



WOMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL MEETING

held on **Monday 29th April 2024** 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, Dan Kinsey BEM, Vince Merrick (Vice-Chairman), Martin Perry, Mary Roberts, Ian Sadler, Daisy Tait.

Clerk: Rachael Wright.

Public: 2 residents plus Chief Inspector Tim Norbury and PCSO Paula Wilkes

52/24 – Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Barry Bond MBE, Elizabeth Keeling, Alan Peace and Matt Powell.

53/24 – 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.

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.

Councillors Martin Perry and Daisy Tait noted they were members of Wombourne and District Community Association.

54/24 – Public Participation

A resident from Apse Close noted residents would be grateful that the plan to build a minimum of 223 houses on land off Billy Buns Lane and Gilbert Lane had been removed from the Local Plan. However, he noted there would still be a minimum of 280 new homes built within the village and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies long waiting times to see a GP, which is a major concern for residents, however the Plan identifies that none of the practices have capacity issues, which he noted appeared inconsistent.

The resident also noted that there were overhead power lines across the fields at Billy Buns Lane and Gilbert Lane and noted the opportunity for a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) to be proposed there. He asked the Parish Council to consider this possibility when preparing their response to the Local Plan.

Councillors Mark Evans, Dan Kinsey BEM and Mike Davies informed the resident the GP surgeries were consulted by the Parish Council as part of their response to the consultation previously and whilst a GP attended a Parish Council meeting to express how stretched services were at their practice, in their official response they stated they had no capacity issues. They noted the Parish Council would address any BESS application on its own merits if and when that arose.

The resident from Apse Close noted the Weight Restriction Traffic Regulation Order which prevents heavy commercial vehicles exceeding 7.5T from driving through Wombourne does allow such vehicles to make deliveries. He asked members to recall there have been complaints since the mid 1990's about vehicles contravening the restriction. He noted that during the last 5 years Staffordshire Police had not issued any Fixed Penalty Notices in the matter. He asked Chief Inspector Tim Norbury if Staffordshire Police would support and encourage Staffordshire County Council as the Highway Authority to consider applying for powers to enforce these types of moving traffic offences.

Councillor Mike Davies informed the resident this could be discussed during their forthcoming meeting with the Highways Manager from Staffordshire County Council next month.

A resident from Brookside Close informed members he had attended last month to complain about potholes in the village and in the 4 weeks since he had attended the roads were still in the same state or even worse. He commented that the Giggetty Estate was particularly bad as was Planks Lane. He noted his Council Tax rates were extortionate and asked what exactly he was paying for, given the roads in the village were in such a bad state. The resident also asked for the Parish Council to consider requesting traffic lights on the site coming off the Lidl development.

Councillor Mike Davies informed the resident repairs are categorised and the most urgent are dealt with first. He encouraged the resident to report potholes to Staffordshire County Council so that they could be categorised appropriately and dealt with.

55/24 – Introduction and update from Chief Inspector Tim Norbury

Chief Inspector Tim Norbury introduced himself to members noting he had worked for Staffordshire Police for 15 years, he had a partner and 3 children and had been a Police Officer for 10 years, a Sergeant for 2 years and an Inspector for 2 years.

He started his career in Tamworth, had been seconded to support policing for the Commonwealth Games and had worked in East Staffordshire predominantly, so had a good understanding of policing in rural areas.

He provided the following statistics, specifically for Wombourne, from the past 12 months:

- Crime in Wombourne is down from 17% to 9%
- Theft of motor vehicles is up by 6% in Wombourne, specific recent numbers are 4 thefts in December, 5 in January, 9 in February and 10 in March, which is consistent with the rise nationally. He noted in Tamworth numbers were up by 40%
- Drug offences are up by 8%, which is reflective of more stop and searches being carried out
- Serious violence is down by 29%
- Less serious violence is down by 17%
- Personal robbery is down by 29%
- Burglary from residential properties is up by 27%. He noted most thefts occur on Saturdays around 6pm and Sundays at 8pm and this was worrying but had plans to deal with it
- Anti-social behaviour is down 27%

He noted Wombourne generally was a safe place to live. He acknowledged the increase in burglaries was alarming and that there is a plan in place to deal with those incidents, including ensuring there are more Police Officers in the village when needed.

Councillor Mike Davies asked if the Police post in the Civic Centre will remain and the Chief Inspector confirmed it would. He also noted he was supporting posts in Kinver and Penkridge too.

The Chief Inspector acknowledged the earlier question from the resident in Apse Close regarding the 7.5T weight restrictions and supporting the County Council in applying for powers to enforce moving traffic offences. He confirmed that the Police do not deal with Fixed Penalty Notices, so the concern would always be who would issue them. He confirmed the local Police will support the initiative, if it was supported by a large number of residents, as it will be costly to enforce.

56/24 – Police report

Members agreed the update from the Chief Inspector satisfied this month's report.

57/24 – Approval of Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting on Monday 25th March 2024.

58/24 – Reports from Committees

- a) Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed members the Civic Centre Management Committee had not met since the last Full Council meeting, however, new festoon lighting had been installed in the Wodehouse Suite and Bourne Room and encouraged them to take a look next time they were in the Centre.
- b) Councillor Mary Roberts informed members that the Finance and General Purposes Committee had met on 15th April 2024 with main topic of discussion being the newsletter. Councillor Elizabeth Keeling had provided an update to members noting the aim was to publish the first newsletter no later than the end of May, with a summer edition also planned, so that the two submissions from students at Blakeley Heath Primary School for drawings of the village could be used as front covers.
- c) Councillor Mike Davies noted plans had been responded to as per item 11 on the agenda.
- d) Councillor Martin Perry informed members the Committee had met on 15th April 2024 when they had been informed the lease at Brickbridge Playing Fields was still ongoing with queries in relation to subletting and grounds maintenance being dealt with. The upgrade of Poolhouse Play Area was positively received at the Annual Parish Meeting Community Showcase Event on 24th April and the Committee had agreed to apply for funding from the Health Inequalities Fund from South Staffordshire Council and put their National Lottery Grant application on hold. Installation of the new gym equipment at Brickbridge Playing Fields was in hand. Councillor Mark Evans thanked Councillor Perry for his hard work over the last 12 months.
- e) Councillor Mary Roberts informed members no meetings of the Staffing Committee had taken place.

59/24 Report from South Staffordshire Council

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed members the latest consultation on the Local Plan started on 18th April and was in relation to the soundness of the plan. Substantial alterations to the Plan had been made, including the removal of approximately 4,000 homes intended to support Birmingham and the Black Country. Smallbrook Farm had been removed from proposals in Wombourne and the development off Orton Lane was now not planned to be a square shape, with the removal of houses from one corner of the development. He noted not all greenbelt sites had been removed from the plan and explained that Bilbrook and Great Wyrley still had developments planned on their greenbelt. Residents should be encouraged to make their comments by noon on 31st May 2024. He noted the focus now needed to be on infrastructure.

The replacement pedestrian bridge over the Wombrook was in hand and should be completed over the summer, with delays being caused by ownership of the water course and permission to re-erect the bridge over it.

Finally, Street Scene will have an additional team working with them to complete tasks set by District Councillors, so they should be encouraged to report any issues they would like to see Street Scene tackle.

Councillor Mark Evans informed members at the next meeting of the District Council, Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM would be proposed as Chairman of the District Council. He noted it was an excellent achievement for him and encouraged his colleagues to support him by attending the meeting.

60/24 Update from Members appointed to Outside Bodies

- a) Club at the Day Centre – Councillor Mark Evans informed members the gentlemen playing pool continued to use the room.
- b) Locality Forum – Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed members there had been no meetings to report on.
- c) Wombourne and District Community Association – Councillor Martin Perry informed members there had been no meetings to report on.
- d) Wombourne Carnival Committee – Councillor Mary Roberts informed members the Committee had met on 18th April 2024, noting slots for the arena were open now, 2 schools had signed up for the parade and stall and pitches were open to book.
- e) Wombourne Charity Trustees – Councillor Mike Davies informed members no requests had been received for funding.
- f) Wombourne Best Kept Village Committee – Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed members no meeting had taken place, but individuals continued to work hard across the village.
- g) Wombourne Retailers Liaison – Councillor Daisy Tait informed members they should be receiving an official invite to attend the newly named Jes759 coffee shop on High Street soon.
- h) Police Liaison – Councillor Vince Merrick thanked members for listening so intently to the presentation from Chief Inspector Tim Norbury, noting it was pleasing to see the graphs coming down in the right direction.
- i) Giggetty Action Group – Councillor Vince Merrick informed members no meeting had taken place, but work continued on the estate.

61/24 – Parish Council Finances and Administration

Members approved the payment schedules for March 2024.

62/24 – Planning Applications

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

63/24 – Correspondence

The Clerk reminded members of the email informing them the consultation on the Local Plan was now open until noon on 31st May 2024. She informed them there would be a face-to-face session for residents this week in their Council Chamber as well as online sessions. They should visit the District Council's website for more information.

64/24 – Meeting Schedule

Members noted:

- a) The next Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will take place on Monday 20th May 2024.

65/24 – Reminders

- a) The office will be closed on Monday 6th May 2024 for Bank Holiday.
- b) The Clerk will be on annual leave from 13th to 17th May 2024.

66/24 – Chairman’s Closing Remarks

Councillor Mark Evans thanked members for their support at the Annual Parish Meeting Community Showcase Event, noting he initially thought if there were 5 or 6 stalls the event would be a success, but that there were in fact almost 30.

He thanked Councillors Dan Kinsey BEM, Ian Sadler and Mary Roberts for their support with the session they held in the Council Chamber for Bratch Scout Group.

He noted this would be the last time he closed a Parish Council Meeting, stating it has been a fantastic honour to be Chairman of the Parish Council, with his highlights including reading at the Remembrance Service and laying a wreath and the turning on of the Christmas Lights and listening to the speech from one member at the Parish Council meeting after.

The meeting closed at 7.46pm.

Signed:

Dated: