

Aymestrey Parish Council

Minutes of Scheduled Meeting of the Parish Council on Wednesday 27 February 2019 at 7.30pm in Aymestrey Parish Hall

Present: Cllrs Ian Banks; Ian Goddard (Chairman); Annaly Goodwin; Helen Hamilton; Ken Holland and Eleanor Waldron.

Absent: Cllr John Probert.

In attendance: 3 members of the public; Ward Cllr Carole Gandy; Maggie Brown (Clerk).

The Chairman announced that Cllr Wendy Bowen has resigned for personal reasons. The Council wishes to record its thanks to Wendy for her valued contribution.

1. **Apologies:** No apologies were received.
2. **Declarations of Interest:**
 - 2.1. Cllr Holland declared a non-pecuniary interest in items 16.1 and 16.2.
 - 2.2. No requests for dispensations were received.
3. **Open Discussion:**
 - 3.1. Ward Cllr Carole Gandy's report was circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting.
In addition, Cllr Gandy reported the following:
 - Balfour Beatty's annual plan for the coming year includes no re-surfacing for Aymestrey parish. The road from the junction of A4110 to Yatton Marsh Farm is due to be surface dressed.
 - C and U roads are inspected annually. Residents are urged to report potholes, either through the reporting app, or to Cllr Gandy. Cllr Waldron confirmed that a pothole reported via the app was mended within 2 weeks.
 - From 1 April 2019 Herefordshire Council will charge additional council tax on empty properties. A property empty for up to 2 years - full council tax + 100%; 5 years + 200% and 10 years + 300% extra.
 - 3.2. Residents present confirmed there is still a problem with vibration caused by traffic at Mortimers Cross.
 - 3.3. The Chairman gave the following update:
 - 3.3.1. Yatton Marsh Common. (YMC) A swathe of trees has been cut down and removed opposite Brick House. The owner of Brick House acknowledged the cutting. YMC is a registered common with 6 commoners, one of whom is Brick House. YMC comes under the protection of s45 Commons Act 2006 as it has no known owner. The local authority has the power to protect, but no duty to do so. Herefordshire Council's officer responsible for commons, Helen Beale (HB) suggested the commoners organise the management of YMC. She has written to Brick House, directing them to a .gov website on commons management; pointing out responsibilities under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and advising that under s38 of the Commons Act, no permanent structures are permitted without consent of the Secretary of State.

HB will also investigate the tarmac parking area by the mown part of the common, (opposite Rowan Tree Cottage), for which consent from the Secretary of State is required.
 - 3.3.2. Balfour Beatty has written to owner of The Farm at Aymestrey. The overhanging hedge has been removed. The Chairman requested they also write to the owner of The Clerks House as no response has been made to personal visits.
 - 3.3.3. A working party is needed to clear debris from the pavement at The Clerk's House.
 - 3.3.4. Flooding along the lane to the Wylde. The Lengthsman has checked the gullies are clear, enabling water to drain from road to ditch. It was noted the tunnels under two field entrances may become obstructed. Gatley Farm has offered to keep an eye on this

4. **Minutes:** It was RESOLVED that Minutes of the Scheduled Meeting of the Parish Council 23 January 2019 be signed as a true record with one correction. Item 3.3. The words 'dipping headlights' were corrected to 'headlights being switched off'.

5. **Consultations:**

5.1.1. [Draft Minerals and Waste Local Plan \(MWLP\) – Consultation](#) including Draft MWLP Annex A.

It was RESOLVED to respond to the consultation as follows:

Aymestrey Parish Council is deeply concerned by the proposals to extend both the lifespan and extent of Leinthall Earls quarry and to search for additional quarrying opportunities within the area. It notes that the draft Minerals and Waste Local Plan seeks to reduce the dependence on aggregate quarrying through its proposed "circular economy": Policy S8 Resource Management. Aymestrey Parish Council could find no evidence in the Plan of a method to expedite this aspiration or to create the facilities to do so. The requirement for Waste Audits for large developments carries no obligation to use recycled resource in place of finite natural resources, the quarrying of which have major adverse environmental consequences. In the absence of genuine and deliverable measures to reduce and replace the use of natural resources, the continuation and expansion of quarrying cannot be deemed sustainable.

The operation of Leinthall Earls quarry already has a severe impact on the residents of Aymestrey through the noise levels, speeding and traffic volumes on the A4110. This was to have ceased from 2027, but is now envisaged not only to continue indefinitely but also to be expanded due to the absence of any realistic steps to require the use of less environmental damaging alternatives.

The Waste and Minerals Plan has been drafted without any regard to national and local planning policies or the LPA's statutory duties, including those under s.66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s.40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 or Schedule 9 28G (2) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

The quarry is adjacent to an Ancient Woodland Site (Gatley Long Coppice), a Grade II* listed church and a registered park and garden.

Should any extension of the quarry - in time or size - be permitted, Aymestrey Parish Council considers that a very substantial s.106 should be paid to provide compensatory measures for the highways impact and loss of amenity and that significant environmental net gains should be delivered. No extension of the quarry should be permitted until a full restoration scheme covering the extant workings has been carried out.

The Parish Council also notes the proposal to use former quarry sites for landfill and would seek assurance that this is not envisaged for Leinthall Earls quarry, due to the very large highways impact and the risk it may pose to the nearby River Lugg Site of Special Scientific Interest, part of the River Wye SAC catchment, which is in unfavourable chemical and ecological condition.

Policy W3: Agricultural waste management

Aymestrey Parish Council has grave concerns about Policy W3.

On-farm anaerobic digesters (ADs) are very far from environmentally-friendly and Policy W3 of the draft Minerals and Waste Plan should be deleted in its entirety.

ADs address neither of the concerns they were intended to. They increase rather than reduce pollution, they generate huge volumes of traffic negating any reduction in fossil fuel use from energy generation and they contribute to climate change through large scale soil loss and the removal of agricultural land from food production. In order to generate energy from farm manure, an AD requires input of green feedstock - usually maize, sometimes silage or food crops - in a proportion of four or more times the quantity of the manure. This is in part because the manure on its own generates little energy - the renewable heat incentive (RHI) subsidy is paid according to the energy produced.

ADs do not address the problem of management of manure and, especially in Herefordshire, poultry litter. The process leaves liquid and dry digestate equivalent to the volume of the manure, feedstock and water that went into the digester. This has to be removed for disposal. The growing of crops purely as feedstock is effectively growing of waste because they have to be disposed of once converted to digestate.

The RHI subsidy promoting AD has led to huge swathes of the country planted with maize, about the worst possible crop for soil loss because the soil is left bare over the winter. Soil loss is both a cause of pollution to the water courses and disastrous for our ability to produce food. Digestate contains higher levels of phosphorus than the undigested manure and so poses a bigger risk to water quality than the manure did in the first place.

The harvesting of maize and delivery of manure to ADs generates huge volumes of traffic. The removal of digestate produces a similar number of vehicle movements, but these are spread over the year. The digestate can be used as fertiliser, but so could the manure have been.

Should the report, post-consultation, contain any policy suggesting approval of anaerobic digesters, given the undisputed environmental impact by reason of physical size, vehicle movements, storage of green fuel and manures and need for disposal of digestates, it is not in the public interest for approval of such digesters to by-pass normal planning application processes and considerations, including Neighbourhood Development Plans.

6. Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP):

- 6.1. A confidential copy of the draft Examiner's report on Aymestrey's NDP had been received, for fact checking by the Parish Council. This is due to be returned to the examiner on Friday 1 March 2019. An invoice had been received from Data Orchard, which will be considered at the March meeting of the parish council. A request will be made for final invoices to be received before the end of March, when the balance of the NDP grant must be returned Groundwork UK. It was RESOLVED to deliver a flyer to each household prior to the referendum. Thanks were recorded to Cllrs Ken Holland and Helen Hamilton for their work on two recent reports received from the examiner.

7. **2019 Election:** Receipt of Election Timetable & briefing for candidates on 7 March 2019 were noted.
8. **Defibrillator:** It was noted that a defibrillator has been installed at the Parish Hall, and has been registered with the Ambulance Service. A sum of £1,665 has been raised by an individual resident for a second defibrillator, which will be installed in Upper Lye. The Parish Council wishes to record its congratulations to the resident on this outstanding achievement, but is required to preserve the resident's anonymity due to Data Protection regulations.
9. **Good Neighbour Scheme:** An update was received from Cllr Eleanor Waldron. An article asking for volunteers will be in the next edition of *Aymestrey Matters*. Templates of forms have been received from Orleton Parish Council and Herefordshire Diocese has been contacted about Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. A member of Orleton Parish Council has offered to present a talk on their scheme and how it operates.
10. **Annual Parish Meeting:** This is a meeting for the electorate, in order for members of the public to express their concerns on local matters. It was RESOLVED to hold a separate meeting in 2019; to invite PCSO Steph Harper to give a presentation on cyber safety training, covering telephone, computer and door to door scams; and for a date to be selected by Chairman and Clerk.

It was noted that the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, followed by the scheduled May parish council meeting, will take place on Wednesday 22 May 2019.

11. **Broadband** The lack of broadband and mobile phone coverage was brought to Cllr Carole Gandy's attention. She advised that 225 properties in Aymestrey Parish are listed on the Herefordshire database as requiring faster broadband. When BT's contract was terminated, they supplied a list of properties that had been connected. It is apparent this list is incorrect, showing significant errors.

The data has been cleaned, and the new project manager, Gigaclear, has an updated list. It is possible some properties may not be connected due to the high costs.

Mobile Phone Coverage It was noted that online banking can be restricted by lack of coverage due to the delay in texts being received. Smart Meters are also restricted by lack of phone coverage.

12. [Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean](#) 22 March to 23 April 19. It was RESOLVED to arrange a litter pick, date to be confirmed and published in Aymestrey Matters. Equipment to be borrowed from Balfour Beatty.
13. **Aymestrey Phone Box:** An update was received and is attached to these Minutes.
14. **Insurance.** It was RESOLVED that the current Insurance Policy is satisfactory, and, due to the high level of service and assistance provided, to remain with the same insurance company from June 2019.
15. **Highways**
 - 15.1. An update on Traffic Calming scheme was received as follows.
 - 15.1.1. Four village gates have been installed. The gate next to the Parish Hall may be moved if it obscures visibility from entrance to proposed development site. Replacement gate may be supplied by the applicant.
 - 15.1.2. Cllr Gandy suggested arranging some publicity of this achievement.
 - 15.1.3. The importance of keeping the gates clean was noted.
 - 15.1.4. There was anecdotal evidence that vehicle speeds are reducing since their installation.
 - 15.1.5. The gates were installed by Balfour Beatty, with no further safety arrangements than proposed by the Lengthsman. A request has been made for the return of a substantial figure of costs paid.
 - 15.1.6. White lines are to be painted at a width of 150mm rather than 100mm.
 - 15.1.7. Thanks were recorded to the Chairman, Cllr Ian Goddard for his perseverance and to Cllr Carole Gandy for all her support and work behind the scenes.
 - 15.2. It was noted that the Lengthsman & Parish Paths Partnership *Expression of Interest Form* had been returned to Balfour Beatty.
 - 15.3. **Works to be undertaken by the Lengthsman.**
 - 15.3.1. It was reported that Parish Councils with a Lengthsman may apply to Herefordshire Council for a grant of up to £25,000 for drainage schemes in the parish.
 - 15.3.2. It was noted that the hedge between the pub and the builders' yard in Mortimers Cross is overgrown. This will be reported to Balfour Beatty.
 - 15.4. To consider works to be undertaken by the Footpaths Officer.
 - 15.4.1. The Footpaths Officer reported that a temporary repair had been made to a stile on AY1. Vehicular access has been requested.
 - 15.4.2. An oak tree had fallen across the Mortimer Trail at Sned Wood. A risk assessment may have to be completed before work can begin on Forestry Commission land.
16. **Planning Applications**

Items 16.1 and 16.2 were considered together.

 - 16.1. [P190216/FH - Full Householder](#) Porch House Aymestrey Leominster Herefordshire HR6 9SU, Proposed single storey rear extension, porch enclosure and conversion of outbuilding to form granny annexe.
[P190217/L - Listed Building Consent](#) Porch House Aymestrey Leominster Herefordshire HR6 9SU, Proposed single storey rear extension, porch enclosure and conversion of outbuilding to form granny annexe.

 It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council has no objection to these applications.
 - 16.2. P190457 – Sally Field Farm, Aymestrey, Leominster, Herefordshire. HR6 9SX. Proposed portal-framed, covered, dry much storage building.

 It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council has no objection to this application.

- 16.3. **P183425/XA2 - PP - Approval of details reserved by condition** Land adjacent to Village Hall Aymestrey Leominster Herefordshire, Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3-6 & 8-18 on planning permission 173692. **Additional document** - Further Highways Comment 22.01.19

It was RESOLVED to respond as follows:

The Parish Council has serious concerns over the difficulty in interpreting the Access and Visibility plans, which appear to incorporate land not in the applicant's ownership. It also notes that roundels or pedestrian crossings are mentioned in the Further Highways Comment 22.01.19 and asks for details of this agreement, of which it was not aware, and which may impact on the Traffic Calming Scheme in Aymestrey.

17. Financial Matters

- 17.1. An update on switch from NatWest to Lloyds was received. It was noted that the NatWest bank account had been closed, and a Lloyds account opened. One signature is still required in order to start using online banking.
- 17.2. Account balances and income were noted. It was RESOLVED to approve payments as listed below.

Balance at 31 January 2019		
	NatWest Bank	13,978.87
TOTAL ABOVE INCLUDES RINGFENCED FUNDS :		
	For Traffic Calming Schemes (including VAT reclaimed 9 Jan 19)	3,010.03
	For Neighbourhood Development Plan	2,010.00
	Parish initiatives including £250 for election expenses 2019	1,186.00
	Reserve fund	3,000.00
	TOTAL ringfenced	9,206.03
	Total non-ringfenced funds @ 31 January 2019	£ 4,772.84

INCOME	Amount (incl. VAT)	VAT
9 Jan 2019 : VAT claimed for April to December 2018	1,567.90	0
This figure is included in the NatWest bank balance above.		
TOTAL	£ 1,567.90	£ -

PAYMENTS: approved	Amount (incl. VAT)	Chq No
Clerk's Expenses (mileage £13.50)	13.50	000001
Clerk's Home Working Allowance for 6 months Sep 18 to Mar 19	50.00	000002
D B Williams Inv 149 (Lengthsman 6hrs drain clearing)	108.00	000003
Plusnet - Direct Debit payment for broadband	19.20	DD
TOTAL	£ 190.70	

18. The contents of Information Sheet were noted.

19. The next scheduled meeting will take place on **27 March 2019**.

Meeting closed at 22:09

Signed*Ian Goddard*
Ian Goddard, Chairman.

DATE 27 March 2019

Original signed and on file.

Aymestrey telephone box

Report on condition and relocation to Parish Hall car park by David Dunn and Ian Goddard

Condition

The telephone box is in better condition than it looks.

Although the door has become detached, the construction is that the door is screwed into a wooden upright and it is the upright which is hinged. The hinges are stiff but look undamaged. It will be sensible to replace the wood as the points at which the screws are fixed have worn, hence the detachment of the door, and a sound repair is quite feasible.

The door closer is complete but untested until it can be removed. It is likely to be restorable, at worst needing a new spring.

The cabinet appears sound subject to cleaning, preparation for paint and painting.

Windows are unbroken but very dirty after years of neglect.

The windows are fixed in place from the inside by a metal inner frame. Some of these, especially on the door, are corroded and will need cleaning and rust treatment before painting. Ultimately they will need replacing.

Spares are available for most parts if needed. While a new door is c£1000 plus VAT, items such as the inner frame for a window is under £10 and a door hinge kit is £44 + VAT. Currently a telephone box in prime condition 'retails' at c£2750. Spares are at www.x2connect.com

In summary, all fixable with a bit of carefully chosen wood from a sustainable source and quite a lot of preparation.

Base construction

The 'phone box is built up on a square metal frame about 4" (10cm) below ground level. The whole sits on a concrete plinth of unknown depth. The centre (inside the phone box) is filled with concrete, which forms the floor of the phone box and explains why your feet were always cold when making a call. The outside of the metal frame is also concreted into place and onto the base. No screws/fixing bolts are apparent.

To remove the box the concrete around the sides will need to be broken out and/or cut to a depth of 4-5"; the concrete inside the box similarly cut. With the right tools, about an hour's work.

Relocation

At the Parish Hall, a plinth will be needed. This needs to be c3'6" square, c1' deep and 2" below ground level. When the box is set on top and concreted around it will then stand c2" above the ground to ensure that water runs away from it.

The plinth needs to be prepared as the first action before the box is moved.

The box weighs 0.7 tonnes - not trivial - but can be lowered to horizontal, then lifted on to a trailer and moved. Lifting equipment (tractor with hydraulics) will be needed. It may be possible to move it the short distance by the tractor alone, which will reduce the risk of damage.

The resultant hole will need to be made good immediately for pedestrian safety.

The whole will then need decorating as outlined above and fitting out for its chosen purpose.

The Parish Hall committee is asked to decide on a location within the Parish Hall grounds for the box. I suggest that the Parish hall supplies the concrete for the base; the Parish Council will make good the existing site and pay for any repairs to the box up to the point of getting it commissioned in its new location.