

BISHOPSTONE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Bishopstone Group

*Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 10th November 2021 at 7.30pm
in Stretton Sugwas Village Hall.*

PRESENT: Councillor John Macklin (Chairman), Cllr R Morgan; Cllr M Holmes; Cllr C Draper; Cllr Lewis Goldwater; Cllr S Knights; Cllr S. Crump; Cllr L Handscombe and Cllr S Keefe.

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs Lesley Hay (Parish Clerk) Ward Cllr David Hitchiner.
2 members of the public present

The Chairman welcomed those present to the November meeting.

MINUTES

1. To receive apologies for absence – none received
2. To receive declarations of interest or written requests for dispensations – none received.
3. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 1st September 2021 - it was unanimously agreed that these minutes should be adopted as a true record.
4. Chairman's Report:

I am sad to report the sudden death of John Verry on 27th September, John represented Bishopstone parish as one of their councillors from 2009 until 2015. He will be remembered for the work he carried out on the roads and footpaths, he helped with the replacement of styles with gates on Bishopstone's footpaths to make the parish style free and improve access to all.

A thank you to Councillors Sarah Keefe and Rosemary Morgan for their hard work in painting Bishopstone Kiosk the result has greatly improve the look and will hopefully last a good few years.

I received an email from a resident on Bishon Lane complaining that the verges had not been cut down the Lane. The clerk contacted the Locality Stewart who quickly discovered the lane was on the cutting list so it should have been cut at the same time, as the rest of the parish's verges. Thanks to the quick action of our Locality Stewart Paul Norris, within a week the contractors had returned and cut the lane, Many thanks to Paul.

Nigel Archer a resident who lives in Bridge Sollars asked to use the Parish councils litter picking kit along with some purple bags which were provided. The kit has now been returned thanks to the Archer family for picking up the litter in their area. Nigel Archer had contacted the Parish Council back in the summer also asked about the sand bags for the parish he is willing to store the sand bags if we can get them, I replied that we would discuss this at the November meeting.

The Bank account saga is ongoing but a I hope for news soon, the difficulty arose because we were removing and adding signatory's as well as opening a new account all this is dealt with on-line with a 10 days' period between each action.

4.1 Kenchester Parish Councillor vacancy

Co-option of new Parish Councillor. The Chairman reminded Councillors that a vacancy had occurred with the resignation of Neil Newton. The Chairman was delighted to introduce Kevin Smith who had recently shown an interest in becoming a Parish Councillor. The Parish Council then followed its co-option procedure; Mr Smith was unanimously voted in and duly appointed as a Parish Councillor.

He signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form and moved to the table with full voting rights. The Clerk will complete the necessary paper work and inform the Elections Officer.

4.2 Byford Parish Councillor Vacancy

The Chairmen introduced Mr Mark Geary who has shown interest in becoming a Parish Councillor representing Byford. Unfortunately, Mr Geary has not lived in the village for the required 12 months – but he was welcomed to the meeting and invited to attend future meetings until May when he would have fulfilled the required criteria to become a Parish Councillor.

4.3. The election of a Vice Chairman has been deferred until the May elections – unless a volunteer comes forward to take on the role in the interim.

5. Ward Councillor's report – will be circulated as Leader's Newsletter.

6. Finance: Account's sheet/schedule of payment sheet circulated.

(6.1) A schedule of payments sheet had been circulated and it was unanimously agreed to pay all outstanding invoices.

(6.2) After some discussion – it was unanimously agreed to re-join HALC and the Clerk prepared a cheque and this was signed.

(6.3) To discuss budget for 2022-2023 and agree Precept request.

To consider and approve Budget for 2022-2023

A draft proposed budget had been circulated.

After discussion it was unanimously agreed not to increase the budget - and to approve a budget of £8,500 for 2022-2023.

To consider and approve the Precept for the forthcoming financial year.

It was unanimously agreed to keep the Precept at £8,500 for the financial year 2022-2023.

The Clerk will submit an application form to Herefordshire Council before the 31st December, 2021.

The Clerk confirmed the accounts have been sent to the internal auditor for the 6 monthly review.

The clerk explained that the annual clerk's salary increases for 2021-2022 were still in negotiation and, when agreed, would be back dated to April 2021.

7. Highways and Environmental Matters:

7.1. Footpath Officers' Reports BY31

Following an incident where a sheep got stuck in the bog and a local resident went in to save it - and then got stuck himself and was fortunate that his wife was alerted to the problem and was able to get help. As a result, in the interests of health and safety, it was agreed to erect sign. However, the wording on the sign diverting walkers off the route was questioned by the Locality Steward and the sign removed.

It was agreed that a warning sign necessary and it was agreed that that the Chairman would go ahead and make a sign based on the suggested wording by the Locality Steward *Subject to flooding, Caution!* - for immediate display. In the meantime, the clerk was asked to arrange a meeting with the Locality Steward to discuss ways of preventing walkers from using this footpath which may result in a tragedy.

BY31 – the electric fence across this footpath – has now been made safe and a letter of thanks has been sent.

7.2 Bridleway, Green Lane. Providing dog bin was discussed and as situation seems to have improved; it was agreed to monitor the situation.

7.3 Speeding issues A438 - no up to date information.

7.4 Update on free trees –Cllr Holmes has taken delivery of 30 trees. After some discussion on the various options where these could be planted – it was agreed that they should be ‘heeled in’ until the Spring. Cllr Holmes will liaise with the Estate and with Cllr Goldwater.

7.5 Sandbags – it was agreed to order a palette of sandbags to be delivered to Bridge Farm. These to be divided and some taken to Bishon Lane to top up their numbers.

7.6 Notice Boards – Byford Common and Church - a quote of £150 +VAT to repair each Notice Board had been received from D C Gardening. After discussion – it was unanimously agreed to accept this quote – clerk to liaise.

8. Recent Correspondence: nothing to report.

9. Planning applications: None to date

10. Brief update on ‘Making space for Nature in our parish’.

Cllr Rosemary Morgan and Cllr Sarah Keefe have carried out an autumn tidying of the 3 wildflower areas in Bishopstone/Kenchester. The plants are now well established and have set seed. More plants have been added particularly at Kenchester Triangle. A new wildflower area is being developed at the top of Bishon Lane where it meets the main road through Bishopstone.

Following an email from Sarah King who has recently joined Herefordshire Wildlife Trust as the Team Wilder Community Engagement Officer. Team Wilder is a nationwide initiative to encourage more people to get out and take action for nature, whether in their gardens, on local nature reserves or by joining online campaigns. The Clerk was asked to extend an invitation to Sarah King to give a short presentation at the next meeting in January.

Date of next meeting will be Wednesday 12th January 2022

Please note - starting at 7.00p.m. due to having a guest speaker.

Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15 p.m.

Signed:

Date: