

# Yarkhill Parish Council

## MINUTES OF

### YARKHILL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 11 August 2020

**Present:** Councillor Jeff Hughes, Councillor Tom Misselbrook, Councillor Chrissie Dobson, Councillor Matthew Kirby and Clerk Sallyanne Lees. There were 4 members of the public present.

1. There were apologies for absence from Councillors Sarah Daw and Ian Carr and Ward Councillor Jonathan Lester.
2. There were no declarations of interest or written requests for dispensations
3. The minutes of Parish Council Meeting held Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 were adopted and signed.
4. **Open Session**
  - 4.1 Ward Councillor Jonathan Lester had submitted his report to the Parish Clerk as follows: Since the lockdown I have continued to participate at Herefordshire Council meetings, including Cabinet and full council meetings. At cabinet meetings topics of discussion have included the Council's reaction to Covid 19, the response to the flood damage across the county and the purchase of Maylord Orchards to name but a few issues. I have publically thanked all Council staff for carrying on with their duties despite the challenges. I have also thanked our partners in the health and voluntary sectors as well as all of the volunteers who have done their utmost to do what needs to be done in these exceptional circumstances. In view of the issues that have been raised concerning the proposed 7 houses at Monksbury Court the application will now go to planning committee. I have not yet been informed of when it will go to planning committee but all will be notified in due course. An emergency meeting of full council was called on 4<sup>th</sup> August to decided how emergency flood damage will be paid for. Details of this agenda item are to be found on the council's website and it is well worth a read. The motion was to borrow the money adding £193 000 in repayment costs per annum. I supported an amendment to pay for the work out of the reserves but the amendment was lost. As a consequence the Council will have to find these costs out of the revenue. There was also an emergency motion to discuss the implementation of the safety measure in Hereford and the other market towns. As a result of the debate these matters will be reviewed by the cabinet member and the ward councillors where the changes are being implemented. Lastly with regard to the request for better signage at Watery Lane I would appreciate it if you could give the matter some consideration. A case could be argued that Herefordshire Council should pay for further signage as they are the highways authority, however, it will not surprise you to note that the demands on the Highways budget is colossal and it may be quicker to enquiry about the community commissioning model. I will be advised by you.
  - 4.2 The Chairman told the meeting that he had attended the Parish Council Summit via ZOOM. This is a meeting, usually held twice a year for Parish Councillors to share ideas and to interact with HCC. One of the speakers, Karen Wright, who is the Director of Public Health for Herefordshire, made the point that the total number of Covid 19 cases for Herefordshire has been extremely low; less than 900 in total as at 23<sup>rd</sup> July and fewer than 3 cases per week as at the same date. She asked that Parish Councils reiterate to all residents that there are particular concerns about what may happen in the winter and the tips she gave were to get fitter, have your flu jab, continue to wash hands rigorously, don't compromise on social distancing wherever possible and if anyone has the slightest symptom to get tested; apparently Herefordshire have a very good testing regime. At a local level Councillor Jeff Hughes praised the setting up of the local help hub and commented that the community as a whole seemed to have really pulled together and watched out for family and neighbours, carrying out such simple but essential tasks like dog walking, shopping, prescription collection and generally checking on the more vulnerable residents.

There has been remarkably little fly-tipping during the lockdown period and the one item dumped down Watery Lane has now been removed. There has been a case of vandalism where the Monkhide Notice board was needlessly damaged. It is believed the culprits are 3 young people seemingly passing through. There was also evidence of a camp fire on the towpath and a knife was also left on the ground. Councillor Jeff Hughes asked that everyone remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity to the Parish Clerk and the Police if necessary. The Parish Clerk will mend the notice board and fit catches instead of locks. Despite the new safety measures on the Stokebridge Road there has been another accident involving a car going into the ditch and unfortunately the accident happened within the area of increased safety measures.

5. With regard to Planning Matters Councillor Jeff Hughes told the meeting that the planning application for 6 houses at Rosedale (Newtown Crossroads A417 area) has been approved. There has been an application for the renovation and extension of an existing grade II listed cottage at Grove Farm; The PC carried out a site visit and their positive comments have been submitted to the HC Planning office. There is a new reserved matters application, which means that it is a further application after approval for 4 detached houses at Northcroft which is on the main A4103 towards Newtown Crossroads. We have submitted our comments this week. During the original site visit the PC's main concern was the disposal of foul water/ sewage. The developer has obtained a discharge permit from the Environment Agency so we have made the appropriate comments on that in our submission to Herefordshire Council Planning Office. Ward Councillor Jonathan Lester mentioned the 7 houses at Monksbury court in his report and confirmed that this application will now have to be put before a planning committee. The Planning Officer had been set to approve this application but given the high number of valid objections it has been decided that the application should be put to the Planning Committee. The date has not yet been set for this but Ward Councillor Jonathan Lester will keep us informed. This will not be heard in the near future because a porosity test was carried out by the developer but it has to be carried out by a third party and so no progress can be made until this has been completed. The Landscape Officer has also objected to the project on the grounds that there are too many houses and that there is no transition from countryside to a modern estate; also that the development is not in the spirit of the NDP and does not integrate with the landscape of Yarkhill. There have been a number of activities with the Enforcement Team; one being the Newtown Inn where it has been reported that the occupants are using the ground floor as living accommodation which is against the court ruling and the Enforcement Officer is expected to report back very shortly; another being the illegal mobile homes on the field at Orchard View – which is opposite the Newtown Inn – and Herefordshire Council are starting the legal process; the final enforcement matter is Monksbury Court Barns. Herefordshire Council are keen to enforce the conditions that were incorporated in the 2005 planning approval which stipulated that all landscaping and the access road had to be finished before the first occupant moved in but of course this was not done. The Enforcement Officer is currently obtaining legal advice on these matters. Traffic using the private road to and from the A417 to Monkhide village is still causing huge problems despite gates being incorporated at the Monkhide End. It seems some delivery drivers are using their vehicles to open the gate thus causing damage. Several solutions have been suggested including coded key pad gates. Delivery vehicles still think it is ok to use excessive speed on our lanes and even on our public rights of way and bridle ways when accessing houses. Please let the Parish Clerk know of any delivery drivers or indeed local drivers who are driving with no regard for residents safety.
6. The 2019/2020 Parish Accounts were accepted and signed and the Parish Clerk will forward them to the relevant authority. The Accounts are available to view on the website and should anyone require clarification of any item they should contact the Parish Clerk.
7. The Parish Clerk updated the meeting with regard to activities during lockdown and since the last Parish Meeting in March. Because we have opted into the Lengthsman scheme, despite there being no funding now, we are eligible for certain grants. The first grant we have been offered and have accepted is for assistance with drainage issues and the amount available is up to £20,000. The Parish Clerk has obtained the quotation from our Lengthsman which totals some £9,000 and so all the ditches and culverts in Monkhide and Watery Lane that need clearing will be cleared as soon as our application is approved. It is important that landowners also fulfil their responsibility with regard to ditches, drains and culverts to ensure we reduce the risk of flooding. We will also spend some of our Parish Funds to maintain the hedges and verges and again would ask landowners to ensure they

maintain those hedges and verges for which they are responsible. The Help Hub set up to assist elderly and vulnerable residents during the lockdown has been highly successful. The Parish Clerk thanked the many volunteers that came forward. There were so many volunteers that many of them were not approached because neighbours and family stepped up and the whole community worked together in a truly heart warming way. The Parish Clerk has been working with Balfour Beatty, Road Safety and the Police regarding excessive speed resulting in many accidents on the A4103. As a result we are awaiting confirmation that a speed check and assessment will be carried out on that road in the near future and recommendations made. Newsletters have continued to be produced and many residents have opted to receive their copy via email as hand delivery is not an option at the moment. The Newsletter is also published on the Website which is kept updated at all times. If you or someone you know is not receiving a Newsletter and wants one, please let me know. During Lockdown we have renewed our data protection and our liability insurance, covered our election costs and paid the Parish Clerk.

8. There were no questions from the floor.

**Close Open Session**

9. Payments were approved as follows:

Autela £67.78

10, It was agreed that items for the next agenda, including a brief description of why this should be added to said agenda to enable all Parish Councillors to research the subject, be sent to the Parish Clerk no later than 25<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Date of next meeting 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020 (To be confirmed due to Covid 19)