

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

DRAFT – subject to
confirmation

Draft Minutes

of the Ordinary Meeting of the Group Parish Council
Wednesday 20th July 2022 at 7.30pm in Stoke Prior Village Hall

Present: Cllr. Ken Bemand
Cllr. Richard Thomas
Cllr. Chris Marston
Cllr. Richard Collins
Cllr. Gill Stovold

Cllr. Hugh Fowler-Wright (Chairman)
Cllr. William Jackson
Cllr. Tim Yair
Cllr. Jeanette Fulwood

Clerk & RFO: Allan Drew

58/22 Apologies for absence

- (a) Apologies had been received from Cllr. Stephanie Wilson, Cllr. Zoe White & Ward Councillor John Harrington.
- (b) No members had requested absence from the next meeting

59/22 Declaration of interests and dispensations

- (a) No declarations of interests had been received.
- (b) No requests for dispensation had been received.

60/22 Minutes of the last meeting

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 18th May 2022 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

61/22 Matters for report arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

The Chairman reported that The Lamb is now advertised as a holiday let, sleeping 12 with accommodation over two floors. This would be a change of use for which there has been no planning application. Cllr. Jackson commented that now The Lamb was no longer for sale it could again be listed as an Asset of Community Value. It was agreed that Cllr. Jackson would contact the planning enforcement officer in connection with the holiday let consent.

The Clerk raised the matter of Cross Cottage where he had received an anonymous phone call alleging “unauthorised development”. Cllr. Fulwood had investigated and had concluded that there was development (a porch had been added to the rear of the property) but that it would be covered by permitted development conditions. Council looked at a photo of the porch and was satisfied that permitted development rules would apply and no further action was necessary.

The Clerk had received a report of an attempted break-in at New Maidenhyde, Risbury. Entry had not been obtained but there was significant damage to doors and some windows. Cllr. Bemand reported that there had been similar reports from the Stoke Prior area.

Finally the Clerk informed Council that during the past 18 months since his appointment as Clerk he had not claimed mileage nor office allowance, both of which were in his contract of employment. Owing to the rapidly rising costs of fuel and heating costs he regretted that he would now have to charge Council for these services as contained in his contract of employment. Council accepted the situation.

62/22 Chairman’s announcements

Verge cutting had taken place and there was some discussion about the status of Turning Ways, Risbury where a smaller tractor was required. The Clerk had asked, via residents’ email, if there were any shortcomings in the quality of the cutting. So far there had been no complaints received. However, Council noted that initially BB had held a position that the Parishes were not entitled to verge cutting due to a previous agreement. Cllr. Jackson explained the background and it became clear that the

obligation was still with BB. A similar situation had arisen the previous year when eventually Council had to pay a local contractor and had not received re-imbusement. Council agreed that a letter should be written to Ward Councillor Harrington expressing dissatisfaction with the behaviour of BB and the Clerk would draft an appropriate note for Council agreement.

The Chairman also raised the issue of poor white line painting by BB at the Stoke Prior roundabout. He was also pleased that Community Week was going ahead at the end of the month

63/22 Public participation

Under Standing Order 8, any member of the public may make a statement or give evidence to the meeting on any business to be transacted or any other business, and ask or answer questions. At the discretion of the Chairman such participation may be permitted under the relevant agenda item.

No items were raised.

64/22 Clerk's report

- COVID was as prevalent as it had ever been. Case rates were high across the whole country and a very infectious new variant was taking hold. However, fortunately the vast majority of people infected suffered quite mild symptoms not usually requiring hospitalisation.
- The Council should be congratulated for delivering the War Memorial project which was widely supported by residents.
- Paul Arnold had donated two gazebos for Community Week and then, along with other residents, had fundraised to buy a shed to store the gazebos. The Clerk commented that on how well the Parishes' residents worked to get community projects underway and completed.
- The new noticeboard had been fitted in Risbury bus shelter.

65/22 District Councillor's report

Ward Councillor John Harrington was not present and no report had been received

66/22 Planning Committee and planning applications update

- (a) *To consider for comment:* new applications

STOKE PRIOR

221781 - Highfield Cottage Stoke Prior Leominster Herefordshire HR6 0LW

Proposed two storey extension and detached cart shed (3 bay garaging). Access track and entrance to road to C1055.

The Clerk had received a statement from the applicant, Mr Crispin Sandford and had agreed to read it to Council on his behalf-

Dear Mr Drew

Thank you for contacting me regarding my planning application at Highfield.

I imagine the contentious issue with some local residents will be the access.

This access was claimed in 1974 upon the sale to the late Mr Bateman and registered by the land registry in 2003.

Nevertheless, the Batemans used a different vehicular route across Broadstone to access their property.

In about 2006 Mr Bateman found himself with financial difficulties, coinciding with the landowner forbidding him to access his property and his mortgage company foreclosed on him. The land Registry have since been mediating the matter and fortunately Mrs Thomas has agreed not to oppose this right of way claimed in 1974.

Obviously it is necessary to reinstate a vehicular access. Although it will initially be stoned across it's full width the central section will quickly become grass. I understand the current public footpath was diverted to this route about 25 years ago. Obviously I will respect the right of the public to use this footpath and it will have the advantages of not being overgrown and having gates rather than wonky stiles.

I hope your council will not oppose my application.

I would be extremely grateful if this email could be read to the meeting.

Cllr. Bemand commented that the plans had been amended to remove an infringement of the splay onto one of his fields.

Council knew some of the history of the cottage and concluded that the dwelling had last been occupied around 2012 although the Clerk had seen signs of work in progress when he visited the site a week earlier. It was not clear whether the property had become inhabited.

Concerns were also raised regarding the size of the proposed extension and whether such a large extension would fall within allowable limits of the Core Strategy.

Cllr. Jackson commented that this was an old cottage which had already been extended and further extension on this scale was inappropriate. The size of the cart shed was also concerning and in total the footprint would be nearly double the current size.

In summary Core Strategy policies RA3, SD1, LD1, SS6 would be relevant to this proposal. The Chairman concluded that the size was too large for the site and the Clerk later submitted the following comments-

“Council discussed this application at its meeting on 20 July 2022 and resolved to OBJECT to the application.

High Fields is a derelict cottage in an isolated position in open countryside some 800m west of the C1055 road. It is not within a settlement area so is classified as “Rural” as defined within the current Herefordshire Core Strategy 2011-2031 (CS). However, the cottage could be considered a heritage asset given its age and location and in that case a number of additional CS policies apply. For developments of this type the policies are-

CS RA3, CS RA4, CS RA5, CS LD1, CS SD1,

Policy HFSP2 of the HFSP NDP states that development outside the three main settlements (Stoke Prior, Risbury and Steen’s Bridge) will be limited to that covered by the CS policies. However, HFSP17 applies in the matter of heritage assets.

Council felt that CS RA5 applied particularly to this application in that *“proposals for the re-use of buildings solely for residential use will only be permitted when the proposal.....(c) demonstrates that it represents the most viable option for the long term conservation and enhancement of a heritage asset”*

This application is to change significantly the nature of the current building by increasing the scale from two bedrooms to four. From the supplied drawings the estimated original footprint of the building is 79 sq. m and the proposed extension adds a further 33.6 sq. m (42%). The addition of a new building – the three-bay cart shed – adds a further 44sq.m. The result is that the footprint of the buildings on the site has effectively doubled. These proposals are out of keeping for the scale of the site and location, are in conflict with RA5, HFSP17 and LD1 and are unnecessary for the long-term conservation and enhancement of the building which, if properly renovated in its current form, would be satisfactory.

Council also noted no clear details have yet been provided for treatment of fresh or foul water, or for any other matters covered by CS SD1.

Given the sensitivity of development in open countryside Council felt that the application could have benefitted from pre-application advice.

The access road was felt to be a matter between the landowner and the applicant and Council assumes Highways will ensure the access splays are satisfactory. However, Council agreed with the comments from the Ramblers Association that insufficient detail had been provided so far to make an informed judgement with regards to any impact of the adjacent public right of way (SP3).

In summary Council OBJECTS to the proposals as presented.”

(b) *To note:* updates on planning applications

Stoke Prior

221195 - Prospect Cottage, Stoke Prior, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 0LQ

Proposed extension and alterations, demolition of existing lean-tos

Approved with Conditions

220514 - Orchard Barn, Stoke Prior, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 0NF

Proposed extension to the rear of house to add an additional ground floor living area, rear porch and first floor an additional bedroom and en-suite.

Approved with Conditions

220132 Ford and Stoke Prior, Hampton, Wood Park Stoke Prior Herefordshire HR6 0LF

Erection of new 4 bedroom dormer bungalow to replace existing 3 bedroom bungalow and 1 bedroom annexe. The proposal also includes a new double garage to include a bike shed. **Refused**

221794 Ford and Stoke Prior, Hampton, Land adjacent to Stoke Haven Stoke Prior Leominster

Application for approval of details reserved by condition 8 attached to planning permission 184686
Determination made (Split decision)

Risbury.

213908 - Land at Gob's Castle, Risbury, Leominster, Herefordshire

Proposed reinstatement of former agricultural workers cottage to holiday let

Undecided

212600 - Land adjacent to Risbury Cross Cottage, Risbury HR6 0NG

DESCRIPTION: Approval of reserved matters following outline approval 181648 (residential development of 6 houses).

Undecided

212473 Dev 1 Land adjacent to Risbury Cross Cottage Risbury HR6 0NG

Proposed permission for the siting of a caravan to provide accommodation on site during the construction of a dwelling on Plot 5 approved under application ref 181648. On hold due to phosphates.

Undecided

211802 - Land at Gob's Castle Risbury Leominster Herefordshire

Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 7 9 10 11 12 13 15 18 19 & 21 attached to planning permission 173687.

Undecided

67/22 General Financial Matters

(a) *To receive:* a report from the RFO including quarter 1 financial summary, bank reconciliation

Quarter 1 finished on 30 June 2022 and in summary-

Income £9952 Expenditure £9565 with £620 reclaimable VAT included (net £8945)

Key Points

- Income was higher than budget due to donations to Community Week (£1778) and sponsoring of War Memorial plaques (£1820).
- A drainage grant of £4339 has been received from Herefordshire but can only be counted against expenditure when it happens.
- Costs look to be in line with the budget with no variances currently forecast.
- As anticipated there will be a shortfall in the year-end surplus (-£2948) although due to the extra income the surplus is better than forecast

Income & Expenditure against budget for quarter 1, 2022-23

2022-23						
	INCOME	OUTTURN 2021-22	BUDGET 2022-23	YEAR TO DATE	FORECAST OUTTURN	VARIANCE FROM BUDGET
1	Precept	12289.00	12289.00	6144.50	12289.00	0.00
2	Pump Advertising	1088.00	1500.00	195.00	1500.00	0.00
3	Pump Postage	60.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
4	Grants	0.00	6000.00	0.00	6000.00	0.00
5	Other	2323.00	900.00	1820.00	2100.00	1200.00
6	CW Fundraising	863.00	850.00	1779.26	2600.00	1750.00
	TOTAL INCOME	16623.00	21639.00	9938.76	24589.00	2950.00
	EXPENDITURE					
7	Clerk	3758.12	3920.00	626.32	3920.00	0.00
8	Administration	521.00	625.00	83.00	625.00	0.00
9	Insurance, audit, professional	783.00	800.00	217.44	800.00	0.00
10	Website & IT	322.00	350.00	0.00	350.00	0.00
11	Hire of Halls	216.00	220.00	0.00	220.00	0.00
12	Parish Pump	2493.06	3850.00	1066.76	3850.00	0.00
13	Training and development	175.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
14	Equipment	132.99	200.00	53.77	200.00	0.00
15	Lengthsman	2332.06	8000.00	801.50	8000.00	0.00
16	Maintenance	0.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
17	Community Week	643.24	2450.00	1779.26	2450.00	0.00
18	HMRC	939.40	972.00	0.00	972.00	0.00
19	Other	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	0.00
	EXPENDITURE	12365.87	21537.00	4628.05	21537.00	0.00
	PROJECTS					
20	War Memorial	0.00	4450.00	4318.00	6000.00	-1550.00
21	Project B			0.00		0.00
22	Project C			0.00		0.00
	PROJECTS EXPENDITURE		4450.00	4318.00	6000.00	-1550.00
23	Redaimable VAT on the above	798	800	619.91	2400.00	1600.00
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	13163.87	26787.00	9565.95	29937.00	50.00
	SURPLUS	3459.1333	-4348.00		-2948.00	

The RFO was satisfied with the position at this stage of the year and commented that income was considerably higher than budget mainly due to the generous sponsorship of the War Memorial plaques.

The banking reconciliation was presented showing that the bank balance and cash book for 30th June 2022 completely agreed at £15274.43. It was agreed that this revised presentation would be adopted for future bank reconciliations.

As at 13th July 2022 the bank balance was (Unity Current account) £14596.83

Income received since last meeting as at 13th July 2022 was £2467.93

Payments made as authorised at the May meeting were £4514.19

(b) Payments for authorisation

Description	Cost	VAT	Total	
Clerk's salary June 2022	£395.96		£395.96	Includes 13 months of arrears for pay award dates 1 April 2021
Clerk's salary July 2022	£318.78		£318.78	For payment 25 th July
Autela Payroll	£55.27	£11.05	£66.32	Qtr. 1 payment
Iain Cholerton	£269.00		£269.00	Refund WM costs. Printing & RBL
Brunel Engraving	£36.45	£7.29	£43.74	Engraved sign for Risbury notice board refund to Clerk
D C Garden Services	£109.00	£21.80	£130.80	Work on HU 3, SP 28 and the Prill
Hugh Fowler-Wright	£91.34		£91.34	Refund for painting supplies for WM

In total these payments are for £1315.94. Council resolved these payments should be made.

Finally, Council noted that the reserves stood at £7626 and at roughly half the bank balance were considered satisfactory.

68/22 Lengthsman

Update on PROW work.

The Clerk reported that he had met all three Council rights of way officers and agreed priorities to make a start on improvement work. The priorities are-

Bridlepaths - fill a large water filled hole on PG11/HU10 adjacent to the Holly Brook close to Sheepcote.

Discussion with the landowner, Mr Parry of Burnt Mill farm is ongoing. The landowner proposes to part fill the hole but the footpath officer is not convinced this will solve the problem. However, it is proposed that Council will -with no legal obligation – repair the wooden gate post and fit a new latch.

Council agreed that the gate post and latch work could be carried out.

Humber – between junction of HU3 & HU6 and A44 path is badly overgrown and a safety railing is incomplete.

The Clerk has applied to Herefordshire for a temporary diversion to this route on the grounds of safety.

PROW Herefordshire have not as yet carried out the diversion and the Clerk has requested an update (30 August)

Ford & Stoke Prior – resolve ongoing problems with SP9 and a number of cut back/signage problems on SP10, SP13 & SP24. *The Clerk and Mike Hayward will create a program to bring these routes up to standard). Mike Hayward and the Clerk walked SP9 on 9 August and Mike agreed to prepare a program of small works to improve the path. He will mostly be able to carry out these himself but any work on stiles will be passed to the Lengthsman.*

There was a general discussion about who paid for stiles and gates and in conclusion the understanding currently is that Herefordshire will supply stiles and landowners will fit them. For gates the position was not clear and the Clerk undertook to clarify the position with Herefordshire Council.

To consider: Any work required in the Group Parishes.

The Clerk reminded members that there was still nearly £5000 of grant money from Herefordshire which required a project. Any suggestions from members would be welcome.

There was concern about hedges growing into the highway and members undertook to let the Clerk know (report + photos) of blackspots and he would pass these to Highways.

69/22 War Memorial

To receive: verbal project closure report from the Chairman

The Chairman reported that the project was essentially complete with the finishing touches due very shortly. Discussion turned to grass cutting around the memorial and the Chairman suggested that the resident, who currently undertook the cutting voluntarily, should be paid a small honorarium. After some discussion Council resolved that the Chairman would offer the resident £70/year as a token of his work on the memorial and report the outcome at the next meeting.

70/22 Future arrangements for the Council

To discuss: adoption of .gov.uk domain name and dedicated .gov.uk email addresses for all Councillors & Clerk. Possible provision of Council owned tablets/laptops to Councillors.

Discussion of this topic concluded that the move to a gov.uk domain name would be worthwhile and Councillors and Clerk would move to gov.uk email addresses. However, a possible move to dedicated devices was not supported and there was general agreement that when members used personal devices they should strictly limit what they retain to avoid any complications with FoI requests. The Clerk holds all Council data on a dedicated laptop and this arrangement should be the only device where Council information is stored.

71/22 Investigating the wider aims and specific objectives of the Group PC

The Chairman introduced this topic as a way of establishing a medium to long term plan for Council business. The LIVES acronym was presented as a framework for establishing such a plan.

Listen. To the community. Currently Council meetings are the only forum for residents to participate and other methods such as informal gatherings to discuss topics, surveys in the Pump etc. could attract more resident participation. Facebook is a powerful vehicle which is currently underused by Council.

Inclusion. 'The PC of the future'. Recent HALC survey from Cllr. Jackson as presented at the Annual Parish Meeting showed that the Council was doing well within the remit it had set for itself. But there are obvious gaps e.g. no representation from Humber Close despite past efforts. It was worth examining periodically whether the Council group actually is representative of the communities it served and if change was required how might that be best achieved.

Volunteers. A very important factor for HFSP since the Parishes are pretty much run by volunteers. Attracting more volunteers to both maintain the supply and enlarge activities is quite a challenge. The motivations to become a volunteer were discussed with some conclusions-

- If people are to volunteer it has to be for a specific purpose (help run the Parish Hall, clear a PROW, publishing and distributing the Pump etc.)
- It was often the case that volunteers enjoy working with a group of friends for a common purpose and that interaction provides satisfaction in itself.
- Payment is not appropriate but some sort of recognition for volunteers is an important factor for a thriving volunteer-based community. Events already exist (e.g. Christmas film with mulled wine which could be used as a recognition event).

Environment. A large topic but could be directed, for example, at helping people manage their heating bills. Issues such as solar farms, insulation initiatives could be part of Council discussions and projects. Cllr. Yair offered to take the lead on this aspect. Cllr. Collins reported that projects such as community energy had to deliver benefit to the community for success. Cllr. Yair would update Council with his thinking at a future meeting.

Shape. The NDP had been a considerable success but other aspects of development such as solar farms or water management could be considered as part of a wider Parishes development plan. Smaller dwellings associated with workshop space had been mentioned especially by younger residents. Cllr. Jackson observed that such a project could be delivered within Council powers and could even provide revenue to the Council. Stoke Prior Village Hall renewal was also a project waiting for serious investigation. The Chairman noted that there were many sources of grant funding which could be accessed once it was known that such grants existed.

The Chairman summarised that he would welcome comments, ideas, suggestions around the LIVES framework. Cllr. Marston suggested that a survey for inclusion in the next Pump would be a good way forward and the Chairman offered to work with Cllr. Marston on the survey. The cost of energy is likely to make life very difficult for many over the next winter with the choice of "Heat or Eat" becoming a reality for many residents.

72/22 Matters for information and future business

- A review of the Pump now that it is over six months old would be timely at the next meeting.
- Absence of action on speeding at Steens Bridge

Date of next meeting

To note: the next scheduled meeting will be on Wednesday 21st September 2022 at 7.30pm in Stoke Prior Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed (Chairman)

Date