

**VOWCHURCH GROUP PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Michaelchurch Escley, Newton, St Margarets, Turnastone, Vowchurch**  
**Minutes of the Vowchurch Group Parish Council meeting held on**  
**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 7.30pm in Vowchurch & Turnastone Memorial Hall**

**PRESENT** – Councillors P Mason (Chair), T Williams, E Williams, S Cole, A Picton, H Franklin, E May, J Kernahan and R Lloyd.

**IN ATTENDANCE** – PCSO Pete Knight, Mrs L Cowles (Clerk) and two members of the public.

**1. ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Ward Councillor Peter Jinman.

**2. RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & CONSIDER ANY WRITTEN APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION**

- There were no declarations of interest or written requests for dispensation.

**3. ADOPT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ORDINARY MEETING** – 21<sup>st</sup> November 2019 – The minutes were signed as a true and accurate record.

**4. OPEN DISCUSSION** – The members of the public present, wanted to greatly thank the lengthsman for his efforts before and after Christmas in clearing the C1206 near St Bartholomew Church. The church footpath is no longer treacherous. They felt that the on-going problem stems from the field opposite the junction with the B4348. Rain water pours off the field across the road and down the C1206 through the village. There appears to be a 10-metre-wide strip on land within the field which is not cultivated. Planting willows along this strip could help absorb some of the water. Members of the public present would be happy to provide the saplings, if the landowner would give permission for them to be planted. There are a number of volunteers in the village who would be happy to help with planting. The Parish Council agreed that they would be happy to support the initiative and suggested that they contacted the landowner directly. The Lengthsmans latest report to the Parish Council stated that problems in this area are primarily caused by the drainage pipe being blocked with debris washed in off the road. As the pipe is oversized for the Lengthsmans capability it will need to be jetted by Balfour Beatty. This had initially been reported to the Locality Steward nearly a year ago, in August 2019 and again more recently. Councillor Cole made the Parish Council aware that Herefordshire has received £250,000 of extra funding from central government to help with drainage issues. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Ward Councillor Jinman to request extra funding be made available for several drainage issues within the area.

Members of the public also enquired whether there have been any updates on the public path diversion order for footpaths VO53 and VO57 (part). The Chair confirmed that the Parish Council has had no further updates.

**5. REPORTS**

**5.1 Local Police** – PCSO Knight reported that there has been only one incident in the area where items have been stolen from a farm in Michaelchurch Escley. He emphasised the importance of reporting crime, the police will always come to see you and can offer free advice and support along with helping with ways to prevent crime in the future including Smartwater, camera's and new padlocks etc. November had been a busy month with courier fraud but calls have now reduced and some arrests have been made. Officer Sarah Smith the Business and Rural Crimes Officer has settled into her post and has completed several operations locally which have seen had good results.

**5.2 Ward Councillor** – Ward Councillor Peter Jinman was unable to attend the meeting. His report had been forwarded to Councillors, via email, prior to the meeting.

**5.3 Lengthsman report** – The Lengthsman was unable to attend the meeting. Councillors reported pooling water at Rose Cottage, Turnastone, Crossways, Michaelchurch Escley and beyond the Old Rectory, Newton. Potholes have been reported on Vagar Hill, when will these be completed?



**5.4 Footpath Officers** – Councillor May reported that as it has been so wet, she had been unable to walk many paths. There is frustration with reporting defects on the Herefordshire Council website as you need to report each problem individually. If Councillor May would like to forward the defects to the Clerk, she will report them.

**6. CLERKS UPDATE** – Thanks you letters have been received from Dore Community Transport and Vowchurch & Turnastone PCC for the Parish Councils donations. Correspondence was received during December from parishioners concerning speed on the B4348, the railings in a field opposite Ladywell Cottage and correspondence from Peterchurch Parish Council regarding flooding on the B4348 at Clatterbrook. All correspondence had been forwarded to Councillors, was noted and responded to. Peter Jinman requested an update on the TRO waiting list for a speed reduction on the B4348 and has received the following response ‘My colleagues are presently working on the January 2020 update of the prioritised waiting list for TROs. It is hoped that this exercise can be completed by the end of January/beginning of February, so I will revert to you at that time’. Correspondence between a local parishioner and Verging on Wild was noted. Balfour Beatty have emailed parishes requesting the preference for verge cutting for the coming year. They have already noted that Vowchurch Parish Council would prefer verges to be cut once per year in the late summer/early autumn. For the rest of the year limit cutting to safety cuts of one metre or one flail’s width whenever cutting is necessary. There are several opportunities for the Parish Council to meet with the Neighbourhood Development Plan team at the end of February or beginning of March if they are considering reviewing their Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan would not be reviewed in the near future.

## **7. CONSIDER PLANNING**

### **7.1 PLANNING CONSULTATION**

**Site:** Turnastone Court, Vowchurch, Herefordshire. HR2 ORA  
**Description:** Proposed application to vary internal layout, change the fenestration on the north elevation and to erect a new attached lean-to extension for a plant room and equipment store.

**Application No:** 194285 **Grid Ref:** 335846:236463

**COMMENT** - The Parish Council shares the reservations of some local residents about the provision of yet more holiday accommodation in Turnastone. Holiday accommodation is already apparently being provided in another part of the Farm which was intended for educational use. It notes that when the original proposals for Turnastone Farm were approved they were for a much broader range of uses, including business and education, than holiday accommodation which was then a much smaller element. All this diversity seems to have been lost at a time when the local area needs homes for local people and space for local businesses. The Parish Council therefore recommends that Herefordshire Council revisit its original planning consent to determine whether more holiday accommodation is really appropriate to local needs. In any case the Parish Council suggests that the building already has enough space for the provision of heating and therefore objects to the proposal for a "plant room".

### **7.2 PLANNING CONSULTATION**

**Site:** The Old School, Vowchurch, Herefordshire. HR2 ORB  
**Description:** Application for variation of condition 2 following grant of planning permission 192211 (remove single storey lean to at the rear of the house and construct a new 2 storey extension) – to allow the extension to be built as per the amended drawings.

**Application No:** 194348 **Grid Ref:** 336155:236528

**NO OBJECTIONS**



### 7.3 LISTED BUILDING CONSENT GRANTED

**Site:** Michaelchurch Court, Michaelchurch Escley, Herefordshire HR2 OJR  
**Description:** Change of use from ancillary building to independent accommodation for live/work unit.

**Application No:** 183721 **Grid Ref:** 330850:234466

### 7.4 AGRICULTURAL & FORESTRY BUILDINGS & OPERATIONS – PRIOR APPROVAL IS NOT REQUIRED

**Site:** Turnastone Court, Vowchurch, Herefordshire. HR2 ORA  
**Description:** Application for prior notification of agricultural development – Proposed steel portal framed building to be used for the storage of animal feed and fodder.

**Application No:** 194336 **Grid Ref:** 335775:236364

### 7.5 AGRICULTURAL & FORESTRY BUILDING & OPERATIONS – REFUSAL OF PRIOR APPROVAL

**Site:** The Long Barn, Michaelchurch Escley, Herefordshire. HR2 OJW  
**Description:** Prior notification for proposed implement and tool building.

**Application No:** 193917 **Grid Ref:** 332433:233521

## 8. FINANCE

**8.1** Confirmation of bank balance - £13,219.77 Statement Sheet No. 140 issued 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

**8.2** Receipts – None.

**8.3** Payment to Mrs Linda Cowles for December 2019 Clerk's hours and £37.72 plus VAT for ink cartridges – **Payment agreed.**

**8.4** Payment to Mr T Griffiths, invoice no. TGC0955 for roads account November 2019 (1) of £364.00 plus VAT and invoice no. TGC0956 for roads account November 2019 (2) of £364.00 plus VAT – **Payment agreed.**

**8.5** Payment to HMRC of £99.20 for PAYE Oct-Dec 19 – **Payment agreed.**

**8.6** Finance Working Group – The finance working group confirmed that spreadsheets and invoices had been checked and all were in order. If Councillors required copies of the quarterly reports, please contact the Clerk.

**9. ROADS** – The Parish Council noted that the recent exceptional weather conditions have caused several problems within the parish. The lengthsman had visited the area near Rose Cottage, Turnastone and had reported that several areas of pipe were totally blocked with silt causing the road to flood. As this is on a bend and in a dangerous area it was agreed that the lengthsman should clear this defect as a specific task. There are still problems at Maerdy Farm and near Percival Place along with the area discussed earlier near St Bartholomew Church. Balfour Beatty stress that ditches fall under Riparian Ownership and should be maintained by the landowner. Councillors raised concerns that many landowners do not have the equipment and are not legally allowed on the roads to clear these problems. It was agreed that in the first instance the Clerk would seek clarification from the Locality Steward as to what certification landowners would need to carry out these works along with enquiring with Ward Councillor Peter Jinman about any possible funding. It was also agreed that to enable the Parish Council to monitor progress on reported defects the clerk would compile a spreadsheet showing completion of works.

**10. GREEN LANE/BERRINGTON LANE, VOWCHURCH** – The Clerk confirmed that she has received no further updates regarding the application from the Ramblers for a modification to the definitive map. It was agreed that she would contact the Rights of Way Officer at Balfour Beatty for an update.

**11. FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER** – Reporting crime to the police, Herefordshire Cabinet meeting in Ewyas Harold, Parish Councillor vacancies.

**12. NOTE THE CORRESPONDENCE SHEET** – The correspondence sheet was noted.

**13. RAISE MATTERS FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** – Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 7.30pm in Newton Church Room - Roads

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.30pm

Signed.....

Dated.....