



ORLETON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES **of the meeting of Orleton Parish Council** **held on Thursday 21st March 2024 at 6:30pm** **at the Village Hall**

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Olena Hayward (Barrett) – Clerk, Cllr Dan Hurcomb – Bircher Ward representative (Herefordshire Council), 2 members of the public.

MINUTES

1. To receive apologies of absence.

Received from **Cllr Powell** (personal).

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

NONE.

3. To approve Minutes of the meeting held on 15th February 2024. – APPENDIX 1

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.

NONE raised.

5. 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings

To consider the recommendations of the appointed Members (Cllrs Gittings & Rogers) and agree next steps.

The Committee was updated on the outcome of consultation with local organisations and members of the public regarding the community wishes for local celebrations of the Anniversary. It has been noted that, with the anniversary falling on a weekday (Thursday) and the nationwide, co-ordinated events being held in the evening (9:15pm), many members of the community may find it impossible to attend. It was also reported that, whilst the community support for the event to be marked has been largely unanimous, with a number of events happening in the village in the close proximity to the anniversary date, most organisations and many community members are already committed elsewhere in terms of volunteering. The Cubs and Orleton History Group willingness to mark the occasion was noted.

It was **RESOLVED** that the PC will offer financial support under its grant policy, to any organisation willing to organise events marking the anniversary. Grants of up to £500 will be made available, with light-touch simplified procedure of applying. Any grants awarded to an organisation for this purpose strictly, will not affect the organisation's ability to apply for further grants of up to £500 during the 2024-25 financial year. All grants will be subject to the usual 'End of project' financial report and criteria.

6. Clerk's report

To receive Clerk's update on recent matters and agree next steps where appropriate.

The Clerk updated the Council as follows:

- 6.1** The PC grant application to the Police and Crime Commissioner John Campion 'Safer Roads' fund has been successful and the full amount applied for - £8,250.00, has been awarded for two new SID devices and the clerk's training. The final documents required have now been submitted and the grant is expected to reach the PC account in April. The PC noted thanks to Cllr Hurcomb for his help in obtaining the necessary Highway Authority's confirmation of the approval of the project.
- 6.2** Herefordshire Council has notified that the PC's application for the redesignation of the NDP area has now been accepted with all necessary documents and conditions fulfilled. Statutory consultation will be conducted soon, with exact dates yet to be confirmed. This is the first stage of the PC approved Review of the Parish NDP.
- 6.3** The last invoice for the HC managed Lengthsman grant has now been issued and remittance advice was received from Herefordshire Council, with the payment expected imminently. This concludes the PC claims under the scheme, with the grant for 2023/24 financial year claimed in full.
- 6.4** Police and Crime Commissioner elections will be held on Thursday, 2nd May 2024, if contested. Members of the community are invited to apply for paid role at the Poling Stations, with applications to be made to Herefordshire Council (information available on the PC website).
- 6.5** Dates for the audit season for the 2023/24 FY accounts have now been received. Internal audit will be conducted in April and the deadline for submission of documents to the External Auditor this year is Monday, 1st July 2024.
- 6.6** 'Mineral & Waste Local Plan Herefordshire' has been adopted by the Local Authority as part of the wider 'Local Plan 2021 – 2041'
- 6.7** The 'Local Transport Plan' for Herefordshire early engagement public consultation will start on Monday, 25th March 2024. Information will be included on the PC's website and noticeboards.
- 6.8** Notification was received from Herefordshire Council regarding three funding schemes to be made available to Parishes in the next financial year (2024/25):
 - A. Lengthsman Scheme – continuation of the scheme for a second consecutive year, with funding available increased from the original offer of £60 to £120 per Km of C & U roads.
 - B. PROW funding – a return of previously discontinued P3 scheme (potentially under different name), with overall budget of £250.000 to be allocated amongst the Herefordshire Parishes.
 - C. Local Drainage Fund (LDF) to address highways drainage issues at local level. Expressions of interest invited by end of April 2024.
- 6.9** CiLCA training session 3rd module – Planning, will be attended by the Clerk on Saturday, 23rd March.
- 6.10** On Tuesday, 19th March the Chairman and Clerk attended a Zoom meeting organised by Herefordshire Council to present a draft of the Herefordshire 'Local Plan 2021 – 2041 – Rural Settlement Hierarchy'. The following points were noted:
 - 6.10.1** This was an initial meeting setting out the methodology of the Settlements classification for the purposes of future development. Individual meetings with Parish Councils will be offered to discuss specific issues regarding individual classifications. Meetings to commence after 8th April 2024. The PC to agree suitable date when offered.
 - 6.10.2** Launch of the Draft 'Local Plan 2021 -2041' will be on Monday, 25th March 2024 at the Hereford Town Hall, followed by 'Roadshow' events across the county. Most local event will take place in Leominster Market on Friday, 5th April 2024, 9:30am-12:00pm.

- 6.10.3** Orleton has been classified under the second highest category of rural settlements – ‘Rural Hubs with Environmental Constraints’.
- 6.10.4** Methodology criteria applied by the Local Authority to identify the ‘Rural Hubs with Environmental Constraints’ were as follows:
- A. Parts of the area lies in Flood Risk Zone 3;
 - B. All or parts of the area is a Conservation Area or lies in a National Landscape designation area;
 - C. Has 4 or more key services, which include:
 - A/B road access,
 - Primary school (no further than 1km from the settlement),
 - Public transport, and
 - 5km proximity to employment.
- 6.10.5** It was noted that sewage, nor any other critical infrastructure’s capacity was included as one of the criteria. A statement made by one of the Officers of Herefordshire Council was noted, that sewage was considered for inclusion on the criteria list at some stage but, following consultations with Severn Trent Water and other Water companies providing services in the county, was excluded as considered too difficult to accommodate.
- 6.10.6** The ‘Local Plan 2021 – 2041’ adoption timeline was set out as follows by the Local Authority:
- Regulation 18 consultation – 25.03.-20.05.2024.
 - Regulation 19 consultation – Spring 2025.
 - Submission stage – Summer 2025.
 - Adoption – 2025-26 provisionally.
- 6.10.7** The draft was presented as not set in stone and subject to amendments and change depending on the outcomes of the consultation.
- 6.10.8** The clerk emphasised the shortness of notice of this consultation, with the parishes having a first sight of the bare bones of the draft just 6 days before the launch and very short notice regarding the meetings and information events. The timing of this consultation was also questioned as not ideal, finding the Parishes on the cusp of the Audit & end-of-financial-year procedures and Annual meetings. With most Parish Councils working to a monthly cycle with part-time clerks, this leaves the parishes with very little time to properly consider and engage with the consultation and prepare meaningful submissions for, what will undoubtedly have a profound and long-term impact on their local areas and communities. Clerk to write to Cllr Hurcomb to take these issues up at the County level.

7. Finance.

7.1 To note the bank balance – 29th February 2024

NOTED - £19,293.45

7.2 To note the updated assets register and the donation of projector to the PC assets.

NOTED. The current value of PC assets stands at £ £17,965.00.

A donation of projector, made by Mr & Mrs C. Mitchell, was NOTED.

7.3 To consider and approve a virement of a sum of £500 from the ‘Dog waste bins (emptying)’ head of expenditure to the ‘Grants (\$137)’ budget.

APPROVED.

7.4 To appoint members to review the PC insurance policy and its compatibility with the PC’s needs and requirements.

Cllr Simmons was **APPOINTED** to carry out a review of the PC insurance policy and schedule to ensure that all necessary elements are adequately covered. Insurance will be due for renewal on 1st June 2024.

7.5 To consider Cllr Gittings request for funding for a sign for the next defibrillator.

Expenditure of up to £30 was **APPROVED**.

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

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

- 7.6.1** Leo Pest Control, February 2024 - £85.20
- 7.6.2** Leo Pest Control, March 2024 - £85.20
- 7.6.3** DC Gardening Services, February 2024 - £2,067.60
- 7.6.4** Village Hall, meeting of 1st March 2024 - £30.00
- 7.6.5** Eyelid Productions Ltd - £100.00
- 7.6.6** Travel & admin expenses - £36.36 + £104.34
- 7.6.7** Home allowance payment (contractual) - £100
- 7.6.8** PC Telephone - £10.00

7.7 To note following payments made:

Following payments were **NOTED**:

- 7.7.1** Clerk's salary for February 2024

8. Internal audit

To consider and appoint internal auditor to carry out the internal audit of accounts for the financial year 2023/24.

It was **RESOLVED** to continue using the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils' internal audit services and **APPOINT** them as the PC Internal Auditor to carry out internal audit of the accounts for 2023/24 financial year.

9. Grants

9.1 To consider grant application submitted by the Orleton Evergreens – away day, £500

Having considered the Clerk & RFO's summary of the grant application it was **APPROVED** in full, subject to the PC grant conditions.

The PC was pleased to support the local Seniors' group social activities and to see the group applying for funding under the Community Grants Scheme.

9.2 To consider a request for grant to Wigmore High School – students' awards and determine the appropriate amount.

A sum of £40 was **APPROVED**, subject to the PC contribution being acknowledged.

Cllr Simmons volunteered his services as pianist at the Awards ceremony, if required.

9.3 To consider the purchase of flags for display around the village during the St George's Day celebrations on the 20th and 21st April.

APPROVED up to a sum of £75.

The PC **NOTED** the commendable initiative to organise the St. George's Day Parade in the village and applauded the idea to celebrate England's national day in a manner similar to other Home Nations national days celebrations.

10. Highways

10.1 S106 Orleton traffic calming project (HC-S106-099)

To receive a report from Cllr Bishop and consider and approve the draft project of traffic calming measures in the parish to be delivered from S106 monies.

The draft project of Traffic Calming measures to be delivered in Orleton under the S106 funding, as appended to these minutes, has been **APPROVED. – APPENDIX 1**

The Chairman and PC expressed their thanks to Cllr Bishop for the tremendous amount of work and enthusiasm she put into bringing this project to this stage. Cllr Hurcomb's input and assistance were also gratefully noted.

10.2 Kings Road classification

To consider Cllr Bishop's report on the classification of the Kings Road and agree next steps.

It has not yet been determined whether Kings Road is classified as C road or is a U road (unclassified). This needs to be established before any further steps are taken; Cllr Hurcomb to assist. A road's classification has an impact on the level of Highways Authority's provision of maintenance, with U roads generally receiving the least amount of funding and attention. Depending on the category of Kings Road it has to be considered whether reclassification is in the best interests of the village and residents. Were the road already a C road, a reclassification would mean a change to a B road, with all implications (including being liable to be included in any future traffic diversions). The matter is to be considered by the PC once the status of Kings Road is established.

At the discretion of the Chairman the following item of the Agenda (11) was moved and considered after Item 6 of this Agenda. All the other items of business were considered according to the order set out.

11. Flood resilience – Orleton Flood Management Scheme

To receive a report from Cllr Lane regarding matters relating to the village's flood resilience and consider next steps as appropriate.

Cllr Lane delivered a short overview of the proposed Flood Management Scheme, which was set out in more detail in a written report distributed to the Committee and is appended to these minutes. – **APPENDIX 2**

The proposal was developed after a detailed analysis of the local land drainage circumstances and other related factors, by Cllr Lane and Mr Mark Wetton.

The principle underpinning the proposal is to develop a scheme, utilising existing ditches and infrastructure with some additional piping and measures, to deliver a drainage system improving the village's flood resilience, which is of the right gradient and self-cleaning. During the analysis conducted by Cllr Lane and Mr Wetton it was established that, given the approval, support and co-operation from relevant Agencies, availability of sufficient funding and subject to obtaining necessary landowner's permissions, such a system is possible to be achieved in Orleton. Crucially, the proposed scheme is designed at rebalancing the existing flows of surface water rather than capturing new flows and would, therefore, not exacerbate flooding risk to properties and areas already liable to flooding. Approaches to a number of landowners who's permission would be required were already made with positive outcomes.

Next steps in the development of the scheme were proposed and agreed as follows:

- To liaise with Highways Authority to establish their level of support to the scheme and willingness to adopt part of the scheme where it runs along B road (points A – D on the map appended to the draft project) as their own, with associated funding. HA expertise is considered fundamental to the ability to deliver the scheme at a scale sufficient to make an impact. Cllr Hurcomb to make the approach to HA on behalf of the PC.
- The PC to make an expression of interest under the Local Authority's proposed Local Drainage Fund, with a view of Part II of the scheme (points D – K on the map appended to the project) to be delivered under this heading. Additional funding may need to be sought or allocated from Precept.

The PC expressed their thanks to Mr Mark Wetton and Cllr Lane for the vast amount of work and time put into developing the proposal of the scheme and all the expertise and professional knowledge employed to deliver this proposal and offered voluntarily for the benefit of the village.

12. PROW - Missing Footpaths

To resolve whether to instruct the Clerk to pursue a submission to HC to establish missing rights of way in the parish generally and more specifically between the B4361 and Millbrook Way following correspondence from HC.

It was REPORTED that following reports of some PROWs missing from the Herefordshire Council's definitive map of PROWs in the area, an approach was made to the Local Authority to request modification of the Definitive Map to include the missing PROW. Historic Ordnance Survey maps were provided to evidence the existence of the footpath. However, the Local Authority did not consider the evidence provided to be sufficient. Further evidence is therefore required, which can include archive records of historic enclosures grants, maps and/or witness statements. The burden of proof lies with the applicant and is significant.

It was **RESOLVED** that the PC has no capacity at this stage to engage in the laborious process of gathering the required evidence and no volunteers have been found to date to undertake the task. This matter was therefore deferred until such time that volunteers if found or the PC finds itself in a position to undertake the evidence gathering task. It was noted that the deadline for the PROWs Definitive Map modifications has been extended until May 2031 beyond which any Public Rights of Way not recorded on it will be lost forever.

13. Maintenance of road signs

To authorise and fund the PFO to refurbish decaying road signs in the village and to authorise funds from the PROW budget to do so.

The PC **APPROVED** the project of refurbishing the historic road name signs throughout the parish, with expenses to be reimbursed through the usual procedure.

Thanks were expressed to Mr Martin Bradford for undertaking this valuable and labour intense project.

14. Herbicide spraying in the village

To review arrangements for herbicide spraying in the village for the growing season 2024 and agree next steps.
DEFERRED, to be discussed under Item 19 of this Agenda.

15. Orleton Memorial Garden

To receive an update on the PC relationship to the Orleton Memorial Garden and agree next steps.

It was explained that the Parish Council's role is that of the Custodian Trustee of the Memorial Garden land, which is managed by a Committee of Managing Trustees, who are responsible for the day-to-day management

of the area. The Managing Committee is not a registered charity, as it does not meet the Charity Commission's annual income threshold, but it acts as a charity to all intents and purposes.

16. Telephone box refurbishment

To consider a request from a member of the public for private sponsorship of the refurbishment of the Telephone Box in the village, including a commemorative plaque in memory of their father.

APPROVED. Clerk to advise on the requirements to use the correct paint shades for such structures.

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

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

- New pricing for VH room hire has been approved by the VH Cttee.

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

In the absence of Cllr Powell the update was delivered by the Chairman, as follows:

- Planning application for the pavilion refurbishment has been approved;
- Tenders for works on the pavilion have been sent out.

17.3 Highways – to receive an update from Cllr Bishop.

No updates further to matters discussed under the Item 10 of this Agenda.

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

No updates further to matters discussed under the Item 11 of this Agenda.

17.5 Defibrillators – to receive an update from Cllr Gittings.

- The new defibrillator donated by Shropshire Homes has now been installed at the Boot Inn and the sign acknowledging the donor will be retrofitted shortly. The de-fib is registered with the Circuit and ready to use.
- An obstruction by the Doctor's Surgery de-fib has now been removed.

17.6 Footpaths – to receive an update from Cllr Lane.

A significant amount of work and PROW improvements has been delivered in recent months with more detailed reports being published monthly in the Grapevine.

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

Cllr Hurcomb updated that a program of resurfacing roads in the County is under consideration and a formal request has been submitted by him for number of roads in Bircher Ward.

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.

19. Lengthsman

19.1 To consider special motion under the Standing Order 7a), as follows:

"To review the decision of the meeting of 22 February 2024 appointing a Lengthsman (Minute Reference 15/02 24.1), having due regard to the receipt of a further tender for these services."

Further to receiving an additional quote for Lengthsman services the Committee considered all three quotes to ensure that best value for money and most comprehensive service coverage are achieved.

Having due regard to all factors it was **RESOLVED** appoint Mr Joshua Hurcomb of Yatton Farm Services Ltd. as the Parish Lengthsman for financial year 2024/25. The appointment will commence on 1st April 2024 and be in effect until 31st March 2025.

The annual schedule of works is to be set by the Clerk, as per previously agreed delegated authority (15/02/24 M.R. 24.2)

20. Employment

20.1 To approve the carryover of the Clerk's unused annual leave entitlement for FY 2023/24 to the next financial year.

APPROVED. The Clerk was advised to ensure that she schedules annual leave times each year, to allow for appropriate rest periods.

20.2 To approve the Clerk's annual leave booking for the following days:

Tuesday, 14th May 2024, Thursday, 16th May 2024, Tuesday, 21st May 2024, Thursday, 23rd May 2024.

APPROVED

READMISSION OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

- Agenda for Annual Parish Meeting;
- Key safes for defibrillators.
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22. Date of next meeting – 18th April 2024.

CONFIRMED.

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 8:40pm.

Signed – Chairman of the Council

Date