

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OMBERSLEY AND DOVERDALE PARISH COUNCIL HELD
ON TUESDAY, 18th FEBRUARY 2014 AT 7.30 P.M.
AT OMBERSLEY MEMORIAL HALL

Present: Cllrs. Mrs. L Moyse (Chairman), W T Arnold, Mrs. H Barningham, M Best, Mrs. J Goodman, D Ingram, C McKensie-Rowan, A J Morris, R Reynolds, R E Murphy (part), R Simpson, Mrs. B Serrell, A J Silvester, (13)

In Attendance: Cllr M H Broomfield (County Councillor)

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Mrs J Goodman to her first meeting of the Parish Council.

17/14 Apologies for Absence were accepted from Cllrs R Murphy, although Cllr Murphy did attend for part of the meeting. An apology for absence was also received from District Councillor P. Tomlinson.

18/14 Declarations of Interest

None

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No members of the public were present.

19/14 Approval of the Minutes from the meeting on 21st January 2014.

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st January 2014, having been previously circulated, were taken as read, agreed and were signed by the Chairman.

20/14 Weighbridge Information Board.

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Diana Pollock to the meeting. Diana had previously submitted some proposals regarding the design and production of the panels for an Information Board to be located on the Weighbridge Site.

Diana referred to her proposal which had previously been circulated to the Parish Council and confirmed a number of aspects following questions from Parish Council members as follows:-

- She had suggested that the panels should be incorporated into a tilted table which would be easily viewable. The panels could be housed in wooden or aluminium frames. This would depend on any preference expressed by the Parish Council. Diana confirmed that the costs of the table and frames were not included in the indicative costs she had submitted.
- In total, the Board would be around 5ft x 3ft in size and Diana had proposed 3 panels – one being a whole map of the Parish (as previously agreed by the Parish Council), a centre section which could be a memorial to Lord Sandys and a third panel featuring an illustrative map of the village highlighting points of local historic interest.
- She had consulted the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust and proposed to incorporate illustrations of animals indigenous to the area in the panel borders.
- The artwork would be printed onto aluminium panels which were extremely 'vandal proof'.
- Diana would aim to have the panels finished by July to co-incide with the arrival of the delegation from Sandisfield.
- Diana's proposals used illustrations rather than actual photographs as she felt that this was visually more appealing. Ultimately, however, she accepted that this was a matter of personal choice.
- Although the Parish Council had originally suggested placing the Information Board on the Weighbridge Site, there would be nothing to prevent it being located elsewhere, such as next to the main parish noticeboard or maybe the Church Lytch Gate.

It was clear from the discussions that there were a number of issues which needed to be confirmed by the Parish Council before work on the project became too advanced. The Chairman thanked Diana for her attendance and the work she had undertaken so far. Once the Parish Council had agreed on some of the outstanding matters, the basis on which it wished to proceed would be confirmed to her. At this point Diana left the meeting.

The Parish Council then proceeded to discuss the detail of the proposal. The following points were raised during the course of the discussion:-

- Some concern was raised at the cost of the project, although it was accepted that this had been known for quite some time.
- It may be possible to arrange for the project to be carried out at a reduced cost. Alternative suppliers could be sought and DAB Graphics was one such option. Cllr Mrs. Barningham had made some initial enquiries and costs appeared to compare favourably although it had to be recognised that the comparison was not like for like in terms of size of the panels. Additionally, although they could produce the panels there would still be an additional cost involved as a 'researcher' would still need to be employed to provide the detail and accompanying artwork. Diana's quote, on the other hand, incorporated all aspects of design and production.
- An assumption had been made that Board would also serve as a memorial to Lord Sandys. Cllr Best, however, urged caution and suggested that the views of the Sandys Family should be sought before proceeding down this route.
- Funding for the project still needed to be confirmed as, at this point no funding sources had been confirmed. The Parish Council had previously agreed on a breakdown of contributions but it was felt that more certainty was necessary to avoid a scenario where the whole cost fell on the Parish Council.
- The Parish Council had a duty to account for expenditure of public money and for the avoidance of doubt an alternative quote should be sought so that the value for money aspect of the expenditure could be confirmed.
- As part of the earlier discussion various views had been expressed as to the location of the Board. It would be necessary to come to an agreed view before proceeding. Similarly, there were differing views on the use of illustrations rather than photographs. Again this was an area where consensus would need to be achieved.

As the discussion proceeded it became more apparent that there were a number of concerns and issues to be resolved. In order to move the discussion forward, the Chairman sought a view from the Parish Council as to their commitment to commission the production of an Information Board. On being put to the vote the Parish Council agreed by 10 votes to 3 that it still wished to commission the production of an Information Board.

Having confirmed the principle, the Chairman suggested that Parish Councillors give further detailed thought to the many issues raised as part of the discussion so that the Parish council could return to this at a future meeting and agree the precise detail and arrangements to be put in place. Once this detail had been agreed, a small group of Councillors should be appointed to oversee the project. All Councillors agreed with this as a way forward.

21/14 Police Report

There was no police report.

22/14 Clerk's Progress Report

The Clerk updated the Parish Council on the following matters:-

- (a) ROSPA Ombersley Play Area Inspection - The Clerk reported that he had been contacted by ROSPA regarding the annual inspection of the Ombersley Play Area. The Parish Council noted that the cost was likely to be in the region of £100 and asked the Clerk to make the necessary arrangements for the inspection to take place.
ACTION:Clerk

- (b) Business Advertising on Ombersley Roundabout – the Clerk reported that the advertising signs had been removed and that the County and District Councils had been notified accordingly. At the appropriate time, the Clerk wished to speak to the County Council to ascertain whether a formal arrangement could be agreed which would allow businesses to meet the whole cost of advertising but with a contribution from the County Council in lieu of the future maintenance of the roundabout.
- (c) Internal Audit Arrangements - The Clerk reported he had been contacted by the Council's Internal Auditor who had offered to undertake the internal audit arrangements again this year at a cost of £100. The Parish Council confirmed that it was content and asked the Clerk to make the necessary arrangements.
- (d) Allotments – The Clerk reported that he had received an enquiry from a parishioner looking to rent an allotment. The Parish Council did not operate allotments but he had passed on the details to the Lloyds Educational Foundation.

23/14 Roads and Related Matters.

- (a) Speed Enforcement in the Village – Cllr Reynolds reported that the Safer Roads Partnership would be commencing speed enforcement on Main Road in Ombersley with effect from 1st March 2014. It was likely that a speed enforcement van, which would be located near the Bakery, would visit 2 – 3 times per week for a 3 – 6 month period. At the end of this period a report would be produced which would enable the Parish Council to see the effect of the enforcement.

Investigation was still ongoing regarding enforcement on Holt Fleet Road. Further information would be provided once the issues concerning visibility and location had been addressed.

The Parish Council noted the pending enforcement and asked that the Clerk place suitable notices on the website and noticeboards to advise motorists.

ACTION: Clerk

- (b) Flooding - The recent heavy and prolonged rainfall had resulted in some instances of flooding on the highway. As far as the Clerk was aware there had been no incidents of properties flooding. The Lengthsman had been making every effort to regularly attend to known flooding hotspots by clearing drains where necessary.

There had been a prolonged instance of flooding on Owl Hill Lane but this was as a consequence of blocked ditches and water run-off from fields which would require intervention by the County Council. The Clerk would raise this with the County Council.

ACTION: Clerk

24/14 New Homes Bonus Update – Cllr Best provided an update on the current situation regarding the payment of future New Homes Bonus (NHB) funds.

In general terms there was good news in that Wychavon District Council had agreed to continue with their commitment to allocate up to 40% of years 2 and 3 NHB money to parish and town councils in the area that had experienced growth. This meant that after 1st April 2014, most parishes would be able to draw down another year's worth of their year 2 and year 3 NHB allocations.

They were, however, making a number of arrangements to the rules, including not considering advance payments, apart from in very exceptional circumstances. This change would need to be reported to the Ombersley Memorial Hall Management Committee as the Parish Council had previously indicated that this may be an option to assist with their programme of major repairs.

In respect of years 4 and 5, Wychavon proposed to allocate up to 40% of years 4 and 5 NHB to parish and town councils that had experienced growth as a result of new homes being built. Occupied empty homes brought back into use would, however, be excluded in future.

In order to make the overall scheme affordable, there would be a sliding scale of allocations of over £50,000. Affected parish and town councils would receive 40% of the first £50,000, 20% of the next £50,000 and 10% of anything else. This was unlikely to impact on the Parish Council.

The District Council also proposed to introduce a number of new rules for year 4 and 5 allocations and these would be explained at a 'Localism in Action' event hosted by the District Council on 26th March 2014. A copy of the invitation to this event had been circulated to all Parish Councillors.

The Parish Council noted the latest position regarding the future allocation of NHB money and agreed that any Councillor wishing to attend the 'Localism in Action' event should contact the Clerk who would make the necessary booking arrangements.

ACTION: Councillors/Clerk

25/15 Twinning' Request – Sandisfield. In his absence, Cllr Tomlinson had outlined the latest position in his report to the Parish Council.

4 local couples had offered hospitality to the Sandisfield delegation. Grateful thanks were due to John Morris, Peter Tomlinson, Peter Turner and Bill Yardley (not Arnold as stated in Cllr Tomlinson's report).

The dates had been confirmed as Sunday 20th July 2014 – Wednesday 23rd July 2014 and an itinerary of events was being planned. Cllr Tomlinson had met with Cllr Mrs Goodman who had agreed to assist with the planning and liaison.

The Parish Council meetings programme for 2014-15 was currently being developed and there was an opportunity to schedule the July 2014 to co-incide with the visit. On balance, however, the Parish Council felt that it would be best to keep to the existing pattern of Parish Council meetings, although an event involving the Parish Council should be planned for the evening of Tuesday 22nd July 2014.

The Parish Council wished to thank Cllr Tomlinson for the work he had undertaken so far. It further expressed its gratitude to Cllr Mrs Goodman for agreeing to assist with arrangements. To assist with the planning all Councillors were asked to give the visit their attention and where possible suggest matters for incorporation into the programme. Cllr Best suggested a trip on the Severn Valley Railway.

ACTION: All Councillors

Finally, the Parish Council noted that Cllr Silvester had updated his short history of Ombersley and a copy had been circulated to all Councillors. Councillors considered this to be an impressive piece of work which showed the area in a new and exciting way. The Parish Council expressed its thanks to Cllr Silvester for undertaking this work.

26/14 Parish Council Meal

Cllr Mrs Serrell reported that she had looked at two possible options and had concluded that The Crown and Sandys was the better option. She had therefore provisionally booked this for 10th April 2014 (7.30pm for 8.00pm). The cost was likely to be £20 (2 course option) or £25 (three course option). No deposit was required and partners would be welcome to attend. Cllr Mrs Serrell would circulate details to Councillors.

The Parish Council thanked Cllr Mrs Serrell for her efforts in making the arrangements.

ACTION: Cllr Serrell/All Councillors

27/14 Correspondence – Correspondence received was listed as part of the agenda papers and received by the Parish Council.

28/14 Finance and Authorisation of Accounts

A schedule of financial transactions had been included as part of the agenda papers. There were no additional transactions to report.

Income totalling £2,343.06 had been received since the last meeting.
Cheques totalling £1,287.92 had been paid since the last meeting.
Payments totalling £555.00 needed to be paid.

All transactions were moved by Cllr D Ingram, seconded by Cllr M Best and agreed by the Parish Council. Details of individual transactions, together with the current bank balances, are attached as an Appendix to the signed minutes.

29/14 Councillors Report

(a). District

In Cllr Tomlinson's absence the Parish Council received the details set out in his written report to the Parish Council. Where appropriate, issues raised in Cllr Tomlinson's report had been considered as part of the discussion on the item to which they related.

(b). County

Cllr Broomfield reported that he was supporting a campaign to re-introduce dredging on the River Severn.

He also reported that he had met with Highways Officers and requested the installation of double yellow lines to control obstructive parking leading to the Tennis Club. There was some concern expressed by the Parish Council as it believed that this was an un-adopted road and enforcement would not be undertaken. Cllr Broomfield would ensure that details of the proposal are shared with the Parish Council.

ACTION: Cllr Broomfield.

(c). Parish:

Cllr Best referred to Cllr Tomlinson's 'ward walk' and the best farming practices employed by Martin Yardley where he was using the edges of his fields to contain water. His approach had been commended. Not only were the Parish Council grateful for the work he was doing (including the digging out of ditches near Merepool) they felt that his approach should be used as a best practice example for other farmers.

Cllr Moyse reported that a parents meeting had been held at Sytchampton School over their proposed changes from a First School to a Primary School. Most parents were in favour of the proposal and, as there were no serious objections, the School planned to move forward with the changes.

Cllr Best reported that a near miss had occurred when a vehicle had attempted to exit the lane alongside The Venture Inn. Parked cars obscured the view and vehicles exiting the lane had to move onto the carriageway to get a clear line of sight. Whilst accepting that there was little that could be done to resolve the situation he felt that the issue should be reported.

ACTION: Clerk to raise.

Cllr Reynolds requested that the Lengthsman be asked to clear the moss etc. from the Weighbridge roof

ACTION: Clerk to arrange

30/14. Next Meeting

The next Parish Council meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 18th March 2014 at Ombersley Memorial Hall (7.30pm)

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.35pm.