

TITLEY & DISTRICT GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING FOR TITLEY & DISTRICT GROUP PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 21st May 2024 AT 7.30 PM AT TITLEY VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllrs R Edwards (Chairman), R Sankey, N Lloyd, C Janson, J Mitchell, M Lloyd, N Davies

In Attendance: Nick Hall - West Mercia Police (SmartWater), Mr S May, 2 residents from Staunton on Arrow and Parish Clerk Rachael Jones

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies of absence
Ward Cllr Phillips

2. Approval Of Minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 6th June 2023
The minutes were **approved** and signed

3 Presentation By Nick Hall – West Mercia Police – We Don't Buy Any Crime SmartWater

Nick Hall, introduced himself as a co-ordinator for 'We Don't Buy Any Crime' Team at West Mercia Police and is part of a team within West Mercia Police tackling acquisitive crime throughout the Local Authority areas of Shropshire, Telford, Herefordshire and Worcestershire, with the support of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and uses a forensic property marker produced called SmartWater to protect parishioners' personal property against theft. The Team work with Parish Councils who invest in the project to offer each resident in their chosen area a free SmartWater property marking kit. Once 70% of the kits ordered have been registered, deterrent street signage will be erected at key locations around the protected area. The cost of each kit to the Parish Council will be 75% of the full price (Kits are priced at £8.70 each). A minimum of 80% of the chosen area must be purchased. (a minimum of 50 kits for each order) SmartWater is based on a solution which contains a unique forensic code that is invisible to the naked eye, but will glow yellow-green under UV light and once applied makes equipment traceable back to their owner. It is easy to apply, with only a speck of solution. Only the size of the pinhead is needed to convict and is guaranteed to last 5 years on each application. In each forensic marking kit you will receive:

1 x SmartTrace forensic liquid – enough to mark 80 -100 items
SmartWater 'THIEVES BE AWARE' window deterrent labels
SmartWater 'THIEVES BE AWARE' tamper-resisant deterrent labels.

The Chairman thanked Nick Hall for doing the presentation.

It was agreed to put it on the Agenda for the next meeting in July

4. To receive views from local residents from the Parishes of Titley, Staunton On Arrow, Rodd, Nash and Little Brampton and Knill

- **Titley Residents**

There were no residents at the meeting

- **Staunton On Arrow (2 Residents)**
There were 2 residents present who made the following points:
 - **Mowley Lane** – there are large potholes and the road surface is in bad state of repair. The residents asked if the Parish Council could put pressure on Herefordshire Council to resurface it. It was agreed to speak to Ward Cllr Phillips.
 - **Bridleway – Stan Lane – U91607 (Pear Tree Cottage to 100 metres west of Stockley Cross)**
The residents asked if the above bridleway could be considered for clearing, as there are adults and young children who now ride and it would make it safer, as the road is dangerous with heavy and fast traffic. This bridleway is impassable at the moment due it being overgrown, with large trees growing across it. The residents mentioned that part of the bridleway had been incorporated into a garden of a property. The residents commented that they would be prepared to clear it, if they were allowed.
- A discussion took place and it was agreed to discuss it at the next meeting in July.
- **Rodd, Nash, Little Brampton And Knill (There were no Rodd, Nash, Little Brampton And Knill residents present)**
There were no residents at the meeting.

5. Chairman's Review 2023/24

The Chairman gave his report and the following points were noted:

- **Planning Applications – the two major applications for the Parish were:**
 - **The Balance Yard (192515 Re-Consultation For Amendments for the approval of reserved matters following outline approval)**
The planning committee has deferred their decision, for the Parish Council and Agent to meet and discuss amendments to plans ie size of dwellings, design, building materials, layout and height.
 - **Proposed Solar Farm At Oatcroft (233578)**
A presentation and public meeting had been held to with the Agent (Green Switch Capital), to discuss this application. 50 people attended the meeting which included residents and councillors. There were over 100 representations on the planning portal, the majority objecting to the application, with some in support. The Parish Council did not support it, as it was not supported by the criteria of the NDP. Subsequently the application was refused by Herefordshire Council.

NDP

On the 19th October a referendum was held with a 105 – 12 in favour. Therefore the NDP for Titley & District Group Parish Council was adopted. Herefordshire Council have started consultation regarding the new Core Strategy for the period to 2041. Titley and Staunton On Arrow do not have enough services and will lose their settlement status and return to their pre – 2016 status of open countryside with limited development.

Footpaths

The Chairman thanked Shaun Haydon for all his hard work on the Titley Footpaths (clearing footpaths, installing new kissing gates and way markers). He also informed the meeting that there was funding from Herefordshire Council for PROWS and hopefully the work will expand to Staunton On Arrow.

Highways

- **Shawl Corner (B4355)**
Discussions were continuing on improving visibility and safety, with new signage hopefully being installed.

Resurfacing

- **Stansbatch Road (U91607)**
The road through Stansbatch to Milton Crossroads has been resurfaced.
- **Mowley Lane (U91604)**
Parts of this road is due to be resurfaced in July.

Lengthsman Scheme

This is now being funded by Herefordshire Council.

Herefordshire Green Network

It was noted that the Parish Council has joined Herefordshire Green Network, with a working group of Councillors and residents set up to coordinate events and raise awareness of what we can do to reduce our carbon footprint.

New Councillors

The Chairman welcomed Matthew Lloyd who stood for Rodd, Nash and Little Brampton at the last election (May 2023) and Stephen May (Co-opted for Staunton On Arrow)

- The Chairman finished by thanking the Parish Councillors for attending the meetings and the Clerk for her hard work and diligence. He also thanked Ward Cllr Phillips for attending the Parish Council meetings throughout the year.

6. Accounts For The Year Ended 31st March 2024

The Chairman summarized the accounts for the meeting.

7. Ward Councillor's Annual Report - Ward Cllr R Phillips

Ward Cllr sent his apologies for not attending the meeting. The Chairman went through his Annual Report below:

County Councillor's Report

Dear Residents

Finance

Following last year's election the conservative group of 21 members took on the minority leadership of Herefordshire Council of 53 members. The first issue was deal with a budget left by the outgoing Green/Independent council which showed 13 million pounds of savings in 2023/24 but no indication of where the savings were coming from. At the year end this figure has been worked on and reduced to under 8 million which will be found from reserves but going forward a balanced budget has been set for 2024/25 with clear identified savings.

I Chair the Rural Services Network and was pleased to see our lobby had resulted in an increase in Rural services delivery grant to Herefordshire to 6 million pounds. Council tax was increased by 2% plus 3% social care charge which will bring in 62 million – 40 million of which will pay for our social care contracts.

Financing of local government remains a concern given the rising costs and demands of Adult and Children's care and the new government will need to look at the criteria and levels of funding going forward. I work with colleagues across the political parties to make the case for rural service delivery.

Children's care services

The council's children's care services are overseen by a commissioner Eleanor Brazil appointed by the Minister. Despite significant extra spending the pace of improvement still needs to be improved and be more consistent. The Council has recently appointed a new Director and works to strengthen the workforce and best practice with less agency staffing. The number of Children at risk and in care remains disproportional higher than similar authorities. Stabilising and improving foster care and adoption, improving the life outcomes for our most vulnerable children remain the key priority for the council.

Capital Projects

The Council has re-instated the southern link road from A49 to A465. After its cancellation by the previous council and the return of government funding to Westminster we will now repurchase the compulsory purchased land sold off. Fortunately the planning permission is still live. The Council will also pursue the plans for a western bypass for Hereford.

In addition more capital funds will be spent on highways, new training centre for care at Hereford hospital, the Shirehall including housing the library. The Council was successful in gaining a large lottery grant to build a new museum in Broad street.

The waste contract for bin deliveries has been awarded to our existing contractor for a continuation of the weekly alternative Black and Green collection.

Highways

The Council's cabinet took the decision to seek an early termination of the Highway contract with Balfour Beatty. The contract indicates a two year notice has to be given; so for the next two years the contract remains in place but the council will be working on a new operational model with a mixture of in house and out sourced delivery of services. Equally important is to skill up the council commissioning side to tighten the monitoring and delivery of the contract. Going forward funding transferred from the cancellation of the HS2 second stage project will increase our spend on highways from 15 million to 38 million in 2024/25. During the year there has been significant works undertaken on U91607 Stansbatch, C1082 Bearwood and on B4355 at the Rodd. Our highway infrastructure has been badly impacted by the weather with maintenance remaining a challenge and road users suffering from potholes, poor surfacing and drainage. Hopefully the new drainage scheme between the Council and parish and improved practices will impact positively in the next twelve months.

[Report problems on the road –](#)

www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/report-problems-road

[Check on progress of a defect](#)

herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/pothole-road-defect-progress-map

[www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/pothole-road-defect-progress-](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/pothole-road-defect-progress-map)

mapwww.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/pothole-road-defect-pr

Report a serious pothole, flooded road or highway obstruction- Balfour Beatty Living Places : 01432 261800

Footpaths issues –

- *PROW - PROW@herefordshire.gov.uk*
- *PROW No – 01432 383 550*

Report fly tipping it will be dealt with in a much quicker time frame. by either calling the Contact Centre on 01432 261800 or by logging the fly tipping via the council website on the links below as your https://link.edgepilot.com/s/f452e836/Hy5YWk_SgEGkleekL2ROFQ?u=https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200226/report_a_problem/98/fly_tipping

During the year we dealt with excess water issues and flooding in Eardisland and Lyonshall.

Planning

The ongoing issue of phosphates limiting the granting of planning permission has eased somewhat with the reed-bed at Luston allowing credits, also the council is granting legal agreements on removal of livestock, replacement of old domestic sewers as a means to allow developments to begin. Ongoing shortage of staff has had an impact on the delivery of services in the planning department. The Titley Group Neighbourhood Plan was passed by referendum and adopted as a strategic planning document.

The consultation on the new Planning strategy for 2021-41 proposes removing settlement status from Eardisland, Titley, Staunton and Holmes Marsh. This returns our two villages to the previous status they had before 2015 with no new development allowed.

The Councils plan to re-site the entrance to an expanded travellers site was refused by the planning committee on highway safety grounds. The site remains closed.

Community

There is a strong sense of community throughout the villages in my ward and this is evident in Titley and Staunton with many community events being held. My thanks go to all the volunteers who support the community to add to the wellbeing of residents.

I send out a monthly update to all my email ward contacts, attend as many Parish Council meetings and community events as I can and deal with individual resident and business concerns. I serve as the Vice Chair of the Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and for the past 12 months as Chair of the Herefordshire Council.

This year has seen some changes in the Parish Council and I want to express my sincere thanks to Bill Stokes on his years as Chair and the enthusiasm and work he brought to the role. Can I thank all my Parish Councillors, Richard and Rachael for their support during the year and I look forward to continue to work with you all.

Roger

8. Report From The Village Hall Representative

Titley Village Hall

Cllr Sankey informed the meeting the following:

- Titley Village Hall has had Wifi installed
- Titley Village Fete is on 10th August.
- The hall has a lot of bookings, including regular ones.

Staunton On Arrow Village Hall

Rob Hughes sent the following report which the Chairman read out:

Staunton Village Hall successfully operates a 'Coffee Spot' every first Saturday morning of the month. It has been extremely well attended and offers an opportunity to meet, greet and eat cakes ...all are welcome.

We have held various social gatherings throughout the year including a very successful Curry Night, a Quiz & Chip butty evening and an Xmas tree Light up evening.

We have recently installed Wifi and are currently updating our audio/visual apparatus...this will enable us to offer other activities within the community.

The Committee is made up of 6 Trustees whom also act as the main instigators and organisers of all the activities, consequently we are always grateful for any additional volunteers. We are especially looking for a new Treasurer and an Events Coordinator to support us in future activities.

The Hall is currently financially fluid and successfully acts under the guidance and regulations of the Charity Commission.

9. Neighbourhood Development Plan Progress Report

Cllr Mitchell informed the meeting that the revised NDP was adopted in November 2023.

10. Report From The Footpath Officer

The Footpath Officer sent his apologies and will attend the Parish Council meeting in July.

11. Report From Pembridge Primary School

The following report from Mr Hollis (Head) Pembridge Primary School was read out by the Chairman.

We were thrilled to receive a letter from the Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP, Minister for Schools, who congratulated us – staff and pupils – on the very high standard demonstrated in the reading, writing and mathematics key stage 2 assessments last year. Hard work and determination with excellent teaching and a wonderful cohort of children has put the school in the top 1% of primary schools in the country!

There continues to be much in the news about Ofsted. One-word grading still looks to be continued and the detail will be in the reading of reports. There is, I gather, a little more mental health awareness shown by inspectors. We keep on expecting our visit from Ofsted any day now but I could, in theory, be saying this next spring too! This waiting has its toll but has given us time to refine areas of the curriculum. We continue to aim for the best we can be and know that we are never complacent.

In September 2023, the Governors became the trustees for the village's pre-school. This nursery is now in the school building and has had a very successful start. We can only take eight full-time children from the age of three – but with some staying part-time over the week, this has been 11 children. They take full advantage of being part of school-life. Our new Reception class this September will be 14 with very well-prepared children, ready for even more learning. Current predictions suggest that over the next year or two, very few young children are in the local area who might attend Pembridge. Generally, 60% of our intake come from catchments which are not the closest to our school.

We explored trying to get funding to build a purpose-built room for our Nursery children – even thinking of starting children from zero! The Local Authority could not support us because of our general income. However, the Nursery is funded separately and is not affecting the rest of the school. The Governors and I still wish to pursue a separate classroom and outdoor block which could be used for childcare arrangements during the holidays. This is a dream!

Over the last year, the Governors have been exploring what it could mean for the school to be part of a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). In reality, for a Voluntary Aided church school where the majority of our Governors are from the church, nearby parishes or the Diocese, this Trust would be the Diocese of Hereford MAT, whose CEO is a certain Andrew Teale – a one-time head of Pembridge – who has huge affection for this school and the village. This Trust reflects its values and vision in all that we hope to achieve. It is a mixed church and non-church school Trust with both secondaries and primary schools from across the Diocese. I know that

