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| **Logo, company name  Description automatically generated** | **KEMPLEY PARISH COUNCIL**  **Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting**  Held on Monday 16th January 2023 at 7.00pm in Kempley Village Hall |

**Present:**

**Councillors:** Martin Brocklehurst (Chairman); Robert Howson (Vice Chairman),

Kim Reynolds, David Lewis

**Officers:** Tim Dain (Clerk)

**In attendance:** Gloucester County Council Councillor Gill Moseley

No members of the public

**Invited guests:** Clare Stone (Buses4Us)

1. Clare Stone informed councillors that she is Chair of Buses4Us, a community action group formed in March 2021 following the cessation by Stagecoach of the Newent to Ross-on-Wye and Newent to Ledbury bus services. Initial public protests were unsuccessful however they did lead to funding being identified for a Ross to Ledbury via Newent service that will go live before Easter 2023 and be known as The Daffodil Line. This new route must be environmentally sustainable and commercially viable and is aimed at leisure and personal business travel including a stop at Ledbury Train Station. A journey time of less than one hour will allow a 2 hourly frequency, with the route including Much Marcle via the B4024.

Funding is currently being finalised and will determine whether the service will be 7 days per week and/or include a Friday and Saturday evening service. Money has been raised via business sponsorship, individual donations and from local councils. Newent, Ledbury & Ross Town Councils have each pledged £3 per voter and Upton Bishop, Dymock, Linton and Much Marcle Parish Councils are anticipated to approve £2 per voter. Clare informed Council that the route cannot include Kempley village if it is to keep to a journey time of less than 1hour, however it will pass through the Parish approximately 1.25 miles from Kempley Green at Windcross crossroads.

Councillors expressed regret that the route did not come through the village and asked whether this could be changed, Clare advised to do so would take the route time above 1 hour and lose an area of Dymock. Councillors discussed likely uptake of the service by locals and walkers/visitors to the Daffodil season. It was requested that Buses4Us consider service variation during the three Daffodil Weekends based on Dymock, Kempley, Oxenhall.

The market bus (Tiller’s Green shopper) will continue until July however will cease when the Daffodil Line starts. Clare agreed to explore Newent Community Transport continuing and coming through Kempley Village or running a pilot during peak visitor weeks, possibly with Forest of Dean (FoDDC) tourism funding or via other post-Covid funding streams. The only other option currently is Dial-a-ride.

It was suggested that using electric vehicles is explored.

**Main Meeting**

1. Apologies were accepted from Cllr. Tom Jackson
2. There were no declarations of interest or written requests for dispensations.
3. Council **resolved unanimously** to approve and sign the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 21st November 2022. Proposed Cllr. Howson, seconded Cllr. Reynolds.
4. Public Open Forum – no members of the public were present.

**Items For Consideration**

**Planning**

1. No new planning applications have been received.
2. No new planning decisions have been received.

**Reports**

1. GCC Cllr Moseley gave a verbal report on the following topics:

Matters relating to Forest of Dean District:

* The Planning Committee has been remodelled as the Development Management Committee with the aim of improving quoracy and ward representation issues.
* A motion has been passed to seek to improve the condition of the River Wye

Matters relating to the Gloucestershire County:

* The newly appointed Director of Transport is anticipated to change the way highway repairs are managed.
* Significant staff churn has created a lack of continuity in some departments.
* The budget for 2023-24 is currently being finalised.
* GCC is to introduce spot fines for certain offences e.g. parking in cross hatch areas
* The ‘Highways Local’ budget remains available for capital programmes and the Build Back Better Fund remains open to applications for a short while longer. Cllr Moseley has already supported Kempley Parish’s request for funding for a new noticeboard and help with one of the kissing gate installations.

Cllr. Brocklehurst raised the dilapidated state of road boundary fencing in Fishpool and general poor state of road signage which Cllr Moseley will take forward.

**Action:** Clerk to send a picture and location map to Cllr. Moseley

**Action:** Councillors to consider other possible projects

1. Council received the Clerk’s report (Appendix I).

The clerk verbally updated on the requested use of HCC Recycling centres. An email was sent to the ward councillors responsible for Ross-on-Wye and for Ledbury and a hard copy letter to the leader of the council. Three responses have been received, all confirming that Kempley residents, as GCC Council Taxpayers, are not eligible to use the Herefordshire sites. Nicola Percival, Waste Services Manager responded as follows:

*“The sole use of Household Recycling Centres for residents who pay their council tax to the responsible authority is not uncommon across the country. Unfortunately, this is a service area where the quantity of waste and cost of such use by those outside of the county is difficult to measure. Herefordshire Council introduced the booking system during COVID and has chosen to keep it in order to provide better value for its residents. With the authority now facing very tight budgets and having to make difficult decisions about services I’m afraid the sites will not be made accessible to any residents outside of the county.”*

Cllr Moseley suggested this would be worth revisiting in the new financial year.

**Items For Exchange of Views:**

1. Cllr Lewis updated Council on the large volume of information worthy of inclusion in the welcome pack with permissions being finalised. As there is considerable duplication across the websites for local organisations, it was suggested that a single ‘landing page’ for Kempley would be beneficial with links to other local pages of interest. This idea was supported in principle subject to costs being identified. It was noted that the Fastershires team offer IT training in Herefordshire and there may be opportunities for training and/or sponsorship in future from Full Fibre.
2. Cllr Brocklehurst updated that 4 Kissing gates were installed in December 2022 at sites on Matthews farm. The fifth gate funded for 2022/23 is to be installed at a site in Fishpool near Brickyard Cottage. The sixth gate funded via Cllr Moseley’s Build Back Better Fund will be installed at Moorhouse.

This leaves 3 stiles on the Daffodil Way, all these sites have now been agreed with landowners for replacement with kissing gates and GCC have again agreed to fund half the cost. Council needs to identify funds to pay the balance. It has already been requested that funds left over in the grant to re-establish the Daffodil Weekend are used for this.

Susanne Hopes, GCC’s Public Rights of Way officer has asked Council to support a meeting with Mike Townsend, Windcross Walking Group and volunteers regarding footpath maintenance and repairs as GCC has identified funding to support volunteer groups.

**Action:** Clerk to facilitate meeting in the Village Hall.

1. Highway Matters

* The clerk advised that 7 new parish boundary road signs funded by the grant money already received have been ordered and delivery is awaited. Some will be fitted to poles in situ whilst some will need to be repositioned.

**Action:** Clerk to request estimate for installation from supplier

* Andrew Middlecote (GCC Highways Manager) has confirmed that the old road signs will be disposed of by GCC and will not be made available for other uses.
* Documenting the state of public highways to strategically influence repairs was deferred. It was noted that this is not a problem specific to Kempley.

1. Cllr Brocklehurst updated that the Kempley Community Broadband Project contract has been issued and includes 176 properties across both Herefordshire & Gloucestershire. 6 Households initially expressing an interest withdrew and there are 2 empty properties, however individual grants have been increased to address this and maintain the overall budget. The total cost of the project cannot exceed £1,000,000 but is likely to be approaching this figure. A connection to the Village Hall is included but there will be a service contract cost. Full Fibre may agree to sponsor this and it was agreed in principal that the Parish Council would if absolutely necessary contribute, subject to an appropriate resolution. It is anticipated that Full Fibre will implement detailed planning and begin installation Spring 2023.
2. The clerk advised he had liaised with Tim Rickard (DyFRA) regarding verge maintenance. Tim has advised that there is nothing substantive to add to the maps and correspondence discussed at the September 2022 meeting. Verges should be cut after daffodil seed has set around late June and with due regard to conservation. GCC’s contract arrangements with Ringway still stand and DyFRA will continue to liaise with the contractors to ensure the work is conducted in the appropriate manner as before.
3. No update was offered on Council’s Biodiversity strategy.
4. A request for funding for the Daffodil Line Bus service (Item 134) was not supported. This would be reviewed if the service changed to travel through the village.
5. In view of HCC’s refusal to allow Kempley parishioners to use Ledbury and Ross recycling centres, the value of additional recycling opportunities within the village was discussed. GCC offers bulky waste collection at a cost of £25 per item and it was speculated that GCC may offer reduced rates for grouped collections.

**Action:** clerk to investigate GCC bulky waste collection services.

1. Provision of Broadband in the Village Hall – see item 147, for future resolution if it’s necessary for Council contribute to service costs.

**Items For Resolution & Decision:**

1. Council **resolved unanimously** to approve a precept of £6,271 for Financial Year 2023/24. This is a 1.48% increase on the previous year (See RFO’s report & 2023/24 budget – Appendices II & III)
2. Council **resolved unanimously** to withdraw support for an updated Centenary Stone information display due to being unable to finalise a version agreeable to all parties.
3. Council **resolved unanimously** to agree in principal support for two kissing gates to replace stiles at Cherry Lea, subject to funding being identified (see item 144).

**Documentation review**

1. Council **resolved unanimously** to adopt the updated version of the following policy:

* Health & Safety Policy

**Financial Matters**

1. Council **resolved unanimously** to add Cllr Reynolds as signatory to the Council’s bank account and a mandate was duly signed.
2. Council **resolved unanimously** to approve the following financial reports at 31/12/2022:

* Bank Statement
* Bank reconciliation
* Budget monitoring report
* Reserves statement

**Action:** Clerk to write a letter of thanks to a parishioner for her work to support the Village Green Christmas Tree and send flowers. (To be funded from Chairman’s allowance)

1. Council **resolved** to approve the following online payments made since the last meeting:

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| DATE | PAYMENT TYPE | DESCRIPTION | POWER | AMOUNT |
| 11/11/22 | DD | Website/IT – Website Hosting | LGA 1972 s.142 | £7.20 |
| 28/11/22 | SO | Clerk’s Salary | LGA 1972 s.112 | £236.80 |
| 30/11/22 | DD | Website/IT – Website Hosting | LGA 1972 s.142 | £7.20 |
| 26/12/22 | SO | Clerk’s Salary | LGA 1972 s.112 | £236.80 |

1. Council **resolved** to approve and sign the following cheque payments:

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| DATE | CHQ No | DESCRIPTION | POWER | AMOUNT |
| 15/12/22 | 489 | Morelock Signs Ltd | Road Traffic Reg. Act 1984 s.72 | £940.78 |
| 16/01/23 | 490 | Clerk’s expenses (includes balance on Christmas Tree) | Various | £132.59 |

**General**

1. The following items were received for the March 2023 meeting agenda:

* Staffing matters – clerk’s appraisal
* Annual Parish Meeting 2023
* King Charles III’s coronation celebrations
* Due to NHS strikes and waiting times consider offering first aid courses.

**Action:** clerk to investigate availability and cost.

1. Date and time of next meeting: **Monday 20th March 2023 at 7:30pm**

**Kempley Village Hall**

With no further business the meeting closed at 08.35pm

Signed (Charmain) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Appendix I – Clerk’s report (January 2023)

Appendix II – Budget 2023-24

Appendix III – RFO’s report (3rd Quarter)