

**Minutes of the Meeting of
LONGHOPE PARISH COUNCIL
held online on Monday 19th October 2020**

PRESENT: Cllrs. S Collins (Chair), G Nicholas, and A Toomey

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr I Barrett (Clerk), County Cllr. B Robinson and 15 local residents

1. There were no apologies for absence.
2. There were declarations of interest.

Comments by County Councillor Robinson

County Councillor Robinson was given the opportunity to speak before the Public Forum. Two topics were addressed:

- Update on Coronavirus. Gloucestershire is at level Medium 2. The County Council has implemented a six point plan to arrest and to prevent the spread of Covid-19. These are summarised as follows:
 - Reinforce national advice and guidance
 - Increased enforcement. Investigating complaints linked to breaches and issue fines and enforcement notices to those who break the rules.
 - Positive case welfare checks. Check the understanding of people as to self isolation guidance
 - Suspend all care home visits
 - Community Protection Officers to move around the county to provide help and guidance and support
 - Work with shielded groups
- Forest of Dean District Local Plan 2021-2041. The tenet of the plan, which had been recently discussed in a full Council Meeting, was to build up to 5000 new homes in the Forest of Dean area in the period up to 2041. One option was to use the area between the A40 and A48, in the area of Churcham, to create a new town. County Councillor Robinson expressed disquiet over this proposal as it would create a fifth town which could well undermine the existing four towns. It would also change the nature of the Forest area. The plan is now out for consultation; councils and the public were encouraged to engage with the process and to provide comment.

3. Public Forum

A local resident enquired as to the length of time that the traffic lights would be in place on the A40 near to the Nags Head. It was advised the traffic lights were in place to prevent the public and traffic getting too near to a wall that was considered to be dangerous. Work on the wall was scheduled to commence on 26 October 2020 and it was estimated that the work would take around two months.

A further question was asked about the coned off area in the Latchen. This was due to a road cover being missing from a water stop cock and the area had been isolated by Severn Trent water. It was pointed out that utility services were permitted to dig up roads with no enforcement or penalties on the time it took.

Ms Cathy Griffiths noted that a poster previously displayed on the village noticeboard, and advertising her participation as co-ordinator of the Covid 19 volunteers, had been removed. Ms Griffiths asked that a similar poster be displayed (but omitting her position as being on the Council). It was agreed that this should be investigated by the clerk.

Action IB

A local resident noted that several of the stiles on the footpath leading from Mill Lane to the village were overgrown and in a state of disrepair. AT reported that the North Dean Ramblers had strimmed the vegetation but the repair of the stiles themselves was in the hands of the County Council. It was the understanding of AT that a site inspection had taken place.

4. Planning

The clerk reported on the progress of previous planning discussions.

- P1012/20/FUL Dick Whittington Farm Park - Creation of Natural Burial Site
Having examined the response from the developers it was considered that the Council had insufficient evidence to sustain an objection.
- P0090/20/DISCON Richard Read Transport Monmouth Road – Discharge of condition 08 (Pedestrian Crossing) of planning application P0293/20/FUL
Notwithstanding the consultancy report the Parish Council considered that a road safety hazard existed without a formalised pedestrian crossing. The clerk had written to the District Council requesting that the concerns of the Council be formally recorded.

The planning report had been circulated to Councillors. After some discussion it was agreed that there were no objections the following proposals:

- P1567/20/FUL May House, Church Road, Longhope, Erection of single storey extensions to rear, replacing existing lean to
- P1420/20/FUL Richard Read Transport, Monmouth Road, Longhope Regrading of land and landscape works
- P1497/20/PQ3PA Sheperdine Top Barn, land at Yartleton Lane. Gloucester Road. Trio notification for the conversion of existing barn to a self build low impact studio dwelling and associated operational development

The Council wished to object to the following proposal on the grounds that this would result in a new house in the open countryside, contrary to National Policy, PPS, 7 and Regional Policies S.4 and H.6 of the Gloucestershire County Structure Plan and Review and Policies (R)FH.6, (R)FH.15 and (R)FNE.1 of the District Local Plan Review.

- P1579/20/FUL Mutlow Cottage (Land At Barrel Lane), Barrel Lane, Longhope, Gloucestershire. Removal of condition (09) of P0970/08/FUL to allow the use of Mutlow Cottage as a residential dwelling

The clerk presented a formal consultation issued by the Forest of Dean District for the diversion of a public footpath crossing land at Woodland View farm and emerging on a public highway at Nags Head. Concern was expressed at this proposal as the diversion would result in the path meeting with a busy road at a point with limited visibility. AT undertook to discuss the proposal with the North Dean Ramblers Association. The last day for objections of 18 November 2020 was noted.

Action AT

5. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings on 21 September and 28 September 2020 were agreed as true records, to be signed when conditions permit.

6. Members' Reports

Cllr Nicholas reported that he had met with the local Police Community Support Officers who were keen to obtain details of the speed of traffic through the village. It was noted that the locally obtained speed camera was not working and it was estimated that two persons would be required to move the installation.

Cllr Toomey advised the meeting that North Dean Ramblers had been advised that they had until 2026 to find any lost footpaths or bridleways. Cllr Toomey that if any member of the public was aware of any lost footpaths, or footpaths which do not go anywhere, that these be reported such that they can be reinstated.

7. Committee Reports

(a) Latchen Room Management Committee

There was no Latchen Room Management Committee report.

(b) Longhope Emergency Fund

It was considered timely that the signatories to the Longhope Emergency Fund be amended, particularly as if a second Coronavirus second wave was combined with a hard winter then it was likely that the fund would be required. It was agreed that Cllr Collins and Cllr Nicholas be added to the signatories and Mr Andrew Maliphant (the previous parish clerk) be removed.

(c) Recreation Ground Management Committee

The Chair read out the following statement to the meeting, concerning the Recreation Ground Management Committee:

After listening to villagers' concerns at multiple council meetings, the Parish Council are currently looking at 2 options in relation to the Trusteeship and management of Longhope recreation ground.

Both options seek to resolve long standing legal irregularities in the trusteeship and management of Longhope Recreation Ground. Such irregularities risked exposing the Parish Council, past Trustees and Committee Members to undue legal and financial liabilities.

Option 1: The Council can vote on the published rules as-is. This would create a joint (and equal) councillor and villager committee with delegated powers in relation to the running of the Recreation Ground.

Option 2: The Parish Council can explore an option where the Recreation Ground, and management thereof, is handed over in its entirety to the village, with NO involvement from the Parish Council. However, to do this correctly and lawfully a new legal entity would need to be established. To that end, the Parish Council, as Charity

Trustee, will need to seek specialist legal advice. During the time this would take to organize, the Council would continue to manage the recreation ground and fulfil all of its legal responsibilities as Trustee of the Charity.

The Chair indicated that Option 2 would be investigated.

8. Clerk's Report & Correspondence

An email had been received from a local resident expressing concern as to the entrance and exit of Hopeswood Park on to the A40. The author of the email was apprehensive about traffic speeding along the A40 and the vision to the left on exiting Hopeswood Park was poor. Whilst sympathising with the circumstances the Council felt that there was little that they could do and considered that the position of the exit itself was contributing to the issue.

The clerk detailed a request from the May Hill Hub for a contribution from the Council to their start-up costs. The May Hill Hub is a not for profit venture which has evolved from community action during the pandemic, a key feature being the delivery of fruit and vegetable bags to residents of May Hill and the surrounding areas. Future plans are ambitious with the establishment of a community shop. After some discussion it was agreed that the Council would not provide any financial support due to the limited benefit of the proposal to Longhope village.

Cllr Nicholas asked that a Section 137 grant application form be placed on the parish website. Clerk to action. **Action IB**

Note: Section 137 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 is a statutory power. It gives council's the power 'to incur expenditure for purposes not otherwise authorised.' It is only used when there is no other specific power available; it is a 'power of last resort', it must benefit some or all inhabitants, not an individual.

The clerk reported back that the Longhope Youth Fund were content for the Parish Council to order the sports equipment on their behalf. To this end the Parish Council would retain the monies granted and pay from the overall Council funds, thereby allowing the VAT to be reclaimed. Cllr Nicholas stated that he had received quotes for the equipment. These were outlined and would be circulated to Council members.

Cllr Collins stated that he would adopt the duties of snow warden. The new handyman, when in post, would subsume some of the duties as directed by Cllr Collins.

The clerk reported that the Parish insurance policy was now in place and the Public Liability Statement had been posted on the website.

An email had been received from the new Police Community Support Officer introducing herself. In addition, a letter had been received from the police outlining the new policing policy for the Forest of Dean.

A request had been received from the Longhope Women's Institute wishing to plant a Field Maple tree on the recreation ground to celebrate one hundred years of the Longhope Women's Institute. Although there was no objection in principle the Council wished to be advised of the proposed location. The clerk was to investigate. **Action IB**

The clerk had received guidance as to the conduct of Remembrance Sunday activities in line with the current Covid-19 restrictions and requirements. The clerk advised that he had

sent a copy to the Chairman of the Longhope British Legion; Council members indicated that they wished to view the document. The clerk was to forward the publication. **Action IB**

9. Finance

The following invoices had already been approved for payment but were presented for record purposes:

HMRC	Employer payment	979.19
Waterplus	Allotment Water Charges	195.96
AR Website	Maintenance of Website	70.00
Came and Company	Parish Insurance	964.30
PATA (UK)	Payroll costs	30.95
Andrew Maliphant	Salary – September 2020	1739.54

The following invoices were approved for payment:

Merlin Waste	Dog waste collection, October	124.80
Gary Nicholas	Allotment fencing Items (reimbursement)	18.09
Ian Barrett	Salary – September 2020	456.92
Ian Barrett	Purchase of Laptop (reimbursement)	274.80
Ian Barrett	Purchase of Software (reimbursement)	85.00
Ian Barrett	Purchase of Zoom Licence (reimbursement)	143.88
Glebe Contractors	Grass cutting	137.87

The monthly financial report was received and approved. The clerk noted that a credit note had been received from Online Playgrounds due to the return of goods and this had been included as a credit on the report. Cllr Nicholas stated that this had been sent in error and should be voided. The clerk undertook to adjust the next financial report. **Action IB**

The budget for tree planting behind the Latchen Room was discussed. Cllr Toomey stated that planting trees behind the Latchen Room was an initiative generated by Covid-19 to provide food locally. However, a recent inspection of the site caused some doubt as to the planting location of the trees and also the suitability of the area. After some discussion it was agreed that the requirement for an extra source of food had not been found necessary and moreover Longhope was in a country area with sufficient resources. It was therefore agreed that the proposal to plant fruit trees behind the Latchen Room should be withdrawn.

The Chair announced that there had been insufficient requests (eight out of a required ten) to hold an election to fill the councillor vacancy caused by the resignation of Cllr Cathy Griffiths. The Council was in a position to co-opt a new councillor with a view to the selected individual being ratified at the next Council meeting. The clerk was to advertise the position. **Action IB**

10. Next Meeting – Monday 16 November 2020 at 7pm

Signed:.....Chairman. Date:.....