

Minutes of Allensmore Parish Council Meeting held on 24th September 2015 at 8.00pm at Allensmore Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Jim Lawrence, Jeremy Lawrence (Chair), C Watkinson, D Cooke, S Lawrence and T Cramp (Vice Chair)

In attendance: Mrs A Wright (Clerk), Ward Councillor Jon Johnson and 3 members of the public.

1. Introduction and welcome by the Chairman

The Chair of the Parish Council, Cllr Jeremy Lawrence, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

There were apologies received from Cllr Steve Williams.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Open Session

No matters were raised during the Open Session.

5. Brief Verbal Reports:

5.1 Local Policing Team. Not present although Bulletin Updates had been circulated. Lamping Season had started again and some perpetrators were seen near to the Three Horseshoes Public House on one morning at 4.30am.

5.2 Footpath Officer: The Footpath Officer was not present. No update for this meeting.

5.3 Lengthsman Co-ordinator: Cllr Jeremy Lawrence reported on items carried out and that more work had been completed that week in reinstating drains and discovering ones that were not previously known about. More line drains to be attended to later in the month.

5.4 Locality Steward not present and apologies sent.

5.4 Ward Councillor

Ward Cllr Jon Johnson explained about the Herefordshire Council 2016 Budget Proposal Questionnaire "Have Your Say". He explained that it was important for as many people as possible to take the time to completed the Questionnaire and communicate their thoughts and suggestions on the Council's Budget proposals. At the time of the meeting only circa 1200 completed Questionnaires had been received and the closing date was 9th October. Residents would need to go online to the Herefordshire Council web site to complete the form at:

www.herefordshire.gov.uk/budgetconsultation2016

The Ward Cllr said that the Core Strategy should be adopted in October and the Southern Link Road Planning Application was due to go to Committee in November. The Planning Officer had reviewed some areas of the application and more description was needed in those areas, which would be consulted on again. Some of the matters included the work over Grafton Lane with the raised fly-over and bat mitigation. Balfour Beatty and drainage would be discussed later in the meeting.

6. To approve minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 30th July 2015 and the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 21st August 2015.

Resolved: - The Minutes of the Meetings, held on 30th July 2015 and 21st August 2015, were both 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 arrangement and facilitation of the two broad band oriented meetings (one Extraordinary PC Meeting and one topical) held since the last ordinary PC Meeting. A considerable amount of correspondence had been generated. The Vice Chair expressed the fact of the extra hours undertaken and the Clerk stated that she would not be claiming for them as was glad to help the parish explore the options regarding the broadband situation. The Parish Council thanked the Clerk for this. The Clerk advised that the VAT claim for VAT paid to date had been submitted.

8. To note correspondence

The Clerk advised re some of the correspondence received including information from Balfour Beatty concerning drainage, from West Mercia Police concerning Neighbourhood Watch Schemes and from Anthony Bush and HALC concerning a proposed Community Governance Review.

9. Finance

9.1 **Resolved:** The following list of payments were approved, prop by JL and sec CW:

Mrs A Wright (salary £332.60, mileage £16.20 home office £50.00)	£320.78
Tax due on salary payment (Payable to The Post Office)	<u>£83.20</u>
Total	£482.00

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

10. Planning

There had been one application received:

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS:	152200 - Land at Green Farm, Allensmore, Hereford
DESCRIPTION:	Proposed solar voltaic array and associated transformer.
APPLICANT(S):	Mr Owens
GRID REF:	OS 347256, 235800
APPLICATION TYPE:	Planning Permission

The Parish Council had responded:

“There are no objections in principle however the Parish Council have noted that the application does not mention any floodlighting, or other major lighting, on the site but just in case this is intended would like it noted that the PC feel that this would make an unacceptable impact and should not be permitted.”

11. To discuss further developments regarding broadband provision

A parishioner from Church Road, Allensmore reported that the broad band provision to their property would be terminated on 12th October 2015. There would be no internet available via mobile service either. This would leave them unable to complete their VAT and tax returns as required on line. Marches Media, a satellite broadband provider, had been to do an assessment regarding broad band supply via satellite to the property. They had deemed the case as requiring a non-standard installation and the cost was anticipated as an initial charge of around £500 and then a monthly sum of £44.00 for 20 “gigabytes” of provision. The resident said it would probably be the same for other potential customers. Around 14 households were likely to be affected in the first switch

off. The resident had been in touch with MP Jesse Norman and a reply had been received from Cllr Graham Powell. A copy of the letter was made available and it indicated that "allpay" were cutting off the connection ostensibly because of "line of sight" issues. This was attributed to a line of trees that was obscuring the signal transmission. Cllr Powell had stressed that he was "nothing to do with "allpay"". Cllr Powell, as lead representative from Herefordshire Council on the Fastershire Project, had been responsible for driving broadband around Allensmore. It was again stressed that "allpay" were an independent company. It was commented that solutions to the issue of broad band provision seem "thin on the ground". Questions were asked as to why the second phase of upgrading to broad band under Fastershire cannot happen now. The first tranche has to be completed before any new funding can be applied for. There was a discussion around the BT cabinet 73 at Belmont which was being looked into as an option. Cllr Johnson would chase up Cllr Powell and subsequently BT and Matt Lloyd the BT Project Director for Fastershire on this topic. One of the problems highlighted was that people would be "jumping ship" and this could put any option of a viable continuation of a service in jeopardy. The question was asked whether "allpay" could keep a service going for "six months" to allow time for customers to source alternative options to the service. Cllr Johnson suggested that customers should write to allpay for the attention of the Managing Director; Tony Killeen. There was further discussion on the line of poplar trees, the failure of the transmitters where signals had dropped for a number of times and targets for transmission were not being met internally by allpay. The 30 days notice commitment had been honoured. Some customers in Allensmore were affected by the fist switch off date and some in Clehonger, some in Dinedor Hill. It was explained that Herefordshire Council do not have the power to do anything about the situation, as the contract had been written at Central Government level, but it was suggested that if enough pressure is brought to bear by companies then something may have to be done. It was suggested that people contact Natalia Silver, Project Director at Herefordshire Council on nsilver@herefordshire.gov.uk or Matt Lloyd at BT regarding the roll out of Fastershire. Some other community solutions were discussed such as a village in Yorkshire where the community had paid for fibre-optic cable to be laid across fields to enable broad band connections.

Airband was another company offering alternative provision, although primarily business oriented, if sufficient take up was given then residential take-up could be considered alongside.

Mr Hamilton, a local resident said that he was prepared to be contacted for further information on the possibility of joining forces to facilitate a community broad band

option. His contact details are email: jimmy@hamiltonsoftwareconsultants.com or telephone 01432 354443.

It was commented that BT should have an “ethical responsibility” to ensure that the zones left out by the current situation be encompassed as quickly as possible.

12. Update on parish drainage, pipe work and flooding issues

The works scheduled for Cobhall Common following the visit by Balfour Beatty had been half completed. The second half of the pipe, some 30 metres in length, had not been renewed. A bigger pipe had been laid in the first section but was still now going down into a 4” pipe. The Chair had commented: “Just to report on my (Jeremy Lawrence) conversation with David Atkinson over my concerns about the drainage work and why it has not been completed as agreed. If you are not aware the contractor has only replaced half the problem drain leaving the 30m from the bus shelter to the drive untouched. David informed me that they found collapsed drain in the replaced length and attribute the poor flow issues to that. I have raised my concerns over the fact we still have 2 open ditches emptying in to a 4in drain. He has promised to monitor the drain and if issues are not resolved will carry out the rest of the replacement immediately which begs the question why not do it anyway”.

There was disappointment and frustration that the project had not been seen through. Assurance had been obtained that if flooding did occur then Balfour Beatty would “see to it straight away”. Ward Cllr Jon Johnson agreed that he would raise the matter with Cllr Paul Rone and report back to the Parish Council.

13. Community Governance Review – initial comments

Councils were struggling to find enough councillors. A suggestion was made by a member of the public present that wider publication of the Parish Council Meeting Agendas would be a good idea. It was agreed that Mr Mumford should be asked if he could send a link, to access the agenda when published, to those on the community mailing list.

14. Village Matters including Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

The Clerk would put in a request for 50 new sand bags, to be delivered to Cllr S Lawrence. The old sand bags were no longer viable.

15. Items for next Agenda

Precept request, budget, drainage and Balfour Beatty

15. Confirmation of date of next Meeting

The next Meeting will be held on Thursday 26th November 2015, at the Allensmore Village Hall at 8.00pm.

The Meeting closed at 9.06pm

Allensmore Parish Council Meeting

24th September 2015

Signedas a true record by Councillor (Chairman)

Dated: - 26th November 2015

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