



Minutes are draft until approved at
the following meeting

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Longdon, Queenhill and Holdfast Parish Council held on Monday, 6 February 2023 at Longdon Village Hall

Present: Chair Cllr Mullins, Vice-Chair Cllr Gray, Cllr Davey, Cllr Faram, Cllr Jones (co-opted under item 5); Cllr Radford (co-opted under item 5).

In Attendance: Bill Austin, Dave Mullins.

1. **Apologies:** Apologies were received from County Councillor, Cllr Wells; District Councillor, Cllr Behan (written report submitted); Cllr Cook; Cllr Unwin.
2. **Declarations of Interest:** No declarations of interest were made. Councillors were reminded to refresh their Register of Interests declarations.
3. **Consideration of any dispensation requests:** There were no dispensation requests.
4. **Public Session:** Two issues were raised:
 - a) Good start on the new Parish website and important to keep it up to date. The Chair thanked the Vice-Chair for all his work on this;
 - b) The approval of £400 for Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) sundry items approved at the last meeting (minute 8 (c) refers). The Chair clarified that this funding was within the original budget approved by Council and was not additional funding.
5. **Co-option of New Council Members:** The Council resolved unanimously to co-opt two new members:
 - a) Nick Radford – Proposed by Cllr Davey, seconded by Cllr Faram;
 - b) Phil Jones – Proposed by Cllr Faram, seconded by Cllr Davey;
 - c) The new Councillors signed a Declaration of Acceptance form and were welcomed to the Council. All Councillors were invited to submit profiles for inclusion on the website (to be sent to: clerk@lqhworcs-parish.org.uk).
6. **Minutes:** The minutes of the previous meeting of the Council held on 9 January 2023 were considered and unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting.



Minutes would now be included on the parish website in addition to the Worcestershire County Council website (statutory site).

7. Progress Reports:

- a) **Speedwatch Scheme:** The Vice-Chair reported that two individuals had volunteered for the scheme (six were required). A further request for volunteers would be made;
- b) **Worcestershire Highways Liaison Officer:** Cllr Davey reported on the response by the Highways Liaison Officer regarding ways to reduce traffic speed through Longdon.
 - i. Gates - £850 each (unclear if includes VAT and/or installation). The Council considered this a good approach. Cllr Davey offered to clarify costs and whether there would be any contribution from Highways. It was noted that Cllr Wells had previously offered to assist with finances;
 - ii. Mirrors – The Liaison Officer would further clarify the Worcestershire County Council position on use of mirrors and this would guide the Council. If a mirror could not be recommended, one alternative approach could be signs to warn drivers of pedestrians;
 - iii. Footway – A plan had been provided from Highways from 1968 which did not indicate a footway, although evidence of a previous footway was visible on site. Cllr Davey offered to discuss further with Highways;
 - iv. Telegraph Pole – A pole was in the path of the potential footway and this would need to be moved. The Council agreed that any further action should await clarification of the status of the previous footway and whether it could be reinstated.

The Chair, on behalf of the Council, thanked Cllr Davey for his progress on this.

- c) **Community Website:** The Vice-Chair reported on the current status - galleries of images, including local walks, and an online booking system for London Village Hall had 'gone live'. The Directory area was awaiting development, it could be a repository of information which could include local charities, services, churches, clubs and businesses. As a first step, Cllr Faram would approach Queenhill WI and the Chair would approach local churches;
- d) **Longdon Village Hall:** The Vice-Chair reported good progress on maintenance works. The Chair clarified that, while the refurbishment project was being



managed the Parish Council (by the Vice-Chair), the Village Hall Committee had agreed to meet all costs. During the repairs, some additional issues had been identified, and it was noted that these may lead to a call on Parish Council funds. The Chair, on behalf of the Council, thanked the Vice-Chair for his progress on this;

- e) **Longdon United Charities:** The item was deferred until the Chair had been able to discuss in detail with the Chair of the Trustees.

8. Report from District and County Councillors: Cllr Behan had submitted a written report (appended). The Chair highlighted:

- a) District Council elections on 4 May would require voters to present photo identification to be able to vote;
- b) Cllr Behan was stepping down after sixteen years as District Councillor;
- c) Cllr Behan had provided a further grant to the Parish, earmarked for play equipment.

The Chair commented that Cllr Behan had engaged very well with the Parish and her input had been very valuable. It was agreed that the Chair write to Cllr Behan to thank her.

9. Email Addresses:

- a) **Payments and Domain Ownership:** The Vice-Chair updated Councillors on options for domain ownership. In discussion, the importance of maintaining email access and backups of information was highlighted. The Vice-Chair offered to investigate further;
- b) **Private Email Addresses:** This item was deferred to a future meeting.

10. Update on Council Elections, 2023: The Chair reported that each person wishing to stand as a Councillor would need to complete a form that would be submitted to Malvern Hills District Council. Posters had been circulated by CALC¹ that could be put up to encourage nominees. The final date for nominations was 27 March. CALC had agreed that the Chair could attend a training course covering election issues (for clerks) and this should provide further guidance for Council. In considering vacancies, it was noted that a candidate to cover Buckbury/Rampings area would be beneficial.

¹ Worcestershire Association of Local Councils



11. Finance:

- a) **Financial Position on 31 January 2023:** The Chair commented that as financial information is now published on the web, the reports to Council will be redacted to remove all personal information. Additional detail will be available to Councillors on request. Council noted the financial position on 31 January 2023;

- b) **Quarterly Update of Expenditure:** The Chair reported on expenditure until 31 January 2023, a four-month period rather than the usual three-months. The reason for this was because there had been minimal expenditure in December but significant spend in January. The current underspend was due to the Clerk vacancy (salary not being paid). Correspondence with CALC had shown that the salary level currently proposed for the Clerk was still insufficient and thus there may be a need to reduce the hours available to allow for a higher hourly rate within the budget. The previous advert was for eight hours but this would now be reconsidered. Cllr Radford commented that this was not many hours in which to conduct Council’s business. It was confirmed that there was no ‘annuality’ in the budget, that unspent balances can be carried over from year to year and the ‘underspend’ in 2022/23 could be used to offset a higher Clerk’s salary in the short term;

- c) **Payments of Fees and Invoices Presented:** The payment of the Lengthsman’s most recent invoices still awaited a discussion between the Lengthsman and Council. Cllr Jones suggested that the Lengthsman could submit images of work completed;

Invoice:	Amount (£):
Lengthsman duties period ending 31.10.22	290.00
Lengthsman duties period ending 30.11.22	290.00
Lengthsman duties period ending 31.12.22	290.00
DCK Payroll Solutions (RTI submissions)	60.00

- 12. **Traffic and Road Safety:** Cllr Faram reported on two recent incidents on the B4211. One involved a fatality, the second had been reported to PC Kevin Johns by Cllr Faram on behalf of the landowner. The incident had damaged road warning signs and reflectors. PC Johns advised that this damage needed to be reported to the



Highways Agency by Council. Cllr Jones highlighted roads that flood in the vicinity of Queenhill and further discussion of this would be added to the agenda for the next Council meeting.

13. **Play Equipment Programme:** This item was deferred to the next meeting.
14. **Planning Applications:** The Chair gave a brief overview of the Council's role in the planning process for the benefit of new Councillors. Two planning applications had been received too close to the meeting to be included on the agenda. These would be circulated by e-mail. The Vice Chair commented that planning applications would be accessible via the community website.
15. **Future Meetings Schedule:**
 - a) **AGM and Annual Meeting of Parishioners:** At the recent Sole Trustee meeting it had been suggested that Council combine its Annual Meeting of Parishioners with that for the Longdon Village Hall. For the Annual General Meeting, Council was required to hold this meeting within fourteen days of the elections on 4 May. This would require the May Council meeting date to be changed to a date between 5 and 18 May. The Chair would revisit this issue after the election training course.
 - b) **Date of Next Meeting:** Confirmed as 6 March 2023.

The meeting closed at 9.38 pm.

Future Meeting Schedule:

Monday, 6 March 2023
Monday, 3 April 2023
May – To be confirmed
Monday, 5 June 2023 (Queenhill tbc)
Monday, 3 July 2023
No meeting in August
Monday, 4 September 2023
Monday, 2 October 2023
Monday, 6 November 2023
No meeting in December

Signed:

Date:

Chairman, Longdon, Queenhill and Holdfast Parish Council



Update from Cllr Bronwen Behan:

There are only a few items in the District report.

The main item is in relation to the District Council Elections on Thursday May 4th.

Voters will require a photo ID in order to be given a voting paper. This can take the form of a passport, driving licence , blue badge etc..

The DC website provides details.

Secondly,

I shall be stepping down as your DC after what will be 16 years. Sometimes it is best to let someone fresh take over and bring with them something new and hopefully of value.

The final list for candidates for elections will be March 27th