

MINUTES
DEFFORD & BESFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Defford & Besford Parish Council held on Wednesday 17th November 2021 at 7pm in Defford village hall

PRESENT: Chairman J Clarke Vice Chairman S Rees Cllr G Marshall Cllr I Spiers
Iain Stephens – Candidate for Co-option Clerk L Yapp 4 Parishioners

1. **APOLOGIES** – were received from Cllrs J Harrington and R Davis (also in capacity as District Cllr), and County Cllr A Hardman

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – None declared

a) *Cllrs are reminded of the need to update their register of interests*

b) *To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature*

c) *To declare Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature*

d) *Written requests for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) are to be with the clerk at least 4 clear days prior to a meeting.*

Cllrs who have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, or Other Disclosable Interest which falls within the terms of the code of conduct, must leave the room for the relevant items

- **Cllr Rees – Consultation on Changes in Education Tier System in Pershore**

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – Parishioners were invited to speak at this point, or to interact at relevant points during the meeting. Those present chose to interact during the meeting

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** from meetings dated 22nd September 2021 – Acceptance proposed Cllr Marshall, seconded Cllr Clarke – all in favour

4. **CO-OPTION** – Cllr Clarke introduced Iain Stephens who had applied for co-option for Defford Ward, with his application having been circulated to Cllrs in advance of this meeting. A proposal made by Cllr Clarke to co-opt Mr Stephens was made, seconded by Cllr Marshall – all in favour. Mr Stephens joined council members.

5. **REPORTS:**

a) **County Cllr Report** – Nothing to report

b) **District Cllr Report** – Nothing to report

6. **FINANCE**

a) Payments for approval / made since the last meeting – *a copy of the full accounts had been forwarded to Cllrs*. Proposed acceptance of accounts made by Cllr Rees, seconded Cllr Clarke – all in favour

1258	Clerks PAYE	229.19
1259	Lengthsman August	144.00
1260	Cheque Cancelled	
1261	Grass Cutting	480.00
SO	Clerks Expenses	15.00
SO	Clerks Salary	307.20
1262	Lengthsman September	144.00
1263	Street Lighting	138.71
1264	Lengthsman October	144.00

Account balances (less unpresented cheques):

Current Account: £19328.25

Deposit Account: £4,056.39

b) **Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal** – A poppy wreath had been purchased on behalf of the parish council. The clerk advised that the manufacturing cost for the wreaths was approx. £20. It was agreed that an additional £30 be donated, making a total of £50. Receipt was record of £30 cash from the Church is respect of the wreath which the clerk had organised for them.

Cllr Rees reported that she had laid the wreath in Defford on Thursday 11th. She felt this was a more personal event in our own village, which involved the children from the village school and was also attended by parishioners. A request was made that this is repeated in future years in Defford, which was supported by the rest of the parish council.

7. HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

- a) Footpaths / Rights of Way – Cllr Marshall reported that he continued to keep an eye on footpaths and PRoW's and report issues to WCC. There are currently 23 'open' reports in Defford across 19 paths and 21 'open' reports in Besford across 18 paths. Some of the previously reported issues have now been addressed. Cllr Rees commented on the condition of the path from Upper Street to the garages (rear of Hillview). Cllr Marshall thought this may well be a WCC Highways issue but would investigate and report back.
- b) Lengthsman – The LM continues to work in the villages. The clerk reminded Cllrs to let him know if they were aware of any flood risks (i.e. blocked drains, culverts etc)
- c) Street Lighting – The clerk would chase the contractors (Prysmian) on status of the works needed on the remaining streetlight. She reminded Cllrs that the CIL reserve held by the parish council would be used to pay for the works carried out, but the monies needed to be spent within 5 years from receipt or repaid to WDC.
- d) Flooding – All Cllrs to report to the clerk or WCC direct any flooding issues as soon as identified for them to be actioned as soon as possible.
 - Church Lane – a drainage issue has been identified. A photograph to be taken to be attached to the report to WCC
 - Flood Signage – Cllr Rees asked if the parish council could 'hold' road closed signs in the event of severe flooding to enable quick distribution. WCC have advised that this is not possible and that they distribute the signs as and where required.
 - Thanks were received from a parishioner to the parish council for their assistance in resolving a long standing flooding issue involving Severn Trent.
- e) Speeding / Traffic Calming – A request has been made to WCC and approved, for the installation of 'give way' and 'slow down' road markings at Rebecca Road / Ladywood Road cross-roads. The clerk was asked to chase this up
- f) Harpley Road, Car Parking – Cllr Rees reported that Rooftop Housing have finally followed up the site visit some months ago and advised that the area around the garages is to be cleared.

8. PLANNING:

- a) Home Farm Housing Survey – In hand
- b) 21/01750 – 27 Lower Drive, Besford – retrospective application for single storey rear extension.
Approved by WDC
- c) 21/01908 – 3 x 4-bedroom houses, garaged, access and ancillary works – *awaiting decision by WDC*
- d) 21/02035 – Land adj. Avonside, Upton Road – change of use of land for the siting of 14 holiday caravans – *approved by WDC*
- e) 21/01311 – Avonside, Upton Road – Minor extension of existing dwelling on site with loft conversion to provide additional annexe accommodation for 3G living – *approved by WDC*

- f) 21/01592 – Jubilee Cottage – erection of 2-storey extension – *commented on by the parish council using delegated powers and awaiting decision by WDC*
- g) 21/02177 – Maidenswell, Upton Road – replacement conservatory with single storey extension – *awaiting decision by WDC*
- h) 21/02311 – Broad Hill Farm, Broad Hill - demolition of dwelling and adj. agricultural buildings. Construction of replacement dwelling, stable building, menage, workshop building, rotunda, boat house, pergolas and new gate house – *lengthy discussion took place and the following comments were raised by Cllrs:*
- The visual impact on the development from Bredon Hill and historic Croome.
 - The materials that are proposed to be used are not in keeping with neighbouring properties, all being constructed from red brick
 - An extremely large application with the proposed new gate house being the same size as the main dwelling now. Cllrs were in agreement that there would be less impact if the main dwelling was situated lower down the hill
 - Cllrs were in support of comments made on the WDC website by the Heritage and Conservation Officer
- Cllrs were in full agreement to object to this application based on the points raised above.
- i) 21/02561 – Land at (OS 9164 4305) Harpley Road – outline planning for five-custom built dwellings (including one affordable) with garages and improved access. At this point in the meeting interaction was invited to the parishioners in attendance with their objections to this application. The parish council were presented with an objection letter from them. *As this application was received too late to be formally discussed at this meeting it was agreed that a planning meeting would be held on Monday 29th November at 6.30pm in Besford when the parish council would formally decide on their own comments. Cllrs Rees gave apologies for absence for this meeting*

11. OPEN SPACES

- a) Millennium Green Main Gate Access – following the travellers invading Abbey Park in Pershore Summer of 2021, the parish council has been looking at the options available to make the open space secure, without impacting on the grass cutting or disabled parking. A suggestion for a height restriction barrier (similar to that at the VH car park) was well received and would offer security but at the same time enable access to those that required it. The clerk would obtain a quote for a barrier with a removable top bar, and also speak to the groundsman to establish the height required for his vehicle and equipment.
- b) Playground Working Group – Cllr Marshall continues to do safety inspection checks. New picnic tables need to be installed – *Action Cllrs Clarke and Marshall*. It was agreed to hold a meeting of the working group in the New Year with a view to carrying out some general maintenance / housekeeping at the playground.

12. PROJECTS

- a) Village Hall Car Park – Cllr Spiers continues up the area around the VH car park.
- b) Electric Car Charging Points – Cllr Clarke to chase up the quote requested
- c) Repair to Church Wall – This has now been carried and positive feedback has been received from village residents. Cllr Rees reported that there were cracks starting to appear on the rest of the wall and that this would need attention at some point. It was agreed that the parish council start building up a reserve towards these works
- d) Future Projects – The clerk asked Cllrs to give some thought with regard future projects within Defford and Besford as we are coming to the point in the year where we need to consider the

budget for 2022/23. The clerk suggested that reserves should start to be built up for (a) general maintenance, and (b) Millennium Green – possible new equipment. A suggestion was put forward for replacement road signs in and around the villages. Whilst these have been reported to the local authority, they are not considered to be 'high priority'.

- 13. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH** – Cllr Marshall reported that there are a few signs that still need to put on posts in Defford. A couple of burglaries had been reported in Defford and that crime rates for the parish were low compared with the national average. It is hope that the mobile police van will be able to visit Defford early next year, and finally, he has started to engage with the police on the benefits of Smartwater for the community.
- 14. COUNCILLOR VACANCIES** – there are now two vacancies for Besford ward, although applications are also welcome from anyone living in Defford.
- 15. CONSULTATION – PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE EDUCATION TIER SYSTEM** – Cllr Rees reported on the current consultation with regard the proposed changes to the tier system (from three tiers down to two – losing middle schools and reverting to just primary schools and high schools) within the Pershore Pyramid. Cllr Rees has been in discussion with the Head and Governors from the village school, who reported that they were in favour of the planned changes. This will bring more children to the school and plans are already underway to accommodate the additional pupils and staff. The parish council were happy to support the school and would comment accordingly.
- 16. PHONE KIOSK, DEFFORD** – a request had been received by Cllr Rees from staff and children from the school to convert the phone kiosk to a book exchange. This was well received by the parish council who were all in favour to support this. The clerk would ask the LM (in his capacity as handyman) for a quote for materials and labour to carry this out.
- 17. BROADBAND** – Cllr Marshall reported that he had received communication from WCC advising that Airband are gathering expressions of interest. He had already received interests from thirty properties.
- 18. VILLAGE HALL** - Cllr Rees reported on a recent VH meeting when it was mentioned that there was no parish council representative in attendance at meetings. Cllr Spiers replied that he was still the representative and was happy to continue to be so. The clerk would advise the chairman of the VH committee.
- 19. CORRESPONDENCE / EMAILS** had been circulated to Cllrs
- 20. OTHER MATTERS FOR INFORMATION / FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**
- 21. DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS** – Date for the next meetings:
Planning Meeting – Monday 29th November 6.30pm at Besford
Parish Council meeting – Wednesday 19th January 2021