**VOWCHURCH GROUP PARISH COUNCIL**

**Michaelchurch Escley, Newton, St Margarets, Turnastone, Vowchurch**

**Minutes of the Vowchurch Group Parish Council meeting held on**

**Thursday 15th October 2020 at 7.30pm in Vowchurch & Turnastone Memorial Hall.**

**PRESENT –** Councillors P Mason (Chair), A Picton, I Chadwick, T Williams, R Lloyd, E May and M Engel.

**IN ATTENDANCE –** Ward Councillor P Jinman, PC Jeff Rouse and Mrs L Cowles (Clerk).

1. **ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –** Councillors J Kernahan, S Cole and H Franklin.

*The Chair welcomed Councillor Iain Chadwick to his first Parish Council meeting.*

1. **RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & CONSIDER ANY WRITTEN APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION –** Councillor R Lloyd declares a non-disclosable interest in agenda item 6 once the letter from a member of the public was discussed; the declarations book was signed accordingly. There were no written applications for dispensation.
2. **ADOPT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ORDINARY MEETING** – 17th September 2020 – The minutes were signed as a true and accurate record.
3. **OPEN DISCUSSION -** For residents to raise local matters – No members of the public attended the meeting and therefore no specific points were raised.
4. **REPORTS**
   1. Local Police – PC Rouse reported that the area was quiet in regard to crime although there has been an increase in Herefordshire of vulnerable people falling victim to Courier Fraud. Please make elderly and vulnerable friends or relatives aware that the police will never ask for money, bank details or tell them to withdraw money from their bank.
   2. Ward Councillor – Ward Councillor Jinman reported that a number of roads have been resurfaced in the area which included the B4347, which has been finished with white lines at the edge of the carriageway hopefully to make the edge more visible to drivers. The development of Peterchurch primary school will go ahead. It will be environmentally built and will be able to take an increase in numbers. Herefordshire is still one of the lowest counties for Covid-19 cases but members of the public must still be encouraged to wear facemasks. There is a concern about the effects of Long Covid in the younger age groups as well. Councillor Picton raised concerns that whilst the roads had been resurfaced there is still a problem with mud being left on the roads and white lines would soon become invisible. Ward Councillor Jinman recommended reporting mud on the road to the Locality Steward or police as it is a criminal offence.
   3. Lengthsman report and any new road defects – The Lengthsman was unable to attend the meeting. His monthly report had been forwarded to Councillors prior to the meeting.

*Councillor Engel joined the meeting*

* 1. Footpath Officers – Councillor May continues to walk the footpaths. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Balfour Beatty about the Improved Maintenance Trial and enquire what minor maintenance works would be required.

1. **CLERKS UPDATE –** The Clerk reported that the B4348 from Vowchurch Accident Site to Cockyard Turn would be closed from Monday 26th October – Tuesday 3rd November from 0900 – 1700, with no weekend work. Talk Community has confirmed that the Covid-19 response line is still open during the week and has been embedded in the customer services team within the council. They have measures in place in the event of a second lockdown. There is plenty of information available on the Herefordshire Council website. Ward Councillor Jinman suggested completing a Resilience Plan, which Talk Community can help with. It was agreed to include this on the November agenda.

A landowner has contacted the Parish Council after a car has damaged the fence again on the corner of C1206 near Ladywell House in Turnastone. It was agreed that this is not a Parish Council matter.

1. **CONSIDER PLANNING**
   1. **PLANNING CONSULTATION**

**Site:** Caeiron Farm, Michaelchurch Escley, Herefordshire. HR2 0PU

**Description:** Proposed general purpose agricultural building together with a new access

from C1205, hardstanding, bund, entrance gate and fencing

**Application No:** 202590 **Grid Ref:** 328337:239027

**NO OBJECTIONS**

**PLANNING WHITE PAPER –** It was agreed that the Parish Council had no comments to make regarding the Government white paper on changes to planning policy and regulations consultation.

1. **FINANCE** 
   1. Confirmation of bank balance - £8,697.78 Statement Sheet No. 149 issued 17th September 2020.

Receipts – None.

* 1. Payment to Mrs Linda Cowles for September 2020 Clerk’s hours plus £1.83 postage – **Payment agreed.**
  2. Payment to Mr T Griffiths, invoice no. TGC1228 for street furniture works of £50.00 plus VAT and invoice no. TGC1229 for September roads account of £373.00 plus VAT – **Payment agreed.**
  3. Payment to HMRC for PAYE July – September 2020 of £71.00 – **Payment agreed.**
  4. Finance Working Group – Receive Quarterly report – The finance working group had been unable to meet, it was agreed to defer to November meeting.
  5. Budget 2021/22 – To was agreed to increase the training budget to £500 with a proposal to increase the precept by 10%. This will be discussed at the November meeting. The 2021/22 budget was approved.

1. **SPEED REVIEW B4348 AND C1206 –** Whilst Balfour Beatty has confirmed that there is a request for a review of the speed limit along the B4348, this does not guarantee that the request will get any higher in the queue as these are reassessed every year. The criteria selected for assessing the priority for speed limit requests include; Collison record, Number of accesses, Length, Road classification and Likely scheme cost. Councillor Picton advised that approximately 38 people have been contacted to write to Ray Wallace, the Senior Engineer at Balfour Beatty, although most have received a generic response. The Parish Council has now been waiting for approximately 5 years to get a review but don’t seem to have any influence on how these are assessed. It was agreed to write to Ray Wallace for more detail as to how each element was assessed and how he had come to each figure.

Ward Councillor Jinman confirmed that Herefordshire Council are currently reviewing their contract with Balfour Beatty and will raise the concerns with the Cabinet Member responsible.

1. **BRIDLEWAY ME3 (MICHAELCHURCH ESCLEY) –** Councillor May confirmed she has visited the landowner and would recommend the Parish Council support the diversion. Councillor May is unaware of any local opposition. It was agreed that the Parish Council would support the diversion and requested the Clerk write to the landowner accordingly.
2. **FOOTPATHS VO53 AND VO57 (Part) VOWCHURCH PUBLIC PATH DIVERSION ORDER –** The correspondence from Mr Clive Richards, Rights of Way Casework and Charting Officer was noted. It is proposed to hold a local inquiry. Arrangements for the inquiry are now being made and details will be sent to the Parish Council in due course. The Clerk confirmed she had completed the on-line survey as requested and had confirmed that a member of the Parish Council would like to accompany any site visit.
3. **CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS REVIEW –** It was agreed that the current arrangements for dealing with code of conduct complaints are fair and reasonable. It was agreed that the Clerk would respond accordingly.
4. **TRAINING –** It was agreed that this was on-going for Councillors when needed. The Clerk advised that HALC run a number of training courses and also offer in-house training sessions at a cost of £200 plus VAT plus mileage costs. Ward Councillor Jinman suggested joining together with other local Parish Councils to share costs.
5. **WEBSITE AND EMAIL ADDRESS -** The Clerk confirmed she has contacted GV Webdesign to allow Word documents to be uploaded to the website instead of PDF’s to enable the Parish Council to be compliant with the new website accessibility regulations. There is also the possibility of uploading posters etc. to make the website more interesting and try to engage with the local community more. The Clerk requested a change to the Parish Council email address for ease of use. It was agreed to change the email address to [vowchurchparishclerk@hotmail.com](mailto:vowchurchparishclerk@hotmail.com)
6. **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATES 2021 –** It was agreed to continue to meet on the third Thursday of every month apart from December. Due to Covid-19 restrictions the Parish Council will meet at Vowchurch & Turnastone Memorial Hall to enable meetings to go ahead whilst observing social distancing rules. Zoom meeting will re-commence if Covid-19 restrictions change.
7. **NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER –** Police warning regarding Courier Fraud, Countryside Code, Covid-19, speed limit on B4348 in GV News.
8. **RAISE MATTERS FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** – Thursday 19th November 2020 at 7.30pm, Vowchurch & Turnastone Memorial Hall, subject to Covid-19 restrictions – Resilience Plan, Quarterly finance report and Trees.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Signed………………………………………………………..

Dated…………………………………………………………