27/23-24

DYMOCK PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on **Tuesday, 5th March, 7.30pm at Dymock Parish Hall**

Present: Cllrs T Eagle (In the Chair); I Bruce, N Fairburn, T Blandford, J George, G Kilmurray.

In attendance: Clerk – Rachel Freestone
County Councillor – Gill Moseley

Public: 18

1. **To receive and accept apologies for absence:**
   Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr James Jackson.

2. **To receive any declarations of interest or written applications for dispensation from Councillors on agenda items:**
   There were none.

   Members agreed to move agenda item 6 ahead of agenda item 3 public participation.

6. **To receive a report from the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust:**
   The Chair welcomed Tony Higgins to the meeting. Unfortunately, Ralph Barber, the Chairman of the Canal Trust was unwell and sent his apologies. He had however written a report which Tony Higgins read on his behalf. Report attached.

3. **Public Participation:**
   The Chairman invited members of the public to address Tony Higgins from the Canal Trust with regards to agenda item 6. Questions raised and responded to by Tony Higgins included:
   - What are managements plans to thin out the trees? Response - Bank near the houses will hopefully grass over naturally, not aware whether anything is being planned to thin the trees on the far bank and will consult with the Chairman of the Canal Trust.
   - Have been three replacement pumps and multiple breakdowns since 2016, how are the Canal Trust going to futureproof the Winding Pool as the pumps are unreliable? Response – it is the Canal Trust's responsibility but very difficult to futureproof. The current pump is a different type and the Canal Trust engineers believe it will last.
   - How will Winding Pool connect up with the other areas under the Canal Trust's management – what is its future? Response – The canal is an ambition, to run from Gloucester to Hereford and will take a long time to be fulfilled. From a green corridor point of view, the areas of green land are important to local communities.
   - Run by the public/volunteers and the Canal Trust have sold property to raise funds, concern over future security. Residents are paying covenants but do not have sole responsibility, with concerns the area is deteriorating the Canal Trust need to take responsibility. Response - If there is no Canal Trust the land will revert to the Local Authority, the Canal Trust are doing their best to keep it going.
   - Is there an extraction licence at Dymock? Response – to be investigated.

   Tony Higgins reassured members of the public that all issues raised would be taken back to the Canal Trust and invited the public to continue discussions away from the meeting. Updates would be provided by the Canal Trust to residents of Winding Pool and the Parish Council on a more regular basis.
   The Chairman thanked Tony Higgins for his contribution to the meeting.
   8pm - 10 members of the public left the meeting.

4. Reports:

a. To receive a report from County Councillor Gill Moseley:
The Chairman thanked County Councillor Gill Moseley for her help expediting with GCC Highways the clearing of part of the pathway along the B4215, however a section still requires work.
County Cllr Moseley informed members that GCC budget figures are not as bad as in some areas of the country, 1:5 councils are at risk of going into deficit in the next 5 years but GCC are coping. The budget has been passed at £616 million, the council had received a slightly better settlement than expected but not enough so there will be cut-backs.
Members were updated on the plans for 'non-reciprocal access' to waste tips in Herefordshire for areas where it is quicker to get to Ledbury or Ross-on-Wye rather than to facilities in Gloucestershire. Unfortunately, Herefordshire County Council are still refusing access. County Cllr Moseley added that she will continue to pursue the issue and intends to hold a petition to evidence the number of people who want, and would benefit, it would not be resolved quickly. With the advent of climate change, the number of vehicle miles to reach waste disposal sites is too high.
Members were informed that the Digital Household Grant for broadband through 'Fastershire' is being extended as Gigabit are not ready to takeover. She explained that any household with a broadband speed of less than 30mgb per second should have received a letter. Any household interested in the scheme should contact County Councillor Moseley.

b. To receive a report from District Councillor Gill Kilmurray:
Members were informed that FoDDC full council meeting had taken place on the 22nd February to approve the budget. A decision had been resolved regarding car park charges in Newent and the rest of the District. Newent has 114 parking spaces and the new charging scheme provides the first hour for free, £1 for 2 hours, £2 for 3, £3 for 4 and £4 for over 4 hours. The Annual Car Park Permit can now be used in any council carpark. Signage is to be updated and feedback has been positive.
Members were informed that she had received reports of antisocial behaviour in Western Way. District Cllr Kilmurray added that she has spoken with residents and also with the Inspector,Nick Cook from the Neighbourhood Policing Team, with a date to be arranged to meet with him. A member added that Two Rivers are aware of the problems and are looking to reclassify it.

5. Minutes:

Members considered the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 6th February 2024. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes as a true record. They were duly signed by the Chairman.

7. Polices and Procedures:

a. Health and Safety Policy: **It was RESOLVED:** to adopt the Health and Safety Policy for 2024/25.

b. Equality Policy: **It was RESOLVED:** to adopt the Equality Policy for 2024/25.

c. Planning Applications between Meetings Policy: **It was RESOLVED:** to adopt the Planning Policy for 2024/25.

d. Dymock Parish Council Risk Assessment: **It was RESOLVED:** to adopt the Risk Assessment for 2024/25.

8. Neighbourhood Development Plan:

a. To consider Reg. 15 of the Dymock NDP and the resolution required from Council to submit to FoDDC:
Councillor Fairburn thanked all those whom had commented during the consultation period. He explained to members that a number of documents circulated previously were ready for approval by full council. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve for submission documents Regulation 15, the Consultation Statement, Basic Conditions Statement, SEA/HRA Screening Assessment and the Design Guide.
Councillor Fairburn added that expenditure allocated to the Locality Grant would be reconciled at the end of March with any grant unspent returned. He added that consideration may be made to applying for a further grant in due course once 2024/25 grants are confirmed and become available.

b. There were no other matters arising from the NDP Working Group.

9. Beauchamp Arms:

a. To consider any items arising from the Beauchamp Arms Working Group:
Councillor Nick Fairburn reported that Greenman are making progress with the fire detection system and are obtaining quotes for a hard-wired system. NFU Mutual had been approached for a specification but were not able to help. There had been no Working Group in February due to members diary conflicts.
Cllr Fairburn informed members that a response to the letter sent in February (as agreed minute 24/8a) had been received from the tenant of the pub. He added that the Chairman and Clerk had received a further

email from the tenant (shared with members prior to the meeting) with regards to the alleged actions of a member of the Parish Council and complaints of interference in running his business. The tenant had been asked to attend the meeting and had refused. The tenant has requested a restructure of the Beauchamp Arms Working Group. Cllr Fairburn commented that there are concerns that the Health and Safety Policy is not in place and the Fire Risk Assessment has not been read by the tenant with outstanding actions to meet statutory requirements. A member added that the Parish Council as a corporate body are custodians of the pub as a village asset and need to ensure the asset is protected.
It was RESOLVED: the Chairman to acknowledge receipt of the email. The Clerk to arrange a meeting with the tenant, Chairman, Cllrs Kilmurray, Blandford and George. The Clerk to attend this meeting and minute.

b. To receive a report from the FOBA representative.
There was none.

10. Common Land/Assets:

a. To consider the request for a noticeboard to be erected on Wintours Green for the duration of the Daffodil Teas 1st March to the 7th April:
It was RESOLVED: to approve the request.

b. To consider the request from the Parish Hall Committee to advertise the Daffodil Teas on 30th/31st March on Wintours Green:
It was RESOLVED: to approve the request.

c. To consider the purchase of signs for DPC assets notifying property of… /use at own risk and who to contact if a problem as follows: Car parks x 2, playground contact info amendment x 2, Winding pool footpath, 4 x telephone boxes, public conveniences. 2 x disabled parking space signs:
It was RESOLVED: for the Clerk to obtain quotes for consideration at the next meeting.

d. To consider regular weekly play equipment inspections, the inspection sheet and a rota and agree actions:
It was RESOLVED: checks to be completed monthly with a standing item on the monthly full meeting agenda to record returned inspection sheets and any actions.
Members were informed that the table tennis table has been damaged and a crime number requested. **It was RESOLVED:** Cllrs Eagle and Bruce to look into whether the surface can be replaced. The Clerk to enquire with the insurance company with regards to a claim.

d. To receive an update on the footpath to Winding Pool and lighting:
Members were informed that there is only one site for lighting on a brick column, the rest of the footpath is bordered with wooden fencing. **It was RESOLVED:** Cllr Eagle to obtain quotes for solar lighting. The Clerk to obtain a quote for a use at own risk sign for the footpath. Members were reminded that the Council has public liability insurance.

11. Planning:

a. Members commented on the Planning Application for Determination by the Forest of Dean District Council:

- P0135/24/FUL Mother Farm, Preston Cross, Ledbury, HR8 2LH
Erection of an extension (15x8 metres) to existing agricultural buildings and the erection of 7 silos for storage purposes (retrospective)
Cllr Fairburn informed members that local residents have raised concerns that whilst this and previous planning applications have been agricultural there is an assumption that ultimately it will become a factory by stealth with a bottling plant. There is no planning permission in place for the current vending machines or offices. A machinery shed is currently being built close to the main road with retrospective permission being sought for the silos. **It was RESOLVED:** to OBJECT to the application. A draft letter to be distributed for approval by members prior to being sent to FoDDC by the Clerk within required timeframes.

b. Members noted the Planning Responses Submitted between Meetings under Devolved Powers:

- P0073/24/FUL Engine Meadow Lodge, Dymock. Temporary retention of dwelling and garage building for the essential needs of a rural worker. SUPPORT
- P0007/24/FUL Rose Hill Farm, Leominster Road, Dymock. Erection of steel portal framed agricultural storage building. SUPPORT
- P1464/23/FUL Roseland, Leominster Road, Dymock. Change of Use of Mission Hut to showers and toilets. SUPPORT with conditions for disabled access and screening to the boundary.

c. Members noted the Planning Decisions made by Forest of Dean District Council:
   - There were none.

   9.02pm 1 member of the public left.

12. Environment and Conservation:

a. To receive an update on the proposed Biodiversity public consultation in March:
   Cllr Kilmurray confirmed that the Parish Hall is booked for the 20th March for an initial public meeting. The 20th April had been agreed with DyFRA to commence work on the verges, digging and taking out the cultivated daffodils. The Beauchamp Arms have agreed to provide refreshments for volunteers. The date for removal of the brambles on the verge to be confirmed. Cllr Kilmurray would like the school to be involved with planting the daffodils later in the year. Cllr Fairburn has created the marketing to advertise the 20th March which will be put in the Windcross and in the noticeboards.
   A member of the public queried why the cultivated daffodils were being removed if the wild daffodils will take time to flower. A member clarified that cultivated daffodils will poison the wild daffodils so need to be removed.
b. There was no other matters arising.

13. Highways/Footpaths:

a. To receive a report from the Footpaths Officer:
   In her absence the Clerk read a report provided by the Footpaths Officer. *GDY 59 - Daffodil Way in Dymock Woods of some of the guide posts almost fallen over. GDY12 - a path that has been causing issues when the crop is in the field and no pathway made available and a possible broken footbridge. To be reported later in the year when the crop has grown.*
b. To receive a report from the Highways Working Group:
   Cllr Bruce reported that several pot holes are now down to aggregate with major problems outside the public conveniences. The quality of the repairs has been raised with Highways as the cold tarmac is falling out straight away. County Cllr Moseley added that GCC own monitoring systems does not raise any quality issues. Highways haven't got the machines available to complete permanent repairs. A member of the public added that the recent repairs to Crowfield Lane have been successful and the road is in a good condition.
c. To receive an update on the snow plough operator and warden:
   The Clerk informed members that Highways had responded explaining that the snow plough equipment is owned by GCC and it is the responsibility of the Parish Council to provide a snow warden and snow plough operator.
d. To receive an update on the Community Speedwatch program and agree actions:
   A member of the public, a Speedwatch volunteer, informed members that 15 people had been reported and will be receiving a letter in February, the fastest in Brooms Green at over 50 miles per hour. No HGV or tractors had been caught speeding. Cllr Bruce commented that he is still chasing the auto Speedwatch camera with no response as yet. Cllr Kilmurray has a meeting arranged with Assistant PCC Nick Evans and will ask for an update.

14. Finance:

a. Members received the Bank Reconciliation to 29th February 2024.
b. Members noted the Bank Statements to 29th February 2024.
c. Members considered the Asset Register. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the working document, the Clerk to add to the website.
   9.20pm 4 members of the public left.
d. Members considered the quote from Greenfields for the grounds maintenance annual contract March 24-Feb 25. Cllr Eagle explained that it is more than expected, £300 over budget. This is due to an increase in the frequency the play area is mowed as in 23/24 it was overgrown at times and a safety issue. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the quote, the Clerk to inform Greenfields.
e. Members considered the quote from Greenfields to provide annual maintenance of the front St.Marys Church burial grounds for 2024/25. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the quote, the Clerk to inform Greenfields.
f. Members considered the scheme and the request for funding from the Malvern and Worcester RSPB Group:

It was RESOLVED: the Clerk to contact them to inform that grants will be reviewed later in 2024/25 if the budget allows.

g. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the following invoices for payment:
- Smith of Derby £4668.20 Net
- Gareth Kemp £140.00
- Parish Hall £270.00
- Clerk expenses B&W Printer cartridge £20.38 Net

h. **It was RESOLVED:** to ratify the following payments made between meetings:
- Clerks Salary February As per contract
- VAT to 31.01.2024 £630.21

i. Members noted income received:
- PCC Donation £4147.00
- Beauchamp Arms Rent February £1666.67 Net/£2000 Gross

j. Members noted the Direct Debit to Nest from March 2024 as per the Clerks contract.

15. Members considered the D-Day celebrations on the 6th June, 2024:
Members were informed that FOBA are holding a curry lunch in the Beauchamp Arms on the 9th June**. It was RESOLVED:** to defer to the next meeting to consider the beacon on the 6th June.

16.Training:

a**.** To receive feedback from any training undertaken and to consider any training needs:
There was none.

17. Diary Dates:

a. To consider the 2024/25 meeting schedule proposed by the Clerk:
It was RESOLVED: Parish Council Full ordinary meetings for 2024/25 to be held on the 11th June, 16th July, 10th September, 8th October, 5th November, 7th January, 11th February and 11th March. The Parish Council Annual Meeting will be held on the 14th May 2024.

18. Correspondence: To include: Portrait of King Charles and the Royal Garden Party
Members were informed that Andrew Perry had been nominated to attend the Royal Garden Party on behalf of GAPTC but unfortunately had been unsuccessful. **It was RESOLVED:** the Clerk to order the portrait and to defer the decision on where to place it pending a response from the Parish Hall committee.

19. To consider items for the next meeting:
Community Action Plan,
D-Day remembrance event.

20. Next Meeting: It was NOTED that the next meeting of Dymock Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 9th April at 7.30pm in the Parish Hall**.**

Signed……*Tony Eagle* ……. Dated……*9th April 2024*……
Chairman

Meeting Closed at 9.32pm

Canal Trust Report – Agenda Item 6.

Dymock 5th March report to the Parish Council.

Thank you for your time this evening. We have encountered a number of issues with the H&G Canal Trust's support of the area at Dymock. Some caused by incorrect equipment, and some caused by miscommunication, and I am please to be here to see if we can change this and move forward.

On the equipment. The pump in this case. The initial pump was not up to the job and after a lot of work by the H&G Canal Trust further replacements done. The third pump installed last year. To be clear this was supplied by the H&G Canal Trust via a donation. This has proved to be successful. Of course, a pump requires electric, and we have all been impacted by the raise in energy costs and this has also been a large cost to the H&G Canal Trust for running the pump. Even as a charity we must pay increases in electric costs.

Next miscommunication, my fellow Trustee with me this evening agreed to take on the task of communication with the residents early last year. When we had the pump issues and low water due to it failing. We asked for a meeting, and they did not want one. My fellow Trustee has spent time knocking on doors and replying to emails to improve the communication, but emails can be misunderstood hence the previous request for a meeting.

Recently we had the issues of complaints about no work been done. As communication had occurred that we would cut back some underground and reeds around the pond. It had been mentioned that this would happen in the autumn. But our volunteer egologist highlighted some bird life was still nesting. So, it was delayed and completed prior to any nesting occurring. This is a good example of the miscommunication. Going forward we would ask that communication is addressed to my fellow trustee.

Coming back to the work completed last month. We arranged a work party that did go over a number of days, spread out over a week due to the volunteers usually only on site on a Tuesday. Unfortunately, due to the very wet weather we have had we could not move all the material out of the way of the houses causing more complaints and miscommunication on both sides. The team came back and finished off the clearing. Then resurface the path in front of the houses. They thank the residents for the cups of coffee. Since then, my fellow Trustee has talked with a number of the residents, and he had positive comments on the work completed.

We are a charity and a fully volunteer organisation, who of course are always after new volunteers. Should any one wish to help locally with the Dymock Winding pool site. My fellow Trustee will be happy to discuss with them to help maintain the area.

One final point around communication. We report in our annual accounts the money we receive from covenants. This is public information. If an individual does not wish to pay when reminded each year. That is their choice and when they come to sell their house. The charge on the house would have to cleared before the house can be sold. These no payment issues are between the H&G Canal Trust and those individuals and is not for public consumption.

Happy to answer any questions.