

---

# Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

## Council Meeting, November 2019

### Report from the Clerk

#### 1. ***We Don't Buy Crime Smartwater initiative***

- 1.1 The two events to distribute Smartwater kits were publicised to residents in October and November, through an article in The Pump, email circulars to residents, posters around the parish, and leaflets delivered in person to every household by a team of 31 volunteers, including parish councillors .
- 1.2 At the first event, on 13 November in Stoke Prior Village Hall, Estelle Stock, the WDBC co-ordinator from West Mercia Police, and PCSO Jack Davies attended to distribute and register Smartwater kits, with other volunteers assisting. A total of 71 households attended to register their kit (nearly 25% of all households). A second event will be held on 14 November in Risbury Village Hall.
- 1.3 Following the events, remaining households will be contacted about their kit, either inviting them to a future event or volunteers visiting them to deliver and register the kit in person. There is a total of 288 households in the Group Parish, and a target of at least 70% registration had to be reached for the Group Parish to be designated a 'We Don't Buy Crime' area, and receive free signage from the police, which will help deter thieves.

#### 2. **Road Safety**

- 2.1 The petition from Steens Bridge residents discussed at the September meeting was forwarded to Highways at Herefordshire Council with a letter requesting an urgent meeting with the Parish Council, and suggesting various possible safety measures. A response to the petition was published online on 1 November, stating that speed limits were being reviewed on the A44 and it was proposed to implement these this financial year, with associated signage and road-markings.
- 2.2 No response has yet been received to the Council's proposals for other speed limits and road safety measures in the parishes, sent in August 2019.

#### 3. **The Lamb Inn**

- 3.1 The Lamb was advertised for sale with a local agents in early October, at an asking price of £550,000 and describing it as a "former pub" and "six-bedroom house". The Clerk and Chairman have been in touch with the agents to make them aware that the property is a commercial premises, has had planning permission refused for change-of-use to residential, and is listed as an Asset of Community Value.
- 3.2 On 10 October 2019 the owner of The Lamb notified Herefordshire Council, under the ACV Regulations, of his intention to dispose of the property. This was publicised by public notice in the Hereford Times of 17 October, and by letter to the Parish Council on 18 October. The Clerk, following consultation with the Chairman and The Lamb Working Group, notified Herefordshire Council on 3 November of the Council's intention to bid for the property. This was acknowledged on 5 November, so that the full 6-months moratorium on the disposal of The Lamb to anyone other than a community-interest group, is triggered – to 10 April 2020.

- 3.3 Following the Council's decision in principle on 2 October 2019 to purchase The Lamb, a valuation report has been commissioned from Sidney Phillips agents, to inform an offer. An oral report on this will be made to Council by the Chairman, if available.
- 3.4 An oral report will be made to Council on the Working Group's proposals for an Acquisition and Borrowing Proposal, and Council will be asked to consider making an offer to purchase The Lamb, subject to borrowing approval being granted and a loan being agreed.
- 3.5 Prior to considering the two matters at 3.3 and 3.4 above, Council will be asked to consider excluding members of the press and public from the meeting for these items, because of the commercial sensitivity of the discussion.

#### **4. Flooding and roads**

- 4.1 Recent persistent heavy rain has caused flooding on roads in several places, notably near Risbury Bridge and near Wheelbarrow Castle, which have been impassable at times, and vehicles have become stranded. Other areas have significant water standing, but have been passable. Several complaints about the flooding were received from residents. In late-October the Lengthsman was asked to clear drain tops and grips into ditches, and an information-circular was sent to residents on 31 October reminding them about the roles of the Parish Council, Lengthsman and Highways Authority.
- 4.2 On 14 November heavy rain has again caused flooding. The Clerk has cleared some drains and grips to prevent floods rising, and has surveyed all roads in the parishes and updated residents on road affected and recommended diversions.

#### **5. Lengthsman Work**

- 5.1 £550 has been spent so far on minor highways maintenance, including clearing drain tops and some ditches, and strimming around signs, benches and salt-grit bins. £1750 remains in the budget for 2019-20.
- 5.2 £307.58 has been spent so far on PROW maintenance, including repairing gates and strimming. £192.42 remains in the budget for 2019-20.

#### **6. Public Access Defibrillator and phone kiosk**

Work completing the refurbishment of the phone kiosk at Risbury Village Hall remains to be completed (some replacement glazing and defibrillator signs) because of continued poor weather. A quote of £360 plus VAT has been accepted for electrical work to re-locate the Defibrillator box into the phone kiosk and install a dusk-to-dawn light in the kiosk, and this work is expected to be undertaken shortly.

#### **7. War Memorial Working Group**

No further progress has been made with proposals for a War Memorial.

Philip Brown

Clerk to the Council

14 November 2019