



**5. REPORTS:**

- a) County Cllr Report – nothing to report
- b) District Cllr Report – District Cllr Davis reported:
  - The Executive Board were meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> September, starting the process to review the Annual Budget for 2020/21, ready for approval next February. He advised the financial situation was good, and he would make the recommendation to the Executive Board that the Council Tax remains as it is at present and that there be no increase in the Wychavon element for a third year, before approval by the full council
  - Refurbishment of the Civic Centre at a cost of £330,000
- c) West Mercia Policing Team – nothing to report, although Cllr Clarke reported on a recent attempted break-in on one of the older properties on the Besford Court Estate. The intruders were interrupted and no access gained. It was also reported that the Defford Arms had also been broken in to. *The clerk would speak to the local officer for the area for a report or attendance at meetings*

**6. MATTER ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

- Smell Harpley Road – Cllr Cheetham reported that this had been reported to Severn Trent and an action to wash through the drainage system is planned. It was agreed that a collection of all the reference numbers from previous complaints be forwarded to Severn Trent with a view to collating all the information received and action to date. Reference numbers should be passed to the clerk
- Openreach Box in St Peters Lane – this had been knocked down and a traffic clearance for a road closure is awaited. It was reported that there may be some interruption to internet services whilst this is carried out
- Church Close Intersection – Concerns had been raised regarding continued speeding traffic, in particular motorbikes. A suggestion of a ‘*cardboard cut-out of a police officer*’ was not supported by the police. The clerk would write to the police for their thoughts

**7. PLANNING**

- 19/01570 Bishops Barn, St Peters Lane – erection for outhouse – *approved by WDC*
- 19/01554 Pershore House, Defford Road – *Tree works approved*
- 19/01317 Avonside, Upton Road – replacement barn – *approved by WDC*
- 19/00758 Broad Hill Farm, Broad Hill – demolition of existing dwelling, agricultural and equestrian building and re-modelling of farmstead to include replacements buildings – *awaiting decision by WDC*
- 19/00815 Land north of Strensham, Bourne Road – screening for solar farm – *awaiting decision by WDC*
- 19/00607 San Remo, Bourne Road – Construction of conservatory - *approved by WDC*
- 19/00698 Buildings at Woodmancote, Defford – external alterations to buildings including replacement windows and doors, cladding and roof covering - *approved by WDC*

**8. FINANCE**

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

1145	Clerks Salary / Expenses	570.34
1146	Website Admin	30.00
1147	Playground Inspection	120.00
1148	Payroll Services	18.00
1149	Cllr Training	120.00
1150	ICO Renewal	40.00
1151	Clerks Salary Sept.	335.04
1152	Clerks Salary Oct	335.04

Payments were accepted and approved, proposed Cllr Clarke, seconded Cllr Wicksteed

b) Account balances (less unpresented cheques):

Current Account: £15,492.33

Deposit Account: £4,053.59

c) Financial Update:

- The clerk reported that there was a substantial amount of VAT that could be re-claimed, spanning back over four years. There is no problem was the past two years as she has the files in hand, although anything prior to 2017 may be more difficult. These may be held at The Hive in Worcester and will be investigated.
- Clerks Salary / Expenses – the clerk asked the parish council if they would consider a nominal amount, £15 per month to cover office expenses rather than an itemised list of individual costs paid out. This would work out considerably cheaper than the current payments made for clerks expenses. If there was to be a case of any substantial expense i.e. photocopying for full parish consultation this would be charged to the parish council as an additional expense. In addition, the clerk asked if it would be possible for her salary to be paid by monthly standing order rather than the current bi-monthly cheque payment.
- Bank Mandate – a new mandate adding Cllrs Cheetham and Davies as signatories was signed
- Reserves – the clerk would look at the accounts to establish what reserves should be allocated. Cllr Spiers advised that there was still funds available from the previous NHB grant monies (for the village hall car park) which need to be identified and set aside.
- Payments – the clerk suggested that in the case of the regular monthly invoices that are received i.e. Lengthsman services and grass cutting / grounds maintenance, a provision should be made to allow payment of these outside of the bi-monthly meetings. This can be included in the Standing Orders / Financial Regulations which will need to be reviewed.

All of the above were agreed, proposed Cllr Clarke, seconded Cllr Spiers – all in favour

**9. REPORTS / UPDATES:**

**9.1 Lengthsman** – the clerk would continue to work with the LM to ensure that all areas are covered as per the WCC guidance

**9.2 Re-surfacing of the Village Hall Car Park** -Cllr Spiers reported on the progress made so far, that the re-surfacing had been completed but there was some drainage that needed carried out. There has been a Wayleave Agreement issued which Cllr Spiers will discuss with Western Power. Western Power had offered to install 2 x charging points for electric vehicles at no cost to the parish council, but there would be connection costs. This would be investigated further and reported back to the parish council. Cllr Cheetham passed to Cllr Spiers contact details regarding a recent communication in respect of the proposed works to install a power cable to the new homes in the next field area.

**9.3 Millenium Green / Play Area**

- Playground Safety Inspection had been carried out with no real issues raised. LA Garden Services had offered to re-furbish the benches and a quote is awaited
- Football Nets – Parishioners had complained there were no nets on the goal posts. This to be looked into further

- 9.4 Dog Fouling** – a previous request had been made for one or two new dog waste bins. It had been agreed to use £1,000 from the previously agreed election reserves. Location to be agreed. A complaint had been received that two bins are not being emptied. The clerk would refer this back to WDC
- 9.5 Website** – Cllr Clarke reported that two updates had been added to the website. The reference to the recent Tour of Britain time trials would be removed. It was agreed that the audit documents and co-option vacancies would be added to the website – the clerk would organise this. It was agreed that a resume of parish council meetings go in the parish magazine and copies of the minutes would be put in plastic sleeves for parishioners to take away if required. Parishioners present said that they could not read previous minutes because the font was too small. The clerk advised that she would be changing the layout of the minutes which would include large font in the hope that these would be clearer. A copy of any minutes would be sent to the parishioners in attendance
- 9.6 New Homes Bonus** – a request had been received for new flooring in the Village Hall. application had been put together and submitted to WDC for inclusion at the last Localism Committee meeting earlier in September but had been rejected because of insufficient consultation evidence. Cllr Davies raised the point that under the guidance for grant approval the new floor may be considered as maintenance / repair and may well not meet the protocol / criteria for any application. It was felt that it may be more beneficial if a larger project package be put together to include a sound system. This could be funded using a larger application for funds from the new Community Grant Legacy. Cllr Spiers would put this to the Village Hall Committee at their next meeting for consideration. The clerk would contact the VH Chairman to explain the process, what is required with regard consultation evidence and options available from the CLG funding
- 9.7 Telephone Boxes:**
- Defford – it was reported that more funding is needed for the re-furbishment to be carried out
  - Besford – nothing to report at this stage
- 9.8 Street Lighting** – A walk round the village had identified that several street bulbs needed replacing. It was agreed that a full report be obtained as to what is required and the clerk see if there is any funding available from WCC or WDC
- 9.9 Highways & Byways**
- Flooding – Defford has been re-surfaced and much improved y
  - Besford Bridge – it was reported that the road surface on the bridge had been replaced and an excellent job was done
  - Village Hall Signage – Cllr Cheetham reported that he would speak to County Cllr Hardman regarding additional directional signage for the village hall
  - Defford Signage – signage to the village was bent. The clerk would report this to WCC both signs are bent
  - Churcham Homes – following a recent meeting, it was reported that damage caused by contractors had now been made good and residents were happy
  - Speeding – a serious accident occurred in Besford between tractor and vehicle had occurred a few weeks ago . Further discussion is needed to decide on what action to take to resolve the concerns

- 9.10 Footpath Warden** – No progress had been made and it was agreed that a notice go in the parish magazine asking parishioners/ walkers be asked to report to the parish council any issues on the footpaths or rights of way. It was also suggested that we speak to Defford Walkers
- 9.11 Electric Vehicle Charging Points** - already covered above, with the other possibility of being facilitated within the street lighting. To be investigated
- 9.12 Repair to Church Wall** – A report had been carried out on the wall and a quote for repairs is needed, however it has been difficult to get anyone out to look at this. It was agreed that this would need to be included on any Risk Register held by the parish council and insurance needed to cover any possible accident or injury. The clerk would look into these points raised.
- 9.13 Bredon Hill Conservation Group** - nothing to report
- 9.14 SmartWater** - nothing to report
- 9.15 Cllr Training** – the clerk would investigate training for Cllrs

**11. CORRESPONDENCE** – emails had been circulated to all Cllrs

**12. OTHER MATTERS FOR INFORMATION / FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

- Review of parish council policies

**13. DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS** – Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 7.45pm at Defford Village Hall