



**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023**  
**at the Pavilion, Fownhope**

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Number:

**Present:**

Cllrs Stuart Eames (in the Chair), Kevin Braybrook, Gareth Williams, Mike Simmons, Frank Hemming, Lavinia Smith and Michael Short.

**In attendance:**

0 members of the public; Clerk Helen Tinson

1) **Apologies for Absence:** Cllrs Tim Jones and Will Morris.

2) **To Receive any Declarations of Interest and Written Requests for Dispensation:**

To receive any declarations of interest: Cllr Mike Simmons declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 5d, FRFA fees; Cllr Michael Short declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 10, Dark Sky Deed of Covenant. The Declarations of Interest book was signed accordingly.

To consider any written requests for dispensations: there were none.

3) **Open Session:**

a) **Report from Ward Councillor:** The Ward Councillor was not present and did not submit a report.

b) **Representation from the Public:** The Clerk reported three comments received from members of the public:

i) A member of the Environment Group has reported that Japanese Knotweed is growing in the River Wye. It was agreed to consider this further under Environment Group Report.

ii) A local resident has raised a query concerning the footpath between Scotch Firs and the Mill Field Development. The footpath has been assessed and considered to fall within accepted boundaries.

iii) A local resident has raised concerns about overgrown trees and hedges along the lane to Old School. It was agreed to forward the concerns to St. Mary's School.

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4) **Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

Members considered the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

**It was RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair.

5) **Finance:**

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a) **Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23:**

i) **Internal Auditor Report:** Members received and noted the Internal Audit Report for 2022/23.

ii) **Annual Governance Statement:** Members considered each assertion on the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23

**It was RESOLVED:** to approve the Governance Statement for 2022/23

iii) **Annual Accounting Statement:** Members received the Annual Accounting Statement for 2022/23. The Clerk presented an explanatory report as attached to these minutes as Appendix A.

**It was RESOLVED:** to approve the Accounting Statement for 2022/23.

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	<p><b>iv) Period for the Exercise of Public Rights:</b> Members considered dates for the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights in line with the external audit requirements.  <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to set the dates from Monday 12th June to Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023.</p> <p>b) <b>Cyber Security Insurance 2023/24:</b> Members considered renewing the existing policy at a cost of £370.25 per year.  <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to renew the policy at a cost of £370.25.</p> <p>c) <b>Annual Subscriptions 2023/24:</b>  <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to approve the following annual subscriptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-virus protection for Clerk computer</li> <li>• ICO/Data Protection Annual Registration</li> <li>• Zoom</li> <li>• HP Instant Ink</li> <li>• Microsoft One Drive</li> <li>• .gov.uk domain and email addresses (10gb storage per mailbox)</li> <li>• Squarespace web hosting</li> <li>• HALC Annual Membership</li> <li>• Herefordshire Tree Warden Network Annual Membership</li> <li>• Herefordshire Green Network Annual Membership</li> <li>• PATA Payroll Services</li> <li>• Scribe Accounting Software</li> <li>• Open Spaces Society Annual Membership</li> <li>• Clerk salary in accordance with contract</li> </ul> <p>d) <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to approve the following payments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nick Maddy Coaches, Bus Service May, £180.00</li> <li>• FRFA, Meeting Room Hire May, £20.00</li> <li>• Suzi Bruce, P3, £413.00 plus £6.60 VAT</li> <li>• BHIB, Cyber Security Insurance, £370.25</li> <li>• Helen Tinson, Salary May, £851.90</li> <li>• G&amp;J Maintenance, Grass Cutting, £240.00</li> </ul> <p>6) <b>Review Policies and Procedures:</b>  Members considered drafting the following policies and procedures:</p> <p>a) <b>Planning Policy:</b>  <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to draft a planning policy for consideration at the July meeting.</p> <p>b) <b>Environmental Policy:</b>  <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to draft an environmental policy which aligns with the FRFA Environmental Policy. The Clerk was asked to research any existing policies with HALC, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust, the Wye Valley AONB and Environment Agency and liaise with the Environment Group before presenting to the Parish Council for consideration.</p> <p>7) <b>Highways:</b></p> <p>a) Members received a report from the Highways Working Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic Calming Scheme – Cllr Eames is continuing to chase BBLP/HC for a progress report, cc new Ward Councillor and new Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure.</li> <li>• Safety Posts on Common Hill Lane – BBLP have installed additional bollards.</li> <li>• Church Croft signs – BBLP have declined to replace the sign. Members considered a quotation of £41.34 to supply the sign. Cllr Eames volunteered to install it.  <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to approve the purchase of the sign at a cost of £41.34</li> <li>• Welsh Water: Cllr Eames has arranged a site visit to discuss concerns about large tankers damaging the verge and trees just before the entrance to the water treatment works.</li> <li>• The replacement safety barrier has been delivered and will be installed during the month.</li> </ul>	<p>HT</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT</p> <p>SE 279/06 /2223 2 of 4</p>
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<p>8)</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b)</p> <p>c)</p> <p>d)</p> <p>9)</p> <p>10)</p> <p>11)</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b)</p>	<p><b>Environment:</b></p> <p>Members received a report from the Environment Working Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The next EG meeting is scheduled for 7pm on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June at the Green Man.</li> <li>• The transition of the Fownhope Car Club from a satellite of MHCC to an independent entity is progressing, though an issue concerning insurance has been raised and a solution is being sought.</li> <li>• A resident of Nover Wood Drive has expressed a desire for some areas to be left as wilder spaces and has been asked to assess the level of support amongst the other residents of Nover Wood Drive.</li> <li>• Japanese Knotweed has been reported in the River Wye. Members considered asking the Wye Usk Foundation to spray as in previous years.</li> <li>• <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to ask the Wye Usk Foundation to spray as in previous years and to approve a donation of £50.00. Members also wished to acknowledge and thank the team of local volunteers who continue to reduce the growth of Himalayan Balsam and Giant Hogweed in the Tan Brook area.</li> </ul> <p><b>Fownhope Community Saturday:</b> Members were reminded that the next event will be held on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June and will focus on Upcycling and Recycling. The Clerk gave a summary of the event and asked members to consider additional financial support of £110.00 to engage Dr. Bike. It was agreed that the events are building momentum and proving popular. It was also agreed that agreeing an annual budget next year would be more efficient and that the Memorial Hall might be a more suitable venue for the winter events. <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to approve additional financial support of £110.00 for the 24<sup>th</sup> June event.</p> <p><b>Grass Cutting at Scotch Firs:</b> Members were informed that an emergency cut had been carried out at the end of May and considered the frequency of future cuts. <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to cut monthly on a trial basis.</p> <p><b>Tree Warden and Annual Tree Survey:</b> Members were informed that Cllr Frank Hemming had volunteered to be the new Parish Tree Warden and that the annual tree survey has been scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023. <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to appoint Cllr Frank Hemming as Volunteer Parish Tree Warden but to change the date of the annual tree survey to the week following 22<sup>nd</sup> June.</p> <p><b>Footpaths:</b></p> <p>Members received and considered a report from the Parish Footpaths Officer as attached to these minutes as Appendix B. There was limited support for a leaflet dispenser but it was suggested that a large copy of the walk could be available on the noticeboard for walkers to photograph. <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to approve an additional £200 per month for the Lengthsman or other contractor to carry out additional footpath maintenance; to be reviewed in October. The Clerk is to ask the PFO to identify key areas on local footpaths which need priority attention. <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to seek quotations for further costs as indicated in the report for consideration at the July meeting. <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to print the Coronation Walk Leaflet on coloured paper in the centre pages of the Fownhope Flag at a cost of £61.75.</p> <p><b>Other Matters related to Planning:</b></p> <p><b>Dark Sky Deed of Covenant:</b> Members were informed that Cllr Braybrook has signed a Statement of Truth concerning the ownership of Tan Brook which will form part of the Deed and was informed that the Deed of Covenant should be concluded shortly.</p> <p><b>FRFA:</b></p> <p>a) <b>FRFA Report:</b> Members were informed that the FRFA have not met since the last PC meeting and there is nothing new to report.</p> <p>b) <b>Planning Permission for Patio:</b> Members were informed that matters are progressing and an update will be presented at the next meeting.</p>	<p>HT</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT/WM</p> <p>WM</p> <p>WM/MS</p> <p>280/06 /2223 3 of 4</p>
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<p>12)</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b)</p> <p>13)</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b)</p> <p>14)</p> <p>15)</p> <p>a)</p> <p>Meeting closed.</p> <p>Signed .....</p> <p><b>Chairman</b></p>	<p><b>Fownhope Community Land Trust:</b></p> <p><b>Community Right to Bid:</b> Members were asked to consider whether they would like the FCLT to continue to work on an application to list Pritchards Butchers and the New Inn as Assets of Community Value. The Clerk had circulated a report providing background information on the process and the impact of a listing for the community and the business. It was noted that the West End Stores is currently listed as an Asset of Community Value until 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025. <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> NOT to progress applications for both Pritchards Butchers or the New Inn as Assets of Community Value.</p> <p><b>Affordable Housing Needs:</b> Members were asked to consider a draft article for publication in the Fownhope Flag seeking information to update to the Housing Needs Survey last undertaken in 2018. It was suggested that the FCLT also consider creating an online survey via Survey Monkey. <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to submit the draft article for publication in the Fownhope Flag.</p> <p><b>Community:</b></p> <p><b>Coronation Booklet:</b> Members considered concerns raised about the accuracy of the report printed about the Neighbourhood Development Plan. It was noted that one of the authors had been an objector to the NDP and members did not consider the report to be a true reflection of the circumstances surrounding the adoption of the NDP. <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to minute the disappointment of members at the inaccuracy of the report. <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> that the Chairman would write to the Local History Group to invite them to discuss the report and any possible resolution.</p> <p><b>West Mercia Police Community Charter Q3:</b> Members considered the top three priorities to report to WMP for Q3. <b>It was RESOLVED:</b> to report 1) Speeding, 2) Antisocial Behaviour, 3) Theft</p> <p><b>Clerk Report:</b> Members received the Clerk’s report as noted in Appendix C.</p> <p><b>Next Meeting:</b> 7pm, Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023. Apologies Cllr Braybrook.</p> <p>Agenda items raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To consider a new Planning Policy</li> <li>• To consider and approve the Risk Management Policy and Risk Register</li> <li>• To receive and consider update on Playground S106</li> </ul>	<p><b>KB/FH</b></p> <p><b>KB</b></p> <p><b>HT</b> <b>HT/SE</b></p> <p><b>HT</b></p> <p><b>HT</b></p> <p>281/06 /2223 4 of 4</p>
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## Appendix A: Finance Report

**Fownhope Parish Council**

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**REPORT FOR COUNCIL MEETING:** 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023

**REPORT BY:** Helen Tinson, Clerk/RFO

**AGENDA ITEM:** 5a: Annual Governance and Accounting Return 22/23

### **Recording the Investment Portfolio:**

Members may recall that on the 21/22 audit we were advised to change the way we record the investment portfolio. The investments can be cashed without notice or penalty and therefore we were advised they should be removed from the asset register/long-term investments and recorded as short-term investments.

This advice was received from Scribe and verified with PKF Littlejohn. A number of conversations and emails were exchanged with PKF concerning restating the previous year's return, which confirmed that PKF consider investments "without either a penalty for liquidating or any maturity dates" to be short term investments.

Therefore, this advice was followed, accounts were amended accordingly and the previous year on the 2021/22 audit restated. The audit was signed off by PKF Littlejohn in September 2022.

However, a query was raised by the Internal Auditor whilst conducting the internal audit for 2022/23. His understanding of the Practitioners Guide is that because the value of investments can reduce, they should always be recorded as long-term investments within the asset register.

He raised this query with me and I raised it with Scribe and also directly with PKF and I was able to speak to the senior auditor who signed off the AGAR last year. She apologised that she was unaware that the investments were a stocks and shares portfolio and confirmed that in this instance they should always have been reported as long-term investments within the asset register.

The accounts have been amended accordingly and the figures presented on the Accounting Statement 22/23 reflect the investments having been removed from Box 1 and included in Box 9, as per the advice received. Figures for 21/22 have been restated.

## Appendix B: Footpaths Report

### Fownhope Parish Council

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**REPORT FOR COUNCIL MEETING:** 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023

**REPORT BY:** Will Morris, Parish Footpaths Officer

**AGENDA ITEM:** 9: Footpaths Report

#### 1) General items

- a) A few gates have been installed this past month, most notably at Keepers Cottage and Lea and Pagets wood, both which have been causing walkers significant issues. See images at end of report.
- b) Still no update from Hereford Council regarding the repairing of two footbridges (near Nash Farm, and near Hawkers Lane). Both are now in an extremely poor condition. One is along the Coronation Walk and I have therefore reached out to FiPL and AONB trust to see if they can have any influence on the team to repair the bridges.
- c) There has been a large volume of minor issues noted during the Spring reporting period from the waywardens. Mostly relating to overgrown vegetation, fallen trees, missing finger posts and rickety stiles. I do not know if the Lengthsman has the time to address all these issues. During the summer months, overgrown vegetation particularly proves to be a difficult and time-consuming issue to address. I would propose that if the Lengthsman does not have capacity, that we consider recruiting an individual who could maintain key footpaths for a certain number of hours each month between May and September. I would appreciate the Councils input on this issue, or if it is even an issue that we are able to financially cover.

#### 2) Coronation Walk

- a) The walk has been awarded a sum of £4,742.46. This figure will cover the printing of leaflets, posters, way-markers and the installation of gates.
- b) Following the grant confirmation, the leaflets, posters and way-markers are now with RL Signs for printing, and the Lengthsman has been given to go ahead to start on the gate installation for the pre-determined gates.
- c) I am meeting with Clays Estate land manager this week to discuss the 6 kissing gates to be installed between Rise Farm and Nash Farm.
- d) I have met with Mike Simmons to discuss installation of materials at the Recreation Field (starting point of the walk). We decided that the best course of action is to purchase a new cabinet which would host the A2 Poster. This cabinet will be installed on the reverse of the currently installed signage board. As a short-term solution, there is a separate cabinet near the Playpark which the Parish Council own, and an A2 poster can be placed there initially, in addition to the main board near the car park.
- e) Waterproof leaflet dispensers should also be installed on the pavilion. This will create a corner where all information for all the walks can be found.
- f) Nick Kingsford has been contacted regarding the creation of a 'Coronation Walk' arrow, to be installed on the fingerpost by the pavilion, which currently has directional arrows for all the Fownhope Walk.

- g) As such, funds are requested for the purchasing of a cabinet, a leaflet dispenser and work to create an 'Coronation Walk arrow'. The grant may cover this, but I am not sure until all the gates are installed. I can provide quotes for the next meeting.
- h) Please see the below images:

**3) Next steps**

- a) Install remaining gates – will likely take a couple of months.
- b) Install way-markers
- c) Install poster at play-ground cabinet
- d) Install cabinet at car-park when available
- e) Install leaflet dispensers on the pavilion
- f) Install Coronation Walk directional arrow



Double sided cabinet available for one Coronation Walk Poster



Rear of signage board, available for hosting another cabinet for A2 poster. Plus, fingerpost where the 'Coronation Walk' arrow can be installed



Current cabinet provided by Securicab.



## Appendix C: Clerk Report

### Fownhope Parish Council

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**REPORT FOR COUNCIL MEETING:** 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023

**REPORT BY:** Helen Tinson, Clerk/RFO

**AGENDA ITEM:** 14: Clerk Report

#### **Local Council Award Scheme:**

The three minor amendments have been submitted to HALC – waiting to hear back:

- 1) To attach the minute reference for any changes in hours or pay scale to my original contract of employment – done.
- 2) To reflect the rationale for insurance provision on documents – added to Risk Management Policy
- 3) To add an ‘estimated life’ to all assets – assessed by SE ad HT at the annual H&S assessment and recorded on Asset Register.

#### **Village Walkaround:**

A reminder for all Councillors to confirm their availability for the date proposed for the village walkaround – Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August at 6.30pm.

#### **HC Waste Team:**

Craig Cornish from the waste team at HC had planned to come to the event on 28<sup>th</sup> January to talk about waste but was unable to come due to illness. He has offered to come along to a PC meeting to talk about the new waste and recycling service (implementation delayed probably 2024) if we’d like him to and he’d be happy to talk about food waste at the same time.

Thoughts please ...

#### **B4224:**

B4224 at Hampton Bishop (Bunch of Carrots) will be closed from Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June to and including Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June – 9am-3pm each day for patching and stud removal ahead of surface dressing works.

#### **Annual Parish Meeting:**

The draft minutes have been published on the website. They are not approved until next year.

#### **HALC Group Training:**

The revised date for the HALC Group training session is Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 7-9pm.