

SELLACK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10TH MAY 2022 AT 7.30pm IN SELLACK VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllrs Mark Robinson, Paul Franklin, Sarah Aitken and Nick Washington.

In attendance: County Councillor Elissa Swinglehurst, Parish Lengthsman Terry Griffiths (for part), Claire Vaughan (Clerk) and 3 residents

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Cllr Mark Whittall

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL PARISH MEETING.

The minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 26th May 2021 were read, agreed and signed as correct.

3. ANNUAL REPORT OF COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 2021-22

3.1 Chairman's Report – Cllr Mark Robinson read out the Chairman's report on behalf of Cllr Mark Whittall.

This past year seems to have passed by rather quickly, and with everything virtually back to normal after Covid, we can hopefully move forward for the foreseeable future.

As usual there have been various items on the agenda throughout the year to discuss and decide on, some of which are ongoing.

Last summer, with the help and guidance from Lynda Wilcox of Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC), the Council went through the motions to find a new clerk. Luckily this didn't take too long and the Council was pleased to appoint Claire Vaughan as the new clerk to Sellack Parish Council.

Sellack Parish Council, with the aid of a drainage grant from Herefordshire Council, managed to have much needed drainage work carried out. This will help manage the flow of water during the wet periods and hopefully prevent flooding issues.

During the year the Council agreed that the website needed to be updated and so, with the help of Cllr Washington, the Council now has a new website that is fit for purpose.

In early April, the Parish Council gathered with residents at Sellack Marsh to plant a Rowan tree to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The tree was planted adjacent to the Coronation bench and Millennium tree.

I would like to thank all of my co-councillors – Councillors Robinson, Aitken, Washington and Franklin for all their time and contribution to the Council during the past year. I feel we have a good team that can work together to deal with the different issues that affect Sellack Parish.

I would like to thank our Clerk, Claire Vaughan, for all her hard work involved with the administration and organisation of Sellack Parish Council.

Many thanks to Cllr Robinson, the Footpath Office, for walking all the footpaths and organising the maintenance accordingly.

I would like to thank our Herefordshire Council representative, Cllr Elissa Swinglehurst and Locality Steward James Howell for their help and support. Also, thanks to the Lengthsman, Terry Griffiths and his team for all the maintenance they have carried out.

I would like to thank Claire Perez, Internal Auditor.

Many thanks to you all.

3.2 Parish Footpath Officer's Report (Cllr Mark Robinson)

The past year has been particularly noted for extensive growth appearing on some Public Rights of Way (PROW) in the parish, due to heavy rainfall last year.

This consequently meant the clearing of weeds was particularly necessary, which was carried out by myself and Councillor Washington. Farmers, whose crops were planted in some of the

fields where PROW's were in situ, were also co-operative, when contacted, in clearing the routes where their crop growth had become an obstruction to walkers.

Two new pedestrian wooden gates, and one new metal gate have also been installed at Backney Bridge Picnic Site, and Backney Common, providing for better access from the former's car park, and along the access track to the Common.

With the aid of a PROW Grant from Herefordshire Council, three new wooden gates are also shortly due to replace present PROW stiles, again aiding walker accessibility.

In the coming year, further work will no doubt be needed to clear PROW obstructions, when they arise, and also further consideration will be given to installing plaques on specific PROW gates, commemorating those parishioners who gave their lives in both World Wars.

4. OPEN DISCUSSION FOR RESIDENTS.

A resident from Lower Grove Common raised a question about an item of discussion from the previous ordinary meeting of Council in March 2022, relating to proposed drainage works. The resident spoke of how they maintain the Lower Grove pond area and keep the water outlet clear and queried why the Council had proposed drainage works to the pond.

The resident advised that it was their belief that any water gathering on the road was not being caused by the pond – but the roads converging at that point.

The resident spoke of a previous attempt by another resident to dredge the pond. The pond was surveyed and was found to be inhabited by the greater crested newt, which would make it an offence to interfere with their breeding habitat. Any work that takes place in or around needs to be undertaken by licensed people.

The resident advised that if the parish council was still considering this work then they would need to proceed with caution as the habitat is protected. A survey was carried out at the pond in 2016 and the newt is on the register with Herefordshire Council.

The resident shared a map of the commonland with the Chairman, indicating that the pond may not be within the registered common area.

The Chair noted the resident's concern and said that the Council was set to agree drainage works for the year at the Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council, following on from the Annual Parish meeting and reiterated that if the council were to take anything further then they would, as recorded in the previous minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council (March 2022), consult with residents first.

A resident raised three items as follows:

- Bench located at Picts Cross – the resident advised that the bench that was located at this site was removed a number of years ago for repair but had not been returned. The resident asked if the council knew what had happened to the bench and if it would be returned. The Chairman noted that, as a parish council asset, the clerk would look into this matter.
- Upper Grove Common parking – the resident advised that the common was being used for parking by non-residents of the common. The resident understood that it was illegal to park on a common without common rights – all those living on the common have access and services indemnity schedule. The Parish Council advised that they would confirm what the common was registered as with Herefordshire Council.
- Road signage obscured – modern hedge cutters cannot cut around many road signs such as the 'unsuitable for heavy vehicles' sign on Lough Pool Lane. Terry Griffiths, Lengthsman noted this and advised that his team do strim around street furniture and cut around overhang as standard but the parish council would need to request such cutting as part of those days. The parish council asked Terry to address the sign on Lough Pool Lane on his next maintenance day.

Nothing further was discussed. There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.10pm.

Signed.....

Date.....