



WOMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the FULL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

held on **Monday 26th June 2023** at 7.00pm

This meeting was held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Gravel Hill, Wombourne, WV5 9HA.

Present -

Councillors: Mike Davies, Jan Evans, Mark Evans (Chairman), Ed Hughes, Dan Kinsey BEM, Martin Perry, Matt Powell, Ian Sadler, Daisy Tait

Absent without apologies – N/A

Acting Clerk: Judith Vasiljevic

Public: Civic Award winner plus 6 guests, 1 resident from Bull Lane, 1 resident from Trysull and Seisdon Parish, 1 resident from Hatch Heath Close, 1 resident from Hawkin Close, and 1 resident from Apse Close

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Parish Council meeting.

90/23 – Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Barry Bond MBE, Andy Clay, Jason Cox, Elizabeth Keeling, Vince Merrick, and Mary Roberts

91/23 – Declarations of Interest

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM noted he was a Member of Wombourne Best Kept Village Committee and a trustee of Wombourne and District Community Association. Councillors Martin Perry and Daisy Tait also noted they were members of Wombourne and District Community Association.

92/23 – Acceptance of Office Form

It was noted the signed Acceptance of Office Form was received from Councillor Barry Bond MBE on 17th May 2023.

93/23 – Joan Williams Civic Award

Councillor Mark Evans congratulated Sarah Slater on being the winner of the Joan Williams Civic Award for 2022 and called upon Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM to pay tribute to Sarah.

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM noted she was a wonderful lady who had contributed greatly to the village. Initially by setting up Dementia Singing Friends, which benefited many, supporting people with dementia plus their families and friends. Then after Covid, setting up Friendly Faces, a place for the community to meet weekly for a chat and more recently, Warm Welcome, extending support to those struggling through winter with the cost-of-living crisis. He acknowledged there were a number of volunteers in the community who helped to run these groups and extended his thanks to them all.

Councillor Mark Evans noted Sarah was indeed an extremely worthy winner, and it was his pleasure to present her with the award.

Upon accepting her award, Sarah said she would not have been able to set up these groups without the support of the team around her and she thanked them for their hard work and support.

94/23 – Public Participation

The resident from Bull Lane noted that Barclays was due to close imminently and when the bank made up its mind on closures they always went ahead. He asked Members to consider what could be done in the Village as an alternative such as a Banking Hub or moving the Post Office to other premises as the current location was not suitable to accommodate increased footfall. He noted online banking was not an option for many especially with increased risk of scams.

Councillor Mark Evans thanked the resident for raising his concerns and noted that this issue was to be discussed under agenda item 14.

The resident from Hatch Heath Close advised members of increased antisocial behaviour around the throughway between Hatch Heath Close and Mount Road giving community access to the Village. He noted there was drug taking, rubbish and very offensive graffiti on the bridge, which was not acceptable. Councillor Mark Evans thanked the resident for raising these important points and asked Sergeant Dorrington if he could address the issue with more regular patrols. Sergeant Dorrington noted arrangements would be made for more patrols of the area and suggested the Parish Council could look into the use of mobile security cameras.

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM agreed arrangements would be made to remove the graffiti.

The resident from Aspe Close advised members that he wished to speak on three issues affecting Wombourne Residents.

Firstly, the decommissioning of Barclays Bank which he noted was to be discussed under item 14.

Secondly the Local Plan. He asked if the Parish Council's Planning Committee were weakening their argument regarding 'housing targets' and 'duty to co-operate' by appearing to accept the figures put forward for Wombourne in the Local Plan. He also asked if the Parish Council still agreed that 'the infrastructure of the village is already strained & crumbling'? He asked if the new Chairman of South Staffordshire Council's Planning Committee (Councillor Mark Evans) continued to support residents of Wombourne in their fight to get changes made to the Local Plan, and was the Parish Council still considering seeking outside independent legal advice prior to any forthcoming Public Inquiry into the Plan? Finally, through the Chairman, he requested each Member of the Parish Council be asked to indicate whether they support the resident's opposition to the loss of green belt status and any development of the Billy Buns Lane sites.

Thirdly, on the issue of potholes, he noted he had read there was a new £2 million fund to help County Councillors tackle potholes in their local area and asked County Councillor Mike Davies to inform members how much is available to Wombourne.

Councillor Mark Evans informed the resident there was no change in direction regarding the Local Plan, the Parish Council accept houses will be built in the village, but don't agree with where the Local Plan proposed to put them. He agreed that the infrastructure is strained, but the Plan has already been agreed at the District Council. Parish Councillors will continue to oppose any inappropriate development in South Staffordshire and Wombourne. Seeking outside independent legal advice is a discussion for the future. The Chairman noted he was not going to ask members how they would vote as the Local Plan had already been agreed.

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM agreed that there wasn't an issue with the number of houses being built but on their location.

Councillor Ian Sadler suggested legal advice could be obtained in conjunction with other villages, if required.

In relation to the resident's third point, Councillor Mike Davies explained that the £2 million fund was split between 62 parishes and Wombourne's allocation was initially to be used for three priority areas, those being Billy Buns Lane, School Road and Sytch Lane.

95/23 – Police Report

Sergeant Dorrington reported that the period he was discussing ran from 15th May to 26th June 2023 and included 2 residential burglaries on 6th June, where a car had been stolen off a driveway in the Planks Lane area and electrical items stolen from a property on Ounsdale Road. The car had since been located and returned to owner and investigations were ongoing. On 9th June there was an attempted burglary in Ounsdale Road but nothing was taken and enquiries are ongoing.

On 17th May a touring style motorbike was stolen from outside a property in the area of Woodhill Drive. Scene enquiries were carried out which proved negative. Advice and re-assurance were given along with increased patrols in the area.

A Suzuki motorbike was also stolen overnight between 16/17th May from a property in the area of Lamb Crescent. It was later located off Common Lane slightly burnt out. Investigations are ongoing.

Hotspot areas of anti-social behaviour reported at railway walk, with off road bikes being used, garages located on Lilac Drive, the Maypole, Windmill Bank, and the Civic Centre. Officers are monitoring areas and patrolling as much as possible. Youths causing damage to the Civic Centre have been located and action taken.

Councillor Ian Sadler asked Sergeant Dorrington if increased anti-social behaviour coincided with end of term exams and asked if police could be aware of these dates.

Members discussed the lack of PCSOs in Wombourne and agreed to follow up with the Chairman writing to the Police Commissioner to address the matter.

96/23 – Approval of Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting on Monday 15th May 2023.

97/23 Reports from Committees

- a) Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM reported on the Civic Centre Management Committee, noting Members discussed the siting of a new memorial bench and contacting the W.I. to see if they owned and would re-site a bench near Barclays. A number of avenues regarding parking at the Civic Centre had been discussed. Dates in the diary available for hire were to be advertised at a discounted rate. The "Slice of Summer" dance had been cancelled due to lack of numbers, but the Christmas dance would be going ahead. Options had been discussed to display Group and Chairman's photos in Council Chamber and it was agreed to remove two existing Chairman pictures to free up space for new photographs. Work had been completed on both the Council Chamber roof and removal of asbestos from the boiler room.
- b) Councillor Martin Perry reported on the Recreation and Amenities Committee, noting that Councillor Elizabeth Keeling had been appointed as Vice Chairman of the Committee. He explained that a tour of the recreation sites was being organised to show Members what facilities the Parish Council are responsible for. A slight shortfall in 106 monies had been discussed and this is to be looked at under item 12 of the agenda. The lease for Brickbridge Playing Fields is still ongoing with District Council. Feedback had been received from football teams and the public on grass cutting at Brickbridge and the Clerk is talking to District Council to see if they can improve the cut, obtaining quotes from other companies and looking at the costs of mowers. The Clerk had recently attended a course on Play Area Inspections which casted doubt on the credibility of the current annual play inspections and this was being looked at. The Park Warden at Brickbridge Play Area had been supported after problems with youths, and CCTV cameras are to be installed.
- c) Councillor Mark Evans confirmed there was no update as no Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting had been held.

- d) Councillor Mike Davies explained there had been no Planning and Development Committee meeting, but comments had been reported on plans within Wombourne.

98/23 Report from South Staffordshire Council

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM reported that the Parish Summit had been attended by a number of Councillors and the Clerk and had been very interesting, with attendees able to visit different break out groups. He reported that the District Council were undertaking a High Street recovery audit and the Parish Council would need to be involved.

99/23 Reports from Members appointed to Outside Bodies

- a) Club at the Day Centre – Councillor Mark Evans informed Members a couple of gentlemen continued to play pool on a Tuesday.
- b) Locality Forum – Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed Members no meeting had taken place so there was no update.
- c) Wombourne and District Community Association – Councillor Daisy Tait informed Members herself and Councillor Martin Perry had been unable to attend the last meeting and were awaiting a copy of the minutes.
- d) Wolverhampton Business Airport Consultative Committee – There was no one available at the meeting to provide an update.
- e) Wombourne Carnival Committee – It was noted that the Carnival takes place on Sunday, so an update will be given at the next meeting.
- f) Wombourne Charity Trustees – Councillor Mike Davies informed Members that a meeting was held a couple of weeks ago and an application had been received for assistance to compete in a football tournament. This was granted and the applicant had sent in photographs after the event. He noted that the appointment of a new rector was awaited and once confirmed they would take over as Chairman.
- g) Wombourne Best Kept Village Committee – Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed Members no meeting had taken place so there was nothing to report. However, members had been out with the water bowser to water planters and the Parish Council had been asked to support with watering during the very hot weather. He asked for it to be put on record how wonderful the planters looked and BKV had been very active in strimming back around the Village Green.
- h) Wombourne Retailers Liaison – Councillor Daisy Tait informed Members there was nothing to report, but reminded Councillors again that it was the Carnival on Sunday.
- i) Police Liaison – Nothing to report.
- j) Giggetty Action Group – Councillor Mike Davies confirmed the Parish Council will continue to work with the Action Group.

100/23 – Parish Council Finances and Administration

Members approved the payment schedules for May 2023.

101/23 S106 funding

Members approved the use of £2,268.93 of general reserves towards the improvements at Brickbridge Play Fields, due to the shortfall in S106 funding for this project.

102/23 – Planning applications

Members noted the responses to planning applications made to South Staffordshire Council in lieu of a meeting.

103/23 – Barclays Bank Closure

Councillor Daisy Tait informed Members that the response to the leaflet Sir Gavin Williamson MP issued across the village had been overwhelming, and she asked that the Parish Council support the campaign to save Barclays, and thanked members of the public at the meeting for their support on the matter.

Councillor Mike Davies noted there were mitigating circumstances in trying to get some banking support in the village.

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM noted that he supported the campaign as not everyone can do online banking and he had expressed his concerns to Barclays. He felt the Co-Op store on School Road was unfit for purpose for the footfall required to support banking arrangements for the residents in the village.

Councillor Ian Sadler informed Members he had been a District Councillor for Bilbrook at the time Barclays closed their branch there, and they had made arrangements for the bank to set up in Codsall once a week. They had investigated Bank closures and found no closures had been stopped as a result of any petitioning.

Councillor Mark Evans noted all Members were opposed to the Bank closure and asked for it to be put on record that he was disappointed in the way it was handled by Barclays.

104/23 – Engagement with residents

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM noted it was important to develop strategies to be seen out and about in the community and to give residents the opportunity to express issues. Members agreed to quarterly walks by Parish Councillors and quarterly open sessions in the Council Chamber with Parish Councillors noting these could be advertised on Wombourne Online, social media and the Grapevine magazine.

105/23 – Wild Verges

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed Members that South Staffordshire Council did not have a specific policy on creating wild verges but felt the Parish Council should support the initiative. Members noted not to agree any specifics but to air on the side of supporting any policy for wild verges.

106/23 – Correspondence

- a) An email had been received from a resident in Apse Close regarding potholes and a subsequent response received from Staffordshire County Council. Councillors had received copies for their information.
- b) Email received from Staffordshire Parish Council's Association re Health and Wellbeing Initiatives with Town and Parish Councils. Councillors had received a copy of the email for their information.

107/23 – Meeting Schedule

- a) The next Full Council meeting will take place on Monday 31st July 2023.
- b) Committee meetings will be held as follows:
 - Monday 3rd July 2023 – Recreation and Amenities Committee
 - Monday 10th July 2023 – Civic Centre Management Committee
 - Monday 17th July 2023 – Finance and General Purposes Committee.

108/23 – Reminders

Members were reminded the Wombourne Carnival would take place on Sunday 2nd July 2023 from midday until 4pm and that the next Planning & Development committee meeting wasn't until 2nd October as shown on schedule previously emailed.

109/23 – Chairman's Closing Remarks

The Chairman closed the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and commented that it had a been a positive meeting with all Members making meaningful contributions.

He advised Members since the last meeting he had visited 2 new businesses in Wombourne run by young people and he suggested Councillors go and look around them. He had also attended a tennis tournament in the village and visited Higher Flyers which he felt was a fantastic organisation.

Along with Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM he had also presented certificates to BSKA Karate Club children who meet in the Civic Centre.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Signed:

Dated: