Ewyas Harold Group Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Ewyas Harold Group Parish Council held at the Pavilion, Ewyas Harold on Tuesday 11th March 2025 at 7pm

Minutes

Present: Councillors Malcolm Watkins (Chair), Sally Probert, Sarah Eynon, Lucy Sevenoaks, Tony Ling, Stephen Clayton Debbie Sissons and Will Lloyd.

In attendance: Emma Thomas – HALC Cover Clerk

Members of the public: 3

A resolution was passed to exclude the press and public from the following confidential item

All members of the public left the meeting

1. **To consider appointing a Clerk and RFO to the Council**
   It was RESOLVED to appoint Emma Thomas as clerk to the Council and RFO from today. 10 hours a week on SCP37 was AGREED. It was RESOLVED that Nest should be the pension provider. It was RESOLVED that HALC would draw up the contract. See confidential note for further salary information.

Press and public were invited to join the meeting

Three members of the public joined the meeting

2. **To receive apologies for absence**
   Apologies were RECEIVED form Cllr Liz Overstall.

3. **To receive any declarations of interest and written applications for dispensation**
   The following Declarations were made:
   Cllr Sally Probert DECLARED a DPI against items 10.1, 14.2.2 and 14.5.1
   Cllr Malcolm Watkins DECLARED a DPI against item 14.5.1 and a NPI against any item involving the football club.

4. **To consider minutes of meetings held on the 11th February 2025**
   The minutes were APPROVED and duly SIGNED by the Chair.

5. **To receive the views of residents on parish matters**
   The following item was RAISED:
   - Flooding issues caused by trees blocking the waterways as well as waterways and drainage outlets being blocked generally. Can the Environment Agency be asked to maintain the drainage systems? Can Herefordshire Council be asked when capital funds will be spent on improving waterways around Ewyas Harold to prevent flooding in the first place?

   One member of the public left the meeting.

   Ward Cllr Matthew Engel joined the meeting, along with one more member of the public.

6. Reports

6.1. Ward Councillors report

The Ward Cllrs report included the following items:

- A briefing on the new planning rules had been received.
- Mr Nick Mason from Herefordshire Council has agreed to attend a meeting in Ewyas Harold to discuss flooding issues. Can Cllrs email dates they are available?
- A licencing application for a music festival to be held in the area on the weekend of the 14th June 2025 will be forthcoming.

It was REQUESTED that the Ward Cllr feedback the following item to Herefordshire Council urgently:

- The unacceptable amount of time it is taking to mend potholes. The roads are now dangerous, and it is only a matter of time before someone gets hurt. The Locality Steward has been shown the issues but nothing has been done. Some deliveries are now not being made to local businesses because of the state of the highways.

6.2. PCSO

The PCSO's report included the following items:

- There have been a couple of thefts in the area so people need to remain vigilant.
- The last speed enforcement took place on the 6th March 2025 – there were no stops for speeding.

6.3. Footpaths officer

None

6.4. Tree Warden

None

7. Kemble Centre:

7.1. To consider an update from the Kemble Centre working group and next steps

An update was RECEIVED. The last of the valuations has now been received. Companies are working on concepts for the design of a car park/picnic area on the site alongside predicted costs. The advert in the Abergavenny Voice and Hereford Times has yet to be placed. It was AGREED that the wording of the advert should be emailed to the clerk to action. Once any responses to the advert have been received, the consultation period can begin.

7.2. To consider an update on grounds maintenance at the Kemble Centre and next steps

An update was RECEIVED. The work on the porch has been completed by the Lengthsman. It was agreed that Nick Cooper-Tompkins should be instructed to do a grass cut of the area before Easter.

One member of the public left the meeting

8. Recreation Ground/Pavilion

8.1. To consider general maintenance works to the Pavilion and next steps

It was REPORTED that general tasks have been ongoing.

8.2. To consider an update on the MUGA (Multi-use Games Area) and next steps

It was REPORTED that despite sending another chasing email no response has been received. It was AGREED that the clerk should send an email. Cllr Will Lloyd will forward the wording.

8.3. To consider installing a sign acknowledging investment in gym equipment by Parish Council and She Wolves

It was RESOLVED that a plaque acknowledging the support given by the Parish Council and the She Wolves should be acknowledged. Cllr Sally Probert AGREED to investigate this.

8.4. To consider the recent anti-social behaviour at grounds
It was REPORTED that there has been some anti-social behaviour on the recreation ground and misuse of equipment. The police have been informed and will patrol the area. It was also requested that all Councillors remain vigilant.

8.5. To consider an update on when the playground will be cleaned and a review of the surface
It was REPORTED that this will take place once the area is drier.

8.6. To consider repairing the gates at the playground
It was RESOLVED that the Lengthsman should be asked to mend the gates.

9. To consider the refurbishment of the telephone box
It was REPORTED that works had started today. It was RESOLVED that the invoice for 50% of the total cost of the works should be paid - £1584.78. It was further RESOLVED that the plastic "telephone" signs should be replaced with glass ones at a cost of £74.40 plus delivery.

10. Lengthsman

10.1. To consider the lengthsman's report and agree any work to be carried out by the lengthsman
The Lengthsman report was considered. It was RESOLVED that he should jet the pipe work by Pool Farm Rowlestone. It was AGREED that the clerk should set up a meeting between the Locality Steward and Cllrs to go over key issues again – including parking by the school.

10.2. To note any tasks given to the Lengthsman by the clerk between meetings
None

11. Footpaths: to consider an update on footpaths and the PRoW grant and next steps
The clerk REPORTED that she has now contacted Head of Highways about the lack of response to requests for equipment to be delivered. He is looking into this and has stated that this kind of delay should not be happening.

12. Highways:

12.1 To consider an update from the Highways working group and next steps
It was REPORTED that the email had been sent to the Head of Highways but no detailed response had been received.

12.2 To consider the verge cutting schedule for 2025-26
It was RESOLVED that verges should have two cuts.

13. Defibrillators

13.1 To note the storage of the spare defibrillator pads at the Pavilion.
NOTED

13.2 To consider how best to keep the defibrillator check spreadsheet up to date
It was AGREED that Cllr Malcolm Watkins would update the spreadsheet and then set up a rota for Cllrs to monitor the defibrillators.

14. Finance

14.1. To consider the bank reconciliation and current balances
The clerk confirmed the following balances as of the 28th February 2025:
Current Account: £15,834.12
Reserve Account: £70,950.57
The finance report and summary was NOTED and signed as evidence of bank reconciliation and budget monitoring.

14.2. To approve payments to be made:

14.2.1. J M Probert – Bin-emptying February 2025; gully clearing; gatepost repair; Kemble Centre maintenance; recreation ground tasks - £798.00

14.2.3. Herefordshire Wildlife Trust Ltd – Wild Play – August 2023 - £250.00
The above invoices were APPROVED for payment by BACS

14.3. To note payments made between meetings:

14.3.1. Unity Trust Bank – February service charge – £6

14.3.2. Sovereign Design Play Systems Ltd – remaining invoice - £6704.08
NOTED

14.4. To confirm monies received:

14.4.1. Pavilion Hire £28.80 – Chambers
NOTED

Cllrs Watkins and Probert left the meeting. It was RESOLVED that Cllr Will Lloyd would be Chair for the next item.

14.5. To consider any grant requests or be advised on any upcoming grant requests

14.5.1 School PTA – Minibus
It was RESOLVED to defer this item until the new financial year as there are few funds left for donations in this year's budget. It was further RESOLVED that the clerk should find out more detail on the application including the following:
- How many times has the bus been hired by members of the community
- How much has been spent on breakdowns over the past year?
- How many children at the school live in the parishes of Ewyas Harold, Llancillo, Dulas and Rowlestone?
- Have all other grant funding avenues been followed?

Cllrs Watkins and Probert rejoined the meeting. Cllr Watkins resumed the chair.

14.6. To consider and update the Reserves Policy

The Reserve Policy was considered. It was RESOLVED to use the HALC model policy. It was RESOLVED that the allocated pots should be as follows:
Election Fund: £9100 – allowing for one election per parish based on 2023 costs.
Muga Prep work: £5000
Pavilion Maintenance Fund: £10,000
Play Area Fund: £10,000
Kemble Centre legal costs: the clerk will work out the balance that can be allocated to this pot.
General Reserves: To be held as closely to a year's worth of precept - which is currently at £53,829 - as possible.
It was RESOLVED that the clerk should update the policy as above for approval in April.

15. To consider signing up to the Civility and Respect Pledge.

It was RESOLVED to sign up to the pledge.

16. To consider an update on the website, email and social media

It was AGREED to put out the following update:
The Flood Pod is visiting Peterchurch on 28th March 2025 between 3-6pm.

17. Correspondence: To consider correspondence received between meetings

- Comment from a parishioner regarding maintaining the churchyard - NOTED
- Comment from a parishioner regarding state of Rabbit Lane and Locality Steward response. - NOTED
- Closure of B4347 from the A465 to Bridge Inn, Pontrilas – Wednesday 12th – Friday 14th March from 9.30-3.30. NOTED
- Increase in trade waste collection charges from April 2025 - NOTED

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18. To consider items for the next meeting (no discussion)
The following items were RAISED:
Policies.

19. To note the date of the next scheduled meeting: Tuesday 8th April 2025, Ewyas Harold Pavilion
NOTED

The meeting closed at 8.35pm

Signed: [redacted] Dated: 8/4/25