



WOMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL MEETING

held on **Monday 27th November 2023** at 7.00pm

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

Present -

Councillors: Andy Clay, Mike Davies, Jan Evans, Mark Evans (Chairman), Ed Hughes, Elizabeth Keeling, Dan Kinsey BEM, Vince Merrick (Vice-Chairman), Alan Peace, Martin Perry, Matt Powell, Mary Roberts, Ian Sadler, Daisy Tait

Clerk: Rachael Wright

Public: 18 residents, Craig Davies from Reds10, Anthea Southall from Wombourne High School, Sgt Jason Dorrington and PCSO Alex Rathbone.

Councillor Mark Evans welcomed everyone to the meeting.

169/23 – Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Barry Bond MBE.

170/23 – 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 noted they were members of Wombourne and District Community Association. Councillor Alan Peace noted he was a member of Wombourne Best Kept Village Committee, Wombourne Carnival Committee, Wombourne and District Community Association, Santa Sleigh Committee, the Volunteer Bureau, and South Staffordshire Narrowboat Association.

171/23 – Update from Reds10 on the development at Wombourne High School

Councillor Mark Evans explained that the Parish Council had invited Craig Davies from Reds10 to the meeting in order to provide an update to the Council and residents on the development at Wombourne High School. He informed residents that a planning application for the development had been submitted to South Staffordshire Council and approved by them, and that the village should embrace the work to the school meaning first class facilities for the children of the village.

He invited Craig Davies to provide residents with an update. Craig informed them that the modular unit deliveries would take place between 29th July 2024 and 19th August 2024. Any deliveries to site during term time would be during the hours of 10am and 3pm and any during the holiday period would be between 7am and 5pm. He informed them the only route to site would be via Billy Buns Lane, School Road and Ounsdale Road. Any issues with this would be assessed and if there were any obstacles en route, deliveries would stop. There will be no queuing of lorries, as only one will be on site at any one time. Radios and phones will be used to keep

in touch with drivers, and 2 banksmen will be used to ensure safe passage into the site. The contractors will be using the school's car park and will walk onto site. The site has completely hard surfacing, so there should be no mud, especially with it being summer, but if any wheel cleaning is needed, it would be done on site.

He informed residents it would take each lorry 30-45 minutes to move in and out of site, and the next vehicle would not be called into site until the last had left, so there would be no crossover of vehicles. The entrance to site had been trialled without any issues and given the modular units would be delivered during the school holidays, it will help with the volume of traffic along School Road and Ounsdale Road. No Police escort is required for the vehicle as they are not delivering wide loads. Properties from The Round Oak to Hatch Heath Close had received a newsletter from Reds10 informing them of the development and updates, a further newsletter will be issued soon, and will include all properties to the end of Ounsdale Road next time. The wider community have been updated via a letter on the school's website and via social media.

Between 5-8 tipper trucks would be attending site to remove waste, again with only one allowed on site at any one time, with traffic management on the gate and two banksmen in place to assist. The modular units are removed by a professional firm who Reds10 have worked with for 10-15 years without issue, they do not anticipate any issues, and if any arise, they will be dealt with appropriately at the time.

Craig acknowledged the word 'polite' in their newsletter referring to Traffic Marshals may be misread as 'Police' and agreed to refrain from using this word in future literature. He confirmed no 'slack days' had been built into the plan, they anticipated the period allocated for deliveries was adequate. He also confirmed the tipper trucks would use the same route in and out of the village as the lorries delivering the modular units. Any issues with the highway along the route used, i.e., potholes would have to be dealt with by Staffordshire County Council. He confirmed that all delivery vehicles accessing site would be the same length, and the gate to site would be widened to allow vehicles entry into site in one manoeuvre. The gates would be put back as they were at the end of the development. He agreed to check the dates for demolition and include in the next newsletter.

To conclude the update, Councillors Mike Davies and Mark Evans encouraged Members and residents to embrace the development, it will bring the school into the 21st century to the standard that should be expected. Anthea Southall from Wombourne High School thanked the Councillors for their support noting the condition the students are currently working in is poor, and repairs had been expensive and, in some cases, impossible due to issues with asbestos, so everyone at the school was thrilled with the new development.

13 members of the public left.

172/23 – Public Participation

A member of the public from Waverley Gardens noted that often cars parked illegally along School Road parking on double yellow lines and on grass verges. The main problem times are 8.15am to 9am and 2.30pm to 3.30pm.

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed the resident he had been in discussion with Catherine Gutteridge, Head of Enforcement at South Staffordshire Council to discuss this issue and to see whether a spreadsheet of hotspots could be produced so that Parking Wardens could be in attendance to deal with anyone parking illegally. He explained if this pilot went ahead, he would put it to the Parish Council to support the initiative.

Councillor Mark Evans explained as an ex-Police Officer he was well aware of the parking issues outside every school in the country, and not an easy issue to resolve. He agreed to keep the residents updated on the issues if they contacted him directly outside of the meeting.

A member of the public from Apse Close explained his understanding was that since the mid 1990's there had been complaints at Parish Council Meetings and more recently on social media, about oversized vehicles using the village roads, as well as local Councillors raising the issue. The response has always been that it is an enforcement issue, so he had submitted a Freedom of Information request to Staffordshire Police. The Deputy Chief Constable indicated that in the last 5 years there had not been a single ticket issued to drivers contravening the 7.5T Weight Restriction Order. He noted that the Police had other priorities, so he had done some further digging and the law changed from last June so now Local Authorities can apply to the Secretary of State for new powers to enforce 'moving traffic offences' something, which in general, only the Police could previously do. He went on to say Wolverhampton and Dudley Councils were amongst those looking to apply for the new powers and asked that the Parish Council requested Staffordshire County Council also look into applying for the powers.

Councillors agreed with this.

173/23 – Police Report

Sgt Jason Dorrington explained in relation to parking outside Schools, that when his team of 5 PCOS's and 2 Police Officers were on an early shift, they would try to be present around Schools in the 26 parishes in the area unless another job came into them at the same time.

He noted parking on double yellow lines was an issue for the County Council to deal with, but parking on zig zag lines was an offence carrying a penalty of 3 points, and when parking on the pavement so long as a double buggy could get past there was nothing they could do to stop that. He remarked they would welcome the assistance of Wardens in the area to deal with the issues.

PCSO Alex Rathbone provided Members with the monthly update noting unfortunately several burglaries had taken place, noting offenders had often snapped locks inside the premises. In last week a vehicle was recovered within 30 minutes of being stolen from Station Road.

She noted a business premises on Health Mill Road had had a window ripped from an aluminium door which had triggered an alarm to go off, and the offenders left empty handed. A motorbike had also been stolen from Health Mill Road, but was recovered in West Midlands Police a week later.

There had been 14 reports of anti-social behaviour, but no reports to note as they were mainly neighbour disputes. It was noted criminal damage had been caused to the public toilets in the village.

Councillor Ed Hughes expressed his concerns with unroadworthy and illegal vehicles being bought from Copart and driven around the village, and asked if this could be looked into.

Sgt Jason Dorrington informed him there were 20k vehicles on site, and it was the hub for insurance write offs in the West Midlands, and vehicles are sold via auction. He was aware of an investigation ongoing at present and asked Members to report any cars parked in and around vehicle that may not be legal and his team could arrange for them to be towed away.

He remarked he was pleased to hear of the funding being spent at Wombourne High School and congratulated the Parish Council on a successful Christmas Lights Switch On Event.

174/23 – Approval of Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting on Monday 30th October 2023.

175/23 Reports from Committees

- a) Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed Members the Civic Centre Management Committee had met on 20th November 2023 where they had noted the latest reservations, and till receipts, lost and found and the accident book. They had approved a special request for Sunday hire and agreed to book in both a matinee and evening performance of the panto next year. They had agreed a one year renewal for electricity at the Centre due to the volatility of prices. They had agreed to meet Cherry Hill next year to discuss the History Room. They had agreed to trail a crisps tower in lieu of commission, and an update was given on a lease at the Centre and agreement made in relation to the number of car parking spaces available to Gravel Hill Surgery.
- b) Councillor Martin Perry informed Members the Recreation and Amenities Committee met on 6th November 2023, when they discussed the ongoing lease for Brickbridge Playing Fields noting it was with the Solicitors for South Staffordshire Council to agree Heads of Terms. The Committee agreed a budget wishlist and asked the Clerk to seek quotations for items. The Committee have since met to agree a suitable location for exercise equipment at Brickbridge Playing Fields and will discuss at the next Committee meeting. They reviewed tenders for new play equipment at Poolhouse Play Area, and what funding might be available to assist with the project. Thanks was given to Robert Wright who had planted bulbs around the village, with Councillor Martin Perry and Alan Peace following on. This project was ongoing, and any help would be greatly received.
- c) Councillor Mary Roberts reported the Finance and General Purposes Committee met on 13th November 2023, when they approved policies, including the Council's Disciplinary Policy, Reserves Policy, Training and Development Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Grievance Policy and the Equal Opportunities Policy. They finalised plans for the Christmas Lights Switch On Event. Councillor Mary Roberts noted her thanks to the Clerk for her organisation of the event, to the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Councillors who attended on the evening, the Police for their support at the event, and the residents who attended. At the meeting, the Committee approved the tender from Turnock Ltd for 3-year period to provide Christmas Lighting. Plans for Small Business Saturday were discussed, including the performers Got2Sing and the Meritless, the Snowman trail which would be starting at the Village Hall to try to encompass the children leaving the Breakfast with Santa event. The Committee discussed the benefits of becoming a Fairtrade Village, noting the benefits of community cohesion and engagement. They had agreed initially to focus on the Parish Council becoming a Fairtrade organisation.
- d) Councillor Mike Davies reported the plans reviewed by the Planning and Development Committee were to be noted later in the agenda.
- e) Councillor Mary Roberts reported the Staffing Committee had met on 13th November 2023 when they had reviewed and approved some vacancy packs in preparation for roles possibly being required in the future.

176/23 Report from South Staffordshire Council

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed Members the latest Review Magazine from South Staffordshire Council was out, initially digitally and on social media, with hard copies being delivered to various points around the village soon. The Council are working with their insurers and the Environment Agency to resolve the issue with the bridge over the Wom Brook following the storm damage. It could take upto 2 months to resolve the matter. The

trailer on the A449 should be moved on 4th December after some to-ing and fro-ing between the County and District Council as to whose responsibility it was to deal with the matter. Bulb planting has taken place at Sytch Lane Cemetary, with Councillors Daisy Tait and Martin Perry in attendace. Finally, he reported the Council are conducting a review of polling stations and a survey was available on the District Council's website.

177/23 Reports from Members appointed to Outside Bodies

- a) Club at the Day Centre – The Clerk informed Members the gentlemen who play pool were continuing to meet at the club.
- b) Locality Forum – Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed Members at the last meeting he received an update on the Bilbrook Repair Shed initiative, and an update from Andy Aston of South Staffordshire Council on speed indication devices which they are looking to invest funding into.
- c) Wombourne and District Community Association – Councillor Daisy Tait informed Members no meeting had taken place so there was no update to provide.
- d) Wolverhampton Business Airport Consultative Committee – Councillor Mary Roberts informed Members due to a change of ownership, the Consultative Committee no longer exists.
- e) Wombourne Carnival Committee – Councillor Mary Roberts informed Members the AGM would take place shortly so a report would be given at the next meeting.
- f) Wombourne Charity Trustees – Councillor Mike Davies informed Members he hoped Reverend Julia Codey would be taking over at Chairman shortly. The Trustees had put an advert in Grapevine to promote their fund and hoped to use social media in the future to further promote it.
- g) Wombourne Best Kept Village Committee – Councillor Dan Kinsey informed Members the Committee had not met in some time, however, its members were regularly out litter picking, cutting hedges and sweeping leaves. He noted Councillor Vince Merrick had been out the day after the Christmas Lights Switch On thanking Helena Plater who was litter picking after the event.
- h) Wombourne Retailers Liaison – Councillor Daisy Tait informed Members she had welcomed two new businesses to the village, who had been included in the Retailers WhatsApp group.
- i) Police Liaison – Councillor Vince Merrick informed Members there was nothing to report.
- j) Giggetty Action Group – Councillor Vince Merrick informed Members some alleyways had recently been cleared and the next meeting would taken place at the end of January.

178/23 – Parish Council Finances and Administration

Members approved the payment schedules for October 2023.

179/23 – Planning applications

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

180/23 – Use of general reserves

Members approved the use of £350 from general reserves to pay for tree maintenance at Bratch Park and £900 from general reserves to pay for one quarterly operational inspection of Bratch Park, Poolhouse Play Area and Brickbridge Playing Fields.

181/23 – Correspondence

None.

182/23 – Meeting Schedule

Members noted:

- a) The next Full Council meeting will take place on Monday 22nd January 2024.
- b) Other meetings will be held as follows:
 Monday 15th January 2024 – Budget and Precept Meeting

183/23 – Reminders

- a) Members noted Small Business Saturday will be taking place on 2nd December 2023.
- b) Members noted panto tickets were still available for the 3.30pm showing of Aladdin on Saturday 2nd December 2023.
- c) Members noted Wombourne’s Christmas Carol Concert will be taking place on Thursday 7th December 2023, with doors opening at 6.00pm for 6.30pm.
- d) Members noted the Holly Jolly Christmas Party will be taking place on Friday 8th December, with doors opening at 7pm for 7.30pm.
- e) Members noted the Parish Council office would be closed from midday on Friday 22nd December and will re-open at 8.30am on Tuesday 2nd January 2024.

184/23 – Chairman’s Closing Remarks

The Chairman gave his thanks to Members for their hard work, noting issues were very often resolved with residents either over the telephone or face-to-face.

He also thanked all Members for their attendance to the Remembrance Day Service at St Benedict Biscop, noting Councillor Matt Powell missed a personal engagement to be in attendance.

Finally, he congratulated everyone on a successful Christmas Lights Swich On, with a special mention to the Assistant to the Clerk, Judith Vasiljevic and Councillor Mary Roberts for their hard work. He said he looked forward to seeing Members at Small Business Saturday and wished everyone peace and tranquillity for the future year.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Signed:

Dated: