

## **Minutes of Allensmore Parish Council Meeting held on 27th March 2014 at 8.00pm at Allensmore Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllrs J Lawrence (Chairman), S Lawrence, J Lawrence, S Williams, D Cooke, C Watkinson and T Cramp (Vice Chair)

**In attendance:** Mrs A Wright (Clerk), Ward Councillor Jim Knipe, Lengthsman representative, P3 Footpath Contractor Paul Wright, Footpath Officer Debby Mumford and 8 members of the public.

### **1. Introduction and welcome by the Chairman**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **2. Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies

### **3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest

### **4. Open Session**

The Council were addressed by concerned residents who had been experiencing flooding issues during the last bouts of heavy rainfall. Large parts of the area around the village and the common, in particular, had lain under water for some time, in some places around a foot deep, and several properties had been damaged by the floodwater entering the ground floor rooms and there were problems with cesspit drainage. The pipe at the rear of the Bus Shelter on Cobhall Common was only 4" in diameter and not adequate for the job of removing the volume of water. The situation down near to the church was that the brook could take the volume of water but the culvert could not. One of the rails and posts had been pushed over by the water pressure. The Chair, Cllr J Lawrence, had met with a co-ordinator from Balfour Beatty that morning of the 27<sup>th</sup> March, following numerous e mails and recent requests for someone to come out and undertake an assessment of the situation. Cllr Lawrence showed the representative as many points as possible including all sizes of pipe, culverts, gullies and ditches. A number of issues were identified, with blocked ditches, pipes that could not cope with the flow, water flowing the wrong way to what had been intended and numerous other issues that were not helping the situation, in conjunction with some of the heaviest rainfall experienced for many years. The co-ordinator has taken the information back to report to the management to see what can be done to help cope with any future deluges of water in the area and to try to safeguard people's livelihoods and property.

There is the possibility that government grant funding to alleviate flood issues may be available. The co-ordinator was scheduled to contact Cllr Lawrence again on the 28<sup>th</sup> March to feed back from the visit. The Parish Council assured the residents that they were doing, and would continue to do, all they could possibly do to help ameliorate and improve the situation.

## **5. Brief Verbal Reports:**

**5.1 Local Policing Team.** Not present

**5.2 Footpath Officer** The Footpath Officer presented the following report:

"Since the last meeting I am pleased to report that our contractor has completed the work outstanding from November – erecting a finger post at the road junction with AN 12 and clear undergrowth from the bridge. I would ask the Committee to approve payment of the invoice at £14.70. There is still an issue with the kissing gate installed on AN 2 this year. Due to the lay of the land lambs have been getting through and after discussions with the contractor in January I understood that a latch was to be fitted to the gate. This has not yet been done and I understand Mr Wright intends to report to the Committee on this tonight.

I have managed to get consent from landowners for two wooden kissing gates on AN 3 (Allensmore) and finger posts need to be erected at either end of this footpath. This work is essential as no stile or gates or waymarker are currently in situ. I also have obtained consent for two metal kissing gates at the southern end and middle of AN 26 (Upper Mawfield Farm) and a new finger post is required at the signage is currently unreadable. My estimate for this work is £605 – £100 in excess of our remaining budget for 2013-2014. I have clarified with Vince Playdon of Balfour Beatty that all sums outstanding can be carried over. I would be anxious that this work is completed in April if possible so we can move forward to plan work for the remainder of 2014-2015".

There was some concern over lams escaping and the Footpath Contractor would fit an adaption and latch to one gate that was not remaining closed.

## **5.3 Lengthsman**

The Chair would liaise with the Lengthsman regarding the remainder of 2013/2014 actions, likely to include works outside the Village Hall and jetting drains and clearing ditches around the "Butts". The VAT reclaim would be made to reclaim VAT paid on services so that the grant monies could be fully spent on lengthsman activities.

## **6. To approve minutes of the Meeting held on 23/01/14.**

**Resolved:** - The Minutes of the meeting, held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2014, were approved by the Council and then signed by the Chairman

## **7. Clerk Update on Action Items**

The Clerk updated the meeting re the action items including the naming of the new close in Clehonger/Allensmore, it would be named Gardiners Oak. The speed limit reduction had again been reiterated. Flooding issues had occupied a lot of time and many e mails had been sent. A parish walk, in regard to the flooding problems, with a technician from Balfour Beatty had taken place that day and feedback was awaited. The End of Year pack had been received from Grant Thornton and the Clerk had been getting the accounting papers together for the completion of the audit requirements. The Real Time Reporting End of Year process had been completed on the HM revenues and Customs Website.

## **8. To note correspondence**

The Clerk advised re some of the correspondence received. These included letters from residents about flooding issues, the End of Year Audit forms from Grant Thornton and notification about the outcome of the Trap House Nurseries Appeal. There had also been correspondence from HALC with information about development threats to village green spaces, Neighbourhood Plan legal challenges and information on proposals to deliver council services through Post Offices.

There had been an enquiry from the Chair of Clehonger Parish Council regarding some of the houses in Poplar Road which it was felt should be incorporated within the parish boundary of Clehonger for the purpose of drawing up the parish lines. This was agreed by the Allensmore Parish Council. The other proposal was for the two parishes to have a discussion about the possibility of joining together to do a Neighbourhood Plan to benefit from some economies of administration etc. This proposal was received favourably by the Allensmore Council and Cllrs J Lawrence, Cramp, Watkinson and Williams would meet with representatives of Clehonger Parish Council to discuss ideas and possible way forward. Clerk to arrange meeting between the two councils. There was a discussion about the merits of doing a Plan, the Core Strategy, legal implications and grant availability. There would also be the benefit of a greater percentage of CIL (community infrastructure levy) money retention if a Plan was held. The question of benefit of the plan could be asked of Liz Harvey a councillor from Ledbury.

Cllr Williams left the meeting at 9.10pm.

A Steering Group would be needed made up of councillors and members of the community and a Planning for Real Event would be held to get the process started. The final plan would be adopted only if over 50% of the residents, of those voting in a referendum, voted for it when finished.

## 9. Finance

9.1 **Resolved:** The following list of payments were approved, including following discussion, the HALC invoice which was prop by Cllr Cramp and sec by Cllr Cooke:

Longfield Services (P3 Footpaths)	£14.70
Mrs A Wright (salary £305.40, mileage £13.46)	£318.86
Tax due on salary payment (Payable to The Post Office)	£76.20
Mr A Cramp (Website domain fee reimbursement)	£38.39
Lengthsman Mr T Griffiths	£424.80
Lengthsman Mr T Griffiths	£288.00
HALC Subscription for 2014/2015	£329.72
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1160.95</b>

9.2 **Resolved:** The bank balance was noted.

## 10. Planning

There had been no new applications.

There had been a decision for one part of the Trap House Nurseries in that the appeal had been upheld. Cllr J Lawrence had contacted Andrew Prior the former case officer to find out what had happened to the other appeal that had been made. Matt Tompkins was now the new case officer for the area.

## 11. Ward Councillor's Report

The Ward Councillor updated the meeting in regard to the situation regarding the proposal for a University for Herefordshire, an idea to which he was opposed, seemingly in isolation from other members of the council. He paid tribute to the conscientious and diligent way in which the Chair of the Parish Council and other councillors and residents had helped each other during the periods of flooding. Sand bags were still available. It was noted that there was still water lying on the road by Pool Farm, this was an ongoing issue even when the rain had not been heavy. There could be an underlying issue such as a leak or spring. Clerk to refer this to Balfour Beatty.

It was commented that farm buildings can be converted, without planning permission, from April 2014 onwards.

## 12. Village Matters

These had been covered during the Open Session. The Rector of the Benefice was leaving and her last service would be at Allensmore Church on 27<sup>th</sup> April.

**13. Items for next Agenda**

All usual items and Neighbourhood Plan update on meeting with Clehonger Parish Council re the possibility of a partnership Neighbourhood Plan (reps to include Cllrs J Lawrence, S Williams, C Watkinson and T. Cramp) and also floods update

**14. Setting of dates of future meetings**

The next Meetings, Annual Statutory and Ordinary, will be held from the earlier time of 7.30pm on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2014, at the Allensmore Village Hall. It was noted to ask re the "e board" held by Steve Mumford for a mailing list for the Annual Statutory Meeting.

The Meeting closed at 9.30pm

Allensmore Parish Council Meeting

27<sup>th</sup> March 2014

Signed .....as a true record by Councillor Jeremy Lawrence (Chairman)

Dated:- 15<sup>th</sup> May 2014

For information about what's going on, local groups and businesses, the Church, some local history and the Parish Council, including minutes of past meetings and dates for future meetings, visit the Allensmore website.

[www.allensmore.org.uk](http://www.allensmore.org.uk)