



WOMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL MEETING

held on **Monday 26th February 2024** at 7.00pm

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

Present -

Councillors: Mike Davies, 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: 1 resident and PCSO Paula Wilkes.

Councillor Vince Merrick chaired the meeting in Councillor Mark Evans' absence.

18/24 – Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Andy Clay, Barry Bond MBE, Jan Evans and Mark Evans.

19/24 – 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.

Councillor Mary Roberts noted she was a member of Wombourne Carnival Committee, Wombourne Best Kept Village Committee, Wombourne and District Community Association and the Santa Sleigh Committee.

20/24 – Public Participation

A member of the public from Brookside Close attended to complain about the state of the roads in the village. He raised issues with several roads where there were deep potholes, including Bratch Common Road, Poolhouse Road, Ounsdale Road, Giggetty Lane and Planks Lane. He also informed members the speed humps along School Road were starting to deteriorate. He noted the Parish Council may not be able to deal with them directly, but should be pushing Staffordshire County Council to deal with them.

The resident also informed members he had recently visited Swindon, Wiltshire, where he had picked up a brochure produced by Haydon Wick Parish Council. In the brochure, they were advertising a Christmas Parcel Scheme whereby residents aged seventy and older living alone could apply for a free parcel. He suggested this would be a good scheme to run in Wombourne, which could be funded by the National Lottery Community Fund or from local supermarkets.

The resident left the meeting.

Councillor Mike Davies noted for members' benefit that all potholes are graded and dealt with according to their grade. The issue with small, less urgent defects, categorised number 3, is that the County Council do not know when they move from category 3 to 2 or 1, making them more urgent to deal with. The County Council are, therefore, going to be employing more Highway Inspectors to conduct more inspections. The budget for the Highways Department to deal with potholes is £82m, however, it must cover the whole of Staffordshire. He urged members to encourage residents to report any potholes via the County Council, so that they could be dealt with appropriately. He also noted since he had become a County Councillor, he had used his local members funding to remove several speed humps from around the village, where safe to do so.

With regards to the Christmas Parcel Scheme, he noted it was a nice idea, but queried how Haydon Wick Parish Council funded it, since Parish Councils are funded purely from public money.

21/24 – Police Report

PCSO Paula Wilkes provided the following overview of incidents from 19th January 2024 to 26th February 2024 to members:

- On 07/02/24 overnight three unknown offenders have gained entry to a property on Hellier Drive via rear patio doors and have taken keys to a Black BMW X3 before going on to steal the vehicle, which was parked on the driveway. CCTV enquiries conducted and enquires are ongoing.
- On 24/02/2024 at approximately 20:30hrs a male has tried to gain entry to a property on Hatch Heath close. Enquires lead to the arrest of the male and the investigation is ongoing.
- On 21/02/2024 at 02:40hrs 3 males have attempted to gain entry to a property on Gittens Park by taking the lock out of the rear patio door. CCTV footage has been viewed and enquiries are ongoing. Offenders were possibly looking to get the keys to a Mercedes E6 AMG and an Audi TT parked on the driveway.
- On 23/02/2024 at approximately 13:45 power tools were taken from a van whilst working on a property in Clee View Road. The offender(s) left in a Blue Mercedes C Class Estate, which from intelligence had cloned registration plates.
- On 23/2/2024 at approximately 18:00hrs a Black Landrover Sport was stolen of a driveway without keys in Clee View Road. Enquiries are ongoing with the Bormus team.
- On 23/2/2024 sometime overnight a quad bike was stolen from an outbuilding on Wodehouse Lane and was taken across the fields. No CCTV or witnesses.
- On 19/2/2024 between 16:40 – 17:20 a Blue BMW 1 Series was stolen, without keys, from a car park on Sedgley Road. There was no CCTV or witnesses.

Councillor Martin Perry asked if there had been any updates on the assault in Sytch Lane. PCSO Paula Wilkes confirmed the information available had all been disclosed on social media.

Councillor Ed Hughes informed PCSO Paula Wilkes that information had become known that the gentleman he had assisted, after being struck by a vehicle, appeared to have been walking up and down the lane looking at cars prior to the incident. PCSO Paula Wilkes agreed to log that information.

22/24 – Approval of Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting on Monday 22nd January 2024

23/24 – Reports from Committees

- a) Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed members the Civic Centre Management Committee had met on 5th February where they had agreed to set up a meeting with Cherry Hill regarding her mother's collection of

historical documents being housed in the Council's History Room. He noted he would be assessing items for disposing this week to bring to the next Committee meeting.

He noted a Fire Risk Assessment had been completed, which had flagged some items to be reviewed. The Christmas Dinner Dance has now been booked into the diary with a set menu from Plyvine Ltd. Sean Vegas and Paul Maddox providing the entertainment. Members were still to agree room layout and ticket pricing. The Committee agreed to new festoon lighting in the Wodehouse Suite and Bourne Room to be installed from April 2024, which will be more efficient and resolve the issues with the lights tripping. The Breast Screening Unit were given permission to site their vehicle on the staff car park, subject to a few queries being resolved and a discount policy had been adopted for late bookings. In addition, members had agreed to advertise for more caterers to join their approved list and discussions were still ongoing around the car park and the availability of spaces.

- b) Councillor Mary Roberts informed members that the Finance and General Purposes Committee had met on 12th February where they reviewed the Q3 report and noted no queries. They approved the Budget and Precept Explained document for publication and agreed to proceed with a Parish Newsletter twice yearly to be distributed online initially, since no budget had been agreed for printing or distribution. Members had agreed a Fairtrade Policy needed to be in place for the Council to progress their ambition to become a Fairtrade Council and they asked the Clerk to produce the necessary policy.
- c) Councillor Mike Davies explained four plans had been commented upon since the last meeting. On three plans advisory comments had been made, with a more in-depth commentary on the fourth with thanks to Councillor Ed Hughes' local information.
Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM noted he had asked Planning Officers to inform the Parish Council on the battery storage application in Swindon given the amount of likely resident interest in the plans.
- d) Councillor Martin Perry informed members no meeting had taken place in 2024 yet, but the Committee would be reviewing the proposed Heads of Terms for the lease at Brickbridge Playing Fields next week at their meeting. He noted the Council's application with the National Lottery for grant funding was progressing and he was due to meet a resident this week regarding the ash tree that had been felled in December at Bratch Park.
- e) Councillor Mary Roberts informed members the Staffing Committee had recently met to consider a request from a member of staff and had been discussing future planned absences. They were currently awaiting a meeting with HR Services at South Staffordshire Council to seek advice on the matters.

Councillor Vince Merrick thanked members and the Clerk for their hard work during the month.

24/24 Report from South Staffordshire Council

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed members the High Street Audit commissioned by the District Council was now complete and District members had been consulted on it. Wombourne came out strongly, thanks to all the hard work of members in encouraging responses to the surveys. Parking in the village came out as the biggest concern.

District Councillors had seen the proposals for the revised Local Plan, with further briefings to follow along with another public consultation subject to the severity of the change to the plans.

It had been noted some residents were up in arms about the tree felling that had taken place in the village, particularly along the Wom Brook. Unfortunately, the trees that had been felled had been badly maintained and, as such the deterioration to the trees meant they posed a risk to public safety. The District Council were working closely with the Forest of Mercia to find suitable replacement species.

25/24 Update from Parish Summit

Councillor Ian Sadler explained there had been four sessions, as well as an introduction session from Age UK Staffordshire, whom he and the Clerk had asked to contact the Parish Council to provide some advice on how our Day Centre facility could be improved.

He explained the first session he attended was a briefing from the Police, who he noted were working hard to investigate where stolen cars were being shipped off to and later being broken down for parts. The second session was on littering, but the focus was around dog fouling and he had picked up some signs and dog poo bags for our use. Officers had asked for the signs not to be put up on every lamp column in the village, but if there was a demand locally for them, more could be requested.

The Clerk informed members she had attended the second Police and Community Safety Session held with Chief Inspector Chris Cotton, who shared lots of statistics. He confirmed they were taking legal advice on the information they were able to share as part of their Police reports and whether it was a good use of PCSO time when most of the information shared was in the public domain in any case.

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM expressed his concern with the reports being withdrawn given part of the attendance at Parish Council meetings meant the Police and PCSOs were seen by the public, which went a long way in improving public confidence in the service.

The second session the Clerk attended was on Community Funding Streams, with four funding streams currently available, including Community is the Best Medicine offering grants up to £1,000 to support the delivery of local workshops. The second was a West Midlands Interchange fund only available if you were within a 3-mile radius of junction twelve of the M6. The third was South Staffordshire Community Fund offering grants up to £1,000 where projects must be linked to the 'place' narrative based on locality profiles. The fourth was the New Health Inequalities grant, which was offering £1,000 to £50,000 for projects that would increase physical activity participation and promote healthy eating as examples.

Groups could apply using just one application form and the District Council would decide which fund fit the project best.

26/24 Update from Parish Summit

- a) Club at the Day Centre – Councillor Mark Evans was not present to provide a report.
- b) Locality Forum – Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed Members no meeting had taken place, so there was no update to provide.
- c) Wombourne and District Community Association – Councillor Martin Perry informed Members no meeting had taken place, so there was no update to provide.
- d) Wombourne Carnival Committee – Councillor Mary Roberts informed Members she had been unable to attend the last meeting, but knew Councillor Alan Peace had been present, so asked for permission for him to provide the report.

Councillor Alan Peace informed members the theme for the Carnival this year was Sport for All, given it was an Olympic year. Applications for stalls and catering would open in due course. Churches Together would be hosting the tearoom and the Council Chairman, along with Councillor Mary Roberts, would be required to visit the shops before the Carnival. Marlene Longman, with assistance from others, would be providing breakfast for the volunteers setting up from 7am on the day. The group would be trying to secure an 'it's a knock out' interactive game. Councillor Alan Peace had met with Darren Allen from South Staffordshire Council with regards to cutting back the bushes where the donkey rides took place to allow more space for that activity.

- e) Wombourne Charity Trustees – Councillor Mike Davies informed Members Rev. Julia Cody was now Chairman of the Trustees. They had received more enquiries since they had advertised their services in the Grapevine Magazine and had recently agreed to contribute towards some funeral expenses.
- f) Wombourne Best Kept Village Committee – Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed Members two meetings had now taken place and BKV were certainly back! He noted several large projects had recently been completed, including on Van Diemans, which was the first large project on that side of the village for BKV and stirred up a lot of interest from local residents. In addition, work had been completed on the library car park with the cutting back of hedges across the front windows, which Councillor Alan Peace

remarked users of the centre had positively commented upon. Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM also confirmed work along High Street had continued last weekend, as well as tidying up the Maypole Street planter. Discussions around re-branding were continuing.

- g) Wombourne Retailers Liaison – Councillor Daisy Tait informed members there were no updates.
- h) Police Liaison – Councillor Vince Merrick informed members he had asked Chief Inspector Tim Norbury to attend the next meeting.
- i) Giggetty Action Group – Councillor Vince Merrick informed members that there would be no meeting in March as the group were on top of the actions they had agreed, but they would be meeting in April subject to room availability.

27/24 – Parish Council Finances and Administration

Members approved the payment schedules for January 2024.

28/24 – Planning applications

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

29/24 – Correspondence

None.

30/24 – Meeting Schedule

Members noted:

- a) The next Full Council meeting will take place on Monday 25th March 2024.
- b) Other meetings will be held as follows (subject to enough items to be discussed):
 - Monday 4th March 2024 – Recreation and Amenities Committee at 7pm
 - Monday 11th March 2024 – Civic Centre Management Committee at 7pm
 - Monday 18th March 2024 – Finance and General Purposes Committee at 7pm

31/24 – Reminders

- a) Virtual Locality Meeting (South Staffordshire Council) will take place on Thursday 29th February at 6pm. Members should let the Clerk know if they wish to attend.
- b) The Joan Williams Civic Award is open for nominations and members are asked to encourage residents to nominate (deadline 22nd March 2024).
- c) The Annual Parish Meeting Community Showcase Event will take place on Wednesday 24th April from 7pm to 9pm and members are asked to encourage residents to attend.
- d) Members are asked to save the date – Thursday 23rd May from 6.30pm to 9.30pm for Bridge Manor Care Home’s Pride of Wombourne Awards.

32/24 – Chairman’s Closing Remarks

Councillor Vince Merrick thanked everyone for their hard work and support. He asked everyone to support the charity car wash at Wombourne Fire Station on 9th March from 9.30am to 1.30pm in support of the Firefighters fund and Cancer Research.

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.

Signed:

Dated: