

UPTON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Upton Bishop Parish Council held on Tuesday 7th May at 7pm in the Upton Bishop Millenium Hall

Present

Councillors: Mark Rusby (Chairman), Mike Tyers (Vice Chair), Keith Cornwall, Vicki Eldridge, Paul Newman, Andy Parr, Michael Wallace

In attendance:

Andrée Mitchell (Clerk/RFO)

Public: 14

The meeting opened at 7pm.

1. To elect the Chairman of the Council for 2024/2025 and to receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Rusby opened the meeting and confirmed that so far, no nominations for the post of Chairman had been received. Cllr Rusby volunteered to stand for the post of Chairman for 2024/2025 and in the absence of other volunteers, members were asked to confirm Cllr Rusby in the post of Chairman by a show of hands.

It was RESOLVED unanimously: to elect Cllr Rusby to the position of Chairman. Cllr Rusby signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2. To receive apologies for absence: Cllr Guy Cooper had sent his apologies due to being away in on business in Catterick.

3. To elect the Vice Chairman of the Council for 2024/2025 and to receive the Vice Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Mike Tyers volunteered to continue in the post of Vice Chairman for 2024/2025 and in the absence of other volunteers, members were asked to confirm Cllr Tyers in the post of Vice Chairman by a show of hands. **It was RESOLVED unanimously:** to elect Mike Tyers to the position of Vice Chairman. Cllr Tyers signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

4. To receive any declarations of interest and written applications for Dispensation and to remind all Members to check their register of interest and update if necessary.

Signed by the Chairman: *Cllr Mark Rusby*

Dated: *25th June 2024*

UPTON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

All members have completed their registers of interest which are published on both the Herefordshire Council and Upton Bishop Parish Council websites.

It was NOTED: that no further updates were required.

Cllr Newman declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 12.2 appoint of website coordinator, as his wife Claire is the volunteer website coordinator.

Cllr Wallace declared a non-pecuniary interest in 7.4.3 Millennium Hall invoice, as his wife is on the Millenium Hall management committee.

5. To consider and approved the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 2nd April 2024.

It was RESOLVED by those who had been present: to approve the minutes as a true and proper record of the meeting.

The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

6. Public Question Time:

6.1. To receive a report from the Ward Councillor:

Cllr Durkin was not present.

It was RESOLVED: to publish the Ward Councillor's report on the Parish Council website if available.

6.2. To received representations from Members of the Public

A member of the public asked the council if the white lines which were in the middle of the road could be reinstated. There were also concerns about the speed at which bends were being taken. This is a matter for Herefordshire Council as the highway authority working with Balfour Beatty Living places; however, it meets their standard model for traffic calming.

7. Finance

7.1. To note the bank balances

It was NOTED: that as of 26th April 2024:

The business bank account has a balance of £10,951.51.

The Treasury Account had a balance of £19,393.82.

It was NOTED: that councillors will have appropriate signatory access to the bank accounts and clerk/RFO will receive statements and can request printouts. The move to electronic banking during this year will facilitate this.

7.2. To consider the insurance policy

Signed by the Chairman: *Cllr Mark Rusby*

Dated: *25th June 2024*

UPTON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

It was NOTED: that the council are insured through Clear Councils (formerly BHIB) insurance company and are part way through a 3-year term of a policy the procurement of which was approved by the Council in 2023.

It was NOTED: that no further updates were required to the policy which would remain on the current long-term arrangement.

It was RESOLVED: the premium of £428.96 be paid for renewal of the second year of the three-year term of the insurance policy with Clear Councils (formerly BHIB) starting 1st June 2024 as per terms of policy.

7.3. To review Subscriptions and Regular Payments.

It was noted that the council maintained five regular subscriptions which have been supported previously. The subscriptions are considered essential for base line parish council business.

It was RESOLVED: that the council continue to maintain the existing subscriptions as follows:

- 7.3.1.** Annual registration to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) - £35 – legal requirement
- 7.3.2.** Annual subscription to HALC – Herefordshire Association of Local Councils – 2023/24 this was £664.04+VAT previously paid Feb 2024
- 7.3.3.** Annual subscription to Microsoft for Microsoft Office for the parish PC – 2023/24 £59.99 previously paid by credit card Nov 2023.
- 7.3.4.** Annual subscription for the register of the parish “.gov.uk” email/domain name previously paid £192 October 2023
- 7.3.5.** Annual subscription to our ISP for hosting of the parish website previously £75 paid to early March 2024

7.4. To consider any invoices due for payment

It was RESOLVED: to approve/ratify the following invoices for payment:

- 7.4.1.** £35 – Information Commissioners Office (ICO) – annual registration payment as per minute 7.3.1. The payment has been taken by Direct Debit (as per minute 7.3.1)
- 7.4.2.** £315.12 inclusive of VAT – Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) for clerk cover at the 2nd April 2024 Council Meeting.
- 7.4.3.** £60 inclusive of VAT – Upton Bishop Millenium Hall – Hire for February and March 2024.
- 7.4.4.** £75 – Helen Geach (Cuttermoon Website Design) – website hosting fees (as per minute 7.3.5)
- 7.4.5.** £428.96 – Clear Councils (BHIB) – annual insurance – zero rated (as per minute 7.2)

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Dated: *25th June 2024*

UPTON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

7.5. To note the following receipts

7.5.1. It was **NOTED**: that the remittance advice for the first tranche of the 2024/25 precept of £9,313.00 has been received from Herefordshire Council.

8. Assets

8.1. To review the Asset Register

It was **NOTED**: that the format of the register is to be reviewed in the light of the latest financial guidance which will be brought to the June meeting.

It was **RESOLVED**: that the asset register be updated to show the bus stops owned by Herefordshire Council (TBC) to be changed to the Parish Council; that the updated register reflected the assets of the Council and it be posted on the website and sent to the insurers.

8.2. To consider the annual health and safety inspection of assets

It was **NOTED**: that while the council does not have assets such as playground equipment it does have bus shelters and the war memorial, and it would be appropriate to consider the current condition of these items.

It was **RESOLVED**: that small group of councillors will consider the need for a health and safety inspection of assets. If anyone in the village has a background in health and safety and risk assessment and would like to help, they should contact the clerk.

9. Planning:

9.1. To receive an update on planning including Certificates of Lawfulness.

Three certificates of lawfulness have been applied for and can be seen on the planning page (application numbers P240986/V, P240987/V and P240988/V). These relate to Harewood Cottage, Upton Bishop and are applications for lawful development certificates for proposals for a detached 3 car garage; a detached garden store; and a detached garden office

It was **NOTED** that the three applications for the above lawful development certificates had been received and that the council were not being asked to comment on the applications.

10. Policies, Codes & Procedures:

It was **NOTED** that:

- The council's policies, codes & procedures are largely due for review although there have been recent reviews and updates to the Councillors and members responsibilities; the Reserves Policy; the Risk Management Policy and the Risk Register.
- An initial review had been undertaken in early 2023, however HALC advised delaying implementation of this until a clerk/RFO was in place and, on the advice of HALC, the

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UPTON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

Standing Orders and Councillor Code of conduct have been reviewed and brought to this Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

10.1. To review Standing Orders and Code of Conduct

10.1.1. Standing Orders

It was **NOTED** that:

- The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) have produced model standing orders with the most recent being reviewed in 2022 and that these compare closely to the council's current standing orders which were based on an earlier model.
- The proposed Standing Orders follow the latest model which has been updated to reflect good practice, and the latest recommendations from HALC, e.g. Paper ballot, and have left room for the introduction of Working Groups.

It was **RESOLVED**: that the new standing orders be adopted, to be reviewed annually and in the light of updates to other policies and law.

10.1.2. Code of Conduct

It was **NOTED** that:

- The proposed Councillor Code of Conduct is based upon the LGA's model Councillor Code of conduct 2020, updated in 2021, tweaked for the size of council.
- An updated model was released just before the papers went out and this was checked and incorporated into the proposed Code of Conduct with only minor changes.

It was **RESOLVED**: that the proposed councillor code of conduct be adopted with minor amendments to be made post-meeting and ratified at the June 2024 meeting. And that it be reviewed annually or as appropriate should significant new guidance become available.

10.2. To consider review of policies, codes, and procedures

It was **RESOLVED**: that the current policies remain in force and that the Clerk prepare a schedule to enable review over the year and the adoption of appropriate best practice and guidance and proper consideration by the council as recommended by HALC.

11. Parish Council Roles & Responsibilities.

11.1. To review Parish Council Roles & Responsibilities and agree actions as necessary.

Signed by the Chairman: *Cllr Mark Rusby*

Dated: *25th June 2024*

UPTON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

It was NOTED: that publication of council roles & responsibilities is required to meet financial regulations and in particular the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities, and that this is published on the website.

It was RESOLVED: that the parish council roles & responsibilities be updated further to changes agreed at this meeting and posted on the website.

12. Appointments

12.1. To consider the appointment of the Footpath Officer

The Chairman formally thanked Andy Parr for his dedication and contribution as footpath officer to the Parish and proposed that he be reconfirmed as the footpath officer for 2024/2025.

It was RESOLVED unanimously: that Andy Parr be re-confirmed in the voluntary position as footpaths officer for the Parish.

12.2. To consider the appointment of the volunteer website coordinator

The Chairman formally thanked Claire Newman for her skill and dedication in running the website to keep the parish informed on activity and issues across the community and proposed that she be reconfirmed as the as the website coordinator for 2024/2025.

It was RESOLVED unanimously: that Claire Newman be re-confirmed in the voluntary position as website coordinator for the Parish.

13. To approve the dates, times, and locations of ordinary meetings of the Council for 2024/2025

It was NOTED: that the June meeting was required to enable the approval of the year end accounts and annual governance statement within the required legal time frames.

It was RESOLVED: that meetings would move back to the normal bimonthly schedule following the June and July 2024 meetings and that meetings would continue to be scheduled on the first Tuesday of the month for which they were scheduled.

14. Lengthsman

14.1. To confirm the Lengthsman for the Lengthsman contract 24/25.

It was NOTED:

- that the council had advertised for the post of lengthsman and the contract for 2024/2025 and that two expressions of interest were received for the role
- the applicants were sent an experience and capability questionnaire to complete covering relevant experience; training and qualifications; equipment; confirmation of insurance; and access to suitably qualified staff.

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UPTON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

- One completed questionnaire was returned by Mr Read.
- The questionnaire was reviewed, and it was found that Mr Read met all of the requirements detailed above.

It was RESOLVED unanimously: that the successful Mr Read be appointed as the parish lengthsman for 2024/25.

14.2. To ratify response to the 24/25 Lengthsman Scheme.

It was NOTED:

- that the parish had benefited from over £3,000 in grant funding for lengthsman work across the parish in 2022/23 meeting approximately two thirds of the funding requirement.
- Herefordshire Council are rerunning the lengthsman scheme for 2024/2025 for which the council had submitted an expression of interest.
- The amount of funding offered is reduced from £140/km of U&C roads to £120/km of U&C roads. There is also matched funding available which would give a total grant of £2,928.

It was RESOLVED unanimously: to take up the Herefordshire lengthsman scheme and apply for the additional grant funding.

15. Highways: To receive an update and agree actions as necessary

Cllr Parr gave an update on Traffic Calming:

- Balfour Beatty have now installed further traffic signs as part of the Traffic Calming Scheme, however there are a few snagging issues with the work which BBLP have been notified about so that they can be rectified in due course. There remain several signs still to be installed.
- On Friday 3rd May Balfour Beatty installed the Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) bases.
- On Thursday 25th April 2024 Herefordshire Council took the decision to bring the council's Public Realm Services contract with Balfour Beatty Living Places to an end in 2026. This will affect highways, asset management, network management, parks and open spaces, street cleaning and contract management functions. The council have said they will continue to work closely with BBLP for the duration of the contract.
- More details are available on the Herefordshire Council website

16. Footpaths: To receive an update and agree actions as necessary

Cllr Parr gave an update on Footpaths:

Signed by the Chairman: *Cllr Mark Rusby*

Dated: *25th June 2024*

UPTON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

- The work on footpaths at this time of year will be to cut back any overgrown areas around stiles and gates so they remain accessible; and to inspect installed features after the winter months.
- The new gates leading to the M50 underpass and Hartleton Water can be used to access the Linton Platinum Jubilee Walk, a 6¼ mile circular walk, details of which can be found on the Linton Parish Council and Herefordshire Council websites.

17. Website: To receive an update and agree actions as necessary

Claire Newman, the website coordinator gave an update on the website:

- The village website and Facebook page have publicised what has been going on in the village during April including the new village eco map and the start of the new village Lego club. Regular updates are given on indoor bowls, Doreen's social afternoons, church events, the village defibrillator, phone box library and the need to pick up your dog and take your litter home.
- Forthcoming events include Midsummer Madness on 5th July 2024 and the Summer Fete on 20th July 2024.

18. To consider items for the next agenda

The June meeting will consider items related to finance including the Annual Governance return and year end for 2023-2024.

19. Chairmans closing remarks.

The Chairman thanked members of the public and Councillors for attending.

20. To note the date of the next meeting:

Tuesday 4th June 2024 at Upton Bishop Millennium Hall at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8:25pm.

Signed by the Chairman: *Cllr Mark Rusby*

Dated: *25th June 2024*