

ORCOP PARISH COUNCIL Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 20th November 2019 at 19.30 hrs in Orcop Village Hall

Councillors Present ... Ben Thomas (Chairman), Jane Rigler, Ian Garlick, Margaret Serle, Peter Garratt and Barry Shaw. Also, in attendance were Ward Councillor Toni Fagan, Mark Hearne (Parish Clerk) and five residents.

1. Apologies for absence - none.

2. Declarations of interest & written dispensation requests - There were none.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting - 18th September 2019.

It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes as a true record of meeting held and they were signed by the Chairman.

4. Public Forum

4.1 Verbal report from Ward Councillor Toni Fagan included the following issues:

4.1.1 – Herefordshire Council have embarked on a 4-year medium term financial strategy in which community lives and wellbeing will be a priority.

4.1.2 – Herefordshire Council have allocated £150k to consider how the delivery of council housing could be best achieved.

4.1.3 – Herefordshire Council will launch a Social Work apprenticeship scheme on February 2020.

4.1.4 – Action is in hand to consider improvements to Herefordshire Council's procurement processes.

4.1.5 – It is proposed to hold a surgery in the new year.

4.1.6 – Councillor Margaret Serle asked about the issue around building control in connection with the development at The Trees. Ward Councillor Fagan advised that it was not within Simon Withers' gift to open all relevant records to the public.

4.2 Views of local residents on parish matters included:

4.2.1 - A resident reported flooding at The Trees and Ward Councillor Fagan agreed to follow up this issue.

4.2.2 – It was reported that a huge crater has appeared at the entrance to Burnett Cottage. It was RESOLVED that the clerk bring this to the attention of the Locality Steward.

4.2.3 – Drainage problems were reported at the entrance to Lodge Farm and it was RESOLVED that the clerk will refer this to the Locality Steward.

5. **NDP** – As Chairman of the Steering Group, Councillor Margaret Serle updated the meeting on the latest developments on the NDP. Significant progress has been achieved since the last Parish Council meeting. A programme of site visits has been progressed which has proven to be very useful. Most of the sites submitted are away from the settlement area of Orcop Hill which raises significant challenges in meeting the housing target and this is an issue which will need to be referred to Herefordshire Council.

Work on the questionnaire is almost complete and it is planned to post it to households (182) in early January 2020. Additional copies of the questionnaire will be available via the website or direct from the Clerk. Households will be provided with a Freepost envelope to be used to return the completed questionnaire.

The responses will be collated by the Steering Group before being passed to the Planning Consultant for detailed analysis. Following this work, it is proposed to organise a public meeting to allow householders to consider the results of the questionnaire.

It is envisaged that once the Planning Consultant has completed the Housing Delivery Report the Steering Group will be in a much stronger position to challenge Herefordshire Council on the issue of settlement boundaries against the background of the housing target.

Councillor Barry Shaw provided feedback from the Core Strategy/Neighbourhood Planning event which he attended along with Councillor Serle on the 6th November 2019. The event provided an opportunity for Herefordshire Council to explain the background to the review of the Core Strategy which must take place every 5 years in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. A review of made NDPs must take place after 2 years. There was some recognition by Herefordshire Council that some Parish Councils, such as Orcop, may not have any sites close to settlement boundaries and this may lead to an adjustment in the published housing targets. A copy of the slides produced by Herefordshire Council have already been circulated to Councillors.

6. Planning - No planning applications have been received.

7. Finance

7.1 – The bank balance as at 31st October 2019 was £32,239.19

7.2 It was RESOLVED to pay the following invoices in line with budget:

7.2.1 Clerk's October & November 2019 salary in line with their employment contract.

7.2.2 Stationery - £37.30

7.2.3 Postage - £8.64

7.2.4 Travel - £23.40

7.2.5 Royal Mail Freepost Fee (NDP)- £66.00

7.2.6 NDP Printing - £45.40

7.2.7 Site Location Map (War Memorial)- £13.20

7.2.8 PAYE (Oct & Nov) - £183.80

7.2.9 HALC - £809.76

7.2.10 DC Gardening Services - £732.00

7.2.11 M Murphy (Printing of Map) - £17.99

7.3 – Draft Budget and Precept – Following discussion it was RESOLVED to leave the precept unchanged for 2020/21 at £9,200. It was further RESOLVED to approve the budget for 2020/21.

7.4 – Financial Monitoring 2019/20 – The clerk provided a spreadsheet showing the spend to date and a forward projection of likely costs for the remainder of the financial year 2019/20. Based on this information it seems that the Parish Council will have reserves in the order of £22k at year end.

8. Lengthsman - It was RESOLVED that the clerk would contact the lengthsman to ascertain when the required work at Copywell will be undertaken.

9. Footpaths - The Footpaths Officer (FPO) reported that the recent poor weather has hindered his efforts on the footpaths but added that opening the circular walk remains a priority.

10. Highway Issues – Councillor Ian Garlick raised concerns about uncut hedgerows in the village and it was RESOLVED that the clerk would write to the landowners concerned asking for some routine maintenance work to be undertaken.

Councillor Peter Garratt reported that a parishioner had raised concern about the proposed works in Hondy Wood. Evidently the owners (Woodland Investment Management Limited) had applied for planning permission in 2016 and, after rejection from the LPA, again in 2017 for an access track leading from the highway which terminates within the wood. This time the Council replied to the effect that planning permission was not required. (In practice, the track will be accessed from the road via an existing area of hard standing.) It is understood that WIML intends to sell off the wood in 5 lots and the track is needed to facilitate this sub-division. Each purchaser of a lot will be required to enter into a covenant regarding proper management which will prohibit certain inappropriate forms of development. It was agreed that the concern expressed was understandable and that the Parish Council should monitor the situation.

Cllr. Garratt also reported also that the recent heavy rainfall had opened up a serious erosion hole adjacent to the bridge over the Garron Brook near Spout Cottage. He had reported this on the Herefordshire Highways website and had received a few hours later an email stating that the problem had been resolved. It has transpired that Balfour Beatty had merely erected a warning barrier around the hole which remains to be repaired.

11. The War Memorial - The clerk reported that it is expected that the planning application will be determined by the end of November 2019. Councillor Peter Garratt added that Mareva Conservation Limited have been commissioned to submit a specification for the remedial work on the war memorial at a cost of £400.

12. Adoption of Grievance & Disciplinary and Community Engagement Policy– It was RESOLVED that both policies be adopted and published on the website.

13. Neighbourhood Watch Scheme – Councillor Serle commented that a specific question will be included in the NDP questionnaire the answer to which will determine whether there is any interest in establishing a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in the village.

14. Clerk Correspondence – No correspondence has been received.

15. Date of the next meeting and matters for discussion - The next Parish Council meeting will take place on 15th January 2020. No matters for discussion were raised.

16. Information items – none were submitted.

SIGNED DATE

DRAFT