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| **The Minutes of the Meeting of the Great Witley and Hillhampton Parish Council**  |
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| **Held at the Great Witley Village Hall on Thursday 21st March 2024** |
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| **Present: Chairman**, Cllr P Trow (PT). |
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| **In Attendance:** Clerk, J Evans, Cllrs C Dermietzel (CD), F Chapman (FC), B Dallow (BD), D Trow (DT), C Hamer (CH), Andrew Goodman (AG), and Darren Danks (DD). |

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| **1.** | **Apologies:** C Jones (CJ), C.Cllr D Chambers (DC) and D.Cllr P Cumming (PC). |
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| **2.** | **Declarations of Interest:** None. |
| **3.** | **To consider any Application for a dispensation:** None. |
| **4.** | **Minutes:** The Minutes of the meeting held on 11.01.24 were approved and signed. |
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| **5.** | **District and County Councillors’ Reports:** Both reports were received and circulated prior to the meeting and are attached to the end of these Minutes. |
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| **6.** | **Progress reports:** 1. JE reported that the Lengthsman’s invoices are going online from next month and she will receive training to help input the data now required by clerks.
2. AG reported that some maintenance to the coping stones by the QuarterGreen is required and he will look into this.
3. JE reported that the Lengthsman’s hourly fee is increasing from £15.75 to £16.50 and this was agreed unanimously.
4. FC reported that there has been little progress with the NDP as we are waiting to hear from MHDC. Their Review will now not be completed this year. The traffic data they are using is from 2016 and is therefore irrelevant now. The Inspectorate needs to have up-to-date data. FC wanted it recorded that we are very unhappy with the lack of progress with the SWDP Review and asked that a letter should be sent to Harriet Baldwin. The Severn Trent pumping station has been rebuilt but they have said that they have not enlarged its capacity.
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| **7.** | **CALC:** All updates and training events were circulated prior to this meeting. |
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| **8.** | **Planning:** None to discuss. However, PT asked on behalf of JE that planning emails are responded to, to avoid calling for planning meetings which could be discussed and responded to over email. |
| **9.** | **Finance:** All finances were circulated and approved prior to the meeting. A payment schedule is attached to the end of these Minutes. |
| **10.** | **Correspondence for Information:*** It was agreed to renew our parish contract with West Mercia Police highlighting our 3 areas of concern as being speeding traffic, increased volume of traffic and rural crime.
* The request to purchase hedgehog boxes of 50 at £150 was declined as we have numerous active badger setts in the parish and it was thought that attracting hedgehogs which badgers feed on would not be appropriate.
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| **11.** | **Clerk’s report on Urgent Decisions made under delegation since the last meeting:** None. |
| **12.** | **Councillors’ reports and items for future agenda:*** Pressure to reinstate the milestone at the Hundred House
* Request advice from the Badger Trust regarding further repairs to the edge of the path in Bowen’s Field
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| **13.** | **Date of next meeting:** It was agreed by a show of hands that the next meeting will be at Great Witley Village Hall at 7.30pm on Thursday 9th May 2024. This will be the Annual Parish Meeting followed by the Annual Meeting of the Parish. |
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| The meeting was adjourned for **Public Question Time**, notes of which are appended to these minutes. |
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| The meeting closed at 8pm |
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| Signed …………………………………….. Date …………………………………….. |
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|  | Chairman |

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| **Notes of Public Question Time**  |
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| 5 Members of the public were in attendance and raised the following concerns during Public Question Time: |
|  |  | 1. | It was pointed out that the fence behind the school is still broken. BD said he has it in hand but has been too busy to carry out the repairs to date. |
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District Councillors’ Report March 2024 Baldwin Ward

 The Council has received a further £1m one off grant from the Government this year, which has been allocated to the priori’es reserve, although it is unclear at this stage what it will be spent on. An increase in the District’s element of Council Tax of 2.82% was agreed bearing in mind the projec’ons for the next few years which show substan’al ongoing savings being required.

The District s’ll remains at risk of specula’ve planning applica’ons due to the expiry of the SWDP, with the adop’on of the new Local Plan now being further delayed as the Inspector has called for upda’ng of various pieces of background data before the Examina’on progresses further. In par’cular the long awaited Transport survey is required. We will con’nue to press for improved performance in this situa’on.

 It is worth no’ng that in the original public consulta’on in 2019, all the Parish Councils in the old Baldwin and Woodbury wards requested that large village development sites should not be included in the Local Plan un’l a transport plan was put forward. The response was that transport modelling would be undertaken to inform site selec’on and yet over three years later sites have been iden’fied for this area without such a transport plan.

With new housing developments being completed, issues with affordable housing are star’ng to emerge. In one case a developer was required to re-examine compliance with the District le8ngs policy. In Pearl Lane in Astley, the market element of 34 houses was converted to Affordable Housing by the developer and in the process no CIL payments towards infrastructure were required. This has resulted in such housing being built in our District effec’vely to sa’sfy the housing needs of other authori’es.

Pam and Paul Cumming Baldwin Ward

**County Councillor’s Report March 2024**

1. Like virtually all other local authorities, Worcestershire County Council is experiencing increasing costs in general and in three expenditure areas in particular, namely, Adult Social Care, Child Care Placements and Home To School Transport. These cost increases are resulting in budget pressures which the Cabinet has addressed resulting in the Budget for 2024/25 which was presented to a full meeting of the Council on 15th February. The Budget was approved by Council.

The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel which I chair, has been scrutinising the budget concerns with regards to Child Care Placements and Home To School Transport. I am satisfied that budget concerns are being addressed regarding Child Care Placements, that will have no detrimental effect on the safety and care of any child within the care system in Worcestershire. At the moment over 1,000 children are within the care system in the county.

There remains however, much work to do to overcome the budget deficit with regards to Home To School Transport. The cost of providing school transport for children without any care needs is within budget, it is the cost of providing transport to school, for children with Special Education Needs that is extremely expensive and the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide what ever means of travel is necessary, including individual taxis. Following a meeting with the Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel overseeing Economy and Infrastructure (both our Panels have an input into Home To School Transport), we met immediately following the full council meeting with the council’s Chief Executive and made it clear that we were dissatisfied with progress being made by officers and required immediate improvement.

The Budget which was presented on was a balanced budget but it required the use of the County Council’s Reserves, in order for this to happen. Now approved, the Budget is/will be available on the County Council’s website for anyone who may wish to view it.

1. The Director of Health who works for Worcestershire County Council, together with Trading Standards have done an excellent job in recent months with regards to challenging the use of vaping in the county, particularly by children aged 11 to 17. The BBC has acknowledged that Worcestershire has undertaken more surveys than the rest of the UK put together. WCC has lobbied the government to ban disposable vapes and the news recently, that the government has announced it intends to do so, is welcomed.

Since the end of 2021 Trading Standards Officers have seized almost 24,000 illegal e-cigarettes from across Worcestershire. Campaigns are ongoing in schools to raise the concerns of vaping by young children.

1. I am pleased to report that works are planned for week commencing 25th March to install a sump and pump in Market Street, Tenbury Wells. Hopefully this will eliminate flooding in Market Street as a result of surface water from heavy rainfall and the underground flood table. This is a separate project to the EA’s Flood Defence Scheme provided by WCC, and it is the first such project that the council has ever undertaken, independent of the EA.

It should be noted that this scheme will not prevent flooding in Market Street as a result of the River Teme flooding.

David Chambers

County Councillor, Tenbury Division

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|  | **Payment Schedule.**

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| JAN | C Bunn | Lengthsman's Dec invoice | 327.36 |
|  | DJN Planning | Steering Group mtg | 672.30 |
|  | J Evans | McAfee anti-tracker | 24.99 |
|  | WCC | Lengthsman's Nov invoice | 228.37  |
|  | J Evans | Clerk's January invoice | 1,280.70 |
|  | HMRC | Income Tax | 44.31 |
|  | C Bunn | Lengthsman's Jan invoice | 308.39 |
|  | A Goodman | Tarmac for potholes repair | 49.95 |
|  | WCC | Lengthsman's Dec invoice | 228.37  |
|  | HSBC | Account fee | 8.00 |
|  | HSBC | Account fee | 8.00 |
| FEB | J Evans | Clerk's February invoice | 442.60 |
|  | Whitehill Direct Ltd | Glebe notice boards | 861.60 |
|  | Defib Store | Replacement pads and kit | 103.19 |
|  | WCC | Lengthsman's Jan invoice | 228.40  |
|  | HSBC | Account fee | 8.00 |

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