

**TITLEY & DISTRICT GROUP PARISH COUNCIL**  
**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON**  
**TUESDAY 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025, 7.45 PM**  
**AT TITLEY VILLAGE HALL**

**Present:** Cllrs R Edwards (Chairman), S May, N Lloyd, M Lloyd, Ward Cllr R Phillips

**In Attendance:** Clerk: R Jones

**1/25 Elect A Chairperson**

Cllr R Edwards was nominated by Cllr M Lloyd and seconded by Cllr N Lloyd to be Chairman. There were no other nominations. Councillors AGREED unanimously.

**2/25 Chairperson's Declaration Of Acceptance**

Cllr R Edwards signed the declaration of acceptance form.

**3/25 Elect A Vice-Chairperson**

Cllr J Mitchell was nominated by Cllr R Edwards and seconded by Cllr S May to be vice-chairman. There were no other nominations. The Councillors AGREED unanimously.

**4/25 Apologies Of Absence**

Cllrs R Sankey, N Davies, J Mitchell

**5/25 Declaration Of Interest And Written Requests For Dispensation For Items On The Agenda**

There were no declarations of interest made by Councillors. The Declaration Of Interest book was available to sign.

**6/25 Approval Of Minutes from the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

**7/25 Parish Council Vacancy (Staunton On Arrow)**

The Chairman informed Councillors that the vacancy has been advertised on the website and the notice board in Staunton On Arrow.

- **To Approve And Adopt The Following (Copies previously circulated to Councillors)**

**8/25 Standing Orders 2025/26**

These were approved and adopted.

**9/25 Financial Regulations 2025/26**

These were approved and adopted.

**10/25 Code Of Conduct**

These were approved and adopted.

**11/25 Complaints Procedure**

These were approved and adopted.

**12/25 Risk Assessment Policy**

These were approved and adopted.

**13/25 Privacy Policy**

These were approved and adopted.

**14/25 Receive Comments From**

**Ward Cllr Phillips**

Cllr Phillips talked through his monthly report, with the following points noted:

- The B4355 has been resurfaced from Rodd to the boundary at Presteigne.
- He attended a meeting with the footpath officers from North West Herefordshire.
- Small electrical goods can now be placed on top of your recycling bin for the purpose of recycling.
- Batteries can be put inside your recycling bin for the purpose of recycling , but they must be put in a bag.
- Weekly food waste collection is scheduled to begin in April, provided that the Government allocates the necessary funding.
- Herefordshire Council are also considering green waste collection.

## Parish Councillors

### Cllr May went through the following updates on behalf of Titley Group Parish Environmental Working Group

#### **Update Brief: Herefordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)**

General: Jeremy Mitchell (JM) & Stephen May (SM) visited Charlie Alfandary (CA), LNRS Offr HC, at HCC offices on Tue 6 May.

**Aim.** To determine:

- current LNRS timeframe;
- participation incentives/benefits for local farmers and landowners;
- and HCC information dissemination / communication to and with local stakeholders.

**Timeframe.** In January 2025, at the time of the LNRS Webinar, the targets were as follows. Current situation given in bold type:

- Stakeholder Engagement: complete by end of February. **Ongoing.**
- Data Collation & Mapping: complete by end of March. Ongoing, 40% complete so far.
- Public Consultation: April – September. **Started.**
- Final Strategy Publication: mid-October. **Likely to be delayed until end of 2025.**

**Incentives & Benefits for Local Farmers & Landowners** (i.e. beyond an individual and altruistic interest in biodiversity). We made the point that, given economic conditions and cash-flow restraints, HCC needs to be pro-active in bringing people onboard. It appears that the current incentives are:

- **Biodiversity Net Gains (BNG).** Planning projects need to show BNG to gain approval. Local farmers and landowners can acquire credits (thought to be 15%) by creating biodiversity projects on their land, e.g. habitat banks. CA didn't appear to have any detail or knowledge of the subject. Comment: further work required by JM and SM to determine: what exactly is on offer; projects that qualify for credits; who to apply to.
- **Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS).** DEFRA driven ELMS, such as Sustainable Farming Incentives (SFI), are available. Again, CA appeared to have no detail or knowledge of what is available. In addition, it was clear that such schemes are not directly linked to HC LNRS and are not especially an incentive to participate in LNRS. Comment: further work required by JM and SM to determine how such schemes might encourage local farmers and landowners to participate in LNRS.
- **LNRS Delivery Funding.** National LNRS work is governed by DEFRA as is delivery funding. At present, DEFRA has not provided detail on delivery funding. However, CA thought that such funds may become available but had no detail. Comment: given the current national economic challenges, it seems unlikely that farmers and landowners will be offered delivery funding incentives.

**Information Dissemination (HD).** HC's ID currently consists of:

- **HC's LNRS Website:** see link at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/conservation-1/herfordshire-local-nature-recovery-strategy-lnrs>. Gives a broad outline and invites viewers to watch the recordings of the two webinars below. In addition, it invites public comment on the anonymous 'Opportunity Mapping Survey' e-form.
- **Webinars:** for Parish & Town Councils held on 22 nd January and for Herefordshire Businesses held on 11 th April 2025 – introductions and Q&A sessions.
- **Seminars:** by request, seminars with local landowners. The first will be at Whittern Farm, Lyonshall, HRS 3JA from 09.00-11.00 on Tuesday 20 May. I have reserved 3 free tickets. It is understood two others are planned for Moccas and Ross. However, I was unable to find further information on them.
- **Facebook:** on the 'Greener Footprints Herefordshire' page. To date, this only includes scant outline on: the Businesses webinar; Business Sustainability news; and the Wyescapes Project.
- **Our Comments.** We asked if there is any other coordinated direction or flow of information available to Parish Councils, such as local Town Councils coordinating with Parish Councils in their area. There are no such plans at present. Furthermore, only a dozen or so parish councils including ourselves, have raised any comments or questions. Our overall impressions so far are: that the project is not well served by the HC leadership; and isn't making much headway, primarily due to a lack of coordination and communication with local farmers and landowners.

#### **Green Update**

In addition to following up on the Nature Recovery Strategy, we have looked at other ways to get the message out to our residents to improve the environment, reduce carbon emissions and encourage wildlife generally.

1. **HCC Greener Footprints Website.** As directed by Ellie Chowns, the site gives useful information on a number of areas, Greener Footprints for: Business; Local Community; Farms; and the general situation in the county. It is also possible to sign up for the Greener Footprints newsletter on this website. We should urge residents to get on to it. The link is at: <https://zerocarbon.herefordshire.gov.uk/what-you-can-do-in-2025/>

2. HCC's 'Warm Homes' Initiative. We have a number of leaflets for circulation. Also, perhaps Rachael could somehow put it on our website? Basically, for those that are qualified to apply, it is fully funded by the Government. The eligibility criteria include: household income below £36,000 p.a; and to be in receipt of means-tested benefits such as, Universal Credit, Pension Credit etc. Full details are on the HC website. <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing-3/home-energy/2>
3. Accredited Trades. Last time we discussed the concerns people have about rogue tradesmen. HC recommend that residents use contractors and installers who are registered with Trustmark - a UK Government endorsed quality scheme. Two residents in Titley have used and recommend Fairway Energy ([enquiries@fairway-energy.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@fairway-energy.co.uk)), who have supplied air source heat pumps using a Government grant.

#### **River Arrow Update**

Information from Ben Woodcock of Eardisland, who briefed Charlie Janson and I last year on Eardisland's work on Green initiatives.

After assistance from the Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) last July, Eardisland held a training session in November, which has resulted in the Arrow and/or tributaries being water quality tested weekly at sites in Eardisland, Pembridge, Weobley, Shobdon, and by Charlie Janson near Mowley Wood.

The Parish Council has been heavily involved in moving forwards a Property Flood Resilience (PFR) scheme funded by the Environment Agency. Somewhere between 20 and 40 properties are having resilience measures installed (gates, pumps, new doors etc) at a funded cost of about £500k. This is welcome as Eardisland has flooded three times in the last two years, two of these being the worst seen for decades.

The Eardisland Environment & Sustainability Group continues to support their PC on river-based issues that can be dealt with locally (water quality testing, Himalayan Balsam removal, advice on best practice for septic tanks etc.)

However, over the past few years of discussions with the Wye and Usk Foundation, EA, CPRE, HWT it has become clear that river pollution (and also reduction in flood risk) needs to be tackled catchment wide, something that is beyond the remit of a local PC.

A small group is now in the process of setting up an Arrow River Trust which would be a catchment wide charitable organisation to support/coordinate work, profile raise, engage with all communities, and apply for project funding along the full length of the river through England and Wales.

This would open up additional sources of funding (including, but not limited to citizen science, arts projects, education, and tourism). Especially needed since the Government stopped accepting new applications for Sustainable Farming Incentives in March this year. Eardisland will be putting in a funding bid from those additional funding sources to form the trust and to start initial projects at the end of May, with the aim of launching in the Autumn.

Ben Woodcock will keep me informed, but they intend to contact all Parish Councils formally once things progress.

#### **Local Residents**

There were no local residents in attendance.

#### **Police**

There were no Police present.

### **15/25 Planning Matters**

15.1 The following planning matters were discussed and noted:

- **233700 – Rodd Court, The Rodd, Presteigne** - Proposed development includes the provision of one temporary cabin with associated access, parking and landscaping for the purposes of tourist - **Valid**
- **241633 – Lower Tan House, Staunton On Arrow** – proposed replacement of existing stable block for 3 horses – **Valid** –  
(The Parish Council have no objections to this application).
- **250243 – Low Bank House, Titley, Kington, HR5 3RP** – proposed erection of an outbuilding containing two garages, secure store and home office – **Valid**  
(The Parish Council have no objections to this application).

### **16/25 Finance**

16.1 To receive Clerk's report and approve finances (ex VAT)

- **Clerk's Financial statement to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

The Clerk informed Councillors the current account balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 - £21,376.33

The expenditure and budget sheet were **approved**.

- **The following payments (Ex VAT) were AGREED:**
- Clerk's salary as agreed by the Parish Council (Mar/April) chq 101141
- HMRC - £244.40 Jan25 – Mar 25 – chq 101142
- HALC – subscription 2025/26 - £421.93 (VAT £84.39) chq 101143
- Gallagher Insurance Company - £411.33 – chq 101145
- G J Evans – Audit of Accounts 24/25 - £200 – chq 101146

#### **Receipts**

Herefordshire Council – part 1 Precept payment 2025/26 - £5,000 – Paid  
HMRC – VAT Reclaim - £959.90.

(The Clerk informed the Councillors that HMRC had made an error in the VAT reclaim payment, by not deducting the takings. The correct amount of VAT reclaim that should be paid to the Parish Council is £317.90). Clerk to contact HMRC.

#### **17/25 2024/25 Account Statements**

The following were approved and signed by the Chairman and Clerk/Financial Officer

- **Certification Of Exemption** – Signed by the Chairman and Financial Officer
- **Annual Governance Statement 2024/25** – Signed by Chairman and Clerk
- **Accounting Statement 2024/25** – Signed by Financial Officer and Chairman
- **Internal Audit Report** – this was approved.

#### **18/25 Lengthsman**

It was noted that the Lengthsman Scheme had been approved by Herefordshire Council.

Work for the lengthsman was discussed. Cllr Edwards agreed to contact the Lengthsman.

#### **19/25 Parish Issues**

##### **19.1 Flooding – School Lane, Titley**

There was no update.

##### **19.2 Flooding near Broadford, Stansbatch (U91607)**

There was no update.

##### **19.3 Titley War Memorial – Cleaning**

There was no update.

##### **19.4 Avenue Lodge, Stansbatch, Staunton On Arrow, HR6 9LE – Retaining Wall Issues**

A discussion took place regarding the safety concern of the retaining wall at Avenue Lodge.

It was noted that the following email on behalf of the Parish Council had been sent to Ed Bradford, Engineering/Highways, Herefordshire Council.

*The resident of Avenue Lodge, Staunton on Arrow has made us aware of his concerns regarding the safety of the road to the west of his property on the southside of the UC91607. We understand that he considers that the wall bordering his property is not structurally capable of continuing to support this road (particularly the modern sized agricultural and commercial vehicles). Titley Group Parish Council would therefore consider it prudent if Hereford Council engineers could carry out a comprehensive structural survey to determine the safety of this section of road.*

##### **19.5 Erection Of Building On Land – Eywood Lane**

A discussion took place regarding a small building which had been constructed on a plot of ground on Eywood Lane.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would not proceed with this enquiry, but advise residents if they were concerned, they could report it to the Planning Enforcement Officer at Herefordshire Council.

#### **20/25 Correspondence**

Cllr Edwards informed Councillors the letter below had been sent to the following, in response to the future of the East Radnor Leisure Centre:

Presteigne and Norton Town Council, Ellie Chowns MP, Powys County Council, Herefordshire Council.

##### **Re: Future Of East Radnor Leisure Centre 12th May 2025**

*It was with some degree of dismay that we were made aware that Powys Council was again looking at the viability of the Leisure Centre at Presteigne. Although our Parishes are in England the border comes to within ½ mile of the Leisure Centre itself, and considering the regular use of the facilities by our residents, it is sad that Powys Council do not communicate their concerns and any decisions directly with us.*

*Both the swimming pool and sports facilities are well used by our residents. Many of our children are learning or have learnt to swim at the excellent lessons, and our older residents enjoy the water aerobics as well as the public swim sessions. The gym is used for both fitness and rehabilitation following injury. Both the Squash courts and hall are regularly used by local clubs drawing from enthusiasts throughout our parishes.*

*Titley Group Parish Council would consider the Leisure Centre an important asset to our local community providing a focus for maintaining the health of residents, potentially reducing NHS costs. We understand that the Leisure Centre's finances are not in the public realm, so it is hard for us as a small council to consider help with funding. We can however encourage our residents to use the facilities more regularly and help advertise classes and events. The rise in energy costs may be a large factor in maintaining the viability of the centre, so alternate renewable sources if considered could be something we could help support.*

*Titley Group Parish Council*

**21/25 Date And Place Of Next Meeting**

Parish AGM                                      Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 at 7.30pm – Staunton On Arrow Village Hall  
Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025 - Staunton On Arrow Village Hall (TBC)

Meeting closed 9.00 pm

**SIGNED (Chairman) ..... DATE .....**