



WOMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **FULL COUNCIL MEETING**
held on Monday 14th April 2025 at 7.00pm

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

Present - Councillors: Mike Davies, Mark Evans, Ed Hughes, Elizabeth Keeling, Dan Kinsey BEM, Vince Merrick (Chairman), Daisy Perry, Martin Perry (Vice-Chairman), Mary Roberts, Ian Sadler

Public – 4 members of the public, PCSO Alexandra Rathbone and PCSO Julia Wells and 2 representatives from the National Flood Forum

Clerk – Rachael Wright

43/25 - Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Barry Bond MBE, Jan Evans and Alan Peace.

44/25 - 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.

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

Councillor Mark Evans noted he was Cabinet Lead for Planning at South Staffordshire Council and would therefore refrain from commenting on any planning matters.

Councillor Mary Roberts noted she was a member of the Carnival Committee and Wolverhampton Business Airport Consultative Committee.

45/25 - Public Participation

A resident from Brookside Close expressed his frustration with the Parish Council that they would not take up his idea of delivering parcels or giving gift vouchers or cash to the elderly at Christmas / during the winter. He explained both the National Lottery and Postcode Lottery will offer grant funding and Lidl have given away £1 billion in good causes. He summarised the issues facing the elderly at present.

Councillors Mary Roberts and Elizabeth Keeling informed the resident the Parish Council had considered his idea again, however, they had chosen instead to support the Warm Welcome initiative by providing free room hire for residents to meet five days per week during the winter with this continuing on Fridays throughout the year. It was noted Kingsway Food Bank give out food parcels, including to the elderly. The resident was informed that the Parish Council would not be reconsidering his idea again.

A resident from Bratch Lane asked what was happening about car parking in the village, stating there clearly were not enough spaces now, let alone once the new homes in the village are built. He noted he had to drive around the village three times last weekend before he was able to find a space to park. He also noted the poor state of the roads in the village and his frustration with some potholes being repaired, but ones very nearby being left.

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM noted when potholes were reported to Staffordshire County Council they are logged and they will listen and respond to reports, albeit he shared the frustration of some being repaired and others close by being left. He noted that parking was a consistent frustration, however, the National Planning Policy Framework doesn't give guidance in relation to new developments and public parking, only an equation for parking at dwellings.

PCSO Alex Rathbone informed members there had been no burglaries to note since their last report, there had been two thefts of vehicles and no thefts from vehicles. The biggest complaint currently, with thirteen calls from 24th March to 14th April, was around motorbikes along the Railway Walk. Unfortunately, the new surface had made the walk a more stable surface for the bikes, which means they can now travel faster along there. Three bikes have recently been ceased, all of them were found to be stolen and a further bike was recovered from Common Road recently. The PCSO asked Councillors to encourage residents to report any issues to 101, so that the necessary resources and operations could be given to target the area.

Alex and Sarah from the National Flood Forum informed members they were working in the area to make residents flood aware. They explained they are funding by the Environment Agency and were able to pass on any information to residents who may be at risk of flooding and they could work with Staffordshire County Council to prevent the risks of flooding. They explained they were predominantly looking at surface water flooding.

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM thanked the representatives for their attendance and asked them to consider assistance for residents in Rushwater Close and Bratch Lane. A resident from Brookside Close also noted issues for residents in houses 22-30.

46/25 - Approval of Minutes

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

47/25 - Reports from Members appointed to Outside Bodies

- a) Wombourne and District Community Association - Councillor Daisy Perry informed members there was no update to provide.
- b) Wolverhampton Business Airport Consultative Committee - Councillor Mary Roberts informed members there was no update to provide.
- c) Wombourne Carnival Committee - Councillor Mary Roberts informed members that bookings were now open for stalls and pitches.
- d) Wombourne Charity Trustees - Councillor Mike Davies informed members the Trustees had agreed to support one family with funds since the last update.
- e) Wombourne Best Kept Village Committee - Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM informed members the Committee were meeting regularly and a new reporting tool had been set up via the Parish Council's IT system, to report what work had been completed by volunteers, meaning the Committee were now able to quantify what they work on each month.
- f) Wombourne Retailers Liaison - Councillor Daisy Perry informed members Niche would be closing their premises and moving to an online business. She asked for formal thanks to Bobbi from Niche who had been an excellent community champion for Common Road retailers. Councillor Ed Hughes informed members Westway Lubricants of Planks Lane had offered any voluntary organisations lubricants free of charge for their tools and machinery.
- g) Police Liaison - Councillor Vince Merrick informed members that PCSO Alex Rathbone had already give them an appropriate update earlier in the meeting.
- h) Giggetty Action Group - Councillor Vince Merrick informed members that a report had been sent to the Housing Association of work required on the estate.

i) Friends of Wombrook - Councillor Ian Sadler informed members whilst no meeting had taken place, work by volunteers continued.

48/25 – Vacancy – Wombourne North

Members noted no election had been called, therefore the Parish Council could now co-opt to fill the vacancy. The usual procedure of advertising the position would now begin.

49/25 - Planning Applications

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

50/25 - Correspondence

Members acknowledged receipt of the email from a resident of Apse Close, however, no Councillor wished to make comment.

51/25 - Meeting Schedule

Members noted the following upcoming meetings:

- a) Annual Parish Meeting and Community Showcase Event - Wednesday 30th April 2025 at 7pm
- b) Annual Meeting of the Parish Council – Monday 19th May 2025 at 7pm

52/25 - Chairman’s Closing Remarks

The Chairman noted he had spent an enjoyable evening with Councillors Dan Kinsey BEM and Elizabeth Keeling when they went along to watch Wombourne High School’s performance of Oliver! He commented it was a fantastic show, the students were brilliant and it was an opportunity to wish the Headteacher all the best as she moves on from her role at the School.

53/25 – Exclusion of the Public and Press

Members resolved that under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

54/25 – Staffing Committee Update

Councillor Mary Roberts updated members on the items discussed at their last meeting, including a request for a job review, approving staff salaries from 1st April 2025 and approval of the job profile for the new Deputy Clerk role.

55/25 – Retirement of the Assistant to the Clerk

- a) Members noted the retirement of the Assistant to the Clerk from 30th June 2025, with her last working day being 11th June 2025 owing to annual leave.
- b) Members noted the Briefing Note in relation to the recruitment of a Deputy Clerk, with approval for the role having been given by the Staffing Committee.
- c) Members **RESOLVED** to approve the additional costs of employment and advertising from general reserves.
- d) Members noted the timeline for recruitment as follows:
Advertising of the post – 15th April to 9th May 2025
Shortlisting and contacting candidates for interviews – 12th to 23rd May 2025
Interviews – 27th May to 4th June 2025
Proposed start date – 7th July 2025.

56/25 – Retirement of the Full Time Superintendent

- a) Members noted the retirement of the Full Time Superintendent from 23rd May 2025.
- b) Members noted the end of his tenancy agreement also from 23rd May 2025.
- c) Members received an update regarding the intention of the Staffing Committee to recruit two Site Managers on a like-for-like basis, taking into consideration the requirements of Martyn’s Law and the recommendations from the Fire Risk Assessment.

Councillor Elizabeth Keeling suggested that this presented an opportunity to introduce greater flexibility within the staffing structure and proposed the recruitment of three members of staff instead of two, to replace the Full-Time Superintendent. She proposed creating one senior management role and two more junior roles to provide a more adaptable staffing arrangement.

Following discussion, Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM proposed that approval be given for the Staffing Committee to recruit up to three roles to replace the Full-Time Superintendent, subject to a combined total of no more than 76 hours per week. He also proposed that the Staffing Committee be authorised to proceed with recruitment, including incurring recruitment costs up to a few thousand pounds either side of the original budget allocated for the recruitment of two Site Manager roles. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Mark Evans and everyone was in favour.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Staffing Committee be authorised to recruit up to three members of staff to replace the Full-Time Superintendent, with a combined maximum of 76 hours per week and that the Staffing Committee be authorised to proceed with recruitment costs of up to a few thousand pounds either side of the originally proposed budget for the two Site Manager roles.

- d) No longer relevant given the resolution made above.
- e) No longer relevant given the resolution made above.
- f) Members noted the proposed timeline and agreed to act as quickly as possible once the Staffing Committee had agreed roles based on c) above.
- g) Members **RESOLVED** to approve the temporary cover costs from general reserves for Mystical Productions to cover for the Full Time Superintendent until the replacement roles are in place.

The meeting closed at 8.03pm.

Signed:

Dated: