

TIBBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY 4th APRIL 2023, 7.30PM

at TIBBERTON PARISH HALL, PLOUGH ROAD, TIBBERTON

Council Members present: Cllr Margaret Rowley, Chairman
Cllr Chris Hartwright
Cllr Eve Holding
Cllr Mike Leci
Cllr Diana Nutting

Council Members absent: Cllr Michael Doolin, vice-Chairman; Cllr Rob Grimer

In attendance: Matthew Acton, Severn Trent's Plant Manager for Tibberton
County Councillor Marc Bayliss
Police Inspector Dave Wise and PCSO Vicky Elliott
18 members of the public
Gill Lungley, Acting Clerk/Support Officer

1. Chairman's welcome.

The Chairman welcomed all to this meeting and asked to bring forward agenda item 5a to hear from the guest speaker.

1a. Matt Acton, the plant manager for Severn Trent's sewage plant in Tibberton.

Matt explained he had offered to attend this meeting to provide an overview of the incident earlier in the year when both Tibberton pumps failed, such an incident being rare. Matt apologised and confirmed they are now on top of the matter; the Environment Agency had been notified and proactive measures have been put in place.

Matt answered questions put by members of the public relating to the plant's current capacity to cope and concerns about the future if the proposed plan for 100 new homes is granted. He promised to feedback to Severn Trent the issues raised during this meeting and was thanked for attending.

1b. Keeping with agenda item 5, the Chairman introduced local police representatives:

Inspector Dave Wise, spoke of his passion for policing and that the area covered by his team also includes Malvern Hills. Dave reported on incidents that have occurred in Tibberton since January and assured residents it is fine to call 999 if they feel something is not right. He recommended reporting unwanted 'doorstep knockers' and that the parish council might want to take forward the Smartwater scheme 'We Don't Buy Crime'. In response to reports of speeding especially in the vicinity of Worcester6 and having noted Tibberton has an active speed-watch group, Dave asked for reports of the night-time speeding so that he can feedback to his bosses and seek additional resources. Dave and Vicky were thanked for attending.

1c. County Councillor Marc Bayliss (MB) was invited to speak:

- a) **The (canal) bridge** – the bridge structure is the responsibility of the Canal and River Trust, but the county council as the highways authority, is responsible for the traffic use. The bridge is showing signs of strain and currently has a temporary reduced weight limit which the highways officers are keen to retain.
A member of the public pointed out the inadequacy of signage, especially for longer vehicles which MB noted is being reviewed by officers. MB hopes to report to the next meeting on proposals which will be put out to consultation, but believes the bridge is unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles.
- b) **Gully cleaning** – will be in the area this week.
- c) **Government funding** - £3.5m has been provided for highways repairs; MB asked to be notified of any paths that need attention.
- d) **White gates** – funding is ready.
- e) **Worcester6** – funding support may be available via developers towards local communities and MB will ask on Tibberton's behalf.
- f) **SmartWater** – is available if the village wants it. MB can support via the county councillor's divisional fund, and believes the scheme helps to drive down crime.
- g) **Road safety** - £14m has been put aside for road safety measures, particularly the prevention of speeding. Use of the TruCam is preferred as it is less labour intensive but a unit costs £30k. The variety of different deterrents such as the vehicle activated signs which can be moved between sites, the community speed watch and the white gates are all designed to make the roads safer.
On hearing of the lack of WCC support for cutting back hedge growth encroaching onto the road MB asked for the correspondence to be sent on to him.
- h) **Copcut junction** – whilst outside the parish, this site on the A38 continues to prove inadequate for road users; it is not yet an adopted scheme and may have to change.
- i) **Response to questions:**
 - (i) On the matter of the proposed closure of Plough Road for the Coronation event in Tibberton, it is now known that another event has identified Plough Road as their diversion route. MB recommended contacting the Highways Officer.
 - (ii) On the matter of the adoption of the footpath between Plough Road and Hawthorn Rise, MB would look into whether it could be maintained by the parish Lengthsman.

1d. District Councillor Margaret Rowley (MR) reported as follows:

- Changes to electoral procedure mean that for the elections on 4th May all voters must produce photo identification; if a voter does not have appropriate photo id, they can apply for a voter authority certificate and must do so before 5pm, 25th April.
- **Response to question:**
On the matter of no progress to the planning application for Plough Meadow, MR explained the planning department is both under-staffed and waiting for responses from the developer.

2. To receive and note apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Michael Doolin, vice-Chairman, and from Cllr Rob Grimer.

3. Declarations of interest. None

4. Written requests for dispensation.

No requests for dispensation had been received.

5. Public forum.

As above, minutes no.1a – 1d

6. To approve the draft minutes of the council meeting held 02/03/2023.

AGREED The minutes of the meeting held 02/03/2023 were agreed a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

7. Planning

Planning Ref: W/22/01425/LB Associated Ref: W/22/01424/HP

Proposal: Construction of detached garage and installation of external flue

Location: The Old Stables, Church Lane, Tibberton, Droitwich Spa, WR9 7NW

Description of additional information / amendment: Movement of garage and additional details provided in respect of the garage's relationship to the boundary wall.

Although the parish council had previously commented on the original application *"Tibberton Parish Council noted that the property is in the curtilage of Rectory Farmhouse, a Grade II listed building. The height of the proposed development should not obstruct views of the Farmhouse or the adjacent barn conversions"* the council agreed to add "The council would further comment that the revised positioning of the garage may adversely impact on the setting of the neighbouring property, Church Barn, intruding on its special character." (Note: Rectory Farmhouse is Grade II* listed.)

8. Finance

a. To note the latest bank reconciliation.

It was explained that following the review and update of the last five years' accounts and input from the External Auditor who has yet to complete the challenge paperwork for 2021/22, the opening balance had been reduced by the amounts owed at the end of the last financial year which have since been paid. The bank reconciliation for the financial year end is:

TPC Bank Reconciliation to 31/03/2023		
Opening bank balances 01/04/2022	£61,854	+
Add receipts for year to date	£40,224	+
Less payments for year to date	£39,175	-
Cashbook balance as at 31/03/2023	(A)	£62,903
Bank balances as at 31/03/2023		
Unity Trust Bank	+£56,593	
Cambridge Building Society	+£6,310	
Total held in bank, as at 31/03/2023	(B)	£62,903
Reconciliation balance should be nil. A-B = £0.00 = balance.		

Earmarked reserves include:

- New village hall landscaping £20,000
- Community Infrastructure Levy £3,554.44 + £694.97 due April 2023.

WDC are holding reserve of £9,968 re s106 funds to be spent on 'off site public open space'.

b. To approve the payments schedule.

The payment schedule, below, was presented to the meeting and the invoices were available for inspection.

AGREED to approve the schedule of payments by online banking. The payment schedule was signed by two bank signatories.

voucher	Payee	Reason for payment	Gross amount £.p	VAT re-claimable
UTB17 dd	Hiscox Insurance	Insurance (March 23)	352.40	0.00
V1a	Mrs G Lungley	Acting Clerk support serv's (Feb 23)	1,197.00	0.00
V1b	Mrs G Lungley	M/soft office	79.99	13.33
V1c	Mrs G Lungley	WMJobs advert	288.00	48.00
V2	Westcotec	VAS Battery (second)	109.80	18.30
V3	E-ON Next	Village Hall energy	95.00	4.52
V4	C E Brassington	Lengthsman (March 23)	150.00	0.00
V5 (dd)	Hiscox Insurance	Insurance (April 23)	352.40	0.00

c. To note the budget comparison to 31/03/2023.

It was noted the budget analysis had been considered at the meeting of the Finance Committee immediately prior to this meeting.

d. To approve the Annual Governance Statement, section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for financial year to 31/03/2023.

The council responded to the eight assertions as follows:

1.	We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements. If 'yes' it means that the council prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations	Yes
2.	We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness. If 'yes' it means that the council made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.	No*
3.	We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances. If 'yes' it means that the council has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.	No*
4.	We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. If 'yes' it means that the council during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.	Yes
5.	We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and / or external insurance cover where required. If 'yes' it means that the council considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.	Yes
6.	We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems. If 'yes' it means that the council arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.	Yes

7.	We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit. If 'yes' it means that the council responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.	Yes
8.	We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements. If 'yes' it means that the council disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.	No*

* Explanations for the 'No' responses would be included with the AGAR submission to the External Auditor and online.

Assertion 2 explanation: the council did not maintain an adequate system of internal control during the first nine months of the financial year, but during the latter three months it has:

- adopted new procedures notably the Internal Controls Policy and the Operational Risk Assessment.
- Appointed a new, independent and competent internal auditor.
- Arranged the review of its finances by an independent accountant.
- Appointed a qualified clerk to provide support.
- Scheduled review of its Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

Assertion 3 explanation: the council is concerned it did not comply with the law or proper practices with regard to the collection and payment of PAYE to HMRC. It has written to HMRC to seek guidance on this matter and is awaiting a response. The council is aware it lacked oversight of payroll matters and is putting measures in place to ensure this does not recur including the appointment of a payroll provider and purchase of appropriate finance software.

Assertion 8 explanation: whilst the council is now working more openly and transparently the outcome of correspondence with HMRC, which may have a financial impact after the year end, is as yet an unknown hence the 'No' response.

It was **AGREED** to approve AGAR section 1 as above.

- e. **To approve the Annual Accounting Statements, section 2 AGAR 2022/23.**
The Accounting Statements, below, were presented for approval.

Box #	Tibberton Parish Council AGAR, s2	Year ending 31 March 2022 £	Year ending 31 March 2023 £
1.	Balances brought forward	54,322	61,854
2. +	(Add) Precept	36,069	36,509
3. +	(Add) Total other receipts	2,747	3,715
4. -	(Less) staff costs	6,031	9,404
5. -	(Less) Loan interest / capital repayments	13,817	13,655
6. -	(Less) All other payments	11,436	16,117
7. =	Balances carried forward	61,854	62,902
8.	Total value of cash and short-term investments	61,854	62,902
9.	Total fixed assets plus long-term investments and assets	899,397	899,397
10.	Total borrowings	285,000	279,000

It was **AGREED** to approve AGAR section 2 as above.

f. To agree the insurance cover for the next 12 months.

Three quotes had been obtained to insure the parish council against identified risks; the quotes varied considerably.

It was **AGREED** to review each quote in more detail and delegate the decision to the meeting of the Finance Committee later this month.

g. To note receipt of quotations for accounting software and payroll.

It was **AGREED** to review each quote in more detail and delegate the decision to the meeting of the Finance Committee later this month.

h. To note tender document for the Lengthsman's position and new contract arrangements.

It was noted that the county council has not yet issued details of the Lengthsman's contract for 2023/24.

It was **AGREED** to delegate the decision to the meeting of the Finance Committee later this month.

9. Committees

a. To receive an update from the Finance Committee, meeting held at 6.30pm.

Cllr D Nutting spoke of:

- minor changes to the risk assessment,
- review of insurance cover,
- requirement to update the asset register,
- seeking an interest-bearing account for council funds.
- Lack of time to respond to the Internal Auditor's questions, but to pick this up at the extra committee meeting to be held on 19th April.
- Need to revise the building society account details; a letter is to be sent.

b. To receive an update from the Human Resources Committee.

The earlier meeting had been inquorate; the council was asked to determine arrangements following the advertising of the clerk's position, whereupon it was agreed to proceed with the interview arrangements.

10. Tibberton Village Hall (New)

a. To agree to award the contract for the landscaping project.

Following visit to relevant sites and receipt of favourable reviews for Contractor C, and having received more detail relating to the work required, it was **AGREED** to award the contract to HFN Landscapes.

During the site visit with the contractor, it was pointed out that the ash trees to the rear of the site need attention and Cllr Rowley has notified WDC of this.

b. To note progress with lease and with maintenance.

- (i) The council's solicitor is in the process of contacting the lessee's solicitor.
- (ii) Wernick's will attend to the peeling paintwork to the porch area at the front door.
- (iii) The alarm system has been serviced.
- (iv) Annual maintenance yet to be carried out on the windows and gutters.

11. New items for decision.

a) To confirm proposals for celebrating the King's Coronation and consider the budget provided by the Tibberton Coronation Event group; to also note receipt of £200 grant from Wychavon DC.

It was **AGREED** to fund the bell-boat hire for £400 and to support the purchase for village children of 100 commemoration mugs, expected to cost £7.50 each.

If VAT is to be charged the mugs will be purchased by the parish council; in which case the council agreed to waive Financial Regulations 6.18-6.20 to allow the Acting Clerk to use their personal credit/debit card upon receipt of the funds from the council.

The Coronation Event group will confirm arrangements.

- b) **To agree business continuity arrangements** such that following the election on 4/05/2023 if more than two current bank signatories are no longer council members, to allow any current bank signatories to continue to effect payment until new councillors are added to the bank mandate.

It was **AGREED** to allow current bank signatories who will not be a parish councillor after 4th May 2023 election, to continue to effect payment until the new councillors are added to the bank mandate.

- c) **To agree to adopt a Complaints Policy and procedure.**

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Complaints Policy and procedure.

12. To receive the reports of Councillors and Clerk's update

- a) **Neighbourhood Watch (NW): Cllr M Leci**

No report.

- b) **Community Speed Watch (CSW): Cllr M Rowley**

Due to the wet weather, there had been only five sessions this month.

- c) **Telephone Kiosk Working Group (TKWG): Cllr D Nutting**

Cllr Nutting reported that internal painting has recommenced. The litter pick equipment has been temporarily re-housed.

- d) **White Gates: (Acting Clerk)**

The supplier continues to be unable to give a delivery date.

- e) **Public Rights of Way: Cllr Grimer**

Cllr Grimer was absent, however Cllr C Hartwright commented on the steps down the side of the motorcycle track which look as if they may need attention.

- f) **Lengthsman: Acting Clerk**

Currently out of contract, but this is to be discussed at the next Finance Committee meeting.

- g) **Additional general updates** not presented.

13. Members matters and items for inclusion on the next or future agenda

Cllr E Holding raised concern about dogs running free on Plough Road from a specific address and whilst they may not be dangerous, they could cause alarm to motorists. It was recommended to contact the local police for advice.

- 14. To resolve to close the meeting to the public** to allow for discussion of matters that may be prejudicial to the public interest if discussed in public. Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s1(2). **Not required.**

15. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Tibberton Parish Council will be the Annual Council Meeting, to be held on Tuesday 16th May 2023 at 7:30pm in Tibberton Parish Hall.

Prior to this, the Finance Committee will be meeting on 19th April at 7.30pm to which all members of the council are invited to provide input to the internal audit questionnaire.

This meeting ended at 10.19pm.

..... Date.....
Signed as a true record of the meeting by the Chairman.