

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 6th February 2024 at 7.00pm at Longford Village Hall

1. Attendance noted as

Cllrs J Ford (Chair), C Byers (Vice-Chair), G Bocking, K Doherty, L Gough, R Harris, R Meeks, C Young

Also present: Mrs J Shirley (Clerk), Borough Cllr S Hands, Mr C Ashman (Tewkesbury Borough Council Director of Place)

Members of public present: One member of public.

Apologies: County Cllr P McLain

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda

None.

3. Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2023

Council resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2023. Proposed by Cllr Doherty, seconded by Cllr Gough, all in favour.

4. To receive an update on outstanding items not on the agenda. None.

Public Participation

A member of public was present to learn what the parish council plans to do in response to the issue of flooding.

County Councillor Report: No report.

Borough Councillor Report: Cllr Hands gave an update from the Borough Council, including an update on the borough council's response to the recent flooding. Cllr Hands is chairing the Flood Working Group which will review policies and procedures in how the borough council responds to future flooding. The borough council is consulting on its Strategic and Local Plan, closing date is 12th March.

Cllr Doherty asked if there are any flood warden update meetings planned. There is a meeting in February at Bishops Cleeve which may not be for the wider area.

Gloucestershire County Council has a flood resilience grant scheme. Tewkesbury Borough Council also have a community recovery flood grant scheme.

Cllr Bocking asked if there will be input from parish councils for the new flood impact study that forms part of the Strategic and Local Plan. Mr Ashman, Director of Place at Tewkesbury Borough Council will follow up.

Cllr Doherty expressed thanks to Tewkesbury Borough Council for the invaluable support given to rural Longford residents during the floods.

5. Flooding

- a) Council discussed the recent flooding issues and noted that the predictions were incorrect due to how the Environment Agency had modelled the data. The water levels rose very quickly, and people couldn't mitigate as they would normally. It was agreed that the parish council write to Tewkesbury Borough Council and Environment Agency to request that the gauge at Sandhurst be used as an indicator of water levels affecting Longford rather than the gauge at Gloucester Docks. **Action: Clerk.** The flooding was exacerbated by vehicles ignoring the road closure signs and driving through flood water which forced the water into homes. Borough Cllr Hands will raise a question with Gloucestershire County Council regarding the declined request for a temporary road barrier at Sandhurst Lane. Cllr Gough requested that the parish council retain a list of homes that are affected by flooding so that

local response can be directed to those properties. Borough Cllr Hands explained that the borough council is collating that information to improve its response in future.

- b) Council considered a storage solution for sandbags and sand to be available within Longford to allow for quicker response in future flood events; Mr Ashman shared some information regarding alternative flood barrier products, and how flood protection measures could be deployed at street entrances rather than at individual properties. Council deferred making a decision pending gathering more information on alternative products.
- c) Council appointed Cllrs Byers and Harris as Flood Warden to co-ordinate a team of flood wardens within Longford. **Action: Cllrs Young / Meek** to promote the flood warden scheme on social media to recruit volunteers. **Action: Clerk** to clarify the duties of flood wardens.
- d) Council agreed to draft an Emergency Plan. **Action: Clerk** to use the GRCC template to produce a first draft for Council to consider; a working party will be set up to progress the plan once the draft has been produced.

6. Finance / Procedures

- a) Council received the latest bank reconciliations and budget report for the 2023/24 accounts.
- b) Council received an update from Cllr Meek on the review of the accounts; Cllr Meek reviewed the budget reports and confirmed that the data presented by the Clerk matches that on the system. **Action: Cllr Meek** will do a transaction sample audit prior to the end of the financial year.
- c) Council appointed GAPTC to carry out the independent audit for 2023/24 at a cost of £215. **Action: Clerk**
- d) Council considered the 3 quotes received to remove mistletoe from the maple tree on the playing field and agreed to appoint Chris Arnold Tree Surgery at a cost of £350+VAT. **Action: Clerk** to request the branches be chipped and left in the orchard area.
- e) Council approved a £250 donation to SARA. **Action: Clerk.**
- f) Council approved the contract to apply 3 applications of weed-spray to the kerbside edges throughout Longford at a cost of £1215+VAT. **Action: Clerk** to request advance notice of when the weed-spraying is applied.
- g) Council noted there were no invoices due for payment. It was confirmed that the standing order had been setup to pay the Clerk's monthly salary commencing February 2024. Invoices expected from Shackleton Nurseries for the community orchard trees which will be paid before the next meeting.

7. Parks, Open Spaces & Allotments

- a) Council agreed the ground maintenance tender and that quotes would be invited to be agreed at the March meeting. **Action: Clerk.**
- b) Council approved the purchase of a cordless pressure washer at a cost of £140 so that the playing field working group could clean play equipment and surfaces. Item to be funded from the Projects earmarked reserve. **Action: Clerk** to purchase a Ryobi 18v cordless pressure washer.
- c) Council received an update from Cllr Byers on tree planting / wildflower areas agreed the following:
 - i. Purchase 6 x 1.8m tree stakes and 4 x 1.8m half logs to protect Mountain Ash and Horse Chestnut trees. **Action: Cllr Ford.**
 - ii. Purchase 1 ton of top soil to cover the bare roots of the Poplar trees. **Action: Cllr Ford.**
 - iii. Purchase tree stakes and guards to support the 12 orchard trees due to be planted February, funded from the Severn Trent Water grant. **Action: Cllr Ford.**
 - iv. Postcrete to install the overflow car parking sign, and stabilise the Sivell Close entrance gate post. **Action: Cllr Ford.**
- d) Council discussed submitting an application to the Tewkesbury Borough Council community orchard scheme. Deferred to the March council meeting pending further information. **Action: Clerk.**

- e) Council consented to the request for a memorial plaque to remain in place on the playing field bench near to Jordan's Way. Council discussed the need for a policy for memorial benches/plaques. **Action: Clerk to draft policy.**

8. Planning

- a) Council had no objections to planning application 24/00033/FUL 12 Sivell Close.

9. Highways

- a) There was a brief update from the Road Safety Working Group regarding traffic survey strips on the road towards Twigworth, and the 20 is plenty campaign.

10. Consultations

- a) Council discussed a response to the Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Strategic and Local Plan (closes 12th March). It was agreed that councillors would draft individual responses and share with council at the next meeting. **Action: all.**

11. To receive reports from representatives for information only:

- Allotments: all plots are occupied and there is a short waiting list following the advert on social media. The horses in the adjacent field were evacuated through the allotments and the fence needs to be checked.
- Finance: No further update.
- Personnel: Cllr Doherty and Cllr Young will arrange the Clerk's annual appraisal.
- Playing Field: No further update.
- Village Hall: Cllrs Doherty and Young attended the latest village hall meeting. There was a possibility of a joint wassailing event to be held mid-January 2025. A stall was requested for SARA to use at the summer fayre. **Action: Clerk to contact SARA.**

Next Meeting to be held on 5th March 2024 at 7.00pm.

Meeting closed at 8.52pm.