

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING  
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 12<sup>th</sup> MAY 2025**

Present

- Councillor Mr M Huskinson Chairman
- Councillor Mr M Simpson
- Councillor Mr D Fellows
- Councillor Mr A Medcalf
- Councillor Mrs M Newport
- Councillor Mrs A Johnson

Mrs G Hollick Clerk

County Council Footpath Liaison Officer Mr David Furlong

District and County Councillor Mr T Wells

**1. Apologies**

Councillor Rvd P Hughes

**2. Election of Officers**

**2.1 Chairman**

Councillor Simpson proposed Councillor Mike Huskinson to the post of Chairman. This was seconded by Councillor Fellows and agreed unanimously

**2.2 Vice Chairman**

Councillor Huskinson proposed Councillor Mike Simpson to the post of Vice-Chairman. This was seconded by Councillor Johnson and agreed unanimously

**2.3 Planning Committee (the Chairman and Vice Chairman are ex-officio)**

The Clerk suggested that as Councillor Peter Hughes had previously been a member of the planning committee but was absent from this meeting, Councillors might prefer to postpone this item until the next meeting. Councillors unanimously agreed that they would continue with the present planning committee until the next Parish Council meeting in September 2025

**3. Public Question and Answer**

There were no members of the public present

**4. Code of Conduct and Declarations of Interest**

**4.1** Parish Councillors were reminded that, as required by the Parish Council Code of Conduct Order 2001, revised 2020, they should notify the MHDC Monitoring Officer of any changes to their Register of Interests or the receipt of any unrecorded gifts or hospitality. They should also declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any of the items of this meeting and the following Parish Council Annual Meeting.

**4.2** There were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interest.

**5. The Race Relations and Crime and Disorder Acts**

Parish Councillors were reminded that all the business carried out and decisions made at this meeting and the following Parish Council Annual Meeting, must observe the requirements of the above Acts.

**6. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025 and the Extraordinary meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

These minutes having been circulated beforehand. Councillors agreed unanimously that these should be signed by Councillor Simpson as he had chaired both meetings.

**7. Report from District and County Councillor Tom Wells**

On behalf of Guarlford Parish Councillors, the Chairman, Cllr Huskinson, gave congratulations to Cllr Wells on his success at the recent County Council elections. Councillor Wells thanked the meeting. He told the meeting that successfully elected as an Independent Councillor he had been asked to ally with UK Reform to form a majority controlling party. Councillor Wells confirmed that he had declined this invitation but had agreed to continue in his role of Scrutiny Chair. Councillor Wells went on to explain that UK Reform candidates were all situated in the north of the county and it was likely that plans for a move to a Unitary authority might now be revised with a north / south divide in Worcestershire. A decision on the way forward will be made by November 2025 in preparation for elections for the new Authority in May 2027

**8. Local Footpaths**

Mr David Furlong told the meeting that footpath 505 has now been cleared, a new bridge installed and the footpath has re-opened. The bridge by the steps at Clevelode has not yet been replaced as it is not seen as priority but Mr Furlong agreed to continue to follow this up. Because of the time of year, the vegetation around footpaths is now growing quickly and Mr Furlong asked the Clerk to arrange for the Lengthsman to cut back vegetation around the access to the footpaths of Rectory Lane and to attend to the footpaths he has worked on over the previous two years. Councillor Johnson added that there was another footpath at Clevelode which needed attention and she agreed to identify this to the Clerk.

**9. Report from the Tree Warden**

The Clerk told the meeting that she had spoken with Councillor Hughes who had said that there were no significant issues in the Parish at present. He reported that he had been having discussions with Mr Peter Donovan about the possibility of developing a community orchard.

**10. Report from Guarlford Village Hall**

*“The past year has been very significant in the life of Guarlford Village Hall. This time last year the hall was effectively closed while work on the new roof was underway leaving just the much smaller Peter Mayner room available for meetings. By September 2024 a complete refurbishment of the main function room, kitchen, stairs, toilets and corridor was finally completed enabling the hall to open again for the community to enjoy.*”

*Since then, hall bookings have slowly started to increase but the Trustees continue to organise a programme of events to both generate an income and provide for the needs and wishes of the community as specified in the Governing Document.*

*The Trustees have sufficient funds to install the new heating system but are currently investigating the possibility of a solar and battery installation alongside this before reaching a final decision.*

*The main task ahead now is to completely renovate the small downstairs meeting room in memory of the late Dr Peter Mayner. The Trustees have received quotes for this work and are now actively pursuing grant funding with this specific goal in mind. Guarlford is extremely fortunate to have such a valuable community space and the Trustees are very grateful to the local residents who have both volunteered their time and efforts as well as attended the many events which have taken place in the hall. Going forward the Trustees would like to ask everyone who has a link with our hall to actively promote it's use to others in neighbouring communities. The future success of our much loved, but greatly improved old building is firmly in the hands of the community. The next meeting of the village hall Trustees will be the AGM on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> June at 7.40pm to which everyone is very welcome to attend and have their say on the future direction of the hall."*

***Phil Thomas***

***Chair to the Trustees***

***Guarlford Village Hall***

Councillor Simpson thanked Phil Thomas for his report and asked the Clerk to pass on the commendations of the Parish Council for the Trustees exceptional work in renovating the Village Hall

### **11. Malvern Hills Trust – Parliamentary Bill**

Councillor Fellows told the meeting that The Bill would have its second reading in the House of Lords on 4<sup>th</sup> June by Earl Atlee. He was expected to be requesting certain matters to be looked at by a cross party select committee.

Following the recent tragic death of a member of staff while at work, the Trust issued the following statement.

*"The death is not being treated as suspicious and enquiries are on-going to establish the circumstances around the incident. The man's family have asked for privacy at this difficult time."*

Councillors expressed their sadness at this loss.

### **12. Local Traffic Management**

**12.1**The Clerk confirmed to the meeting that the cost of VAS had increased and that to date she had only received one permit for a post to be erected on the B4211 close to 'Maywood' Councillors agreed that a second post is also needed at the other side of the village close to the 30mph sign and asked the Clerk to pursue this. Councillor Wells agreed that he would be able to meet 50% of the cost of one camera and suggested that the Clerk contact WCC to ask for details of the

new supplier of these. It was agreed that a solar powered VAS should be purchased once the Clerk had presented revised costings.

### **13. Parish Environment**

#### **13.1 Lengthsman**

The Clerk told the meeting that she had renewed the contract with WCC for Lengthsman services for 2025 and that Jeremy had now signed his contract with Guarlford for the coming 12 months.

#### **13.2 Bus Shelter**

The Clerk informed Councillors that she had discussed this with Councillor Hughes who has agreed that he will be able to replace the bus shelter within the £1,000 budget. He was currently identifying wood and planned to carry out the work in the autumn but would like some volunteer help. Councillor Johnson asked if he could set a specific date for this so that people could make a commitment by booking this into their diaries. The Clerk agreed to liaise further with Councillor Hughes

#### **13.3 The Village Pond – Blakes Lane**

The Clerk reported that she had been in contact with Mr and Mrs Vivian who live next to the pond. Mr Vivian had reported his concerns to MHT about the condition of the pond but had not heard anything back from the Trust since September 2024. Councillor Fellows suggested to the Clerk that she could contact Andy Pearce at the Trust.

### **14. Planning**

#### **14.1 Permission in Principle application for land bordering Rectory Lane**

The Chairman noted that a small notice relating to this application had now been placed in the gateway to the site and that the closing date for responses was 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025

#### **14.2 Permission in Principle for land between Chance Lane and Hall Green**

It was noted that this was just outside the parish of Guarlford but would have an effect on local residents. Councillor Simpson added that the planned access was on such a sharp bend in the road it was difficult to see that this would be acceptable to Highways

#### **14.3 Planning application M25/00157/FUL**

It was noted with surprise by Councillors that this had been refused on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2025

#### **14.4 Planning application M24.00197/CM**

It was noted that this application for a pet and equine crematorium had been refused on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025

### **15. Liaison with other bodies**

#### **15.1 A letter received from CAB requesting a donation had been carried forward from the previous meeting for further discussion.**

Councillor Simpson proposed that the money in the 'Charity' account (£111.37) be paid to CAB and the account closed. The Chairman also agreed that this

would be a suitable use for these funds. This was seconded by Councillor Johnson and agreed unanimously. The Clerk agreed to action this.

### **15.2 Devolution and the White Paper review**

This had been discussed earlier by Councillor Tom Wells in his report. The Clerk agreed to keep Councillors informed of any further developments

### **15.3 Email address and transfer to .gov domain**

The Clerk explained to Councillors that in order to comply with the requirements of the AGAR it was essential for Parish Councils to own a .gov email address. This would also improve security. The Clerk had obtained a quote for this at £60 pa (plus VAT) for the domain renewal and £24 pa (plus VAT) for each email account. The cost of a .gov website and e-mail would be £750 set up costs and £200 annual costs, however this would include 10 email addresses. After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should have a .gov email address and all correspondence should be directed through this address. For the present time the Parish Council would continue to use the village web site. This was proposed by Councillor Simpson, seconded by Councillor Fellows and agreed unanimously

### **15.4 Community Facilities Legacy Grant Scheme**

The Clerk told the meeting that the village hall Trustees were applying for this to renovate the Peter Mayner room.

### **15.5 Clerks email to PC Jon Clark re Parish Priorities**

The Clerk confirmed that she had written to PC Jon Clark following the meeting of GPC in March and had also sent a follow up email regarding the local concerns of speeding vehicles in the village. However, to date no reply had been received. Councillors asked the Clerk to pursue this.

## **16. Finance**

### **16.1 Update on account balances and review of effectiveness of financial systems**

The first tranche of the precept is expected to arrive in the account by 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Bank statements as at 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025

<b>Current</b>	£ 5342.56
<b>Deposit</b>	£ 694.99
<b>Charity</b>	£ 111.37
<b>Total worth</b>	<b>£ 6148.92</b>

The Clerk presented the account balances to the meeting and confirmed that she had presented the full and detailed end of year accounts to the Chairman, Councillor Huskinson, the internal financial moderator, Councillor Medcalf, and to Mr Peter Hughes for audit. All had declared the accounts to be in order.

### **16.2 Accounting Governance and Accountability Return**

The Clerk had completed the relevant documentation for the AGAR. Councillor Simpson proposed that this be signed by the Chairman and this was agreed unanimously

**16.3 Approval of financial statement detailing transactions since the meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

The Clerk presented a list of all transactions showing who each payment had been authorised by.

Date	Authorised by	Payee	Amount
21.3.25	Mike Simpson	Lengthsman March 25	216.00
7.4.25	Mike Simpson	Atkinson & Co Accountants	76.80
23.4.25	Mike Huskinson	G Hollick Clerks Wages April 25	267.30
23.4.25	Mike Huskinson	HMRC PAYE on Clerks Wages April 25	66.80
23.4.25	Mike Huskinson	G Hollick reimbursement Admin Lengthsman	216.00
28.4.25	Mike Simpson	CALC/NALC Annual Subscription	207.23
9.5.25	Mike Simpson	Lengthsman April 25	80.00
9.5.25	Mike Simpson	G Hollick Clerks Wages May 25	267.30
9.5.25	Mike Simpson	HMRC PAYE on Clerks Wages for May 25	66.80
9.5.25	Mike Simpson	Zurich Municipal Insurance	284.46
22.4.25		Bank Charges	4.25
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1752.94</b>

This was proposed by Councillor Fellows seconded by Councillor Newport and agreed unanimously.

**17. Items for the next meeting**

- Data Protection
- Date for working party for bus shelter.

Signed ..... Date.....  
**Cllr Mr M Huskinson**  
**Chairman**