

UPTON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 7th February 2023 at 19.00 at Millennium Hall, Upton Bishop

Present

Councillors: Mark Rusby (in the Chair), Michael Wallace, Paul Newman, Claire Newman, Mark Shuttlewood and Andrew Parr.

In attendance

Clerk Helen Tinson – on behalf of HALC (Herefordshire Association of Local Councils); 14 members of the public

1. Consideration to access HALC Clerk Cover for the meeting:

It was **RESOLVED**: to access HALC's CiLCA qualified Clerk/RFO Cover for the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence: Cllr Mike Tyers and Ward Cllr Barry Durkin; Cllr Guy Cooper was absent with no apologies.

3. Declarations of interest & written dispensation requests: There were none.

4. Minutes:

4.1. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 1st November 2022:

It was **RESOLVED**: to approve the minutes as a true and proper record of the meeting.

4.2. Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Meeting held on 3rd January 2023:

It was **RESOLVED**: to approve the minutes as a true and proper record of the meeting.

4.3. Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Meeting held on 13th January 2023:

It was **RESOLVED**: to approve the minutes as a true and proper record of the meeting.

The minutes of each meeting were signed by the Chair.

5. Public Participation:

5.1. Ward Councillor Report: Cllr Durkin's report will be published on the website. Of note, Herefordshire Council are proposing to increase council tax by 4.99% for 2023/2024.

5.2. Public Session: No comments.

6. Finance:

6.1. Members received a financial report:

6.1.1. Action to add additional signatories to the bank account is ongoing;

6.1.2. Review of income and expenditure to date:

6.1.2.1. Income, £18,626.02

6.1.2.2. Expenditure, £12,000.02

6.1.2.3. Balance as at 7 Feb 23, £28331.46

07/2023

6.2. Members received an update concerning a previous request for financial support from The Chimes. Information about plans to make the publication sustainable has been requested but not yet received.

It was RESOLVED: not to provide funding until the information has been received and reviewed.

6.3. It was RESOLVED: to approve the following invoices for payment:

6.3.1. PWLB Loan Repayment (DD) £1719.13

6.3.2. HALC Membership 2023/2024, £596.18 including VAT *

6.3.3. HALC Clerk Cover, 3 Jan, 13 Jan, 7 Feb, £837.36 including VAT

* It was noted that this fee includes two free councillor training places if paid before 31st March 2023.

7. Highways:

7.1. Traffic Calming Scheme: Members received a brief update noting that a copy of the presentation from the last meeting has been made available on the website. Cllrs Mark Rusby and Andy Parr attended a Fownhope Parish Council meeting on 1st February following FPC's meeting with stakeholders.

7.2. Local Highways: The Parish Council continue to support the actions of a local resident who is working with the Ward Councillor and Herefordshire Council to progress traffic calming measures on the A49 between Old Gore Crossroads and Ross on Wye. There has been some success with line painting and clarification of what can and cannot be done.

8. Planning:

8.1. Hilltop Containers: Members received an update on the enforcement action. The Enforcement Officer has attended the site and is satisfied that the containers are for agricultural use only. There is no enforcement issue and the enquiry has now been closed.

8.2. Members considered applications for determination by Herefordshire Council:

8.2.1. 230106: 1 The Steppes, Phocle Green, HR9 7TW. Proposed 1-bed timber-framed holiday let in rear garden.

It was RESOLVED: to OBJECT to the application on the basis of the following concerns:

8.2.1.1 negative environmental risks with respect to waste and run-off water, and a proximate private water supply that could be contaminated;

8.2.1.2 overdevelopment of the site following two recent extensions to the side and rear of the main building;

8.2.1.3 unacceptable housing congestion within a small hamlet of scattered cottages in an RA3 open countryside location;

8.2.1.4 its elevated position which would adversely affect neighbouring properties in terms of noise, reduced light and overlooking;

8.2.1.5 vehicular access onto the B4221 presents safety concerns; and

08/2023

8.2.1.6 concerns about the ridge height of the new building which appears to be 1m higher than the main property.

4 objections, 2 abstentions.

9. King Charles III Coronation Celebrations:

Members considered proposals for celebrating the coronation of King Charles III on 6th May. There was support for an event that would build on the success of the Platinum Jubilee Event last year. Proposals for a lunch on Sunday 7th May were discussed and a request for funding, in conjunction with funds from the PCC and Millennium Hall, to support the event was received.

It was RESOLVED: to approve a grant of £500 towards the event.

10. Policies and Procedures:

Members were informed that whilst the Information Commissioners Office found no further action is required following the FOI request, they have recommended the adoption of a Documents Retention and Disposals Policy. It was noted that policies are due for review and suggested that policies are reviewed at the May meeting, to enable a timely annual or 4-yearly review going forwards. It was agreed that Cllr Claire Newman would work with HALC to review and update the policies in readiness for the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May.

11. Footpaths:

Members received a report from the Parish Footpaths Officer. A review of the stiles along the Herefordshire Trail has been carried out following a successful application by Walkers are Welcome in Ross for grant funding from the DEFRA Access for All fund via the Wye Valley AONB. Self-closing gates or kissing gates will replace stiles within the parish to improve accessibility along the Herefordshire Trail where agreed with Landowners. Funding includes the supply of gates and installation. Further updates will be reported in due course.

12. Website:

Local events continue to be advertised on the website, Facebook and Twitter pages. Of note, Christmas Fayre, carol singing, Alice Gamond's record-breaking poppy collection, visits from Market to your door, the first Big Sing which raised money for Air Ambulance and regular reminders about the village defibrillator, phone box library – with thanks to the volunteer who regularly restocks the books - dog poo and litter issues. Forthcoming events include a quiz and pudding evening on 11th February, Mothering Sunday Brunch on 19th March, and a St. George's Day Dragon Hunt around the village on 23rd April.

13. Items for the next agenda: There were none.

14. Chairmans Closing Remarks: The Chairman had nothing further to add.

15. Date of the next meeting: Tuesday 4th April 2023

09/2023

A resolution was passed to exclude members of the public from the following confidential matter:

16. Employment Tribunal:

- 16.1.** Members received a confidential update concerning the current status of the employment tribunal:
- 16.1.1.** Timeline for the delivery of documents and court dates;
 - 16.1.2.** The first FOI request has been concluded with no action recommended;
 - 16.1.3.** An FOI has been received focused on the specifics of the tribunal and the process of compiling documents;
 - 16.1.4.** A further complaint has been received in respect of an alleged breach of data protection law;
 - 16.1.5.** The claim has been updated to include eight individuals named as respondents on the claim in addition to the Parish Council; the claimants are required to complete and submit their response via an ET3 form;
 - 16.1.6.** An allegation has been submitted to the Employment Tribunal alleging documents have been intentionally withheld from the document bundle submitted by the Parish Council. The allegation is strongly refuted.
It was RESOLVED: to carry out an audit to check if anything has been missed;
It was RESOLVED: to seek legal advice from HALC and NALC in relation to the bullying of councillors and for advice on the claim update to name individuals.

- 16.2** Members considered the potential costs involved if the case was to proceed to court and also considered possible settlement costs.
It was RESOLVED: to continue to prepare to defend the case and consider a negotiated settlement within the approved budget for the case. 5 support, 1 abstain.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

SIGNED*Mark Rusby*..... DATE *April 4th 2023*