



WOMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **FULL COUNCIL MEETING**
held on Monday 24th March 2025 at 7.00pm

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

Present - Councillors: Barry Bond MBE, Mike Davies, Jan Evans, Ed Hughes, Elizabeth Keeling, Dan Kinsey BEM, Vince Merrick (Chairman), Alan Peace, Martin Perry (Vice-Chairman), Matt Powell, Ian Sadler

Public – 2 members of the public, PCSO Alexandra Rathbone and PCSO Julia Wells

Acting Clerk - Judith Vasiljevic

27/25 - Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Mark Evans, Daisy Perry and Mary Roberts.

28/25 - Declarations of Interest

Councillor Daniel Kinsey BEM declared he was a Trustee of Wombourne and District Community Association and Chairman Wombourne Best Kept Village Committee.

Councillor Martin Perry noted he was a member of Wombourne and District Community Association.

Councillor Alan Peace noted he was a member of Wombourne Best Kept Village, Wombourne Carnival Committee, Wombourne and District Community Association and a Director of South Staffordshire Narrowboat Company.

29/25 - Public Participation

A resident from Glendale Drive attended to enquire as to the short, medium and long term plans for the Recycling Centre in Wombourne. He asked if the Parish Council could get a response to long term commitments from Staffordshire County Council.

Councillor Mike Davies informed the resident that Staffordshire County Council's intention is to keep the Recycling Centre open, however they had to ensure that the whole site was safe before it could go back to full operation. He agreed to seek an update from the Cabinet Member responsible at Staffordshire County Council and inform the residents and Councillors.

30/25 - Approval of Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting on Monday 24th February 2025.

31/25 - Report from South Staffordshire Council

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed members the Council were working on their proposals to submit to the Government in light of the December 2024 Devolution paper with an outline position of a north and south split across Staffordshire. Full proposals have to be submitted in November 2025.

Members had started work looking at the next Local Plan submission. Despite the current one still being with the Planning Inspectors, it was imperative they started working on the next one.

Extensive work was happening along the Railway Walk with thanks to funds from the UK Prosperity Fund. The walk was being widened and tarmac put down and the reviews to date have all been very positive, with residents noting it feels safer, especially after dusk.

Finally, Staffordshire's Lieutenant was coming up to retirement and he looked forward to congratulating him on this life event.

Members agreed the improvements to the Railway Walk were much needed and hoped it would discourage off road bikes given it was a smooth service and much more open.

32/25 - Reports from Members appointed to Outside Bodies

- a) Wombourne and District Community Association - Councillor Martin Perry informed members there was no update to provide.
- b) Wolverhampton Business Airport Consultative Committee - The Chairman informed members on behalf of Councillors Roberts that no meeting had taken place.
- c) Wombourne Carnival Committee - Councillor Jan Evans informed members the theme for this year's Carnival has been confirmed as Outer Space. Stall and food vendor enquiries are coming in and it looks like they will sell out quickly. Various enquiries have been received already for performers in the arena. Thanks were passed onto Councillor Alan Peace and the BKV team for sorting the overgrown trees and shrubbery to the side of Mill Lane Club. The 26th and 27th April have been earmarked for getting the tarpaulins opened out and dried, subject to the weather. It is thought there will be at least six floats this year. The Chairman is trying to locate someone to give a talk on space and exploring other similar ideas.
- d) Wombourne Charity Trustees - Councillor Mike Davies informed members that no applications had been received since the last meeting.
- e) Wombourne Best Kept Village Committee - Councillor Alan Peace informed members BKV were now holding regular meetings and a mission statement is in preparation and a formal constitution had been established. The group are now active with members working around the village on various ongoing projects either in small groups or individual members working alone. Work is ongoing to clear the ivy at the rear of the Civic Centre and Sally Lewis has established a very nice display opposite the pool bar with some BKV initials in red, white and blue. Unfortunately, there have been some thefts of plants from some of the planters around the village, which is very disappointing and annoying given the time and effort that has been put into making them look so nice. The BKV social media platforms are being viewed extensively at around 8.5k views with one of the heaviest responses coming following the plant thefts. BKV are grateful for the support from T.H and G Wenlock Nurseries. Various activities and projects are either under way or being considered, including the online reporting and planning tool, the Litter Lotto scheme where people can win prizes just for picking up litter, the possibilities of street sign cleaning and it is hoped to possibly have a thank you social evening open to everyone who does something to help make Wombourne a pleasant place to be. On 26th April, the Guides are going to be doing a big clear up around the Guide Hut and would like people to help, if they can. The 3rd Wombourne Scouts have also asked if they can design a poster to go into the BKV noticeboard.
- f) Wombourne Retailers Liaison - Councillor Elizabeth Keeling noted no specific issues have been raised by retailers. They had been informed of the Business Celebration Workshop organised using funds from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Two new businesses have taken occupation of units in the village - Elly's Eatery and Mike Wood MP's office.
- g) Police Liaison - Councillor Vince Merrick informed members that no major changes to the Police pattern. The PCSOs in attendance informed members thankfully there had been very little crime over the past couple of months. There had been an attempted burglary in Forge Valley Way with a similar incident in Brewood. PCSO Julia Wells introduced herself to members, noting she would now be covering Wombourne and surrounding areas.
- h) Giggetty Action Group - Councillor Vince Merrick informed members the group were formulating a list of tasks and he would consult with Councillor Mike Davies when it had been received.

i) Friends of Wombrook - Councillor Ian Sadler reported someone has been excavating into the banks and planting nests had been removed from the Wombrook. This individual had been asked to cease this activity.

33/25 - Update from Committees

a) Finance and General Purposes Committee - Councillor Elizabeth Keeling informed members an email from a resident had been received in relation to the firework display. However, members agreed the format should remain the same, but asked the Clerk to enquire again about silent fireworks. Members thoroughly reviewed the matter of Christmas parcels for the elderly and after a long discussion concluded that no new information had been presented since their last discussion and as a result reaffirmed their decision not to proceed with the initiative. The Chairman of the Committee had subsequently contacted Kingsway Foodbank following the meeting and was exploring options in terms of collaborating with them, which she would bring back to the Committee.

Members reviewed correspondence in relation to Railway 200 and agreed to inform the sender of the miniature railway at Baggeridge Park and share celebration posts on social media when they arise.

Members reviewed correspondence received in relation to the Boating Rally and asked the Clerk to obtain further information in relation to the litter disposal required to see if this were something South Staffordshire Council could assist with.

Members noted the Q3 comparison report.

Discussion took place regarding the Parish van and Councillor Matt Powell agreed to assist with this.

Members reviewed the candidates put forward for the Joan Williams Award 2024 and selected a winner.

The award giving will take place at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May 2025.

b) Recreation and Amenities Committee - Councillor Martin Perry informed members the lease at Brickbridge Playing Fields was still outstanding and being chased - updates to follow. Members also reviewed and authorised new signage for the changing rooms detailing contacts, safety notices and permitted activities. Alongside this, the Committee discussed an event proposed by Wombourne Allstars to celebrate their anniversary year, with approval being given to hold the event (without alcohol) with certain conditions imposed.

Members noted the balance of funds available from the Poolhouse Play Area development, which the Clerk would be seeking approval to move into earmarked reserves. Following the completion of recent upgrade works, some work was still required, namely grass seeding once the weather improved and a request had been made to South Staffordshire Council to make good the footpath through the park, to resurface / hardcore to mitigate a muddy stretch affecting access at each gate.

Members were updated on an extremely rewarding afternoon at Bratch Park for a tree planting activity with the Forest of Mercia donating trees to South Staffordshire Council with members joining children from Westfield Primary School to plant an oak and hawthorn tree, alongside an orchard of plum and crab apple trees. Residents, who were in attendance, asked about another Friends of Bratch Park event and it is hoped this would be scheduled in later this year.

Safety inspection reports had been reviewed for all locations and only minor issues had been noted with each to be monitored and covered within routine maintenance schedules.

Members noted the successful implementation of the new bus shelter in High Street and budget available from April to install a further one, with Common Road near junction of Blakeley shops and Giggetty Lane being the location agreed. Members agreed to issue a letter to nearby residents informing them of this and an order would be placed post 1st April when the new budget was in place.

A letter had been received from a resident minor with ideas for a skate park. The content was detailed and contained free hand sketches and ideas - a superb letter and members noted they wanted to encourage the interest of residents, however, the installation of such a park was one to consider in the medium term, which constraints on finding appropriate land and budgets.

34/25 - Resignation of Andy Clay

Members noted the resignation and the Notice under the Local Government Act 1972 of the vacancy, which expires on 7th April 2025.

35/25 - Asset Register

- a) Members approved the re-stated assets for 2023/2024 at £376,354.35
- b) Members approved the assets for 2024/2025 at £429,556.20

36/25 - Earmarked Funds

- a) Members approved the movement of £24,718.04 to earmarked reserves for Poolhouse Play Area
- b) Members approved the movement of £100 to earmarked reserves for the Quality Gold Award

37/25 - Policies

Councillor Mike Davies proposed the policies be agreed en bloc, Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM seconded the proposal and all members were in favour.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following policies be approved:

- a) Financial Risk Assessment
- b) Scheme of Delegation
- c) Standing Orders
- d) Risk Register
- e) Investment Policy
- f) Governance Framework Policy
- g) Code of Conduct
- h) Financial Regulations
- i) Internal Audit Plan

38/25 - Approval of Payments

Members **RESOLVED** to ratify payments, bank reconciliations and petty cash (if applicable) for January 2025 and February 2025.

39/25 - Planning Applications

Members noted the submissions made to South Staffordshire Council in lieu of a meeting.

40/25 - Correspondence

Members acknowledged receipt of the emails from a resident of Apse Close concerning S106 funding. While they appreciated the resident’s feedback and suggestions, it was noted that the process is complex and involves more than simply submitting a request. Members agreed that the Parish Council will continue to work collaboratively with South Staffordshire Council on any future applications for S106 funding.

41/25 - Meeting Schedule

- Members noted the following upcoming meetings:
- a. Full Parish Council Meeting - Monday 14th April 2025 at 7pm
 - b. Staffing Committee Meeting - Monday 7th April 2025 at 7pm
 - c. Annual Parish Meeting and Community Showcase Event - Wednesday 30th April 2025 at 7pm

42/25 - Chairman’s Closing Remarks

The Chairman noted he had not been able to be as visible this month due to ongoing family matters, however he had met with a couple of residents regarding ongoing concerns. Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM thanked the Chairman for his hard work and dedication acknowledging the difficulty in conducting the role when he had personal matters to deal with.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm.

Signed: **Dated:**