

Minutes of the ordinary parish council meeting held on 4th September 2024, held at St Leonard's Church, Cotheridge.

Members Present: Cllrs Burrows (Chair), Cullen (Vice-Chair), Worrall, Guest and Longley.

Officers Present: L Law, Clerk.

Also present: Two members of the public.

24/47 Apologies for absence: To receive apologies and approve any for absence.

LGA 1972 S85(1)

Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that a record be kept of the members present and that this record form part of the minutes of the meeting. Members who cannot attend a meeting should tender apologies to the Clerk as it usual for the grounds upon which apologies are tendered also to be recorded. **Cllr Jones-Williams had sent apologies as she had a meeting at MHDC.**

24/48 Declarations of Interest and written requests for dispensation:

**Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 SI No 1159
Localism Act 2011, Part 1, Chapter 7, Section 28 (2)**

Members are invited to declare:

- (1) Disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI)** and any
- (2) Other registerable interests** in items on the agenda and their nature.
- (3) To consider written requests for dispensations from Councillors.**

Requests for dispensation must be in writing addressed to the Clerk and received as soon as possible before the meeting. **No interests were declared.**

24/49 Public participation:

Residents are invited to give their views and raise questions to the Parish Council on issues on this agenda or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the Chairman. Individual members of the public are permitted to speak for no more than 3 minutes. Members of the public may not take part in any other part of the Parish Council Meeting itself and the Parish Council cannot pass a resolution on matters raised during public participation. It was reported that St Leonard's is being developed in to a community space for residents. **Noted.**

24/50 District Councillor or County Councillor reports. To receive any reports from the District or County Councillors. Cllr Jones-Williams had provided a written report circulated to members and published on the website. **Noted.**

24/51 Chairmans Report. To receive a report from the chairman of the council. **Noted.**

24/52 Clerks Report. To receive a report from the clerk regarding matters that may not be included on the agenda. **Noted.**

24/53 To approve the minutes of the Parish Council. **LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 41(1)**

To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the council meeting held on 19th June 2024. The minutes were **approved** and the chair duly signed a copy. Proposed Cllr Cullen, seconded Cllr Longley.

24/54 Broadwas and Cotheridge NDP review. To receive a report, if available, (attached) regarding the Broadwas and Cotheridge NDP review, from the NDP Working Group. **Noted.** It was **resolved** that the council will proceed with funding from Localities. Proposed Cllr Worrall, seconded Cllr Cullen.

24/55 Planning. To note planning applications determined by Malvern Hills District Council. M/24/00806/HP Westwinds, Little Green, Broadwas, WR6 5NN. Proposed detached garage. **Approved. Noted.**

24/56 Road Safety and Speeding. For members to receive an update from Cllr Burrows concerning replies from the letter sent to involved parties. (see attached). Members were forwarded all replies received from involved parties. Members discussed the issues and it was resolved that :

1. Members wanted clarification on the speed surveys data conducted by WCC.
2. To reply to received letters
3. To confirm the site of bus stop in Cotheridge.
4. To contact local SNT partnership to site cameras in Cotheridge.

24/57 Council Policies. For members to consider the review and adoption of the following policies:

1. Financial Regulations. After reviewing the new NALC model Financial Regulations, members **resolved** they were adopted as amended.

2. Standing Orders. After reviewing the Standing Orders members **resolved** they were adopted as amended.

3. Code of Conduct. After reviewing the Code of Conduct members **resolved** to adopt the document without any amendments. Proposed Cllr Worrall, seconded Cllr Cullen.

24/58 Finance. 1. For members to note the following payments were made between meetings with agreement of the chair: Broadwas Village Hall £191.14 for printing contributions. Countrywide 583641 ground maintenance July, £581.96. J Moore Lengthsman July £288.00. Westcotec 16057 109.80, new battery for VAS sign. L Law Salary July £561.32. RPM 6436 £180.00 playground maintenance. Scanned invoices sent to members.

For members to note the receipt of £288.00 from Worcestershire County Council for the lengthsman scheme. **Noted.**

2. For members to consider the below payments:

Payee	Supplied	Amount
J Moore	Lengthsman August	£288.00
L Law	Salary August	As per contract
Countrywide	Grounds Maintenance August	£581.96
Broadwas Village Hall 1185	Hall Hire	£31.00

All the above payments were **approved** for payment. Proposed Cllr Guest, seconded Cllr Cullen.

3. For members to approve the bank reconciliation dated 30th August 2024. See finance report. A copy of the clerk's cashbook has been sent to the Finance Working Group for scrutiny. The bank reconciliation dated 30th August was **approved**.

24/59 Litter Bins. For members to consider the purchase of a litter bin for the layby by Tack Farm. Clerk to confirm with WCC and MHDC that the proposed location for the bin is within the parish boundary.

24/60 Councillor Training. To consider any training for members or staff. It was **approved** that Cllr Burrows would attend NDP training by NALC, cost £41.90 plus VAT and the clerk would attend CALC training for budget setting, £35.00 plus VAT. Proposed Cllr Cullen, seconded Cllr Worrall.

24/61 Correspondence.

1. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) is preparing the Service's strategic plan for 2025-2030, known as the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). There is a questionnaire, which can be accessed by following this [link](#) to provide you with an opportunity to consider which risks are of most concern and which should be priorities for the work of HWFRS in the coming years to 2030. It should only take about 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The closing date for responses is 6th September 2024. It was **approved** that the Chair would prepare a response for the clerk to submit in reply to the questionnaire.
2. NPPF Consultation. The Government published, on the 30th July 2024, a consultation version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) with a significant number of proposed amendments and has invited responses to these by the 24 September 2024. The NPPF sets

out the overarching national policies for planning and the changes reflect the new Government's manifesto commitments and reverses updates to the current version of the NPPF published in December 2023. Further information can be provided via this link:

[Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework)

The district council will be providing a response to the consultation and officers have provided a briefing to your ward members recently setting out the proposed changes and explaining what the implications may be for planning in the district. The briefing note (circulated to members) provides a summary of the proposed amendments, which may also help your council decide as to whether they wish to provide a response to the Government. **Noted.**

24/62 Councillor's reports and items for future agenda: Councillors are requested to use this opportunity to report minor matters of information or action not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas. Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision making.

Cllr Guest raised the issue of weeds growing on the footpaths in the parish. The clerk to contact the lengthsman regarding this matter.

Meeting Ended at 8.50pm

Report for item 24/54 Broadwas and Cotheridge Neighbourhood Development Plan Review.

- Further to the Parish Council decision to review the NDP a working group has been convened and met for the first time on the 27.8. 24. All Parish Councillors have opted to join and we have coopted ex Cllr Pearce. We welcome any interest in the review and will be organising further information and briefings.
- Planning matters are necessarily complex, and more recently at a national level are the subject of major review. This means it can be difficult to keep up with what this means and how things work.
- It is understood that some funding is available and we are seeking to confirm asap how this is accessed and how it might be used. From experience of forming the first and current plan being able to draw on expert advice and additional resources is critical.
- MHDC have a key role in planning and in supporting our review, and some promising initial contacts were made. We are now pressing for some answers to some key questions which will allow us to finalise our action plan and move forwards.
- It is understood that the review can take between 6 and 9 months, as it is likely to involve a Housing Needs Survey (when we ask all parishioners about their needs and the future), consultations and meetings and possibly a referendum.
- As we probably all recognise, discussion about the future and the planning arrangements can result in quickly formed polarised positions. It is therefore important for the Parish Council and the working group to do their best to adopt a fair and objective approach that is based on evidence, so that going forward it is clear in respect of new developments what is important to local people and why.

- It is hoped that some of the working group will be able to take advantage of some forthcoming training and at the next meeting we will be in a position to finalise our action plan and set out for parishioners the review process and how they can contribute.

Richard Burrows
Chair

Report for item 24/56.

Re Road Safety and Speeding.

1. Background and general points

1.1 Councillors will be aware that following the sending of a letter (see draft minutes of meeting held on 17th July 2024), replies have been received and circulated.

1.2 The purpose of this report is to summarise the above replies and data that has been supplied in order for the Parish Council to consider its response.

1.3 The principle areas of concern relate to 2 stretches of the A44 as it passes through the Parish, namely through Cotheridge (between HillTop and the Lightfoot Lane. And through Broadwas (village boundaries and run up in each direction (east and west).

1.4 Parishioners and the Parish Council have for many years reported and raised their concerns re speeding, as well as in the case of the Cotheridge stretch the number of accidents and incidents. The Cotheridge stretch is governed by the national speed limit i.e 60mph. Broadwas village has a 30mph limit with a 20mph school zone limit that operates at certain times of the day. Both the east and western approaches are at the national speed limit, and in both cases the reduction from this limit to 30mph is on a bend.

1.5 The A44 is a primary route feeding of the M5 and from Worcester into central Wales, and therefore carries at peak times a volume of holiday traffic, motorbikes and HGV's. (The former are primarily made up of delivery lorries, agricultural vehicles, horse transport and HGV's carrying aggregates to the many developments in the Worcester and West Midlands area). In addition the A44 serves as a main route for emergency service vehicles. There are also movements of wide loads reflecting the various mobile home/caravan and lodge sites that are located along and near to the A44. The A44 is also used by cyclists, which in turn demonstrates the importance of the area and other destinations in terms of tourism, sports and leisure.

1.6 The Parish Council will note and be grateful for the data supplied by the County Council, and welcomes the commitments of the Police and the County Council to continue to collect and share data, so that future discussions can be as evidence based as possible.

1.7 In considering the supplied data Parish Councillors may wish to consider and note the following.

1.7.1 As noted in the data supplied, it is indicative and further will always be limited by when, how and for how long it is collected.

1.7.2 The Parish Council is aware that West Mercia Safety Team also sites a mobile camera unit at various points on the A44, it is not presently clear whether the supplied data includes this.

1.7.4 The Parish Council will note and understand that the relevant authorities need to use a number of benchmarks in order to determine how best to respond. Compliance with speed limits being one of these thresholds. Another threshold would for example be serious and reported traffic accidents and incidents, including any fatalities and or serious injuries.

1.7.5 For many parishioners, their thresholds for concern relate to their lived experience, and the Parish Council therefore supports the need for all concerned to give equal weighting to this lived experience in terms of nuisance, noise pollution, environmental pollution and overall feelings of safety and security.

1.7.6 It is to be hoped that longer term data is accessible, as this would help to quantify and qualify an understanding of the concerns. It is a matter of recorded concern for example that reported incidents in particular on the A44 Cotheridge stretch, do not always appear to have been recorded by the respective authorities. The Parish Council is therefore committed to supporting and working with these authorities to ensure that there is a reliable record and that information is shared effectively between agencies.

2. Initial response to the data supplied:

2.1 The Parish Council does not presently have access to specialist and technical support in terms of a full analysis and understanding of the data supplied, however the Parish Council may wish to consider the following

2.2 A 44 Cotheridge - For the period 5/8/24 - 12/8/24 (Monday to Thursday) Total daily volume (aggregate of west and east bound measurements I.e vehicles) was 5546. The mean average

speed was 40-44 mph. The 85th%ile speed figure was 48 mph (west bound) and 46mph (east bound). It is understood that the 85th %ile speed is what many countries set speed limits using the "85th percentile", an idea that means that the top speed of 85% of the vehicles on a road should be considered legal. Using it as a basis for a speed limit has clear benefits: the limit has been set by popular opinion of drivers, so it should be based on the judgement and experience of a broad cross-section of the motoring public, and it ends up requiring little enforcement action as the vast majority of drivers will naturally comply with it. (Source roads.org.uk)

2.3 Data was also supplied for the further stretch labelled Hilltop conducted between 5/8/24 and 12/08/24. This identifies broadly similar findings. However the Parish Council may wish to scrutinise this data further.

2.4 Therefore subject to further discussion and or advice, it may be important to explore what conclusions can be drawn from this data. However in the letter dated 23.8.24 from WCC (S Gilmour) does not feel that this stretch of the A44 merits a speed limit lower than the present one I.e 60 mph.

2.5 Councillors may want to reflect on this position as it is contrary to the expectations of the parishioners who have shared their concerns.

2.6 Councillors will note that it has been hoped there would be support for a reduced speed limit for this stretch of the A44, the instillation of further signage and or other measures that can help drivers manage their speed such as road markings, road narrowing and APNR and or Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS). Ultimately the Parish Council may be dependent on the support and permission of the County Council for any further measures, however in terms of prevention and encouraging a proactive response the Parish Council may feel that some or all of the above measures, need exploring. The Parish Council may also want to explore and better understand whether or not a reduction in the speed limit would have a beneficial effect given that the data indicates most drivers comply with the limit. I.e if the limit was reduced to 50mph would this result in a further fall in average speeds?

2.7 A 44 Broadwas - The shared data was collected between 7/8/24 and 14/8/24 (Wednesday to Monday). This indicates a mean average speed of 40 mph on a daily volume 4993 vehicles. The 85th %ile figure was 50mph westbound and 51mph eastbound.

2.8 However it is disappointing to note that the survey does not relate to the area of concern, but rather to stretch of the A44 where the 60mph limit applies. (After the turning to Little and Broad Green, from the East and before the 30mph zone.

2.8 It therefore appears that as yet there has not been an opportunity for the County Council and its partners to address the concerns raised regarding Broadwas.

3. Summary and next steps?

3.1 The Parish Council is grateful for the response of all those it wrote to and for the production of data in respect of its concerns regarding the A44 as it passes through Cotheridge. The Parish Council is encouraged that the key agencies i.e the County Council and the Police have signalled their commitment to develop a meaningful dialogue with the Parish Council.

3.2 The Parish Council is disappointed that as yet it has not been possible to draw on data in relation to the A44 as it passes through Broadwas. The Parish Council should consider re stating this request directly and through the elected representatives at County and District levels.

3.3 In regard to the present response for Cotheridge the Parish Council should consider whether it is satisfied or content with this. In effect it appears the County Council is signalling that it is not prepared to take any action.

3.4 For both stretches of the A44, the Parish Council should consider whether per se the indicative position of the respective agencies, is good enough. It is not unreasonable for the Parish Councillors to expect those who have expertise and authority to come forward with a more comprehensive, proactive and preventative set of proposals. Whilst it is understandable that any organisation has to exercise thresholds for when it does or does not act, there has as yet not been any indication that the respective agencies are prepared to consider a more holistic and effective approach to addressing the concerns raised.

3.5 The Parish Council in addition to further representations and requests, should consider how best to further engage parishioners.

R Burrows
Chair

Signed

Dated.....

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