|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Logo, company name  Description automatically generated** | **KEMPLEY PARISH COUNCIL**  **Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting**  Held on Monday 18th September 2023 at 7.30pm in Kempley Village Hall |

**Present:**

**Councillors:** Martin Brocklehurst (Chair), Robert Howson, Denise Wood, Ricky Goodwin.

**Officers:** Tim Dain (Clerk)

**In attendance:** Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) Cllr. Gill Moseley.

David Lewis, candidate for co-option.

No members of the public.

1. Apologies were received from: Cllr. Kim Reynolds

Forest of Dean District (FoDDC) Cllr. Gill Kilmurray.

1. Cllr. Brocklehurst declared the following interest:

Project AURORA - Martin Brocklehurst is a partner in this European Funded Horizon 2020 project that will run for 3.5 years from December 2021 and is leading Work Package 5 Exploitation, Dissemination and Communication for the Project and will receive 70% of all staff costs and 100% of expenses.

1. ***Council resolved*** to approve the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 10th July 2023.
2. There were no members of the public in attendance.
3. After discussion, ***Council resolved*** to co-opt David Lewis to a vacancy on the Parish Council, proposed by Cllr. Howson, seconded by Cllr. Wood. An acceptance of office was signed.

**Items For Resolution & Decision:**

1. ***Council resolved*** that organisation of this year’s Act of Remembrance will be delegated to the Friends of Kempley Churches. The request to ensure the flagpole is functional was noted, Cllr. Goodwin has sourced a superior quality rope and will attend to this.

**Action:** Clerk to write to the Friends of Kempley Churches to confirm.

***Council resolved*** to re-use the wreath purchased from the Royal British Legion last year and donate £50 to the fund.

1. The clerk confirmed an earmarked reserve of £360 for providing a Christmas tree and holding a “Switching on the Lights” event on the Village Green.

***Council resolved*** that Cllr. Howson and Cllr. Goodwin will arrange this supported by volunteers. Cllr. Howson has negotiated a 20 feet tall tree at no cost.

***Council resolved*** to approve use of the £360 reserve for printing leaflets to advertise the “Switching On” event at an anticipated cost of £40, the purchase of new lights to replace broken ones at an anticipated cost of £200 and a small gift for children that attend the event.

**Action:** Cllr. Goodwin will assess whether the old lights are repairable and if so, get them PAT tested.

**Documentation review**

1. ***Council resolved*** to adopt the following updated policies and procedures:

* Planning Applications Policy version 2.0

**Financial Matters:**

1. ***Council resolved*** to approve the following financial reports dated 31st August 2023:

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

**Payments & Receipts**

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DATE | PAYMENT TYPE | DESCRIPTION | POWER | AMOUNT |
| 12/07/23 | DD | Website/IT – Website Hosting | LGA 1972 s.142 | £8.40 |
| 26/07/23 | SO | Clerk’s Salary | LGA 1972 s.112 | £241.20 |
| 11/08/23 | DD | Website/IT – Website Hosting | LGA 1972 s.142 | £7.20 |
| 26/08/23 | SO | Clerk’s Salary | LGA 1972 s.112 | £241.20 |

1. ***Council resolved*** to approve the following list of cheque payments:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DATE | CHQ No | DESCRIPTION | Budget/Power | AMOUNT |
| 18/09/23 | 509 | GAPTC – Internal Audit | LGA 1972 s.111 | £180.00 |
| 18/09/23 | 510 | Clerk’s expenses Jul/Aug (includes 2-year McAfee subscription) | Admin/various | £173.33 |
| 18/09/23 | 511 | Flagpole rope | War Memorials (LAP) Act 1923, s. 1 | £28.68 |

Cllr. Howson raised that the Village Hall Committee have not received payment for Council’s use of the Hall within the current and previous financial years.

**Action:** clerk to request invoices from the Village Hall Committee and bring to the next meeting for approval.

**Items For Consideration**

**Planning**

Cllr. Lewis declared an interest regarding P1151/23/FUL.

1. New planning applications:

* **P1018/23/TPO** Laurel Cottage, Kempley Green, Kempley, Dymock. 1 x Field Maple covered by G1 of DFTPO 65. Trim back re-growth on the western side of the tree overhanging the driveway of Laurel Cottage, back to the previous pruning points granted permission under planning application number P0301/19/TPO.

Considered ‘low impact’ under KPC Planning Applications policy. Response has been submitted within deadline to: https://publicaccess.fdean.gov.uk/online-applications

* **P0712/22/FUL** Stonehouse Farm Kempley Dymock. Conversion of existing agricultural building to No. 2 holiday units with associated landscaping, parking and works.

Considered ‘low impact’ under KPC Planning Applications policy. Response has been submitted within deadline to: https://publicaccess.fdean.gov.uk/online-applications

* **P1041/23/FUL** New Farm Access Gate, Land to East side of Saycells Farm, Construction of access to farmland from public highway and installation of pair of farmland access gates.

Considered ‘low impact’ under KPC Planning Applications policy. Response has been submitted within deadline to: https://publicaccess.fdean.gov.uk/online-applications

* **P1089/23/FUL** Saycells Farm, Much Marcle, Ledbury, HR8 2NP. Retention of existing temporary caravan for residential purposes while replacement house is constructed (currently approved until 16th December 2023 by permission P1684/20/FUL) until 25th June 2025 or when the house is capable of occupation, whichever is the sooner.

Considered ‘low impact’ under KPC Planning Applications policy. Response has been submitted within deadline to: https://publicaccess.fdean.gov.uk/online-applications

* **P1151/23/FUL** Laurel Cottage, Kempley Green, Kempley, Dymock. Variation of Condition 8 (services approved shall be laid underground) to enable fibre optic cable to be connected via an existing pole above ground relating to planning permission P0097/14/FUL.

Considered ‘low impact’ under KPC Planning Applications policy. Response to be submitted within deadline to: https://publicaccess.fdean.gov.uk/online-applications

1. The following planning decisions were noted:

* **P0643/23/FUL** | Variation of Condition 02 (approved plans) relating to planning permission P1197/22/FUL to facilitate changes to the approved scheme. Saycells Farm Much Marcle Ledbury HR8 2NP | Received: Fri 28 Apr 2023 | Validated: Tue 02 May 2023 | Status: Consent
* **P0680/23/FUL** | Erection of a single storey extension with associated works. The Bakery Fishpool Kempley Dymock Gloucestershire GL18 2BT Received: Wed 17 May 2023 | Validated: Thu 18 May 2023 | Status: Consent
* **P0509/23/FUL** | Erection of detached garage and garden store with ancillary accommodation above. 2 Stonehouse Cottages Kempley Dymock Gloucestershire GL18 2AT | Received: Tue 11 Apr 2023 | Validated: Wed 12 Apr 2023 | Status: Consent

**Reports**

1. GCC Cllr. Moseley gave a verbal update:

* Time is running out to apply for grit bins. Both large, blue and small, yellow bins are available.

It was agreed that new bins are needed: on the Fishpool to Upton Bishop Road (Chibler’s Hill), by St Ed’s Church and by Hill Brook Cottage on the Fishpool to Much Marcle road.

**Action:** clerk to request bins from GCC.

* The Gloucestershire digital innovation fund remains open to provide grants to community groups and organisations that help adults live full and independent lives through the power of technology. Information can be found at: [Gloucestershire digital innovation fund | Gloucestershire County Council](https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/business-property-and-economy/finance-funding-and-grants/gloucestershire-digital-innovation-fund/)
* Regarding the FoDDC Local plan, the first preferred option to build a new settlement near Huntley will not go ahead, meaning the second preferred option will now proceed.

1. The clerk presented their written report (Appendix I) and advised:

* Following the inspection of Council Assets, all are in acceptable condition, however vegetation needs cutting back around the Fishpool bus shelter.

**Action:** clerk to liaise with the contractor.

* Regarding reciprocal use of recycling centres, Cllr. Stark, Chair of Herefordshire County Council’s Environment & Sustainability Scrutiny Committee has acknowledged receipt of the request and forwarded it to the HCC Waste Team for a response. GCC Cllr. Moseley advised a cross funding arrangement is likely to be required.

**Action:** clerk to write to Colin Chick, GCC Director of Economy, Environment and Infrastructure to request they cover the cost.

* ‘No Overnight Parking’ signage is available at a cost of approximately £30 per sign, designs were discussed and support was expressed for campervan specific signage.

**Action:** clerk to identify availability of signage.

* Councillors are unwilling to accept the response that the C1289 Much Marcle road is in an acceptable condition.

**Action:** Clerk to write again requesting that resurfacing is reconsidered.

* Cllr. Goodwin has obtained a noticeboard to go in the Fishpool Bus Shelter and will put this up in due course.
* The clerk expressed thanks to whoever has attached a ring binder to the frame of the noticeboard in the Village Green bus shelter, this works well and frees up space.

**Action:** Thanks to be shared via WhatsApp

* Thanks were expressed to a parishioner for clearing vegetation around fire hydrants and kissing gates and for providing useful information to the GCC Public Rights of Way Team.

**Action:** clerk to send formal letter of thanks.

* The use of ‘Parish Online’ software to record the location of existing and new carbon reduction initiatives identified through planning applications has been an outstanding action for some time. Councillors discussed the usefulness of Parish Online, available for the past three years at no cost as part of the Council’s insurance deal. This free access will end next year.
* **Action:** clerk to include the cost of a subscription to Parish Online in the budget for 2024/25.

**Action:** clerk to send Cllr. Lewis the log-ins for Parish Online

* Cllr. Brocklehurst has requested Buses4Us consider a free park and ride service from Newent during the Daffodil Weekend.

**Items For Exchange of Views:**

1. It was acknowledged that the Kempley Emergency Plan is now out of date and needs updating to reflect changes in available communication methods (i.e. WhatsApp). SMS texts are potentially a more reliable method, both methods are dependent on up-to-date contact lists. GDPR issues need to be considered.

Regarding the Winter Plan 2023/24; Cllr. Goodwin was confirmed as Snow Warden. The current snow plough operator is considering his future in the role. Job Descriptions for both roles were reviewed, the Parish Council has been encouraged to recruit to this position which is a paid role with invoices sent to GCC.

**Action:** clerk to find current rates of pay for Snow Plough operators and inform Cllr. Goodwin who will clarify with the existing operator.

1. The draft design for a replacement St. Mary’s Church road-sign has been shared with the Friends of Kempley Churches and the GCC Highways manager Andrew Middlecote for comments. Ed McGregor, Free Sites Partnership Manager for English Heritage supports the new sign and use of the English Heritage logo.
2. The Community Approaches to Road Safety (CARS) Toolkit has been obtained.

**Action:** clerk to make the information available via social media, asking for feedback from parishioners on whether there is a significant road safety problem in Kempley and offering support from the Parish Council to set up a volunteer ‘Speedwatch’ group.

1. Individual email addresses for each councillor have been created in the format: [firstname.surname@kempleyparishcouncil.org](mailto:firstname.surname@kempleyparishcouncil.org), enabling parishioners to contact councillors directly. Council emails will be published on the website and noticeboards however, councillors may opt out of this by prior agreement. A protocol for use (Appendix II) will be appended to Standing Orders.

**Action:** clerk to re-send log in details to councillors.

1. The Ash Dieback Project replanting scheme was discussed. No sites were identified for replanting at the current time.
2. Road Verges

* 99 a – Road Verges Highways Agreement update.

Maps received from Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records were reviewed. These contain species data and there is overlap with the verges covered by the Parish Council’s Licence to Cultivate Highway Verges - Wild Daffodil Project 19th August 2008. (Ref NIO/LB/GRF1/17).

Data was gathered following DyFRA’s request for an ecological report made last year. It was suggested that a May/June “Bio Blitz” be carried out to capture additional data.

The Parish Council wants to use the GCC Conservation Road Verges Site Register format to document the current condition of the verges and the management regime in situ.

* 99 b – Road Verges: Mowing of verge by Moorhouse Farm.

The clerk apologised for any confusion, this was added to the agenda in error and should refer to the Restricted Byway known as Folly Farm Lane GKE28, adjacent to the Village Green.

The GCC PROW officer has confirmed this is cut by GCC contractors late July/early August as part of the annual cutting regime. It is the only path in the parish to be listed for this and had been removed as it appeared to be cut by someone else, then later re-added due to complaints that it becomes overgrown and unwalkable. An earlier cut in May is possible, however grass cuttings cannot be removed due to the prohibitive costs involved. It is environmentally beneficial to remove the cuttings to reduce fertility and promote species diversity. Local residents also occasionally deposit grass cuttings in the lane. It was agreed that the path will continue to be routinely cut by GCC contractors once in August only.

**Action:** clerk to request via social media that grass cuttings are not left in Folly Lane.

1. The Community Ownership Fund is a government initiative to enable the purchase of ‘Community Assets’ that are at risk of being lost. There is an online application process with a requirement to match funding. No potential assets were identified in Kempley at the current time.
2. A briefing note document was circulated regarding the Kempley Community Broadband Project. A press release of this information is anticipated imminently. Work has now started in Upton Bishop. There will be some road closures in Kempley from October.

**Action:** clerk to distribute information on road closures via social media and add to the website.

1. The Forest Community Energy Group has been set up to work with the Big Solar Co-operative in the Forest of Dean area to offer investment opportunities to members of the public. The minimum investment is £100 with an anticipated 5% - 6% return. Approximately 40 sites are being investigated however the infrastructure in Kempley is believed to be inadequate to support substantial inputs to the National Grid.

**Action:** clerk to chase meeting with a representative from the National Grid to discuss safety issues and infrastructure limitations.

1. Public Rights of Way

* 103a – Upgrades planned and completed:

GKE 13: a new Kissing gate has now been installed.

GKE 20: a proposed kissing gate on the boundary between Kempley Court and Hillbrook Farm has been agreed by one landowner with confirmation currently being sought from the other.

GKE 23: Hillbrook Farm, confirmation to proceed with a kissing gate has been received and is scheduled for completion.

GKE 29: on the Folly Farm/Matthews Farm boundary, a kissing gate has been agreed and is scheduled for completion.

GKE 38: the proposed diversion blocked by the Ramblers Association will go to a public hearing with costs met by the affected landowners.

GKE 3/16/17/18/19: diversion orders in and around Court Farm are anticipated to proceed despite objections from outside the parish. The Council expressed support for these diversions but concern that PROWs have not been re-instated within maize crops. The GCC PROW officer is aware of this and will discuss with the landowner.

GKE 2: Saycells Farm, a temporary diversion order has been made during construction works. These are supported by Council however must revert to the original route once construction is complete.

GKE 30: The offer to install kissing gates has been declined by the landowner.

* 103b - Additional sites for upgrades

The Parish Council has previously resolved (minute reference 21) to match fund up to five kissing gates in the current financial year. The cost has reduced from £250 to £200 per gate, therefore a total expenditure of £1,000 is already earmarked. This will come from the GCC Build Back Better Fund grant received in 2022. Use of the grant in this way has been agreed with the Daffodil Weekend Committee and GGC’s Economy and Strategic Planning Team. Four confirmed sites are listed above leaving one further site to be agreed, this will potentially be:

GKE 21: Kempley Court/Matthews Farm boundary. GCC are planning to install a new footbridge over Kempley Brook this Autumn, landowners will be offered a kissing gate once this has been completed.

GKE 12/14/15 Hillfields Farm.

Council expressed support in principle to part-fund up to a further three kissing gates.

**Action:** Cllr. Brocklehurst to walk GKE 12/14/15 to identify potential sites prior to approaching landowners.

**Action:** a resolution to match fund three more kissing gates to be taken to the November meeting.

The GCC PROW officer is sourcing additional PROW signage and will make this available as soon as possible.

* 103c -

Council expressed support for the use, with landowners’ agreement, of a robotic brush cutter to clear footpath headlands in late Summer. This would reduce the need for labour intensive hand clearing by volunteers. Council agreed in principle to joint fund this with GCC.

**Action:** Cllr. Goodwin to explore possible demonstration opportunities.

1. The council has been contacted regarding the Ministry of Justice’s Anti-social Behaviour Action Plan. ‘Community Payback’ and ‘Immediate Justice’ opportunities are being sought. The Council did not identify any at the current time.

**General**

1. The clerk gave notice that he would be leaving the post at the end of the year. Cllr. Brocklehurst proposed a vote of thanks to the out-going clerk for their service and standard of work. Cllrs. Wood and Howson were appointed to join the clerk on a recruitment panel.

**Action:** clerk to advertise the post with interviews scheduled in November for a January 2024 start.

1. To receive items for the November 2023 meeting agenda.

* 2024/25 Budget.
* Completion of road sign installations.
* Community first responder and First Aid training.
* Danger from falling branches – Forestry England

1. Date and time of next meeting: **Monday 20th November 2023 at 7.30pm**

**Kempley Village Hall**

With no further business the meeting closed at 9.40 pm

Signed (Chairman) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Appendix I: Clerks report (September 2023)

Appendix II: Use of Councillor email addresses