BREDENBURY GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

Held on Wednesday 29h May 2024 at 7.00pm at Bredenbury Village Hall

Present: Councillors: Jane Berwick, Hugh Farey, Alex Gerrard, John Hulse, Pete Jones, Massie Piggott,

In attendance: Clerk Vicky Hancock, Ward Councillor Bruce Baker

1. **Election of Chairman 2024-2025**
   1.1 Cllr John Hulse was nominated for Chairman by Cllr Piggott and seconded by Cllr Farey, there being no other nominees Cllr Hulse was elected unanimously as Chairman.
   1.2 Cllr Hulse signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and the Clerk countersigned.
   Councillor Hulse continued to chair the meeting
2. **Election of Vice-chairman 2024-25**
   Cllr Massie Piggott was nominated for Vice Chairman by Cllr Farey and seconded by Cllr Hulse, there being no other nominees Cllr Piggott was elected unanimously as Vice-Chairman.
3. **Election of Footpaths Officer** Cllr Hugh Farey was nominated by Cllr Hulse and seconded by Cllr Piggott there being no other nominees Cllr Farey was elected unanimously.
4. **Finance Working Group** members to remain as Cllr Libby, Cllr Hulse and Clerk Vicky Hancock.
5. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Libby, PC Lowri Jones
6. **Declarations of interest and written requests for dispensation: Item 15** Cllr Gerrard signed the book accordingly
7. **To consider the minutes of the previous meeting**: Parish Council Meeting 24th April 2024. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes and these were signed by the chairman.
8. **Open Session**
   8.1 Clerk had received notification that a stile at Upper Wacton to the Glebe is in a state of disrepair. Cllr Farey to inspect. The Clerk informed the council that the lights at the school had been altered so they did not shine into nearby properties.
   8.2 Ward Councillor Baker gave a brief update
   - reports of excessive mud on the road in some areas. Cllr Baker reminded the meeting that this can always be reported
   - a delay on some of the verge cutting but this was now underway
   - funding available through Herefordshire Council for PROW and work on C & U roads *(meeting adjourned at 7.14pm to move cars reconvened at 7.16pm)*
   - Drainage funding also available
   - 13.8 million deficit in council funding – budget for 2024-25 forecast at 8.7million
   - Transport hub approved at Hereford railway station
   - Transport plan consultation ongoing
   - Cllr Baker had visited the owners of Rowden Mill Station and reassured them that there was no possibility of the Greenway proposal going ahead during the current administration. He had also assured them that the wording in the draft local plan would be changed to reflect that any future development would require landowner consultation and consent.

   The Chairman thanked Ward Cllr Baker for his update.
9. Clerk shared the May budget monitoring. Councillors **RESOLVED** to accept the May monitoring and Cllr Hulse signed the document.

10. Finance

10.1 The Clerk shared the bank statement to 30th April 2024. Balance brought forward £13819.86. The balance at 30th April 2024 £17734.89 including remittance for 1st Precept payment £4500.00 Noted and signed by Cllr Jones.

10.2 Clerk shared the Bank Control Account to 30th April 2024 which detailed payments and receipts to date. Outstanding cheques total £990.61. Closing balance £16744.28. Noted and signed by Cllr Jones.

10.3 Cashbook expenditure & remittance2023-24 was presented to the council

10.4 It was **RESOLVED** to agree the following payments:

10.4.1HALC Internal AUDIT 23-24 £300.00
10.4.2 JACs Village Gates &Speed Indicator Device £8836.80
10.4.3 Flagmakers D-day 80 £38.34
10.4.4 GeoXphere Parish online £36.00
10.4.5 J Hulse Mileage £15.75
10.4.6 V Hancock Offices Expenses & Mileage £23.34
10.4.7 Clerk's May Salary and note assessment report re: Workplace Pension

11. Bank Signatories Following the resignation of Cllr Jones it was **AGREED** that the bank signatories going forward would be: Cllr Hulse, Cllr Berwick & Cllr Libby. Clerk to contact NatWest to initiate changes.

12. Policy & Procedure

12.1 New Financial Regulations were presented to the council for consideration. After discussion and it was **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** these with effect from May 2024.

12.2 Each Councillor had received a copy of an additional paper on Respect as part of Councillors Code of Conduct. This paper was **ACCEPTED.**

13. Annual Governance and Accountability (AGAR)

13.1 The Clerk presented the **Annual Audit Report** drawn up and signed by HALC Internal Audit Services.

13.2 The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the **Annual Governance Statement 2023/24**. Signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

13.3 The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the **Accounting Statements 2023/24**. Signed by the Chairman and the RFO.

13.4 Council **RESOLVED** to accept that Bredenbury Group Parish Council could sign the **Certificate of Exemption 2023/24** as income and expenditure has not exceeded £25,000 and therefore qualifies as a smaller authority. Clerk to email certificate to PKF Littlejohn, external auditors.

13.5 **Transparency Code Information** –a breakdown of all payments made over £100 during the year **2023/24** was presented to the councillors.

13.6 All papers to include **Explanation of Variances**, final **Bank Reconciliation** and **Transparency Code 2023/24** to be published on the website alongside the notice of the period for the **Exercise Public Rights** and **Publication of Annual Governance & Accountability Return** (Exempt Authority).

The Chairman recorded a vote of thanks on behalf of the council to the Clerk for all the work involved in preparing and submitting the audit documentation.

14. Planning Consultation P240840/F Little Wacton Lodge, Bredenbury, Bromyard HR7 4TQ. Proposed new garage, including change of use of agricultural land. As the planning notice was not posted until 22nd May and therefore had not been up for the statutory 3 weeks a decision was made to defer comment until the additional meeting planned for Tuesday 11th June.

15. **Lengthsman** Cllr Gerrard declared an interest in this item and left the meeting. Discussion followed regarding appointment of Alex Gerrard as contracted Lengthsman. Cllr Jones had reviewed the Lengthsman Contract and rewritten the relevant documentation for the post including the due diligence paper to cover H&S, first aid, system of working and manual handling. All papers have been agreed. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Alex Gerrard as Lengthsman subject to the provision of satisfactory insurance cover.
16. **West Mercia Police Community Charter**. Council agreed that the priorities discussed for the previous charter would still remain relevant. Clerk to return charter.
17. **Road Safety** There was celebration that the village gates had at last been installed after a very long and drawn out process. *(The Traffic Management Group met for the first time on 9th August 2021 to produce an aspirational Traffic Management Action Plan. The first meeting that the Chairman and Clerk held with the Assistant Police Commissioner, Paul Middlebrough, was 27th September 2022 to try and secure funding!)*
    Councillors had already received many positive comments. The Speed Limit Indicator is yet to be installed.
18. **Village Hall** As this was the first occasion when the Parish Council had been able to meet in the Village Hall the council had had the opportunity to inspect the improvements. Cllr Hulse gave a brief update on the future plans.
19. **Correspondence** Letter from Bredenbury Village Hall thanking the council for their recent donation.
20. **To raise matters for the next meeting**
    Lengthsman
    PROW
    Insurance renewal
21. **To note dates of the next scheduled meetings:**
    ~~*Wednesday 26th June @ 7.00pm*~~
    Please note this meeting is now to be held on: ***Thursday 27th June at 7.00pm***
    Wednesday 31st July @ 7.00pm
    Wednesday 31st August TBA
    Wednesday 25th September @ 7.00pm
    At the end of the meeting the Chairman thanked Cllr Jones for all of his valuable contributions during his tenure as a Parish Councillor and expressed his gratitude that Cllr Jones would still remain part of the NDP steering group and continue to offer his advice on matters relating to Risk Management.

The meeting closed at 8.13pm