

LUSTON GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF LUSTON GROUP PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.30PM ON MONDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2024 AT CAWLEY HALL

Present: I Stevens (Chairman), C Pearson (Vice Chairman), R Bennett Jones, A Brandish, E Coates, P Edwards, K Wood, A Capell and W Talbot Ponsonby.

In attendance: Two representatives of Border Oak, Ward Cllr. D Hurcomb and R Hewitt (Clerk). Three (3) members of the public were present.

1. Receive apologies for absence – None. The resignation of Mr J Oatley was noted.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 Disclosable Pecuniary. None.

2.2 Non-disclosable Pecuniary. None.

2.3 Non-Pecuniary. None.

2.4 Written requests for dispensation. The Chairman's written request for dispensation in respect of planning applications 240151 Land to the West of B4361 and 240114 Land to the west of White House was granted on grounds of community interest (b. knowledge of flooding which is considered to be in the interests of persons living in the authority's area).

The Vice Chairman's written request for dispensation in respect of planning applications 240151 Land to the West of B4361 and 240114 Land to the west of White House was granted on grounds of community interest (b. knowledge of flooding which is considered to be in the interests of persons living in the authority's area).

3. Approval of meeting minutes from 4 December 2023 and 11 January 2024

DECISION: The minutes of the meetings were agreed and signed.

4. Matters raised by local residents

Highway concerns were raised: the condition of the road surface on the road between Eyton and Lucton and C1040 by South Lodge; trees growing into the road on the approach to the B4361; poor road surface on junction with Eyton Common and C1040 towards Kingsland; and blocked culverts on the Seggin.

5. Consultation on Hinkley Point C proposals for 'weir improvements' on the River Lugg

The parish council is concerned that the proposed functional removal of one of the weirs between Kingsland and Eyton will cause rapid soil erosion and flooding of property downstream. The Lugg flows rapidly due to the contours of the land which means potential harm is likely to be caused at times of heavy rainfall without the weirs to hold the water back. It was noted that the Environment Agency is funding leaky dams and other natural flood measures to hold water upstream, and the proposal to remove a weir installed for this purpose is seen as contradictory and a potentially hazardous dismantling of a long lasting and successful flood alleviation scheme put in place to protect the market town of Leominster in the 1970s.

It was noted that the weirs' capacity to hold water back also benefits fish stocks at times of drought when the river runs low/ dry. The pools formed by holding the water at each weir provide a refuge for the fish.

Two members of the public reported that the removal by the Environment Agency of half a weir between Kingsland and Eyton in 2019 led to rapid soil erosion and near unprecedented flooding of Eyton and The Broad in January 2020.

DECISION: The parish council resolved to oppose the proposed functional removal of one of the weirs due to flooding and potential harm to fish stocks at times of drought, and to urge that the objective to support fish stocks in the Lugg can be better served by maintaining/improving all the existing weirs including the existing fish passes, between Kingsland and Eyton. The Clerk was asked to submit additional supporting evidence that might become available following the meeting.

6. Flooding matters

[Cllr. Talbot Ponsonby chaired the meeting.]

The Clerk reported that potential natural flood management projects above Luston will be reviewed by the landowner once the Sustainable Farming Initiative has been established. Currently, it is apparently in a transitional period and subject to change.

DECISION: To invite the flood group to a walkabout on PROW above Luston to review potential projects.

[The Chairman resumed the chairing of the meeting.]

7. Ward Councillor D Hurcomb's Brief Report (for information only)

The meeting noted Ward Cllr. D Hurcomb's verbal report. The 2024-25 budget has been proposed. Lengthsman funding is to return to 2023-24 levels in future years. £1 million is proposed to fund the strategic housing strategy. Council tax is likely to increase by 4.99 percent in 2024-25, and thereafter reduced increases are planned in the medium term. A meeting will be held later in February to consider a southern link road at Hereford. The emerging local plan is likely to require planning for provision of a further 15-20 dwellings in the neighbourhood development plan. Repair of the swing bridge over the Lugg at Eyton has been costed at £120,000, equal to 25 percent of the county's PROW budget.

8. Planning

8.1 240151 Land to the West of B4361 Luston. Proposed extension of redlined development area and submission of surface water drainage scheme in relation to application 231701 - Proposed variation of condition 2 of planning permission 190032 (Proposed development of 8 houses and garages). Amendments to design changes to plots 1,2,3,5,6 houses and garages to allow for changes to building regulations since original planning permission and other general design changes. **COMMENT:** The planning application is supported.

8.2 240114 Land to the west of White House, Luston. Proposed self-build dwelling and garage plus associated landscaping, planting and infrastructure. **COMMENT:** The planning application is supported.

8.3 240053 New House, Nordan, HR6 0AJ. Proposed demolition of redundant detached buildings, change of use from redundant agricultural to residential, erection of detached building for storage of vintage tractors and erection of car port. **COMMENT:** The planning application is supported.

8.4 240031 14 Townsend Park, Luston, HR6 0DZ. Reduce crown on Fir tree by 40% and shape to maintain proportions, reduce crown on Silver Birch tree by 20% and shape to maintain proportions. **COMMENT:** The proposed tree work is supported.

8.5 240200 22 The Willows, Luston, HR6 0DF. T1 - Birch Tree to be reduced by 30% in height, to old pollard point. **COMMENT:** The proposed tree work is supported.

8.6 Update on planning decisions: Planning applications 233425 and 233181 Pool Cottage have been withdrawn.

9. Clerk's Report and reports on meetings attended by parish councillors

The agreed precept (£22,500.00) has been submitted to Herefordshire Council. Lengthsman grant funding for 2023-24 has been paid in two stages (£2,515.00 and £1,412.00). The full grant available for the 2023-24 period has been received. Participation in the lengthsman scheme in 2024-25, including match funding of £1,122.00, has been acknowledged by the highway authority.

The SIDs have been deployed at Luston. One required a repair which was completed on 23 January 2024. The stock of sandbags kept at Cawley Hall has been checked and is sufficient for the time being. The status of the two defibrillators at Eyton and Luston has been updated with The Circuit. Eleven highway defects across the group parishes have been reported to the highway authority.

An outcome to the request to use an area of the wetland at Luston as amenity land is still outstanding. Ward Cllr. Hurcomb kindly offered to follow this up with the county council. The trustee(s) of the Wankland Trust would like to provide the parish council with a briefing at the next meeting in March 2024. Herefordshire Council is to consult on the Local Plan (Regulation 18) from 25 March 2024.

10. Highways and environmental matters

10.1 Highways – Matters to bring to the attention of Balfour Beatty. **DECISION:** To request a meeting with the locality steward to review defects raised under #4 matters raised by local residents.

10.2 Lengthsman and P3 footpaths. **DECISION:** No matters raised.

11. Finance

11.1 Payments:

HALC, subscription and affiliation 2024-25 – £840.02

AVG Anti-virus, subscription 2024-27 – £97.21

Clerk, wages, January 2024

DECISION: Payments were agreed for electronic payment.

11.2 Review direct payments:

Gigaclear, broadband service, January and February 2024 – £72.00

DECISION: Payment was noted.

12. Public space protection order (PSPO)

Consultation by Herefordshire Council on the proposed renewal of the PSPO was considered.

DECISION: The Clerk was delegated to respond to the survey.

13. Parish Council Charter

An invitation to participate in a working group facilitated by Herefordshire Council to update the charter which sets out the relationship between the county council and parishes was considered. **DECISION:** Noted.

14. Matters for consideration at the next meeting (no discussion)

D Day commemoration, 6 June 2024, The Wankland Trust.

15. Date of Next Full Council Meeting

DECISION: The next meeting will be at 7.30pm on Monday 4 March 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed as a true record_____

Date_____