

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY 3RD NOVEMBER 2021
AT MANSEL LACY COMMUNITY HALL

Prior to the formal meeting PC Josh Kitchen gave a short presentation on behalf of the local Safer Neighbourhood Team. He covered the team members, their role, contact details and introduced the Neighbourhood Matters bulletin service (neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk).

The meeting itself commenced at 6.50pm

Present: C.Edwards (Chairman), A.Davies, S.Hallett, M.Mangan, D.Gwynne, A.Powell
In Attendance: R.Hallett (Clerk), M.Jones (Ward Councillor)
Apologies: D.J.C.Davenport

- 1) Draft Minutes of the General Meeting held on 4th August 2021 were accepted and signed by C.Edwards as a true record.
- 2) Matters Arising
 - a) A.Powell confirmed that the owners of the campsite at Moorhampton were supportive of installing an additional defibrillator at the campsite entrance. Various schemes exist to subsidise defibrillators and R.Hallett to research these and provide a definitive cost to allow a decision on whether to go ahead or not.
 - b) R.Hallett provided short feedback on the new Parish Council Reference Working Group. So far, little has come up that is of direct relevance to FGPC. R.Hallett to report back if this changes.
- 3) Finance
 - a) The regular report was presented (see Agenda). The council is projected to finish the financial year with a balance in the region of £6.5k
 - b) To make the grant award process more transparent and auditable, written applications for grants had been invited from the historic recipients: Brinsop PCC, Mansel Lacy PCC and Foxley News. Responses were received from the first two to help with maintenance of their churchyards and these were approved for £300 and £400 respectively.
 - c) Approval was also given to budget £900 for grants for 2022/23
 - d) A budget of £1670 was approved for Lengthsman services for 2022/23. This includes two days of ditching work although one day may be sufficient. To be decided following a site survey and to be approved by the council
 - e) The precept for 2022/23 was maintained at £2500 and so the council budget for 2022/23 will be:

Expenses	Insurance	150
	Website	175
	Lengthsman	1670
	Hall Hire	80
	Grants	<u>900</u>
		3010

Source of Funds	Precept	2500
	Comm Assoc	75
	Reserves	<u>435</u>
		3010

- 4) Highways
 - a) Having set a budget for Lengthsman services for 2022/23 and an outline scope, R.Hallett will request quotes from D.Campbell and R.Mills in the New Year. This is subject to approval from Herefordshire Council to continue the Lengthsman scheme.
- 5) Planning: Nothing to report
- 6) Any Other Business
 - a) M.Jones presented his ward councillors report (Appendix 1) and took questions
 - b) S.Hallett wanted to raise awareness of riparian responsibilities, principally among domestic residents. R.Hallett to include something to cover this in his report for the Foxley News.
 - c) Herefordshire Council have asked us to complete a survey, in advance of an update of their Local Plan and the formal consultation on that. R.Hallett to work with D.Gwynne to complete the survey.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm

Post-Meeting Note: General meetings for 2022 to be 2nd Feb, 4th May (with the Annual Meeting), 3rd Aug and 2nd Dec

DRAFT

Appendix 1

Ward Councillor Report 30/10/2021

A total of 169 personal have left the council employment over the last 12 months which represents some 12-13% of staff. This is similar to other authorities and is not cause for concern. The council are trying to recruit in all areas and are looking to appoint 4 new directors by December. One of the main areas of concern is planning; there are delays in allocating planning applications to officers. The leader of the council and cabinet member for Children's services are implementing a strategy of carrying out exit interviews with Children's social workers to try and ascertain why they are leaving and see if they can be persuaded to change their mind.

The Interim Director of Children's services left with immediate effect in October following a whistle blowing enquiry. Catherine Knowles had only been in the role for six months and the enquiry is still taking place into her actions. Daryl Freeman has taken over the role until a new Director has been appointed in December.

Paul Walker the chief executive has been looking at potential sites for a new bridge to cross the river Wye and form an Eastern Link Corridor. No land has been purchased yet but it was disappointing to read John Harrington's comments that this new bridge linked to the Rotherwas trading estate may be restricted from HGV's. I feel this could waste a lot of money building a new bridge on its own, not linked to a bypass that cannot take lorries to the Rotherwas Industrial Estate; the very heartland of business growth for Herefordshire. The Council had a £1million pound under spend on revenue for the year ending 30th March 2021. Adult social care came in under budget and considering the growing costs in this sector, this was a great achievement. Also written off in last year's figures was the costs of the abandoned Western Bypass. Some £3.9 million was requested for repayment by the LEP, but only a percentage of this was paid back which was an undisclosed sum not put forward by the head of finance.

Over £9 million pounds is currently held up with the council in section 106 money. This money is for local projects where building developments over 10 houses have been provided by the developers. This money is to be released in December for local projects to go ahead having been held up by the council to check that value for money is being gained and several quotes are being obtained, instead of just using Balfour Beatty.

At the full council meeting on the 8th October 3 motions were put forward:-

1 To change the model of Children's Scrutiny with 3 dedicated councillors. Motion lost

2 Declare that Belmont Abbey surroundings and Breinton become a cultural Heritage.

Motion passed

3 Areas of the River Wye and Lugg officially identified as swimming water. Motion passed

The council have been looking where the main complaints have been coming into the council from the public, with planning issues the main concern. Lots of complaints about enforcement and planning issues especially where work was agreed to get planning and has not been carried out by the developer.

Michael Jones