

CUSOP PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of an Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on
Wednesday 18th January 2023 at 19.00 at Cusop Village Hall

Present

Councillors: Mark Hainge (in the Chair), Julia Whittall and David Evans.

In attendance

Clerk Helen Tinson – on behalf of HALC (Herefordshire Association of Local Councils); 4 members of the public.

1. Consideration to access HALC Clerk Cover for the meeting:

It was unanimously RESOLVED to access HALC's CiLCA qualified Clerk/RFO Cover for the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence: Cllrs Ian Jardin and Phil Gilbert; Ward Cllr Jennie Hewitt

3. Declarations of interest & written dispensation requests: Cllr Mark Hainge declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 9c.

4. Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 13th December 2022:

Members considered the minutes of the meeting held on the 13th December 2022.

It was RESOLVED: to approve the minutes as a true and proper record of the meeting. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

5. Public Participation:

5.1 A member of the public commented on the minute referring to the playing fields at the last meeting as he felt the conclusion did not reflect the level of work agreed. Concerns were raised about the level of dilapidation of the playground, and that it would not be appropriate to enter into an agreement to purchase equipment until a schedule of works to address the structure of the playground had been prepared and residents of the parish consulted. It was also proposed that some work could be done to improve the look of the play area and equipment (for example to pressure wash the climbing frame). Furthermore, it was proposed that funding for such a large project should not be agreed until after the new council is elected in May.

5.2 A member of the public commented that he would consider it useful to understand what input parishioners could have and what opportunities or channels there are for volunteering help. The Chairman took away an action to pass contact details on to the volunteer play inspector.

5.3 A member of the public noted that the play area lacks suitable play equipment for under 5's.

5.4 A member of the public raised concerns about the casual vacancy and the process for co-option. Having expressed an interest in becoming a councillor, he queried why it was not on the agenda and how the council intended to proceed. The Chairman reported that he had received other applications and the Clerk explained the usual procedure for co-opting a casual vacancy when there are multiple applicants for one vacancy. A member of the council felt the process had not been followed as it should have on this occasion. It was agreed that an item to co-opt the casual vacancy would be on the February agenda.

6. Playing Field:

Members considered next actions concerning the playground. Concerns were raised that there has been no progress in seeking volunteers for working groups to help take the project forward, and it was suggested that a working group for the playing field together with a working group for the community gardens would be the most useful. There was support for progressing a lasting project that would bring together residents of differing ages. Members considered a brief report on suitable grants that may increase the available funding for the project and it was agreed that there is still work to do before it would be appropriate to approve costs or equipment.

It was RESOLVED: to defer the decision on expenditure for new equipment.

It was RESOLVED: that Cllr Whittall continue to research suitable grant funding

It was RESOLVED: that the Chairman write a newsletter to publicise the project, seek views from parishioners and ask for volunteers to join the two proposed working groups.

7. Lengthsman:

Members received a report from Cllr Whittall who has now driven the area with the previous lengthsman to identify the areas he used to maintain and the work that was carried out. A map showing the location of all culverts in the parish has been obtained from BBLP. It was further reported that the Lengthsman scheme has been earmarked for funding for the next five years for work carried out to C & U roads in the parish.

Payment is calculated at £60 per km per 12 months; there are 12.6km in Cusop parish and therefore the possible lengthsman funding would total £756.00 per year. Further details will be distributed by BBLP in the coming months.

Members considered three initial tenders for the Lengthsman contract reported by Cllrs Whittall and Evans. One contractor declined to quote, but interest had been received from three contractors.

It was RESOLVED: that Cllrs Whittall and Evans continue discussions with Contractors 2 and 3.

Two members of the public left the meeting.

8. 2023/2024 Budget and Precept:

Members were informed that there has been little movement in the bank account since the last report on 31st October 2022. The bank balance on 18th January 2023 was £17,041.19.

Members considered the draft budget for 2023/2024, as published in November.

It was RESOLVED: to adopt the budget as proposed and set the precept for 2023/2024 at £8,500.00. The Clerk/HALC are to inform Herefordshire Council accordingly. The approved budget is noted as Appendix A.

9. Payments:

It was RESOLVED: to ratify the following payments made between meetings:

- 9.1** HALC, Clerk costs (November), £284.08
- 9.2** Autela, Payroll support for ex-clerk, £44.17
- 9.3** C M Hainge, Reimbursement of printer costs, £37.88
- 9.4** Cusop Village Hall, retrospective 6-mth hall hire costs, £60.00

The Chairman was asked to confirm to the next meeting the ongoing liability with Autela in terms of monthly cost; and to check the dates of the retrospective hall hire costs (assumed to be July-December).

10. Councillors Reports:

- 10.1** It was reported that water was very high earlier in the week but nothing had flooded and levels have now stabilised;
- 10.2** Feedback on the Village Initiative application has still not been received;
- 10.3** Ward Cllr Hewitt has written an update on the Road Safety Scheme – there is no further update;
- 10.4** It was reported that the bench at ‘Tycoch’ has been destroyed and should be removed from the Asset Register;
- 10.5** It is understood that Hay and Powys Town Councils will be meeting to consider speeding, in particular approach roads into Hay, and that all roads will be considered for 20mph zones. Wales have now passed the ‘20 is Plenty’ legislation. There should be a quarterly report on the S106 money;
- 10.6** It was reported that the pavement at The Dingle is dangerous and has been reported to Herefordshire Council. The Chairman will include a note in the newsletter to ask parishioners to individually report the issue to HC via the ‘Report a Problem’ website;
- 10.7** The Chairman was asked to correct a small number of errors on the website;
- 10.8** Multiple applications have been received to fill the co-opted seat. The Chairman will provide a deadline of 8th February for final applications. There will be an agenda item to co-opt the casual vacancy at the next meeting;
- 10.9** The Chairman was asked to follow up on the minutes from the Annual Parish Meeting with the ex-Clerk;
- 10.10** A candidate for the Clerk vacancy has expressed interest though has not yet submitted a formal application.

11. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 15th February 2023, 7.00pm, Cusop Village Hall.

Agenda Items:

- 11.1** Casual Vacancy: to consider co-opting

- 11.2 Playing Field: to receive update and consider actions as necessary
- 11.3 Lengthsman: to consider quotations for the 2023/2024 contract
- 11.4 Asset Register: to consider the removal of the bench at 'Tycoch'

Meeting closed 8.25pm

SIGNED DATE

APPENDIX A: APPROVED BUDGET FOR 2023/2024

	PROJECTED OUTTURN		DRAFT	BUDGET
	2022-23		2023-24	
GENERAL	£	£	£	£
brought forward from previous year		18345		19696
receipts				
precept	8500		8500	
reclaimed VAT	370		230	
leaflet sales	50		25	
bank interest	3	8923	0	8755
payments				
staff costs	4500		4950	
office materials services etc	50		55	
payroll services	230		255	
bank charges	160		85	
election costs	0		1800	
newsletter	0		35	
internet services	64		85	
HALC fees	450		495	
insurance	748		820	
audit	50		55	
ICO registration	40		45	
room hire	160		160	
community bus grant	100		100	
S137 payments (includes donations)	100		100	
playing field rent+maintenance	260		400	
training	0		75	
miscellaneous	60		50	
parish contractor	600	7572	2000	11565
carried forward to next year		19696		16886