

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 16th September 2024

Present

Councillor	Mr M Huskinson	Chair
Councillor	Mr M Simpson	Vice Chair
Councillor	Mr A Medcalf	
Councillor	Mr D Fellows	
Councillor	Rvd P Hughes	Tree warden
Councillor	Mrs A Johnson	
Councillor	Mrs M Newport	
Mr David Furlong	WCC Footpath Liaison Officer	
Mrs G Hollick	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer	

1. **Apologies** District Councillor Mrs K Wells
County and District Councillor Mr T Wells
Mr P Thomas Guarlford Village Hall

2. Public Question and Answer

Alison Maddocks Dean of smaller churches in the Diocese of Worcester attended the meeting to ask Parish Councillors if they would be willing to support a public meeting to ask local people how they would like to see St. Mary's church used into the future. She went on to explain that nationally rural churches are vulnerable due to low numbers of community members who are actively involved in their church. Furthermore, rural churches are an important part of the heritage of the country but without an income of funds or resources to maintain church buildings, they could quickly fall into disrepair.

Alison Maddocks told the meeting that it was hoped that Guarlford residents would like the building to be used more broadly while still remaining a place of worship. A public meeting would provide a platform for the local community to contribute their ideas for the future of St Mary's church building and also identify local people who might like to form a committee to work towards supporting the church into the future. Cllr Newport suggested that as the meeting was about the Church, it would be better to hold this in the church rather than the village hall. Cllr Johnson suggested holding a meeting on a Saturday daytime when people would not be at work as they may be reluctant to attend on a cold autumn evening. Alison Maddocks agreed to produce some advertising flyers once a date had been agreed and The Clerk agreed to distribute these locally.

Councillors agreed to consider the matter further and respond to Alison Maddocks after the meeting.

3. Code of Conduct and Declarations of Interest

- a. Parish Councillors were reminded that, as required by the Parish Council Code of Conduct Order 2001, revised 2020, they should notify the MHDC Monitoring Officer of any changes to their Register of Interests or the receipt

of any unrecorded gifts or hospitality. They should also declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any of the items of this meeting.

- b. There were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interest.

4. The Race Relations and Crime and Disorder Acts

Parish Councillors were reminded that all the business carried out and decisions made at this meeting must observe the requirements of the above Acts.

5. Acceptance of the Previous Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting and the Parish Council Annual Meeting held on 13th May 2024 had been circulated and read. There were no matters arising not already on the agenda of this meeting and it was agreed that the minutes should be signed by the Chairman.

The minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 19th July 2024 had been circulated to those who had attended the meeting. Cllr Fellows had been excluded from this meeting as he had a conflict of interest. There were no matters arising and it was agreed by those who had attended, that the minutes should be signed by the Chairman.

6. Report on local police matters

6.1 The Clerk had previously informed Councillors that Mr John Campion had been re-elected to the position of West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner in May 2024.

6.2 The Clerk informed councillors that she had received an e-mail from WMP in regard to setting the quarterly policing priorities for the parish. It was requested that specific detail be provided, eg. times and locations etc, so that the policing team can target any issues. Councillors discussed that speeding vehicles was still the main concern in the village. Cllr Newport agreed to note specific times when this was particularly noticeable in Clevelode Lane and report back to the Clerk.

6.3 The Clerk had circulated the latest 'safer neighbourhood' newsletter to Councillors. Cllr Simpson asked the Clerk if she had any details on the recent theft of sheep from Clevelode. The Clerk agreed to request further information from the local neighbourhood policing team.

7. Report by Cllr Kathy Wells, District Councillor

Cllr Kathy Wells had submitted a report prior to the meeting which had been circulated to Councillors. This contained a link to complete the local council satisfaction survey.

8. Report on local footpath issues

8.1 Mr Furlong, WCC Footpath Liaison Officer, told the meeting that footpath GU505

8.2 had still not been repaired and is now padlocked to prevent access. Jon White, WCC Footpath Warden Co-ordinator, had told Mr Furlong that the delay in repairs was caused by having to wait for the Contractors to have space available in their schedule

8.3 Cllr Fellows had spoken to Mr Bladder of Fowlers Farm about the signage on his land stating “Beware of the Bull”. Mr Furlong told the meeting that the wording on this signage was not admissible whereas “Bull in field” was acceptable. After much discussion on this matter Councillors agreed that young people on Duke of Edinburgh expeditions were putting themselves at risk when walking amongst livestock as they did not understand the potential risks and how to protect themselves. Mr Furlong agreed to ask Jon White to contact the LEA and request that D of E organisers prepare young people appropriately. Mr Furlong circulated an HSE information sheet on “Cattle and public access”

8.4 Mr Furlong informed the meeting that the bridge by the steps at Clevelode is rotten and that this has been reported to Jon White for repair.

9. Report from Tree Warden Cllr Rvd Peter Hughes.

9.1 Cllr Hughes told the meeting that he regularly receives information from the Clerk relating to tree planting schemes and he was very aware of the value of community orchards to villages for celebrations and education etc. However, there were many issues which needed addressing when considering a community orchard, the priority being to obtain the necessary land. Cllr Fellows added that the PCC were investigating the purchase of land adjacent to St Mary’s church which could be used for an orchard. Cllr Fellows invited Cllr Hughes to attend the next meeting of the PCC to discuss this further. Councillors offered their unanimous support to this project.

10. Report from Guarlford Village Hall

Mr Phil Thomas, Chair of the village hall Trustees had submitted this report.

Report from Phil Thomas, Chairman, Guarlford Village Hall.

“In June this year Guarlford Village Hall held its AGM which was attended by all 8 Trustees plus 10 members of the local community. At this meeting, the Chairman, Jenny Cameron decided to step down from her role but to remain as a Trustee. I was elected as the new Chairman, Heather Clarke was re-elected to the post of Treasurer and Gill Hollick was re-elected to the post of Secretary. The remaining Trustees continue to be Jenny Cameron, Andrea Candlish, Judith Knott, Richard Edwards and Roy Hollick.

The main function room of the hall has remained closed over the summer for phase 2 of the refurbishment but the Village Hall committee were still able to join with the Parish Council to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the D Day landings, with another successful village street party on 8th June. The Trustees are grateful to the Parish Council for supporting this event and look forward to further collaborative working in the future.

Phase 2 of the refurbishment project is now nearly complete and it is planned to re-open the village hall on 28th September at 2pm with a re-launch event to say thank you to everyone who has supported this project and market the hall to new potential users for the future.

Although the hall has received much needed remedial work as well as a facelift, there is still more to be done. The function room has been well insulated but unfortunately there were insufficient funds to cover the cost of a new boiler so fundraising will continue. In addition,

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the Peter Mayner room will require another £30,000 to insulate and transform into a usable function room.

With the hall now in a fit state for hire it is hoped that regular group use and occasional hirers will begin to generate sufficient income to support these additional improvements.

The Committee have organised a programme of fundraising events for the remainder of the year including a Barn Dance, Quiz, Garland Making, Nativity Café and Christmas Fayre.

I would like to invite you all to attend the opening event on 28th September when there will be more information about the scope of work which has been carried out on the hall to date.

If anyone knows of any group facilitators who might like to hire the hall for their sessions, the Trustees would be very pleased to hear from them.

Finally, the Village Hall website is now live and I am pleased to be able to share this with Guarlford Parish Council who use the hall as their main point of contact with the community.”

Phil Thomas,
Chairman
Guarlford Village Hall

Councillors asked the Clerk to thank Phil Thomas for his report.

The Clerk provided Councillors with details of the new website which also had pages for the Parish Council. Councillors were asked to provide the Clerk with an up to date photograph which could be included on the site.

11. Malvern Hills Trust Report

Cllr Fellows had previously provided details of the next meeting of MHT which would be when consideration would be given to issues raised in the public consultation.

12. Local Traffic Management Sub group update (Highways)

12.1 VAS Camera. The Clerk told the meeting that permission had been granted by WCC to install a camera post in Clevelode Lane but not on the bend of the main road by Guarlford Court. However, as the verge is owned by MHT permission has been requested from Jonathan Bills to install the post and a response is still awaited. Until the posts are in place the purchase of a camera has been put on hold. The Clerk also told the meeting that Bushley Parish Council have a camera to sell but it is not known how much is wanted for this. The Clerk of Bushley Parish Council has agreed to confirm this after their next meeting on 24th September. If Guarlford Parish Council decide to purchase a new camera, the Clerk will apply to the Commissioners Community Fund for the full amount of the purchase cost. If a camera is purchased second hand from another Parish Council, it is likely that this will have to be funded from the existing Parish Council budget. Cllr Simpson asked the Clerk if it would be possible to position a camera in the 40mph zone on the B4211 for vehicles

leaving the village towards The Plough. The Clerk agreed to investigate and report back.

- 12.2. Clevelode Lane repairs** The verges have now been repaired by WCC to good effect. Cllr Newport asked the Clerk if the Lengthsman could cut a new verge gully at the top end of the lane where rainwater was still pooling. As this is in a 30 mph zone the Clerk agreed to speak to the lengthsman about this.
- 12.3 Road surface at Clevelode.** The potholes at Clevelode have now all been filled.
- 12.4 White Gates.** The Clerk asked the meeting if anyone knew the whereabouts of the white gate which had been in Clevelode Lane prior to the carriageway repairs. Nobody had any information about this. The Clerk had spoken to Tanya Crake from Highways who in turn had asked the contractors. The Contractors had no knowledge of any gate being present. Councillors asked the Clerk to write to County and District Councillor Tom Wells about this as he had been instrumental in obtaining this for Guarlford.

13. Parish Environment

- 13.1 Lengthsman:** The Clerk reported that the Lengthsman, Jeremy Moore, had carried out PROW work as requested on the same footpaths as previously and would be happy to work on any other footpaths identified by Councillors subject to the necessary approval.
- 13.2 Defibrillator workshop** The Clerk confirmed that this will take place on 4th November starting at 7.30pm in the village hall. The Clerk agreed to distribute flyers for this and advertise it on the new website. Cllr Johnson offered to distribute flyers to residents of Clevelode.
- 13.3 Bus Shelter.** Cllr Hughes had been called away from the meeting earlier so the Clerk agreed to e-mail him about the Bus shelter to request an update and place this on the agenda again for the next meeting.
- 13.4 Village Pond at the junction of Rhydd Road and Blakes Lane.** Mr Tom Vivian had been corresponding with MHT about the state of this pond, which had become blocked with debris and weed growth, and copied this exchange to the Clerk. It was agreed to review this again at the next meeting.
- 13.5 Hedge alongside B4211** It was reported to the Clerk that the hedge outside Guarlford Court had overgrown the short length of pavement fronting the property. The Clerk confirmed that she had spoken to Mr Pete Donovan who had commenced cutting back some of the vegetation. The hedge on the opposite side of the road alongside the Glebe Fields also frequently becomes overgrown with brambles. Cllr Fellows agreed to contact Mr Parslow to attend to this.
- 13.6 Vehicle Parking in Penny Lane and Penny Close.** The Clerk told the meeting that she had been contacted by Sharon and Chris Brinkley about vehicles, including a boat, which was regularly parked outside their property. Cllr Newport reported to the meeting that she had researched the legal position on this matter and found that there were no regulations being contravened. In view of this councillors felt that there was little to be done to

rectify the situation and asked the Clerk to report back to Sharon and Chris Brinkley.

14. Planning

- 14.1** The Meadows – Alpacca Tearooms This application was withdrawn on 1st August 2024
- 14.2** 2 Bamford Close This application was approved on 13th September 2024
- 14.3** 6 Bamford Close This application was approved on 13th September 2024
- 14.4** Gammonds - This application was still ‘pending’ as of the current date.

15. Other administration and liaison with other bodies

- 15.1 EVCI strategy** --The Clerk had emailed a link to councillors with more information about this. Councillors discussed the value of an electric charging point in the village. Possible locations would be The Plough and maybe the Village Hall
- 15.2 Safety of Electric Powered Micromobility‘Vehicles and Lithium Batteries Bill’**
The Clerk had forwarded to Councillors details of an Early Day Motion by Yvonne Fouargue to tighten the law on the safety of these products. Electrical Safety First and the National Fire Chiefs Council were calling on all councils to support this motion. Councillors agreed that this was an important issue but did not warrant further attention from the Parish Council at this time.
- 15.3 CALC AGM** The Clerk had circulated details of this meeting to Councillors. Cllr Newport and Cllr Johnson confirmed that they wished to attend. The Clerk agreed to book them both a place.
- 15.4 GPC / Village web site** - This had already been discussed at item 10
- 15.5 Local Government Boundary Commission Summary.** The Clerk had previously circulated information on this to Councillors. The final recommendations were that Worcestershire should have 53 divisions, an increase of one, with 49 single-councillor and 4 two-councillor divisions across the county. Guarlford sits within Powick and The Hanleys with two Councillors.
- 15.6 Worcestershire on Demand Bus Service** The Clerk informed Councillors that following the last meeting of GPC she had contacted Worcestershire on Demand who agreed to add a stop at the top of Clevelode as suggested by Councillors, if this was at all possible.

16.1 and 16.2 Finance

Cheques Paid out since last meeting of GPC

Date of cheque	Chq no	Payee	Amount
13.5.24	671	Atkinsons and Co Accountants Oct 23 – April 24	134.40
10.6.24	672	J Moore Lengthsman May	288.00
10.6.24	673	G Hollick -Clerks Wages May	254.06
10.6.24	674	HMRC Tax on Clerks Wages May	63.40
10.6.24	675	G Hollick – Clerks Wages June	253.86

10.6.24	676	HMRC Tax on Clerks Wages June	63.60
27.6.24	677	J Moore Lengthsman June	144.00
17.07.24	678	Atkinson and Co Accountants May/June	38.40
7.8.24	679	G Hollick – Clerks Wages July	254.06
7.8.24	680	HMRC - Tax on Clerks Wages July	63.40
7.8.24	681	G Hollick – Clerks Wages Aug	253.86
7.8.24	682	HMRC Tax on Clerks Wages Aug	63.60
7.8.24	683	J Moore Lengthsman July	144.00
13.8.24	684	J Moore Lengthsman Aug	144.00
16.9.24	685	G Hollick - Clerks Wages Sept	254.06
16.9.24	686	HMRC Tax on Clerks Wages Sept	63.40

Cheques not showing on bank statement

Date of cheque	Chq no	Payee	Amount
13.8.24	684	J Moore – Lengthsman Aug	144.00
16.9.24	685	G Hollick - Clerks Wages Sept	254.06
16.9.24	686	HMRC Tax on Clerks Wages Sept	63.40
Total			461.46

Money which has been claimed but still to be credited to account.

WCC Lengthsman scheme reimbursement part payment Aug	63.00
Total	63.00

Current Account

Bank statement as at 16 th September 2024	£6263.45
Minus value of unpresented cheques	£ 461.46
Sub total	£5801.99
Plus claims awaiting credit	£ 63.00
Total	£5864.99
Deposit	£ 689.90
Charity	£ 110.55
Total worth	£ 6665,44

The Clerk asked Councillors for approval of the cheques raised since the last meeting. This was proposed by Cllr Medcalf, seconded by Cllr Johnson and agreed unanimously.

16.3 Current Account The Clerk asked Councillors to consider giving approval to the Clerk to pursue transferring the current account to an on-line

account. The Clerk had discussed this with CALC who recommended that the account should be on-line. Currently there were only 10% of all Parish Councils across the County who were not operating an on-line account. Cllr Simpson added that the account should be set up with access for 3 people, the Clerk, Chairman and Vice Chairman. The Clerk agreed that when any payments were to be made she should notify the Chairman and Vice-Chairman in advance and continue to provide a financial statement to all Councillors at each meeting as at present. With these conditions in place Councillors agreed that the Clerk should transfer the Parish Council current account to an on-line account. Proposed Cllr Huskinson, Seconded Cllr Simpson and agreed unanimously.

17 Any other business

Further to the discussion with Alison Maddocks at the start of the meeting Councillors asked the Clerk to respond to both Alison and Rev Gary Crellin suggesting a meeting to be held in St Mary’s church on Saturday 19th October in the morning.

18 Date of Next Meetings: -

Monday 9th December 2024

Monday 10th March 2025

Signed

**Cllr Michael Huskinson
Chairman**

Date