

The Minutes of Abberley Parish Council  
Held at Abberley Village Hall Committee Meeting Room at 7.30pm on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020

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Present: Cllr. Knight (Chairman), Cllr. Eden, Cllr. Eberlin, Cllr. Andrew, Cllr. Goodman, Cllr. T Nott.

In Attendance: (Carole Hirst) Clerk. MHDC Councillor. Cllr. Cumming.

Item 284	<b>Apologies</b>	Cllr. Pollock
285	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	Cllr. Eberlin declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Minute "Suffolk Lane and Jacobs Well – flooding issues". Cllr. Eden and Cllr. Andrew Declared a Disclosable Pecuniary interest in Matters Arising - 19/01746.Ful- The Orchard, Apostles Oak.
286	<b>Democratic Period/ Public Time</b>	None attended.
287	<b>Minutes</b>	Cllr. Eden Proposed and Seconded by Cllr. Goodman that the Minutes were a true record, and all agreed to adopt the minutes of the meeting held on the 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2020. The Chairman duly signed them as a true record. Cllr. Knight Proposed to approve the notes for the 16 <sup>th</sup> March 2020. Cllr. Eden Seconded. All in favour. Finance Item a) Payments and Receipts for the period to 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2020 to be ratified at this meeting. *See Finance item a).
288	<b>Matters Arising</b>	<b>Matters Arising from the Notes of the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Planning Procedure for Planning Committee</b> circulated on 21<sup>st</sup> March and approved by the Planning Committee. <b>Noted.</b></li><li>• <b>19/01746.Ful- The Orchard, Apostles Oak</b>, Abberley, WR6 6AD-Response to Planning Portal submitted.</li><li>• <b>WCC Siding Out – Hannah Davies update 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020.</b>- Report from Hannah Davies- "WCC have provided a plan marked in red with the area that can be sided out (Tenbury Road and Clows Top Road) and have decided that this is the only location where the siding out programme would be of benefit. If the siding out by the church was to take place, taking into the consideration a machine scraps the vegetation off the footpath and the work is not done by hand. Then due to the current condition of the footpath, it would not be able to withstand the machine and leave it in an unsuitable condition. As this section of the footpath by the bank and on route to the church is quite short could I suggest the Parish consider this an ideal job for the Parish Lengthsman Scheme. Action: Clerk agreed to put this on the Parish Council website for information and reply to Hannah Davies.</li><li>• Cllr. Andrew offered to take on the role of Parish Path Warden for Abberley. Cllr. Gibson agreed to forward the necessary contacts for Cllr. Andrew to progress this.</li></ul>
289	<b>County and District Councillor Reports</b>	Cllr. Cumming MHDC Report circulated prior to the meeting attached as Appendix 1. Cllr. Pollock WCC Report circulated prior to the meeting attached as Appendix 2. Reports Received.

Chairman.....

Date.....

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- 290 **Council's Policy Documents 2020/21**
- a) To note Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Risk Assessment, Asset Register, Code of Conduct. Cllr. Eden Proposed that all policies be accepted for 2020/21. Cllr. Andrew Seconded. All in favour. Cllr. Andrew noted that the Bench was installed in 2011 for the asset register. The Clerk to update the register.
  - b) To Approve the Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee. Cllr. Eberlin Proposed that the Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee be accepted for 2020/21. Cllr. Goodman Seconded. All in favour
- 291 **Planning**
- 19/00674/RM** - Land At (OS 7450 6737) The Common, Abberley- **APPROVED**. Paul Cummings was on hand to answer some queries as to the process used by Planning Officers in communicating with a Parish Council with regard to Planning Applications and whether the Parish Council would be consulted following consultation when the Parish Council's comments had not been taken into account. Cllr. Cumming confirmed that the District Council are not required to explain decisions to a Parish Council once a planning application is determined. However, he has insisted that MHDC consult with him regarding the drainage scheme for the site. Cllr. Andrew raised concerns regarding moving earth around the site during construction and Cllr. Cumming replied that the Parish Council should keep an eye on the development and report anything to Planning Enforcement MHDC if the Developer does not conform.
- 20/00144/HP** - The Glebe, The Village, Abberley- Conversion of existing garage and carport to provide new kitchen/utility, ground floor extension to reception 1, 2no roof lanterns to kitchen/utility, first floor dormer window to bedroom 3, 2no roof lights to bedroom 1/staircase, new detached double garage with room above, internal remodelling, new composite boarding to elevations and ancillary works- **Approved 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020**.
- 20/00449/LB** Pool House Barns, Bromleys Barn, Studd Lane, Abberley- Proposed conversion of existing attic to create study- Consultation to 7<sup>th</sup> May 2020. Cllr. Nott did not think a site visit necessary and Cllr. Goodman and Cllr. Knight agreed having read the application. Therefore Cllr. Nott determined that the Parish Council had no comment. No dissension came from the other Planning Group member Cllr. Andrew.
- 292 **Progress reports from Parish Councillors/ A) Neighbourhood Plan Working Group**
- Cllr. Knight reported that as of Monday 20th April we have not had a confirmation letter from Malvern as to whether we need to undertake Strategic Environmental/Habitats Regulations Assessments before we go to Public Consultation. David Clarke is chasing this for us.
- David Nicholson has advised that although, according to Malvern, the considered expectation is that we do not have to produce anything else it would be circumspect to wait until official confirmation rather than have to come back to the Parish Council should the above - mentioned position change. By Wednesday, however, Councillors should be prepared to agree the proposal that we can now go to Public Consultation. Please note that this is a mechanism to approve the Plan just for the purposes of public consultation. After consultation, the Plan will come back to the Parish Council for final approval, together with the public feedback.
- The next thorny problem is what form the consultation is to take. We must meet certain regulatory requirements as to how to publicise and consult upon the Plan. There are no specific restrictions arising from Covid-19 other than that we must abide by the rules laid down by Government to stay at home and away from others. Thus, we would not be able to hold any public meetings such as open days etc, but we may be able to go down a largely digital route. What must be clarified is that the examiner

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would accept the methods we choose as meeting the regulations. Again, this is something that David Clarke is trying to clarify. David Nicholson will prepare our Regulation 14 submission along with our proposed methodology and once that is agreed as acceptable by Malvern we can go ahead. Both the Steering Group and Working Group will be involved in the best way to make this process as democratic as possible. As you realise all processes are having to be thought through very carefully at this challenging time, so we will have to wait for definitive answers. The report arrived too late for the meeting but states that we are not required to do an SEA or HAR for the Abberley NDP.

B) Lengthsman  
The Clerk reported that WCC have suspended all Lengthsman work as at 24<sup>th</sup> March due to restrictions on Coronavirus. Clerk emailed Lengthsman on 24<sup>th</sup> March to notify. WCC have sent through to the Clerk the 2020/21 Lengthsman Contract which the Clerk signed by return to WCC. Lengthsman has now received his 2020/21 Contract with budget remaining as 2010/20 set at £2131. On 21<sup>st</sup> April an email was received by all Parish Clerks stating that “**defined limited**” Lengthsman tasks can resume once a risk assessment has been undertaken by the Clerk. The Clerk has informed the Lengthsman and Risk Assessments are being planned. Cllr. Andrew reported that a drain was blocked on Wynniates Way. The Clerk agreed to report this to the Lengthsman.

C) Broadband upgrade in Abberley  
Cllr. Gibson has resubmitted the properties to WCC based on the information provided from BT Openreach and is now waiting for Robert Stepniewski from WCC to let him know the next steps, regarding how people apply for the grants etc.

D) Flooding on Suffolk Lane at Jacobs Well  
Cllr. Eberlin reported that the CCTV survey team have shut-down due to Covid 19 and that work will not progress until this survey is done.

293 Training  
**Defibrillator Training.** Training is POSTPONED/CANCELLED due to Coronavirus.  
**Councillor Training (Disclosable Pecuniary Interest etc)** All training postponed until Government guidance is lifted on public gatherings.  
Councillors to identify any training needs.

294 Finance  
**Finance (Clerk to report)**  
**a). Payments and Receipts 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

Carole Hirst Salary to 5th March 20		£ 389.00
HMRC Payment Nov to 5th March 20		£ 97.20
Carole Hirst expenses 19th Feb to 18th March 20		£ 28.00
IN2OUT - Lengthsman Feb 20		£156.00
Abberley Village Hall March NDP Meeting		£ 10.00
Abberley Village Hall March Parish Meeting		£ 10.00

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DJN Planning Ltd		£2,100.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>£2,790.20</b>

**RECEIPTS up-to March  
16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 not previously  
reported**

WCC Lengthsman  
Scheme £ 180.00

**TOTAL RECEIPTS      £ 180.00**

**Payments to 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020**

<b><u>Payments list APRIL 22nd 2020</u></b>		
IN2OUT - Lengthsman March 20	£ 156.00	2019/ 20
Carole Hirst Salary to 5th April 20	£ 389.00	2020/ 21
HMRC Payment Nov to 5th April 20	£ 97.20	2020/ 21
Carole Hirst expenses 18th March to 4th April 20	£ 18.00	2020/ 21
Worcestershire CALC	£ 478.72	2020/ 21
Wyre Piddle PC	£ 3.99	2020/ 21
HMRC VAT REPAYMENT (They paid it twice)	£ 142.18	2020/ 21
K Gittins Auditor	£ 60.00	2020/ 21
<b><u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</u></b>	<b><u>£ 1,189.09</u></b>	

**Receipts to 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020**

£142.18 from HMRC- Duplicate Payment received and returned on the 17/4/20.

Cllr. Eden Proposed and Cllr. Goodman Seconded that the Payments from the notes taken on the 16<sup>th</sup> March and the Payments presented to the meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020 be Approved. All in favour.

**b).** To ratify the Annual transfer of funds to Allocated Reserves Funds for Village Hall. On the 18<sup>th</sup> March £200 it was agreed by the Finance Committee that £500 was transferred to the Village Hall Car Park Fund and £200 be transferred to the Village Green footpaths Fund. Cllr. Goodman Proposed and Cllr. Eberlin Seconded that this be Approved. All in favour.

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**c). Audited accounts & Annual Governance and Accountability Return: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

- (i) To Approve the Annual Audited Accounts from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup>. March 2020 as Audited by Internal Auditor Mr. Kevin Gittins. Cllr. Eden Proposed and Cllr. Juckes Seconded that the Accounts be approved. All in favour.
  - (ii) Proposal to consider Section 1: Annual governance statement. Cllr. Andrew Proposed and Cllr. Nott Seconded that Section 1 was a true record. All in favour.
  - (iii) Proposal to consider Section 2: Accounting statements *Accounts & Audit regulations 2015*. Cllr. Ballard Proposed and Cllr. Nott Seconded that Section 2 was a true record. All in favour.
  - (iv) To consider and confirm that the authority neither received gross income, nor incurred gross expenditure, exceeding £25,000 during 2019/20 and agree that the Certificate of Exemption can be signed as part of AGAR. Cllr. Eden Proposed and Cllr. Andrew Seconded that the Parish Council was an Exempt Authority by its definitions. All in favour.
  - (v) Consider Internal Auditor's Report & Recommendations. Mr. Gittins attended the meeting to deliver his audit report and was thanked by the Chair and other Councillors for his diligent work.
  - (vi) To consider the period of dates for the Exercise of Public Rights. Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April to Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Cllr. Eden Proposed and Cllr. Goodman Seconded that these dates be approved. All in favour.
- Cllr. Knight thanked the Clerk for all her hard work in achieving such a good audit report.

**d).** Bank Reconciliation at 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020 noted.

**e).** Scheme of Delegation Approved by Finance Committee and Circulated to all Members 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Approved 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020. Cllr. Eden Proposed and Cllr. Goodman Seconded that the Scheme of Delegation be ratified. All in favour.

**f).** Revised Standing Orders (section 4.1) Approved by Finance Committee and circulated to Members on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Approved 22<sup>nd</sup> March. Cllr. Eden Proposed and Cllr. Goodman Seconded that the Revised Standing Orders be ratified. All in favour (Re adopted for 2020/21 under Minute Reference 290 above).

**g).** Parish Council Insurance Renewal Quotes for cover from June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021. The 4 quotes received are £354.76, £483.37, £305.42 (3-year quote) and £339.56. Cllr. Eden Proposed and Cllr. Knight Seconded that this item be delegated to the finance committee for approval. All in favour.

The next Parish Council meeting is on Wednesday May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 7.30pm. A **Zoom** invitation will be emailed and advertised on the Parish Council website.

295 Date of next meeting

**The meeting closed at 8.39pm**

**Appendix 1 WCC Councillor Report – Cllr. K. Pollock**

**Coronavirus impact**

I hope that all councillors have had a chance to read the email I circulated via your clerk yesterday about how everyone should get in touch with the organisations offering help during this current lockdown. If there is any confusion, please let me know and I will endeavour to clarify matters.

We are very grateful for the second tranche of £1.6 billion that Robert Jenrick has made available to local authorities and this will certainly ease our concerns about running out of money during the lockdown phase.

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We are hopeful that we will be able to deploy any surplus labour, arising from furlough or redundancies to satisfy the needs of our farming colleagues. No-one should be in any doubt that this is hard work, with long hours for low pay, but we all recognise it is essential, and better for people to be busy than isolated at home and relying on state benefits.

You may be aware that Defra have removed certain restrictions, originally intended to encourage competition, to see that the vital supply chains in farming products, most importantly those in the dairy sectors, are adapting to the new reality of no demand from the hospitality sector. We hope that this will result in no disposal of fresh milk to the drains, as has happened recently in certain areas.

### **County Matters**

At this time of year, pupils are allocated to their appropriate primary and middle schools. As all this is normally done digitally, only 300 letters needed to be written for the whole county to reach those who are not available that way. So, 98% were dealt with online, and over 90% received their first choice of school. In total, 97.4% were accommodated in their parents' first three choices of primary school, while 100% of pupils were accommodated in their first three choices of middle school.

You will recall that at the end of February, we welcomed Matt Warman, MP, Minister of State in DCMS, to Worcester for him to confirm the allocation of £3.3 million to Worcestershire to run a two year experiment with Shropshire on the efficacy of 5G to improve connectivity in rural areas. This will be based in Tenbury, given its rural nature and the topographical features in the area, and that probably includes Abberley. I would like to emphasise that the connection between 5G and the coronavirus is entirely spurious, despite the highly regrettable acts of sabotage that some have undertaken, setting fire to 5G masts.

In addition, I have seen reference to the many scientific papers that assure me, and I hope the general public, that there are no health dangers from the deployment of 5G.

### **Appendix 2 - MHDC Councillor Report Cllr. Cumming.**

The District Council is currently working closely with the County and other Worcestershire Districts in ensuring an effective voice from local government in dealing with the current COVID19 outbreak.

Part of this is monitoring arrangements to ensure that the more vulnerable residents are cared for by local networks. Although much is being done by people working at home, modern communication methods allow quick responses to be provided at a distance – I have even had details of a local person needing assistance via someone living in Australia.

Within the Council itself particular efforts are focussed on getting the cash grants paid to local small businesses, as well as maintaining an effective refuse collection service and dealing with issues of homelessness. Collection of fly-tipping, which is showing a noticeable increase is continuing although can take slightly longer.

Meetings are due to re-commence on 6th May by use of virtual technology. This is a move which I fully support and have been encouraging, to ensure that the democratic input in dealing with the current problems is not lost. It has especially ensured that local member involvement in planning decisions is not lost.

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