

## BIRLEY WITH UPPER HILL PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Meeting at 6.00pm on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021

In view of government legislation re the Coronavirus Pandemic this was a remote meeting by zoom and telephone.

### **Present:**

Councillors: Mrs A Pendleton, Mrs I Stokes, Mrs S de Rohan, Mr J Gough, Mr A Last and Mr M Pytka.

### **In Attendance:**

M Jones (Ward Cllr), Mrs K Morris (PROW Officer) and Mr M Hopkins (Clerk).

**Members of the public:** One member of the public.

#### **1. To Accept Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Mr R Grayburn.

#### **2. To Receive Declarations of Interests and Applications for Dispensations**

**Resolved:** Cllr A Pendleton declared an interest in planning applications 210443 – living in the vicinity.

#### **3. To Approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020, the Extraordinary Parish Council Meetings on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021.**

**Resolved:** The Minutes were confirmed and to be signed by the Chair.

#### **4. To Receive Brief Reports from:**

##### **4.1 Herefordshire Councillor (Cllr M Jones)**

Cllr Jones reported on:

- The announcement of a new Chief Executive, Paul Walker, who will take office from early May 2021
- At the February meeting the council cancelled the Western bypass and Southern link road. With up to 11,000 more homes planned for Belmont there will be many more cars using the Wye Bridge.
- Herefordshire Housing land supply target has been reduced from 5% to 4.22% resulting from more houses being built over the last two years.
- Council tax for 2021/22 will increase by 4.99%.
- Fly tipping is becoming a problem. Opening hours for refuse tips are to be extended.
- Covid cases are thankfully decreasing. Last week 97,000 people had been vaccinated.

**Resolved:** Report noted and to be circulated. Cllr Jones thanked accordingly.

##### **4.2 Westhope Common Management Association (Cllr Mrs I Stokes)**

Cllr Stokes reported that the Management Association had not met since her report at our November meeting.

**Resolved:** No report on this occasion.

#### 4.3 **Parish Footpaths Officer** (Mrs K Morris)

Karen reported that her aim is to see the footpaths around the parish more accessible so that they can be widely used to provide safe and easy access to the beauty of our countryside while protecting farmers' crops, livestock and property.

Karen has inspected the footpaths in the parish and the following were the suggested required actions.

1. Clearing obstructions to the footpath. The Locality Steward has phoned the landowners that have footpath/bridleway obstructions and is hopeful that these will be removed soon.
2. Replacing missing Fingerposts. These have been noted by the Locality Steward and these signs will be installed by Herefordshire Council.
3. Replacing missing Way Markers which have just been received from Herefordshire Council and all missing signs will now be replaced.

The following stiles are currently in need of repair or replacement:

**Footpath HD27** – currently obstructed by a hedge and in need of an access point where the footpath meets the road. Suggested installing a footpath gate

**Footpath HD18** – broken stile opposite Pigeon House Farm. Again, maybe worth considering installing a footpath gate.

Approximate costs: Purchase of a gate incl delivery £270 and the minimum costs of installation by the Lengthsman £100 (this depends on the location of the stile/gate and ease of access from the road).

The clerk confirmed that now we have an official PROW Officer he has signed the Parish Council up to the P3 scheme for 2021/22 with a budget up to £1,000. A contract has now been received which requires the signature of the Chair which will be arranged as soon as possible.

The P3 scheme (Parish Paths Partnership) allows parishes to maintain the public rights of way within their community, maintaining footpath furniture as well as the footpaths themselves.

The work can be done by the parish under the P3 Scheme:

Parishes can maintain the following:

- Repairing gates, stile, cross steps, ditch crossings etc also
- Maintaining sign posts, marker post and way markers

Full details of the P3 scheme are contained in the Information Sheet

**Resolved:** The report was noted and the Chair thanked the PROW officer for the first report and acknowledged the hard work she had put into it.

It was agreed to progress the installation of the first two gates on HD27 and HD18 as above. Parish Councillors to walk footpaths with Karen Morris before May meeting.

#### 5. **Open Time**

No items raised.

**6. To Receive the Clerks Report, General Updates and Note the Information**

All updates since the meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020 are included in the Information Sheet which had been circulated.

**Resolved:** Reports, Updates and Information Sheet noted. A copy of Information Sheet is attached to these minutes.

**7. Financial Matters**

**7.1 To Receive a Report from the RFO**

Bank Balances as of 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021: Community Account: £7,235.61 and Business Premium Account: £985.67.

**Resolved:** Report noted.

**7.2 To Consider and Agree the Budget for 2021/22**

The amended proposed budget was circulated and discussed.

**Resolved** – The budget spend of £3,000 was agreed and approved (copy attached to these minutes).

**7.3 To Consider the following Payments**

**7.3.1** Payments Made since the last Meeting:

**Resolved:** No payment made.

**7.3.2** Outstanding Payments: Stationery (printing paper for Cllrs) £28.56 (614), Clerk's salary (January/March) £130.10 (615), HMRC (PAYE January/March) £32.40 (616), Clerks expenses 2020/21 £383.74 excl vat (617)

**Resolved:** The above payments were agreed.

**7.3.3** April payments:

HALC subscription for 2021/22 £323.46 (excl £64.69 vat) (618) and ICO (Data Protection Registration fee for 2021/22) £40.00 (619).

**Resolved:** The above payments were also agreed.

**8. Planning Matters**

**8.1** Planning Applications Received:

210443 - Lion Cottage, Upper Hill HR6 0JZ. Demolition of existing rear single-storey lean-to-extension and erection of a two-storey extension. Alteration to front entrance and construction of a porch.

**Resolved:** Once the public footpath issues have been legally resolved the Parish council has no objections.

**8.2** To Note Planning Decisions Received:

203848 – Heathlands, Bush Bank, HR4 8EN. Proposed alterations and extensions to existing bungalow. Granted with conditions.

204151 – Stone House, Upper Hill, HR6 0JZ. Proposed extensions. Granted with conditions.

**Resolved:** Decisions noted.

**9. Highway Matters**

**To Receive any Issues for Herefordshire Highways.**

The issue of speeding through Upper Hill was discussed.

**Resolved:** To consider possible ways of dealing with the problem. Ideas to be discussed at the May meeting.

**10. To Raise Items for the next Scheduled Parish Council Meeting - No Discussion**

**Resolved:** All items referred from this meeting

**11. To Confirm the Date of the Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting**

**Resolved:** Assuming that the Function Room at The Bush Inn is open then Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7pm. Otherwise by zoom at 6.00pm (*to be confirmed*).

**Meeting concluded at 7.00pm**

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**Signature of Chair**

24<sup>th</sup> May 2021  
**Date**

Following the public open meeting the Councillors discussed the following in private:

To consider if there are any acceptable reasons for the failure of Councillor Robert Grayburn to attend any meetings of the Council for twelve consecutive months thus avoiding forfeiture of office as a Parish Councillor.

The clerk had spoken to Cllr Grayburn who stated that there had been no agenda items that required his attention or that he could help with.

He has had the opportunity to join all meetings held since March 2020 by zoom or telephone but has declined to do so. He states that he does not have access to the internet but he does have a landline.

**Resolved:** In the absence of any acceptable reason the councillors present agreed that automatic forfeiture of the office of Parish Councillor then applies.

The office becomes vacant when this Parish Council declares it to be vacant, which we must do then a casual vacancy arises (LGA 1972 s.87).

The Councillors were mindful of the extra costs that may arise due to the need to hold a by election in the Parish should two people apply to fill the vacancy.