

Minutes of Annual Parish and Annual Statutory Allensmore Parish Council Meetings held on 22nd May 2025 from 7.45pm at Allensmore Village Hall

Part One Annual Parish Meeting (open session)

In attendance: Cllrs S Williams C Watkinson and T Cramp (re-elected as Chair) and Mrs A Wright, (Clerk) plus Ward Cllr Richard Thomas and nine members of the public

Cllr T Cramp welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Annual Parish Meeting - Open Session with parishioners

There were nine residents from the parish present for the Annual Parish Meeting. The subject of broadband was discussed. There were expressions of dissatisfaction that new properties being built in the community were obtaining broadband, whereas existing households were still not being served with a decent service. There was a discussion about the ideas that had been tried and that it was proving impossible to get a straight answer on the subject from potential providers. The Chair advised that he would be meeting with the MP Jesse Norman, and a representative from the current potential broadband provider, to discuss the deployment and outcomes. The Ward Cllr also said that he would speak to MP Jesse Norman on the subject. There was an urgency for things to get moving as deadlines were not being met, and the frustration of the continued delays and issues were causing a great deal of concern to residents, some of whom were being seriously disadvantaged by the situation and were without facilities, such as phone connections, in some cases.

The Annual Parish Meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

Part Two Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

1. Co-option of councillor(s)

There was currently one vacancy for a new councillor. No co-option at this time.

2. Election of Chair and acceptance of office

Cllr Tony Cramp was nominated as Chair of the parish council by Cllr Steve Williams and seconded by Cllr Charles Watkinson. There were no other nominations. Cllr Cramp was duly elected as Chair and he signed his acceptance of office form.

3. Election of Vice-Chair

The office of Vice-Chair received one nomination and Cllr John Evans was proposed by Cllr Tony Cramp and seconded by Cllr C. Watkinson. Cllr John Evans had accepted the Office of Vice-Chair, if he were to be nominated, ahead of the meeting.

4. Election of Parish Council Officers (incl. Footpath Officer, Lengthsman Co-ordinator)

The Planning Sub Committee was confirmed as comprising all members. Lead Charles Cllr Watkinson

The Footpath Officer was confirmed as Cllr Steve Williams

The Finance Working Group was confirmed as all Cllrs. Lead Cllr Tony Cramp

The Lengthsman Co-ordinator would be Cllr Jeremy Lawrence

5. Apologies for absence

There were apologies for absence received from Cllrs S Grenar, J Evans and J Lawrence.

6. To note Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

7. Brief Verbal Reports:

7.1 **Ward Councillor** - The Ward Cllr; Richard Thomas updated the meeting and he had sent his report by e mail.

He advised that there was no further update on the amalgamation of authorities.

There was a discussion about another road traffic collision involving the A465, in the vicinity of the B4348. It was agreed that a further letter would be sent to the authorities asking for a review of the situation to see if anything could be done to reduce the speed limit and to look at possible deceleration lane configuration?

8. To approve minutes of the Meeting held on 20/03/25

Resolved: - The Minutes of the meeting, held on 20th March 2025, were approved by the Council

9. To receive any correspondence and Information Update

Talk Community bulletins

Balfour Beatty

The Locality Steward had circulated reports, when available.

West Mercia Police

Newsletter circulated when received.

Timing of the parish council meetings

It was proposed that the time of future meetings should be changed to 7.30 pm. The Chair would check with Cllr Lawrence who may be affected by this timing due to work commitments.

10. Finance and Policies

(10.1) to approve list of payments (separate list)

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| Mrs A Wright - salary paid in accordance with contract | |
| Tax due on salary payment (Payable to HMRC only) | £134.60 |
| Clear Insurance Management Ltd (PC Insurance) | £627.07 |
| Information Commissioner (ICO) | £52.00 |
| C. Bull (Internal Audit 2024 – 2025) | £40.00 |
| Cobb's Tree & Estate Services (Lengthsman) | £600.00 |
| T. Griffiths (Lengthsman) | £1080.00 |
| Mrs Y M Chapman (donation for Histories Week) | £50.00 |
| Walford Timber (footpath bridge) | £2126.92 |
| Cllr S Williams (cement/ sundries for footpath works) | £52.50 |
| Kingstone Surgery Charitable Trust (donation) | £100.00 |

(10.2) **To note bank balance**

The bank balance was noted as £10337.16.

(10.3) **To sign and approve the Exemption Certificate 2024 – 2025**

The Exemption Certificate 2024 – 2025 was approved and signed

(10.4) **To sign and approve Annual Governance Statement 2024 – 2025**

The Annual Governance Statement 2024 – 2025 was approved and signed

(10.5) **To sign and approve Accounting Statement 2024 - 2025**

The Accounting Statement 2024 – 2025 was approved and signed

(10.6) **To consider donation to the Kingstone Surgery Charitable Trust**

The parish council discussed the proposal for the prescription dispensing service and resolved to make a donation of £100.00 towards the project.

11. Planning

(11.1) To review any planning matters

There were no new planning consultations to review at the time of the meeting.

Cllr Watkinson had circulated an update, with the current position, concerning applications that had been reviewed and commented on, for information purposes.

(11.2) To revisit the Neighbourhood Development Plan – way forward

The Chair advised that the current Allensmore NDP would hold weight in planning decisions until 2026.

The following notes are from the Chair who attended a briefing on the subject of the NDP:

"These are my main takeaways from yesterday's seminar about the impact of the new housing targets on NDPs. (Context: our NDP was made on 7th June 2021, so becomes 5 years old June 2026).

With the current Herefordshire local plan not being appropriate for the new government imposed housing targets, HC are embarking on a new plan with a draft scheduled for consultation in March 2027 and targeted for submission in Jan 2028. With the new housing target, the county now has a housing supply for 3.1 years down from 5.8 yrs for the previous target. Until our plan is 5 years old (i.e. June 2026) it has all the weight it had before. After it is 5 years old policies unrelated to housing supply continue to have the same weight but those related to new housing are no longer valid meaning we are subject to speculative development from June 2026 and can't use our NDP to steer the location or numbers of new housing. This situation continues until the NDP is formally reviewed and accepted. The revised NDP has to be accepted against the new local plan and therefore can't be done until this is available. Some preparatory work can get underway in parallel before the new plan is submitted, especially once the draft is available, but by necessity it is limited until the new local plan is in place (due Jan 2028). So we are vulnerable to speculative development from June 2026 to whenever our revised NDP is "made" (or whatever the equivalent is for a revised plan).

The HC NDP team is focussed on developing the new local plan and will therefore have limited resources to help with NDPs, we will therefore need to use consultants for some of the tasks that the HC NDP team did before. (Perhaps this will be better after the new local plan is submitted?).

It is thought that Localities are currently providing grants for NDP work (which will need to be greater than before unless we have our own funds we can use). The new housing targets are based on a proportion of existing housing stock plus an affordability factor. HC can calculate these targets for our designated area on request. Our previous NDP had a target of 32 new dwellings but at the time it was made we had 44 net completions and commitments. This is still the case today but with 1 further addition (Kennels manager's house) so now 45 as the commitments continue to turn into completions. For the county, the new target is 27,260 new dwellings which is 32.9% of the dwellings (per 2021 census). Applying this proportion to Allensmore (and ignoring any affordability factor) suggests a target of around 68 new dwellings

compared to the previous target of 32 and our actual number 44 commitments and completions."

12. Drainage and related matters – update and decisions

Works were in progress and grants being utilised. Two new footpath bridges were being installed and gates and fingerposts had been installed.

There were a couple of footpath matters that Cllr Williams would be dealing with, a difficult with passing a footpath due to a locked gate and another stile near Goose pool that required a new step. Outstanding drainage works were being chased up and a further two maintenance days would be implemented. Cllr Lawrence would lead on activities.

13. Lengthsman update/actions & to confirm signed contract for 2025 - 2026

Cllr Cramp and the Clerk signed the 2024 – 2025 Lengthsman Contract.

Pieces of work were being agreed and one contractor would undertake a survey of drainage issues. This would be to look at key areas and look at end points. Decisions on contractor tasks and getting quotes for works were under consideration.

14. Broadband update (if applicable)

This topic was discussed during the Annual Parish Meeting, with the residents present.

15. Items for next Agenda

All the usual items would be included for July. Also co-option of councillor

16. Date of next meeting

The next Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council was confirmed as 17th July 2025

The Meeting closed at 9.17 pm

Allensmore Parish Council Meeting

22nd May 2025

Signedas a true record by Councillor Tony Cramp (Chairman)

Dated: - 17th July 2025

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