

UPTON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 4th April 2023 at 19.00 at Millennium Hall, Upton Bishop

Present

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

In attendance

Clerk Helen Tinson – on behalf of HALC (Herefordshire Association of Local Councils); 13 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: Cllrs Michael Wallace and Guy Cooper; Ward Cllr Barry Durkin.

3. Declarations of interest & written dispensation requests: Cllrs Paul Newman and Claire Newman declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 8.3 Planning Item 230577; Cllr Mark Rusby declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 6.3.4 reimbursement of expenses.

4. Minutes:

4.1. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 7th February 2023:

It was RESOLVED: to approve the minutes as a true and proper record of the meeting. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

5. Public Participation:

5.1. Ward Councillor Report: Cllr Durkin's report will be published on the website.

5.2. Public Session: No comments.

6. Finance:

6.1. Banking Mandate: Members received an update on the banking mandate noting that full control of the accounts was regained in November. The application for online banking has been submitted but completion is being deferred until the new council is elected in May. In the meantime, payments are still being made by cheque. A financial report noted income for 2022/23 £18,626 and expenditure £12,883.59. Bank balances were reported as: Treasurer's Account £10,645.57; Reserve Account £16,813.91.

6.2. Internal Audit: Members considered appointing an auditor to carry out the internal audit for year ending 31st March 2023.

It was RESOLVED: to appoint HALC at a cost of £220.00 plus VAT.

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

6.3.1. ICO (DD) £40.00

6.3.2. Helen Geach (Cuttermoon Website Design), Website hosting renewal, £70.00

6.3.3. Much Marcle Village Hall, Traffic Calming Grant Meeting HC/BBLP, £25.00

6.3.4. Mark Rusby, Reimbursement of administrative expenses, £156.39 *

6.3.5. Michael Wallace, Reimbursement of administrative expenses re tribunal, £89.82

* In accordance with his declaration of interest, Cllr Mark Rusby abstained from the vote.

7. Highways:

7.1. Traffic Calming Scheme: Members received an update. Cllrs Mark Rusby and Andy Parr have attended a meeting with Herefordshire Council, Balfour Beatty and West Mercia Police to present the proposed plans as presented to the meeting of full council on 7th February 2023 and as published on the website. BBLP are preparing costed drawings. It is anticipated that the scheme will be completed before the end of the next financial year (31.3.24).

7.2. Local Highways: Members were informed that the Lengthsman has been clearing grips and ditches, in particular carrying out ditching work on the small lanes leading into the village, which appears to have improved the situation during recent heavy rain. A member of the public enquired about the flooding at the junction of B4224 and B4221. Cllr Rusby confirmed that this has been reported to BBLP via the online reporting system.

8. Planning: Members considered applications for determination by Herefordshire Council:

8.1. 230602: Ryelands, Upton Bishop, HR9 7TU: Proposed single garage at the side of a barn for ancillary accommodation. Members considered the application and raised no objections.

It was RESOLVED: to SUPPORT the application, noting no objections.

8.2. 230590: Heatherfield House, Upton Bishop, HR9 7OP: Proposed extension and alterations. Members considered the application and raised no objections.

It was RESOLVED: to SUPPORT the application, noting no objections.

8.3. 230577: Field Opposite Phocle Cottage, Phocle Green, HR9 7TW: Proposed change of use from agricultural use to mixed use being agricultural and equestrian use, proposed stable block, hay feed store and hardstanding. Members considered the application and raised no objections.

It was RESOLVED: to SUPPORT the application, noting no objections. In accordance with their declaration of interest, Cllrs Paul and Claire Newman abstained from the vote.

9. Footpaths:

Members received a report from the Parish Footpaths Officer (PFO). The Walkers are Welcome project is progressing; training has been organised and installation will take place across the summer. Money has been allocated from the 23/25 budget to extend the project. The council wished to thank Cllr Andy Parr for his work as PFO.

A member of the public raised a query concerning the closure of a footpath known as 'Coffin Walk'. It was noted that this is an area of contention between landowners and is therefore not a matter for the Parish Council. The Chairman suggested that any comments are directed to the PROW team at Herefordshire Council.

10. Website:

Members received a report from Cllr Claire Newman, noting the promotion of a number of village events on the website, Facebook and Twitter pages during February and March. Forthcoming events include a St. George's Day Dragon Hunt on Sunday 23rd April and the Big Coronation Lunch on Sunday 7th May. A new group (Upton Bishop Village Community) has been set up on the main UB Facebook page, which will enable residents to post their own items such as missing dogs, loose sheep etc. Domain hosting for the old site 'uptonbishop.org.uk' has now ceased and the website has closed. Cllr Newman has carried out a number of administrative tasks to update URLs on the .gov.uk site and a captcha has been added to the contact form to try and lesson the amount of spam received. On behalf of the Parish Council, the Chairman wished to thank Cllr Newman for her work keeping the website and social media pages updated and the village informed.

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

12. Date of the next meetings:

- 12.1. Monday 15th May 2023, 7pm Millennium Hall, Annual Meeting of the Parish Council
- 12.2. Tuesday 30th May 2023, 6pm, Millennium Hall, Annual Parish Meeting

13. Chairmans Closing Remarks: The Chairman reported the inaugural journey of the Daffodil Line Bus Route, re-established by dedicated local volunteers which opens up bus access from Ledbury to Ross via Dymock, Newent, Gorsley and Upton Bishop. He wished to thank Councillors for their hard work over the last year, recognising the number of volunteer hours spent supporting the village, and looked forward to continuing projects in the forthcoming year.

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

14. Employment Tribunal:

Members received a confidential update concerning the current status of the employment tribunal. It was noted that an 800- page document bundle had been organised and submitted on time and witness statements have been completed and are ready for the legal team to check compliance before submission (required by 17th April 2023). The number of hours taken to conclude the documentation was noted.

The Chairman proposed a motion to settle the claim with the claimant and members considered and agreed a settlement figure.

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It was unanimously RESOLVED: that on behalf of the Council, the Chairman will propose the agreed figure to the Claimant in full and an ex-gratia payment for the final settlement of the claim. This was subject to contract and with no admission of liability.

It was unanimously RESOLVED: to seek appropriate legal advice to draft the contract (COT3) for submission and ratification through ACAS agreement. Advice would also be sought on a legally appropriate public statement.

It was unanimously RESOLVED: that, upon acceptance of the settlement and the signing of the contract (COT3), the Chairman process the transfer of suitable reserves from the Reserve Account to the Current Account and arrange a payment to the claimant.

The meeting closed at 8.27pm.

SIGNED*M R Rusby*..... DATE*2 May 23*.....