Clerk’s report (September 2023)

**Council’s website updates -** the current Insurance Policy Schedule, Certificate of Public Liability and Certificate of Employers Liability have been added to the website. An updated Asset register that includes details of when assets are checked has also been added along with an Asset condition report completed by the clerk on 17th August 2023.

The **Notice of Public Rights** time-period during which members of the public can request to inspect and make copies of the Council’s Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) and accounting records for the 2022/23 accounting year has now expired. There were no requests received. Both the AGAR and the accounts can be found on the Council’s website at: https://kempleyparishcouncil.org/accounts

The **gas barbeque and gazebo** purchased for the 2022 Daffodil Weekend now appear on the Parish Council Asset Register to ensure they are checked for safety. The Register can also be found on the website. Approval for this action has been confirmed by the Daffodil Weekend Committee.

Agenda item #103 - A letter has been received via FoDDC from the Home Office, signed by Dehenna Davison MP (Minister for Levelling Up) and Damian Hinds MP (Minister of State for Prisons and Probation) about Anti-social behaviour **Community Payback** and **Immediate Justice** programmes. Whilst action will be at Local Authority level, Parish Councils have been invited to identify opportunities to implement the programmes.

Agenda item #96 - **Ash Dieback Project, replanting scheme:** The replanting season runs November to March, parish councils are encouraged to use local knowledge to identify suitable areas for replanting with groups of mixed native whips (young tree seedlings 2-3 years old) or possibly larger specimen trees.

There are two options:

* Submit areas to be considered for replanting on highways land by the Ash Dieback Team.
* Submit a request for whips / trees to be donated to the parish council, to plant themselves within the community.

There is a form to request the above. This planting work is being undertaken in addition to the County Council’s existing pledge on tree planting.

**GAPTC is calling for nominations for its** **Executive Committee**. Being part of this committee, which meets half a dozen times a year, is an opportunity to network with like-minded councillors and share learning. The executive works closely with the national association which lobbies national government on behalf of member councils. The Executive is instrumental in moving the organisation forward by actioning and overseeing the implementation of its strategic objectives. There are two vacancies in the Forest of Dean, the deadline for submissions is 28th October 2023.

**GAPTC has welcomed** **Chris Haine as the new Chief Executive Officer**, starting on 25th October. GAPTC, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting and empowering parish and town councils across Gloucestershire, has been at the heart of supporting the first tier of government for many years. Chris brings a robust background in the work of local councils, having been the Town Clerk at Coleford Town Council. He also brings with him an in-depth understanding of the unique challenges faced by local councils. He has experience with GAPTC having run several of its training courses in the past. Previously, he worked at DEFRA.

The **GAPTC Annual General Meeting** was held on Saturday, 22nd July 2023. The meeting’s minutes and associated reports can be found at: https://www.gaptc.org.uk/

A response has been received from Much Marcle Parish Council regarding the **C1289 Kempley to Much Marcle road** as follows: “*Our Highways working group inspected the road on Tuesday as far as the border with Gloucestershire in an open-door vehicle so they could examine the condition closely. They last surveyed the road about two months ago and had reported a few issues however, they did not find a pot hole which is within the reporting limits on this occasion. They did note that some potholes had been recently filled. They felt that the road as far as the border was in a better condition than it had been. They made the comments that any more changes to the road are unlikely as it's a C road with the part that lies in Herefordshire in an adequate condition.”*

This response has been shared with parishioners via the ‘Kempley Keep In touch WhatsApp group and Facebook, along with details of the HCC pothole reporting process.

A letter response was also received dated 14th August 2023, from Rachel Churchill, Balfour Beattie Complaints handler noting KPC’s comments but advising that the C1289 is not listed for resurfacing in the current financial year or within the current programme of work. The condition will be monitored through safety inspections and surveys. A copy of the most recent site history was enclosed.

Communication has been received via Facebook Messenger regarding an incident where walkers on the Daffodil Way felt at **risk of harm from cattle**. They were advised to report this at: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/public-rights-of-way/report-a-problem/>. Details were also forwarded to the Public Rights of Way Officer who advised that she would have a conversation with the landowner. The farm involved is in Dymock Parish. This is included in the report for awareness and to highlight that this is the first time that any communication has been received via Facebook Messenger.

Every three years, Kempley Parish Council has a legal duty as an employer to put eligible staff into a pension scheme and submit a **declaration of compliance to the Pensions Regulator**. Re-declaration is due in 2023 and the necessary declaration of compliance has now been completed and confirmed. The Council’s employee (i.e. the clerk) has opted out of being placed in a pension scheme and no further action is currently necessary.

The Pageant Master to Town & Parish Councils has written regarding the ambition to light 80 beacons in each county for the **80th anniversary of D-Day on 6th June 2024**. Those taking part will be sent the Certificate of Grateful Recognition enabling them to frame and display it as a lasting reminder of this moment in history commemorated. The Guide, message from the Prime Minister encouraging local communities to take part in lighting Beacons and the logo are available to download from the D-Day 80 website - [www.d-day80beacons.co.uk](http://www.d-day80beacons.co.uk).

Tom Brockington, Operations Manager – Our Shared Forest, West Forest District has advised via email that Forestry England will be hosting a **Forest Forum event on Thursday 2nd November**, with a morning optional site visit followed by a complementary lunch at Speech House and a series of presentations in the afternoon. The topic this year will be Forestry Management and changes to Silvicultural practices. There are limited free tickets available, a booking link will be made available in due course.

The Parish Council has been approached by a charity based in Stroud named **Allsorts** ([Home - Allsorts (allsortsglos.org.uk)](https://allsortsglos.org.uk/), who provide bespoke opportunities to children with disabilities and their families throughout Gloucestershire. These opportunities include fun day trips out, weekly family activities and sports clubs all adapted to meet individual needs, which are activities they may find difficult to access elsewhere. Allsorts have asked whether they are eligible to apply for funding from the Parish Council. They have been directed to the Grant Awarding Policy and advised that with an annual budget of just over £6,000 it is unlikely that grants will be considered unless they directly benefit Kempley parishioners.

**Upcoming GAPTC Training opportunities:**

Planning in Plain English: 19th September, 31st October, 7th November

In the Hot Seat: Being an Effective Chairperson: 19th September, 9th November

New Councillor Toolkit: Introduction 26th September, Feedback 25th October

Being a Better Councillor: 11th October Part 1, 18th October Part 2, 8th November Part 1, 22nd November Part 2

Councillor networking 25th September: Safer communities with the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner, Chris Nelson.

Book online at: <https://www.gaptc.org.uk/training-and-events>.

Please seek Chairman approval prior to booking and ask GAPTC to send invoices to clerk@kempleyparishcouncil.org.

**Actions tracker:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Actions from Ordinary Meeting 10th July 2023** | **Date Set** | **Status** |
| clerk to identify costing for a new St Mary’s road sign and agree expenditure with the Chair of the Daffodil Committee. | 10/07/23 | Done |
| clerk to email the Daffodil Weekend Committee to confirm the gazebo and barbeque are included on the PC’s asset register | 10/07/23 | Done |
| clerk to put updated Asset register & asset check documents on website. | 10/07/23 | Done |
| clerk to complete asset condition report for discussion at the September meeting. | 10/07/23 | Done |
| clerk to inform the Parish via social media that the Youth Fund exists. | 10/07/23 | Done 16/08/23 |
| Chair to investigate whether Buses4Us can offer a minibus service during the 2024 Daffodil Weekend. | 10/07/23 |  |
| clerk to request again a reciprocal arrangement between Herefordshire and Gloucestershire County Councils for use of recycling centres. | 10/07/23 | Done |
| clerk to locate the ’20 is Plenty’ road signs previously displayed. | 10/07/23 |  |
| clerk to obtain a copy of the Speedwatch toolkit from the GCC website. | 10/07/23 | Done |
| clerk to set a date in late May 2024 for the Annual Parish Meeting | 10/07/23 |  |
| clerk to obtain tenders for the Village Green maintenance contract for next year. | 10/07/23 |  |
| Council to donate seed trays and compost to the Wild Daffodil Seeds Project if required.  | 10/07/23 | Not required |
| Chair/clerk to produce a template and populate it for the verges included in the 2008 Licence to Cultivate. | 10/07/23 | Ongoing |
| Chair to discuss with volunteers and landowner designs for the new notice board. | 10/07/23 |  |
| clerk to right a letter of thanks to the landowner confirming the new arrangements. | 10/07/23 |  |
| clerk to submit a Parish Council response to the Dymock Woods Forest Plan | 10/07/23 | Done |
| clerk to submit a response on behalf of the Parish Council to the GCC Local Roads feedback survey | 10/07/23 | Done |
| councillors to distribute dog fouling letter and leaflets. | 10/07/23 | Done |
| clerk to request inclusion of the letter’s text in the Windcross Magazine | 10/07/23 | Done |
| Cllr. Goodwin to purchase and be re-imbursed for new flagpole rope | 10/07/23 |  |
| Cllr. Goodwin to purchase and be re-imbursed for Fishpool shelter notice board. | 10/07/23 |  |
| Clerk to arrange McAfee virus protection for the Council’s laptop | 10/07/23 | Done |
| **Actions from previous meetings** |  |  |
| clerk to set up councillor email addresses and draft a protocol for use. | 15/05/23 | Done |
| raise overnight parking/obstructive parking with County Highways | 15/05/23 |  |
| Cllr Reynolds to liaise with David Lewis regarding a Kempley ‘Home Page’ with links to different websites. | 15/05/23 |  |
| clerk to raise awareness of the council’s website via social media channels to increase traffic and improve visibility. | 15/05/23 | Ongoing |
| Cllr Goodwin to investigate cost of purchasing a suitable permanent cover for missing manhole cover outside Parkfields from Hereford Drainage for. | 15/05/23 |  |
| clerk to investigate cost of ‘No Overnight Parking’ signage. | 15/05/23 | Done |
| clerk to raise awareness of Fly-tipping reporting processes via social media. | 15/05/23 | Done 07/08/23 |
| clerk to write to HCC Highways about the C1289 Much Marcle to Kempley Parish boundary road. | 15/05/23 | Done 07/08/23 |
| clerk to send appointment form to GAPTC for Internal Auditor 2024 | 15/05/23 | Done 07/08/23 |
| Clerk to contact Forestry Commission and fact find about boom access | 20/3/23 | ongoing |
| Update the Kempley Emergency Plan. | 20/3/23 | ongoing |
| Use Parish Online software to record the location of existing and new carbon reduction initiatives identified through planning applications | 21/03/22 | Volunteer sought |