Recreation Association – to receive an update from Cllr Powell.

In the absence of Cllr Powell the report was delivered by Cllr Mitchell as follows:

- Awaiting the outcome of planning application for refurbishment of the pavilion;
- ROSPA inspection of the Rec has been carried out at a cost of £900, no major issues identified. Woodland and PROWs to be attended to.
- Falling fence in the process of repair.

20.3 Highways – to receive an update from Cllr Bishop.

In addition to the report delivered under item 12 of the agenda, Cllr Bishop raised the issue of Kings Road, which as an unclassified road receives less attention and has lesser chance of resurfacing funding. The matter of reclassification of the Kings Road to be explored by Cllr Hurcomb and reported back to the PC.

20.4 Land Drainage Group – to receive an update from Cllr Lane.

Cllr Lane reported as follows:

- Natural Flood Management meeting attended in Hereford; importance of practices like under-cropping and field management by farmers underlined. Developing relationships with local farmers crucial. A presentation of the NFM scheme planned in the parish for June/July with farmers to be invited and/or home visits arranged.
- Meeting with Severn River Trust set up for 1st March, Clerk to book the venue.
- Reports that verge cuts up Green Lane done at 90° instead of 45°. Needs raising up with BB/Lengthsman. Clerk & Cllr Lane to pursue.
- Malfunctioning flood gauge reported and repaired.
- Comberton Farm culvert attended by BB but not sorted. BB to return at later date.
- Training for volunteers under the flood closures local scheme is awaited for Cllrs Lane & Gittings.

20.5 Footpaths – to receive an update from Cllr Lane.

- The vandalised 'Millbrook Way' road sign has been found and recovered and will be restored and reinstated by the PFO.
- Last month AFWG report on works carried out on the local PROWs has been received and will be published in the 'Grapevine' and on PC's website.

21. To receive an update form HC Bircher Ward Member, Councillor D. Hurcomb (limited to 5 minutes).

Cllr Hurcomb reported:

- according to Balfour Beatty's records the broken gully at the bottom of Green Lane does not exist, which is the reason why any jobs raised for reported fault are not accepted by the system. This obvious error will be raised with BB for correction and, if necessary, will be raised with the Cabinet Member so the matter can be progressed.
- The draft Rural Settlement Hierarchy of the Herefordshire Local Plan stipulates 30 new houses in Orleton. Consultation is planned in March.
- Council Tax increase of 4.9% has been approved to try and combat deficit.
- Lengthsman Grant for 2024/25 has been reviewed and increased to £120/km of C & U roads in a parish.
- Drainage grant scheme is anticipated to be rolled out soon.
- P3 scheme is also anticipated to be brought back with some funding likely for the parish PROWs.

22. Health & Safety

To note health & safety inspection carried out by the Chairman in the PC office – the Clerks home address and agree to implement any arising recommendations, if any.

The Chairman **REPORTED** that Health & Safety inspection has been carried out at the Clerk's home address, which is the PC's official address and a place of work. No issues of concern were identified.

23. Employment – professional development

To approve training sessions attendance by the Clerk:

23.1 CiLCA, module 3 – Law.

23.2 CiLCA, module 4 – Planning.

APPROVED.

EXCLUSION OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A resolution was passed, pursuant to 'Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960, c. 67, s. 1(2)', to exclude the members of the public from the meeting for the duration of the following items, due to confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

24. Lengthsman

- 24.1** To receive the Clerk's report regarding the quotations for works under the Lengthsman contract and consider the appointment of a contractor to carry out the Lengthsman works schedule for 2024/25.

The Clerk presented two quotes received for works to be contracted under the Lengthsman scheme. It was reported that one of the contractors does not hold all necessary permits and licences to carry out works on or around highways.

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint DC Gardening Services, Mr Dave Campbell as the Parish Lengthsman for the financial year 2024/25.

- 24.2** To consider and approve schedule of works for the appointed contractor.

It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Clerk to determine the schedule of works to be carried out by the appointed Lengthsman during the 2024/25 FY and report any jobs scheduled to the PC.

READMISSION OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

25. Matters for discussion at the next meeting. (No discussion)

- PC relationship to the Orleton Memorial Garden (RG)
- Kings Road classification (VB)

26. Date of next meeting – 21st March 2024.

CONFIRMED.

There being no other business the meeting has closed at 8:48pm

Signed – Chairman of the Council

Date