

GARWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held remotely on Thursday 25th February 2021 at 19.00hrs

Present ... Councillors: Tony Phillips (Chairman), Chris Strange, Rose Sparey, Phil Tucker and Cara Campbell.

Also present were: Ward Councillor Fagan, Mark Hearne (Parish Clerk) and three residents.

1. **Apologies for Absence...**None.
2. **Declarations of Interest & Requests for Dispensation** – None
3. **Minutes of the previous meeting on 28th January 2021** – It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes as a true record, and these will be signed by the Chairman in due course.
4. **Open Session**
 - 4.1 **Ward Councillor Toni Fagan** reported on the following issues:
 - 4.1.1 – Planning permission for the development at St Mary’s Church has not been granted as there is concern over the license for discharge issued by the Environment Agency. Ward Councillor Fagan agreed to seek further information on this issue.
 - 4.1.2 – A resident has written raising concerns about various planning issues and unaffordable housing and damage to local roads. The resident also expressed concern over the ditch at Caldicot Farm. It is understood that the landowner has agreed to pipe the water that flows from this ditch.
 - 4.1.3 – The Enforcement Officer at Herefordshire Council has checked the pavement outside Broad Oak and determined that it is compliant with planning permissions.
 - 4.1.4 – Lockdown has meant a significant increase in the number of people visiting Garway Hill. The Locality Steward has visited the site but as the track serving Garway Hill is privately owned no action can be taken to prevent people using it. Ward Councillor Fagan agreed to see if the owners of the track can be identified but suggested that signage might be something worth considering.
 - 4.1.5 – The level of Council Tax for 2021/22 will be increased to the highest level possible to bridge the gap in funding due to Covid 19.
 - 4.1.6 – There is a piece of work which is seeking information on the facilities available to young people in rural communities. The Clerk agreed to forward any information provided by the Community Centre.
 - 4.2 **Local Residents**– The following issues were raised.
 - 4.2.1 – A resident asked for the contact details of the Chairman of Garway Village Hall Charity as they are interested in purchasing the porch from the old village hall. The Clerk agreed to provide the contact details.

5. **Sale of the old village hall** – The Chairman reported that a buyer has been found for the old village hall (including the ransom strip) who has agreed to pay circa £90k for the asset.
6. **Planning ...** To consider planning applications received from Herefordshire Council.
 - 6.1 – Planning Consultation 210246 – Haskells, Whitelands Road, Broad Oak, Herefordshire. Retention of development carried on in non-compliance with planning permission 192922 (creation of dwelling). Following discussion. Councillors confirmed their support for these proposals and it was RESOLVED that the Clerk notifies the LPA accordingly.
7. **Finance**
 - 7.1 The current bank balance is £28,739.52.
 - 7.2 It was RESOLVED to make the following payments:
 - 7.2.1 Clerk’s salary in accordance with his employment contract (February 2021)
 - 7.2.2 PAYE (February 2021 - £93.20)
 - 7.2.3 Postage - £7.92
 - 7.2.4 Stationery - £11.98
 - 7.2.5 Lengthsman - £447.60 – Councillor Strange reported that the lengthsman has agreed to empty the dog bin, which has been installed on the Common, free of charge.
 - 7.2.6 HALC - £427.64
 - 7.2.7 Defibrillator battery & electrode pads - £309.54.
8. **Clerk Correspondence** – Correspondence on the following issues has been received:
 - 8.1 – A resident has expressed concerns over various issues including the amount of housing development in Broad Oak and its lack of affordability, the poor state of the roads and a ditch at the entrance to Caldicot Farm. Ward Councillor Fagan commented on the issue with the ditch at Caldicot Farm explaining that the Locality Steward has visited the site and concluded there are no non-compliance issues. At the request of the Chairman Ward Councillor Fagan will ask the Environment Agency to assess the ditch to establish whether there is any leakage of effluent from the nearby slurry lagoon.
 - 8.2 – A representative from the Garway Hill Commoners Association had written advising that the Parish Council will be denied access to their accounts. The Chairman advised that as owners of the Common it is anticipated that the auditors will expect to be provided with details of the resources available for the maintenance of the Common. In response, a representative from the Commoners Association commented that the issue over the accessibility of accounts will be swept up as part of the future governance arrangements and the Parish Council will be provided with recommendations emerging from those deliberations in April 2021.
 - 8.3 – The Garway Hill Commoners Association appreciated the offer of financial support towards the purchase of plantings for the track leading to the Common but had decided against accepting the offer.
9. **Commons** – There was nothing further to report following the previous discussion (see 8.2)

10. Footpaths – Councillor Tucker advised there are no specific concerns across the footpath network but enquired about the footpath diversion across land owned by Councillor Rose Sparey. Councillor Sparey noted the concerns about the footpath and will seek a resolution to the issue. Councillor Tucker mentioned that a resident has asked for a replacement gate on their land and it was RESOLVED that the Clerk refers the request to the Locality Steward.

11. Lengthsman – Councillor Strange reminded the meeting the quotations have been received from the Lengthsman for the two following pieces of work.

11.1 – Restoration of 50 metres of a Common verge opposite the public house (£1672.00 ex VAT)

11.2 – Clear, pipe and backfill the ditch from Tennesfield (£898.00 ex VAT)

It was recognised that financial probity ideally requires three quotes and at the last meeting it was RESOLVED that Golden Valley Construction be invited to quote for the work. Both the Clerk and Councillor Strange have attempted to arrange a site visit but it seems there is little enthusiasm from the company for undertaking this work. The Chairman agreed to acquire additional quotes, but the Clerk commented that all estimates must be based on the same specification. Councillor Strange asked if he could be present during any site visit. Rather than wait until the next Parish Council meeting to consider the quotes it was RESOLVED to hold an extraordinary meeting on the 9th March 2021.

12. Children’s Playground – Mrs Sue Thomas reported that a meeting has been held with Mr Dave Tristram from Herefordshire Council who provided invaluable advice on the process for seeking grant funding and suggested that evidence of a consultation with the local community is key to a successful bid. A survey has been launched seeking the views of residents and already 94 responses have been received which are overwhelmingly in support of a revamped playground. A further meeting with Mr Tristram has been arranged for the 8th March 2021 and it is intended to submit the first application by the end of March 2021. There was a brief discussion on the preferred surface at the playground and it was agreed to consider the options and associated costs.

13. Matters for the next scheduled meeting – None were raised.

14. Date of Next Parish Council meetings – 9th March 2021 & 25th March 2021

Meeting closed at 20.40hrs

SIGNED DATE

