



ORLETON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Annual meeting of Orleton Parish Council held on Thursday 9th May 2024 at 7:30pm at the Village Hall

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Olena Hayward – Clerk, Cllr Dan Hurcomb – Bircher Ward representative (Herefordshire Council), 4 members of the public.

MINUTES

1. To elect the Chairman of the Council for 2024/25 and receive Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

It was proposed by Cllr Gittings, seconded by Cllr Bishop and unanimously **RESOLVED** to **ELECT Cllr Colin Mitchell** as the Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2024/25.

The newly elected Chairman has duly **SIGNED** the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Proper Officer of the Council.

2. To elect the Vice-Chairman of the Council for 2024/25.

It was proposed by Cllr Gittings, seconded by Cllr Powell and unanimously **RESOLVED** to **ELECT Cllr Barry Rogers** as the Vice-Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2024/25.

3. To receive apologies of absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Simmons (prior commitment).

**4. To consider any declarations of interest and written requests for dispensation on agenda items.
None.**

5. To Remind Councillors of the need to review their Register of Interests forms and make Herefordshire Council aware of any updates.

Members of the Council were reminded of their duty to review their Register of Interests, update any changes as soon as they become aware of them and notify Herefordshire Council of any changes. Copies of updated Registers of Interests must be also sent to the Clerk of the Council.

6. To approve Minutes of the meeting held on 18th April 2024

Minutes of the meeting held on 18th April 2024 were unanimously **APPROVED** as true and accurate record and duly **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

7. Open session (limited to 5 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.

8. To receive an update from Bircher Ward Councillor Dan Hurcomb (limited to 5 mins).

Cllr Hurcomb distributed a written copy of his report, which is appended to these Minutes. – **APPENDIX 1**

It was proposed by Cllr Gittings, seconded by Cllr Mitchell and unanimously **RESOLVED** to express thanks to Cllr Hurcomb for his continued support for the Council and Parish over the preceding year and his generous contribution to today's Annual Meetings of the Parish and Council.

9. Clerk's report

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

The Clerk reported as follows:

9.1 Grant application from Orleton History Group, as approved by the PC on 18th April has now been withdrawn by the applicant and no payment will be made.

10. To review Orleton Parish Council's policies and (re)adopt.

a. Code of Conduct, including the recent Guidance on Respect under Councillors' Code of Conduct (April 2024).

The Code of Conduct was reviewed and it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to re-adopt it without changes. The Guidance on Respect under Councillors' Code of Conduct was **NOTED**.

b. Standing Orders.

Orleton Parish Council Standing Orders were reviewed and it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to re-adopt them without changes.

c. Financial Regulations – to consider and adopt new model Financial Regulations as recommended by NALC.

The new model Financial Regulations, as issued and recommended by the National Association of Local Councils were considered. It was then unanimously **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** them as Orleton Parish Council Financial Regulations. The model Regulations were amended to reflect the size and structure of the Council, where appropriate.

d. GDPR Policies & Schedules:

A. Data Protection Policy. **B.** Data Protection – General Privacy Notice. **C.** Data Protection – Staff Privacy Notice. **D.** Data Protection Retention Schedule. **E.** Data Security Incident Procedure. **F.** GDPR Consent Form. **G.** Subject Access Request Form.

The GDPR Policies were reviewed and it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to re-adopt them without changes.

e. Publication Scheme Policy and Orleton PC Publication Scheme

Publication Scheme Policies and documents were reviewed and it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to re-adopt them without changes.

f. Risk Management Policy and Risk Schedule, including Financial internal controls.

The Council reviewed its Risk Management Policy and Schedule and it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to re-adopt them without changes. The PC has also conducted a review of its arrangements for Financial Internal Controls, as in place over the preceding year, and it was unanimously **AGREED** that the Council's system of internal control is adequate and sound and delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.

g. Reserves Policy, including the scheduled build-up of General and Earmarked reserves, as at the End of FY 2023/24

Reserves Policy was reviewed and it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to re-adopt it without changes. It was also **NOTED** that the build-up of the General and Earmarked Reserves is on track, as per the Reserves Policy and as reported at the end of FY 2023/24. The Reserves Policy and Reserves build-up schedule will be reviewed again by no later than end of December 2024 as part of the annual budget setting process.

h. To note the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners' Guide (JPAG), March 2024
The updated 'JPAG Practitioners' Guide' was **NOTED**.

11. To review and approve the schedule of Parish Council meetings for 2024/25, including the Annual Council Meeting and Annual Parish Meeting for 2025 and confirm the time meetings are held.

The PC considered the draft schedule of meetings for the municipal year 2024/25 and it was **RESOLVED** to approve it. – **APPENDIX 2**

It was proposed by Cllr Mitchell, seconded by Cllr Powell and unanimously **AGREED** to change the time at which PC meetings are held to 6PM.

12. Representatives to outside bodies:

a. To consider and nominate a representative to the Village Hall committee.

It was proposed by Cllr Lane, seconded by Cllr Rogers and unanimously **RESOLVED** to appoint **Cllr Gittings** as Trustee of the Village Hall Cttee.

b. To consider and nominate a representative to the Orleton Recreation Association.

It was proposed by Cllr Lane, seconded by Cllr Gittings and unanimously **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Powell as Trustee of the Orleton Recreation Association Cttee.

13. Delegations:

To consider and appoint Liaison Councillors in respect of the following matters

a. Road Safety and Highways Liaison

It was proposed by Cllr Lane, seconded by Cllr Gittings and unanimously **AGREED** to appoint Cllr Bishop as the Road Safety and Highways Liaison Member.

b. Land Drainage Volunteers group

It was proposed by Cllr Gittings, seconded by Cllr Mitchell and unanimously **AGREED** to appoint Cllr Lane as the LDV Lead and liaison Member.

c. Adopt a Footpath Working Group

With Cllr Lane tendering his resignation as the AFWG Lead, it was proposed by Cllr Lane, seconded by Cllr Rogers and unanimously **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Gittings as the AFWG liaison Member.

14. Appointments:

To consider the appointment of Parish Tree Officer as per the Clerk's recommendation.

Upon the Clerk's recommendation the Council considered a candidate for the position of the Parish Tree Officer. The proposed candidate comes with an impressive professional background and considerable experience in the field.

It was proposed by Cllr Gittings, seconded by Cllr Rogers and unanimously **RESOLVED** to appoint Mr David Batten as the Parish Tree Officer.

15. Finance.

a. To note the bank balance – 30th April 2024

Bank balances on 30th April 2024 were **NOTED** as follows:

CURRENT T1 - £39,169.22

EARMARKED RESERVES – £2,250.00

b. To receive and note Internal Audit Report

The Council **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the Annual Internal Audit Report.

It was specifically **NOTED** that the Auditor considered that all his recommendations from the previous Annual Internal Audit 2022/23 were fully implemented by the Council and the RFO, and there are no further recommendations regarding the PC financial practices and procedures, with the current regime to be continued and maintained.

Auditor's recommendation for the PC to consider inclusion of a level of Cyber Cover in its insurance policy was **NOTED**.

c. To consider and approve the Annual Return Governance Statement 2023/24 (AGAR Section 1)

AGAR 2023/24 Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement was considered and unanimously **APPROVED**. It was then duly **SIGNED** by the Chairman and the Clerk.

d. To approve the Annual Return Accounting Statements 2023/24 (AGAR Section 2)

AGAR 2023/24 Section 2 – Accounting Statement was received and **APPROVED**. It was then duly **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

e. To note the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights, as set by the RFO.

Dates of the period for the exercise of public rights set by the RFO were **NOTED**. The period for the exercise of public rights will commence on Monday, 3rd June 2024 and conclude on Friday, 12th July 2024, inclusively. The Notice of the above will be made on Thursday, 30th May by a publication on the PC website and on the PC noticeboard.

**f. To note the receipt of Precept 2024/25 Pt. 1 payment from Herefordshire Council - £17,975.00
NOTED**

g. To review the Council's insurance cover and approve payment of insurance premium due on 01.06.2024. To consider and approve the inclusion of Cyber Security cover.

The PC insurance schedule and cover were reviewed and considered adequate. The Council has also considered the Auditor's recommendation to include a level of Cyber Security cover and **RESOLVED** that the Data Breach Response policy add-on will adequately serve this Authority's needs. It was

therefore **RESOLVED** to renew the insurance policy cover with the current provider with the addition of Data Breach Response cover.

h. To note the updated Assets Register.

To review and note the inventory of land and other assets as on 31st March 2024.

The PC inventory of land and assets was reviewed and the Assets Register as on 31st March 2024 was **NOTED**.

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

The following invoices were **APPROVED** for payment by BACS.

- i. **Village Hall - £37.50**
- ii. **Leo Pest Control - £87.60**
- iii. **Cllr Gittings, defibrillator sign - £25.99**
- iv. **Admin & Travel expenses - £22.28 + £24.84**
- v. **PFO expenses - £27.96 & £150 +VAT (red telephone box refurbishment materials)**
- vi. **Lengthsman, May 2024 - £444.00**
- vii. **Clear Councils, insurance renewal - £780.41**
- viii. **Clear Councils, Data Breach Response - £58.80**
- ix. **HALC, internal audit services - £300.00**

j. To note the following payments made:

Following payments made were **NOTED**:

- i. **Clerk's salary – April 2024**

16. Local Plan Consultation response

To agree and approve the PC response to the Local Plan consultation.

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Mitchell and Cllr Bishop to finalise the PC submission in response to the consultation. The response to be reported to the PC at the next meeting. Following points will be included in the final response:

- a. An objection to the proposed housing allocation for Orleton as incompatible with the village's critical infrastructure capacity, in particular the sewage system.
- b. A challenge of the criteria for classifying Orleton as Rural Hub with environmental Constraints, in particular the availability of employment within 5km – no substantial employment sites available within that distance.
- c. Failure to include and consider the capacity of critical infrastructure in the Local Authority's assessment of and classification of settlements under the specified classes (Rural Hubs, Rural Hubs with Environmental Constraints, etc.). In particular, failure to include the sewage systems capacity as one of the criteria, resulting in housing allocations which cannot be realistically accommodated within settlements without a substantial investment and improvements to the existing systems.
- d. Failure to offer a meaningful consultation with Parish Councils. In particular misleading the PC representatives regarding the opportunity for individual meetings and consultations with Parish Council's at the Zoom meeting held on 19th March, where officers of Herefordshire Council stated that individual meetings regarding specifically the Rural Settlements classification will be offered to Parish Councils before the Local Plan consultation's end. This was subsequently not followed up and only meetings relating to the impact of the Draft Local Plan on individual NDPs were offered. This has substantially and adversely affected the Parish Council's ability to enter a meaningful conversation about Orleton Parish's specific needs and constraints and the PC's ability to have a meaningful say in

the proposals for the Parish. It is considered that the Local Authority failed in its duty to consult with the local community and its representative body – the Parish Council in a meaningful way.

17. Planning

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

a. 240848 - Barn on land near, Ashley Moor, Orleton, Herefordshire, SY8 4JJ

Proposed conversion of rural building to dwelling.

It was RESOLVED to submit the following comments to the above consultation:

No objection, but the Planning Authority should consider the potential impact of increased traffic on Ashley Moor junction.

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

None.

19. Date of next meeting – 20th June 2024.

Confirmed – the meeting will be held at 6PM.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:16 PM

Signed – Chairman of the Council

Date