

# WEOBLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## WEOBLEY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Weobley Parish Meeting which was held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at the Hopelands Village Hall, Weobley, commencing at 7.30pm.

---

In the chair: Mrs Lorraine Anderson

Present: Mr Ian Connolly (Traffic Management Advisor, West Mercia Police Safer Roads Team) and 22 members of the electorate

**1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTION**

Cllr Anderson welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Brenda Havard and John Simons.

**3. MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2017 were approved and signed.

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

An update on the repair of the Victorian lamppost in the centre of the village was provided. It was hoped that the light would be operational in the next few weeks.

**5. HIGHWAY MATTERS, WEOBLEY**

The meeting welcomed Mr Ian Connolly, Traffic Management Advisor, West Mercia Police Safer Roads Team, who had been invited to attend to discuss Weobley related highway issues.

Mr Connolly provided advice on road safety measures to a variety of bodies and organisation, but West Mercia Police did not have the budget to pay for any of the possible measures. Highway departments were now working with limited resources which presented some challenges.

Highway safety was compromised by either too much traffic or traffic moving too quickly. The following concerns were raised by residents:

- High level of congestion outside the schools which had resulted in at least one injury. It was acknowledged that there was too much traffic at this location. Balfour Beatty were currently in discussion with the Head Teacher regarding possible solutions including a crossing, the retention of existing parking but ensuring that any future crossing was not obstructed by parked vehicles;
- If solutions were installed at one location it was likely that the issues may emerge at other locations;
- Bus services had been reduced thus increasing other traffic;
- Issues relating to anti-social driving between 7am and 11pm in the village including speeding. The matter had been reported a number of times but no action had been taken;
- The use of SatNav by HGVs had resulted in Back Lane, which was narrow, being

- used as a shortcut;
- The highway network had been built in the 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and was not suitable for the levels of traffic today;
- The Speedwatch initiative had now been discontinued as it did not work out. There was still a need to slow traffic down;
- The possibility of providing Advanced Stop Lines (ASL) to improve cycling safety. These were normally installed as part of official cycle lanes and it was unlikely they would be installed in rural villages like Weobley;
- Concerns were expressed regarding the speed of traffic through Weobley Common. There were no speed limits except the national speed limit but the road was very narrow. There was also damage to the grass verges and animals roaming in the area. Mr Connolly agreed to look at this area and consider some possible solutions;
- Concerns were expressed regarding pavement parking. It was clarified that pavement parking was only illegal if it constituted an obstruction. If pedestrians or vehicles could pass with difficulty then it was not an obstruction. If pedestrians or vehicles were unable to pass then it was an obstruction but this had to be witnessed by a police officer. Photographs were not admissible evidence;
- It was not an offence to park on or by a dropped kerb. However, if it was an obstruction then it was an offence. H bar markings were only advisory.

It was noted that the Police had been responding to speeding issues in Weobley. It was further noted that 20mph speed limits would only be considered in areas where vehicles were already travelling at that speed. Otherwise traffic calming would be required to physically reduce vehicle speed to 20mph.

It was suggested that a combination of solutions would be required including education, engineering and enforcement. It was likely that the issues would not be fully solved but that if they were addressed problems may reduce:

- Parking restrictions could be installed at various locations in the village including the school and the village centre, although these required enforcement. The local community would need to work with Herefordshire Council to look at options;
- Educating drivers to make them aware of the issues and the potential health and safety implications of parking/speeding;
- The use of the Village Hall car park to provide additional car parking especially for the schools;
- Additional signage to discourage HGV traffic;
- Shropshire had erected signage suggesting that drivers should not follow SatNav directions at some locations;
- Wording suggested was "Unsuitable for HGVs. Ignore SatNav. Continue to follow this route" which should be erected at turnings off the main arterial routes. This matter would be investigated with Herefordshire Council and Balfour Beatty;
- If such signs were erected then information regarding an alternative route would need to be erected as well;
- The installation of Gateways into the village;
- Signs needed to be made more high profile to increase impact and driver perception;
- Village Welcome signs to be relocated to coincide with the 30mph restrictions;
- Different coloured tarmac to indicate entering into a 30mph zone;
- Speed indicator Devices although there needed to be 3 or 4 locations where these

- could be moved to in order to maintain impact;
- A variety of Speed Indicator Devices could be considered;
- Wheelie bin stickers confirming the speed limit zone.

It was agreed to report to Balfour Beatty that the white lines in Back Lane had now faded and needed repainting.

Mr Connolly was thanked for attending the meeting.

## **6. POLICING ISSUES**

The meeting noted that PCSO Stephanie Annette had now been appointed for this area following the retirement of PCSO Dick Allford. PC Bowden had also moved on. The Police had been unable to attend. Residents were encouraged to report any issues in the village via the 101 line. An update on the continuation of PACT meetings was awaited.

## **7. HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCILLOR UPDATE**

The meeting received Cllr Cooper's annual update which included work undertaken by Herefordshire Council. The report included an update on pothole repairs, highway resurfacing, education, foster caring and staffing.

Concerns were raised regarding planning application P181050 for outline permission to build an additional 50 dwellings in Weobley. The following information was noted:

- The application would be considered by the Herefordshire Planning Committee;
- The Woodland Trust had submitted an objection;
- Cllr Cooper agreed to find out if there had been any policy changes regarding S106 contributions as nothing had been allocated to Weobley Library from the Gadbridge Road development;
- The proposal was outside the current settlement boundary.

Residents were encouraged to submit their comments to Herefordshire Planning department regarding the application.

## **8. PARISH COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Anderson, Chair of Council, presented her annual Parish Council report:

- This was her fourth year as Chair and it had been no less busy with some big issues currently facing the village;
- The Parish Council's new website had now been launched and Council information was being uploaded;
- There had been a spate of antisocial behaviour over the past year in the village including an arson attack. The bench had been damaged and a new one was soon to be installed;
- PCSO Allford had retired. The support he had given the community had been very much appreciated;
- The year had seen the start and end of the Speedwatch initiative;
- There had been a good number of planning applications to be considered and thanks were extended to the Parish Tree Warden, Alan Jones, for his comments and support;
- Applications had included the Old Bowling Green, Burtonwood and the latest one

submitted by Kodiakland. This had been fully discussed at the extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2018. Over 100 comments had now been lodged on the Herefordshire Council website;

- It was hoped that the Neighbourhood Development Plan would have an impact and thanks were extended to the Working Group for all their hard work;
- The development at Gadbridge Road had now commenced and should be completed within two years. There had already been an increase in traffic and congestion;
- Street lighting, the Victorian lamppost refurbishment and new LED lights had caused some concerns which were currently being discussed;
- It was hoped that new signage would be secured in the next 12 months following the invitation to submit a grant application to the EU funding LEADER programme;
- Discussions regarding the Pump House were continuing with Welsh Water regarding its future. A survey was currently being undertaken of the building;
- The Bell Square car park continued to be well used;
- There were some concerns regarding the future of the Post Office in the village as it was experiencing some difficulties. The matter was under review and being monitored;
- Thanks were extended to all the volunteers in the village, the Parish Councillors and the Clerk.

#### **9. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN/PLANNING UPDATE**

The Chair gave an update on the progress of the Weobley Neighbourhood Plan which had just been submitted under Regulation 14. A copy of the plan was on the NDP website and was 84 pages long. It would cover the period 2011-2031, so only had another 13 years to go. It reflected the Herefordshire Core Strategy.

Following the Regulation 14 consultation further amendments would be made prior to its Regulation 16 consultation following by examination and referendum.

#### **10. PLAY AREA UPDATE**

Cllr Breen presented an update on the upkeep of the play area to the rear of the village hall. Four volunteers made up the management committee who met once a month. The volunteers carried out safety checks, grass cutting, litter picking and general maintenance. An annual risk assessment was carried out and 48 assets were inspected. A maintenance action plan was developed and carried out. This year the woodchip safer surface was being replenished.

Issues included vandalism, graffiti, glass and the loss of the bench following an arson attack. Any issues were reported to the police on 101.

Future investment in the area included the development of a skatepark and consultation had been carried out to assess support.

#### **11. OPEN FORUM**

Electors were then invited to ask questions. These included:

- Clarification on any future use of the Pump House – the building had deteriorated and no plans had been drawn up as yet. Any future use would be subject to the outcome of the survey. Residents were encouraged to submit their ideas to Council;
- The A Board had been refurbished and was available for use;

- New litter picking equipment was being ordered to help support the local volunteers;
- A LEADER funding application was currently being developed to improve signage in and around the village. A sum of up to £35,000 was potentially available;
- A request to enhance the bus shelter was noted;
- Various events to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WW1 were being organised. The Parish Council had given a grant of £100 towards the cleaning of the war memorial, poppies were currently being knitted, a silent soldier would be installed at a prominent location in the village, an art installation was being proposed on the Rose Garden by the statue of the Magpie, there would be a shop window display, there would be WW1 songs performed in the Village Hall and on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at 6am there would be a commemoration held.

Cllr Ware, the Parish Footpath Officer, gave a brief overview of the footpath infrastructure in the parish. There were 35 miles of footpaths included 25 paths, 26 stiles, 81 gates and 10 bridges. Every Saturday morning at 8am a walk was organised and left from the centre of the village. A request for dog walkers to keep their dogs under control was made.

Prior to the closure of the meeting thanks were extended to Cllr Anderson, Chair of Council, for all her hard work during the year.

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 10pm.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CHAIR:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE:**