

MINUTES
DEFFORD & BESFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Defford & Besford Parish Council held on Wednesday 19th May 2020 at 7.00pm held via Zoom

PRESENT: Chairman J Clarke Vice Chairman R Davis (also in capacity as District Cllr)
Cllr C Wicksteed Cllr L Revell Cllr S Rees
Cllr J Harrington Cllr S Harris Clerk L Yapp
County Cllr A Hardman

1. APOLOGIES – Cllr I Spiers

The clerk reported that she had received an email from Cllr Hornsey with his apologies for the meeting and that due to health issues, he would be also stepping down as Cllr. The clerk would advise WDC for the necessary notification for website and notice board

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None declared

- a) *Cllrs are reminded of the need to update their register of interests*
- b) *To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature*
- c) *To declare Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature*
- d) *Written requests for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) are to be with the clerk at least 4 clear days prior to a meeting.*

Cllrs who have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, or Other Disclosable Interest which falls within the terms of paragraph 12(4) of the code of conduct, must leave the room for the relevant items

Before the meeting continued, Cllr Clarke wished to have his grateful thanks recorded to all those involved (Cllrs and residents) in volunteering support and help to those parishioners self-isolating or vulnerable. A number of residents had volunteered time and help with shopping, collection of prescriptions and the making of face masks.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – There were no parishioners at the meeting

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES from meeting dated 22nd January 2020 – Acceptance proposed Cllr Clarke, seconded Cllr Revell – all in favour

5. REPORTS:

- a) **County Cllr Report** – County Cllr Hardman reported that there had been approx. 170 deaths throughout the county (*at the date of the meeting*) with 2 or 3 hospital admissions daily. With regard flooding and drainage issues, Cllr Clarke paid thanks to both WCC and WDC for their actions following a site visit just before Christmas. A number of drainage issues had been identified and these had been assessed and necessary works had been carried out in both Defford and Besford. Cllr Rees raised a concern with regard a flooding issue in Harpley Road. It was agreed that Cllr Hardman and WCC officer meet on site with Cllr Rees to discuss.
- b) **District Cllr Report** – District Cllr Davis reported that WDC were continuing to work through the Covid-19 situation with the majority of staff working from home and a skeleton staff of Senior Management going into the Civic Centre daily. Meetings were being carried out remotely which include weekly briefings. A £575,000 hardship fund had been made available to both businesses and residents with an emergency budget also available to help local volunteer groups. Waste collections had been maintained with the recycling centre about to re-open. WDC are working

closely with local businesses to get them back up and running again. A Small Business Grant of £10,000 is available to small businesses and village halls. This information had been passed on to the Village Hall Committee for Defford hall. Cllr Clarke advised that he would speak to them to ensure that they had registered for the grant.

c) **West Mercia Policing Team** – nothing to report

6. FINANCE

a) Payments for approval / made since the last meeting – *a copy of the full accounts had been forwarded to Cllrs*

	1171	Website Admin	30.00
	1172	Clerks PAYE	201.00
SO		Clerks Expenses	15.00
SO		Clerks Salary	268.04
SO		Clerks Expenses	15.00
SO		Clerks Salary	268.04
	1173	Moving of Dog Bin	25.13
	1174	Cllr training	177.00
	1175	Lengthsman february	264.00
	1176	Website Admin	30.00
	1177	Hall Hire	16.00
	1178	Printing Costs	20.00
	1179	Clerks PAYE	201.00
	1180	Payroll Services	22.75
SO		Clerks Expenses	15.00
SO		Clerks Salary	268.04
	1181	CALC	572.99
	1182	Additional Printing	15.00
	1183	Street Lighting Costs	130.82
	1184	Website Admin	30.00
	1185	Zoom Part Contribution	19.98
	1186	Insurance	417.79

Payments were accepted and approved, proposed Cllr Davis, seconded Cllr Harris. The clerk reported that VAT had been reclaimed and received (£776.44) and Community Infrastructure Levy monies had also been received (£9,658.80). The CIL grant does come with certain criteria, and options as to where it would be better spent would be investigated.

b) Account balances (less unrepresented cheques):

Current Account: £31,566.66

Deposit Account: £4,084.27

c) Year End Accounts 2019/20 – these had been circulated to Cllrs for consideration. There were no queries raised. Approval proposed by Cllr Rees, seconded Cllr Harrington – all in favour

d) Internal Auditor – the clerk advised the parish council that we were required to have an internal audit of the parish council accounts carried out before the Annual Return is completed for the external audit process. Cllr Davis advised that there was a village resident with an accountancy background who may be able to help (*Since the meeting this has now been arranged*).

7. HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

a) Signage – worn signs: it was reported that there were a number of ‘worn’ signs in and around the two villages. It was agreed that these would not be considered high priority during the current situation but should be reported on the WCC website, particularly if there was a safety concern.

- b) Footpaths / Rights of Way – The clerk had informed Cllr Wicksteed of two areas which required inspection and reporting. Cllr Rees advised that there were a number of paths which had broken stiles and lack of waymarking. It was agreed that exact locations be identified, and she would liaise with Cllr Wicksteed.
- c) Street Lighting – no issues raised
- d) Flooding – Already covered under County Cllrs Report
- e) Lengthsman – at the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis, lengthsman duties were suspended. However, on submission of an approved Risk Assessment, WCC have now lifted some of the restrictions to enable some tasks to be undertaken, all with adequate social distancing measures to be adhered to.
- f) Speeding – Cllr Harris raised the point that there was a serious need for some traffic calming measures to be put in place in the two villages. It was agreed in the first instance there should be a meeting with WCC to highlight the worst affected areas and to identify what, if any, traffic calming measures could be used and supported by WCC. These could include VAS signs, additional road markings and white ‘village gates’. It was agreed that ‘speeding’ would become a future agenda item under Projects.

8. PLANNING:

- a) Home Farm Housing Survey – nothing further to report
- b) Wychavon District Council – Housing Needs Survey – we are awaiting the results of the survey carried out

11. OPEN SPACES

- a) Millennium Green – s106 monies are available to be used at the Millennium Green to ‘improve’ the open space. Children at the village school had been invited to give their thoughts as to what they would like. This would be given further consideration when we are able to obtain costings.

12. PROJECTS

- a) Village Hall Car Park – Nothing further to report. The parish council was reminded that there was an agreement allowing Network Rail use of the car park back in March in return for a fee to the parish council. The clerk was awaiting the latest bank statements to see if this had been paid by Network Rail before chasing them
- b) Electric Car Charging Points – Nothing to report
- c) Repair to Church Wall – Further quotes are being sought for the repairs to the wall, along with funding opportunities which may be able to assist with the costs. It was agreed that we seek written confirmation from the PCC to clarify the ownership and responsibility of the wall, as now a closed churchyard
- d) Phone Boxes – Besford phone box has been refurbished. Cllr Harris would arrange for the Defford phone box to also be done, as agreed at the January meeting to a budget of approx. £300.

- 13. POLICIES** – The clerk had identified that the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders were due a review in line with changes and recommendations made by NALC (National Association of Local Councils). Draft documents and been circulated to Cllrs for consideration. In addition, it was considered necessary to formalise an updated Scheme of Delegation in order to make urgent payments and decisions outside of meetings. This had also been circulated to Cllrs for approval. These were approved and accepted by all Cllrs, proposed Cllr Harris, seconded Cllr Harrington.

2020/08

- 14. DOO POO SIGNS** – complaints have been received with regard the non-picking up of dog waste. The clerk has a contact to make some small A5 signs which can be placed on gates or on small stakes. Cllr Wicksteed had also seen a design which may be acceptable and would circulate to Cllrs for consideration before we place any order
- 15. CORRESPONDENCE / EMAILS** had been circulated to Cllrs
- 16. OTHER MATTERS FOR INFORMATION / FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**
- 17. DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS** – Dates for the next meeting – Wednesday 22nd July at 7pm, to be held via Zoom (unless the current situation changes enabling meetings in person)