

# Cofton Hackett Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Held at Cofton Village Hall, Cofton Hackett

---

## PRESENT:

### Councillors:

Cllr Mr M Pattison (Chair)  
Cllr Mrs J Fay  
Cllr Mr R Deeming  
Cllr Mr S Chatterley

### Clerk to the Parish Council:

Andrew Billau

## APOLOGIES:

Cllr Mr J Slack  
Cllr Mr N Banyard  
Cllr Mr G Cook  
Cllr Mrs J Webb  
Cllr Ms A Dale

## ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

County Cllr Mr A Kriss

2 members of the public

Agenda Item	Discussion and Decisions	Action
111/23	<b>Apologies</b> Apologies were received from Cllr Slack (holiday), Cllr Dale (family commitment), Cllr Banyard (work commitment), Cllr Webb (illness) and Cllr Cook (holiday), these were accepted.	
112/23	<b>Declaration of Interests</b> Register of Interests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Councillors are reminded of the need to update their register of interests.</li><li>• To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.</li><li>• To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.</li><li>• Councillors who have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, or an Other Disclosable Interest which falls within the terms of the code of conduct, must leave the room for the relevant items. Failure to register or declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest may result in the commission of a criminal offence.</li><li>• To consider written requests from councillors for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) – written requests to be with the clerk at least 4 clear days prior to a meeting.</li><li>• Interests were noted to be recorded in the Register</li></ul>	

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Discussion and Decisions</b>	<b>Action</b>
I 13/23	<p><b>Dispensations</b></p> <p>There were no applications for dispensations received.</p>	
I 14/23  I 14.1/23          I 14.2/23	<p><b>Public Forum</b></p> <p>There were 2 members of the public in attendance, who expressed an interest in the discussions regarding the Bilberry Centre (item 10.2 on the agenda). Cllr Pattison agreed to bring this item forward in the agenda.</p> <p>Cllr Patisson thanked members of the public for drawing the Council's attention to the demolition notice at the Bilberry Centre. Consequently, the Clerk had written to John Cotton (Birmingham City Council) expressing the Council's and residents' concerns. It transpired that only the 1970s extension to the building is to be demolished, as it has been badly damaged by fire. Mr Cotton has asked two of his colleagues from property division to meet with members of the Council to discuss the future of the Bilberry Centre. This meeting will also involve members of the Lickey Hills Society, and the County Councillor. The National Trust were also invited but have declined to attend as it is too early for consideration in their '8 Hills project'. The meeting is being held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September. Cllr Patisson said he had 3 objectives for the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To establish a working relationship with Birmingham City Council.</li> <li>- To hear what plans they have for the future of the Bilberry Centre and challenges they face.</li> <li>- To collectively offer any help to try to secure a future for the building.</li> </ul> <p>Cllr Fay asked that BCC be reminded that they should have taken actions to secure the building a long time ago.</p> <p>Members of the public also expressed concerns that the Lifford Land refuse disposal site is due to close for refurbishment and land at Cofton Park is being considered as a temporary site. The Clerk reported he had also received an email from a resident expressing similar concerns. Councillors noted these concerns and will monitor proposals.</p>	
I 15/23  I 15.1/23  I 15.2/23  I 15.3/23  I 15.4/23	<p><b>Reports from Outside Bodies / District and County Councillor</b></p> <p>County Cllr Kriss spoke about the RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete) problems recently in the news. He said that there are no schools in Worcestershire affected but that County Hall has RAAC and temporary offices are in use.</p> <p>Cllr Kriss said he is disappointed at the amount of graffiti and vandalism in the area. He reported he had visited the Rednal Social Club with its new owner to look at the fire damage there. He advised that the planning application for its replacement with housing is under consideration and Bromsgrove Planning Department are reviewing whether the building should be considered as a community asset and therefore be retained.</p> <p>He advised that he is meeting members of Highways department to again look at the potential for a pedestrian crossing on Groveley Lane.</p> <p>He reported that the drop-in surgery he had held prior to the PC meeting had been a success and he would be holding a further surgery in October, with an officer of the Police also in attendance.</p>	

Agenda Item	Discussion and Decisions	Action
I 16/23	<p><b>Previous Minutes</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council dated 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.</p>	
I 17/23 I 17.1/23 I 17.2/23	<p><b>Chairman's Report</b></p> <p>Cllr Pattison thanked Councillors for their support over the summer break, it had been an unusually busy summer period.</p> <p>It was agreed that the date of the January 2024 meeting will be <b>Monday January 22<sup>nd</sup></b>.</p>	<b>All</b>
I 18/23 I 18.1/23 I 18.2/23 I 18.3/23 I 18.4/23 I 18.5/23 I 18.6/23 I 18.7/23	<p><b>Highways, Environment and Open Spaces</b></p> <p>I 18.1/23 The Clerk reported that the positions for the 3 vehicle activated signs had been agreed. The Clerk is waiting on installation by Highways department and timescales for fitting of the signs. Cllr Kriss advised that one of the positions may need to be amended slightly due to shadows from vegetation.</p> <p>I 18.2/23 Cllr Pattison reported that he and the Clerk had met with solicitors to discuss the rights of Shadow Close residents to deny access across the footway in front of their homes. Solicitors have advised that they have no rights to deny access but that St Modwen, as the owners, may have. Cllr Patisson said he did not think this worth pursuing at this stage. Firstport have suggested there may be an alternative access route into the OSW site which will be investigated.</p> <p>I 18.3/23 The Clerk again reported no progress from St Modwen's solicitors regarding Old Sewage Works access.</p> <p>I 18.4/23 Cllr Pattison reported that he and the clerk had met with Worcestershire Water to look at the drainage pipe at the Old Sewage works. They have suggested that the problem could be mitigated by placing a paving slab under the outlet, with sand bags either side, and maybe installation of heavy duty membrane at the corner of the ditch. Clerk to ask lengthsmen if this could be done.</p> <p>I 18.5/23 Cllr Pattison reported that Cllr Dale had asked if the Council would provide funds of £312 to carry out water quality testing at the balancing pond. Worcestershire County Council cannot provide these funds as the land is privately owned. The Clerk advised that the Parish Council could provide funds under its General Power of Competence status. Cllr Pattison suggested that, should the water prove to be toxic, this will put pressure on St Modwen to take action, and the costs for that are likely to be passed on to residents of the new estate. He said he was therefore reluctant to agree to funding the water testing. Councillors agreed with this position and funding was therefore denied.</p> <p>I 18.6/23 Cllr Pattison spoke about residents of the new estate having to contribute the same Council tax as residents on the older settlement, with little return from the Parish Council. He suggested that the Council may wish to provide replacement benches for the play area, which would have a CHPC plate attached. Councillors agreed in principle, Clerk to add to next agenda for formal approval.</p> <p>I 18.7/23 The Clerk reported that there had been 3 street light LED conversions over the summer break and that there are no outstanding street light faults. He advised that 64% of the Council's street lights have now been converted to LED.</p>	<p><b>Cllr Kriss</b></p> <p><b>Clerk</b></p> <p><b>Clerk</b></p>

Agenda Item	Discussion and Decisions	Action																																																																	
118.8/23	The Clerk reported on work carried out by the lengthsman during the month. The lengthsman is undergoing LANTRA training in October. Cllr Deeming reported that there is new graffiti on the bus shelter at Rose Hill Island, Clerk to report to BDC.	Clerk																																																																	
118.9/23	Cllr Pattison reported that he had carried out the monthly play area inspection, with no issues noted. The graffiti on some of the play equipment seems to be fading.																																																																		
<b>119/23</b>	<b>Finance and General Purposes</b>	Clerk																																																																	
119.1/23	The Clerk advised that the sale of the Old Mission Hall had been completed. He advised on income from the sale and solicitor and estate agent costs. A condition of the sale is that the purchaser is responsible for the maintenance of the retaining wall at the rear of the building.																																																																		
119.2/23	Cllr Patisson noted that conditions of the lease for Cofton Hackett Village Hall are apparently not being complied with and that trustees need to be reminded. Clerk to write to CHVH trustees.																																																																		
119.3/23	Discussion on the use of funds from the Sale of the Mission Hall deferred.																																																																		
119.4/23	Discussion on possible grants for St Michael's Church deferred.																																																																		
119.5/23	The Clerk reported on the current budget vs expenditure status, pointing out over budget items relating to the sale of the Mission Hall, and website hosting costs.																																																																		
119.6/23	A list of bills for payment, circulated before the meeting, was presented and agreed.																																																																		
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="320 1144 579 1182">Supplier</th> <th data-bbox="582 1144 1038 1182">Services</th> <th data-bbox="1042 1144 1166 1182">Payment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1187 579 1225">Yu Energy</td> <td data-bbox="582 1187 1038 1225">Street Lighting Electricity *</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1187 1166 1225">£334.22</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1229 579 1267">Yu Energy</td> <td data-bbox="582 1229 1038 1267">Street Lighting Sensor Electricity *</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1229 1166 1267">£31.36</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1272 579 1310">Cofton Spark</td> <td data-bbox="582 1272 1038 1310">Street Light Maintenance</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1272 1166 1310">£396.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1314 579 1352">Andrew Billau (Clerk)</td> <td data-bbox="582 1314 1038 1352">Exchange Online Subs</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1314 1166 1352">£10.80</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1357 579 1395">ElanCity UK</td> <td data-bbox="582 1357 1038 1395">Vehicle Activated Signs x 3</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1357 1166 1395">£8,423.96</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1400 579 1438">Kennedys Solicitors</td> <td data-bbox="582 1400 1038 1438">VAT Relating to Insurance Claim Rose Island</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1400 1166 1438">£83.33</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1442 579 1480">Andrew Billau (Clerk)</td> <td data-bbox="582 1442 1038 1480">Salary July - August 2023 (by S/O)</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1442 1166 1480">£749.91</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1485 579 1523">HMRC</td> <td data-bbox="582 1485 1038 1523">Tax &amp; NI July - August 2023 (by S/O)</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1485 1166 1523">£212.23</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1527 579 1565">Yu Energy</td> <td data-bbox="582 1527 1038 1565">Street Lighting Electricity *</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1527 1166 1565">£328.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1570 579 1608">Yu Energy</td> <td data-bbox="582 1570 1038 1608">Street Lighting Sensor Electricity *</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1570 1166 1608">£31.36</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1612 579 1650">Acer Trees</td> <td data-bbox="582 1612 1038 1650">Tree Felling, R/O The Grove</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1612 1166 1650">£625.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1655 579 1693">Cofton Spark</td> <td data-bbox="582 1655 1038 1693">Street Lighting Maintenance</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1655 1166 1693">£1,014.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1697 579 1736">Truslove Estate Agents</td> <td data-bbox="582 1697 1038 1736">Mission Hall Sale Estate Agent Fees</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1697 1166 1736">£4,290.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1740 579 1778">Astwood Law</td> <td data-bbox="582 1740 1038 1778">Mission Hall Sale Solicitor Fees</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1740 1166 1778">£4,634.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1783 579 1821">Cofton Spark</td> <td data-bbox="582 1783 1038 1821">Street Lighting Maintenance</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1783 1166 1821">£450.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1825 579 1863">Andrew Billau (Clerk)</td> <td data-bbox="582 1825 1038 1863">Exchange Online Subs</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1825 1166 1863">£10.80</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1868 579 1906">Siteground Hosting</td> <td data-bbox="582 1868 1038 1906">Hosting and Domain Fees (2 years)</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1868 1166 1906">£596.10</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1910 579 1948">Andrew Billau (Clerk)</td> <td data-bbox="582 1910 1038 1948">Stationery via Viking</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1910 1166 1948">£117.55</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1953 579 1991">Gary Haynes</td> <td data-bbox="582 1953 1038 1991">Grass Cutting</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1953 1166 1991">£650.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1995 579 2033">Gary Haynes</td> <td data-bbox="582 1995 1038 2033">Lengthsman Services</td> <td data-bbox="1042 1995 1166 2033">£540.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 2038 579 2076">Andrew Billau (Clerk)</td> <td data-bbox="582 2038 1038 2076">Office Costs July - September 2023</td> <td data-bbox="1042 2038 1166 2076">£113.40</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Supplier	Services	Payment	Yu Energy	Street Lighting Electricity *	£334.22	Yu Energy	Street Lighting Sensor Electricity *	£31.36	Cofton Spark	Street Light Maintenance	£396.00	Andrew Billau (Clerk)	Exchange Online Subs	£10.80	ElanCity UK	Vehicle Activated Signs x 3	£8,423.96	Kennedys Solicitors	VAT Relating to Insurance Claim Rose Island	£83.33	Andrew Billau (Clerk)	Salary July - August 2023 (by S/O)	£749.91	HMRC	Tax & NI July - August 2023 (by S/O)	£212.23	Yu Energy	Street Lighting Electricity *	£328.50	Yu Energy	Street Lighting Sensor Electricity *	£31.36	Acer Trees	Tree Felling, R/O The Grove	£625.00	Cofton Spark	Street Lighting Maintenance	£1,014.00	Truslove Estate Agents	Mission Hall Sale Estate Agent Fees	£4,290.00	Astwood Law	Mission Hall Sale Solicitor Fees	£4,634.00	Cofton Spark	Street Lighting Maintenance	£450.00	Andrew Billau (Clerk)	Exchange Online Subs	£10.80	Siteground Hosting	Hosting and Domain Fees (2 years)	£596.10	Andrew Billau (Clerk)	Stationery via Viking	£117.55	Gary Haynes	Grass Cutting	£650.00	Gary Haynes	Lengthsman Services	£540.00	Andrew Billau (Clerk)	Office Costs July - September 2023	£113.40
Supplier	Services	Payment																																																																	
Yu Energy	Street Lighting Electricity *	£334.22																																																																	
Yu Energy	Street Lighting Sensor Electricity *	£31.36																																																																	
Cofton Spark	Street Light Maintenance	£396.00																																																																	
Andrew Billau (Clerk)	Exchange Online Subs	£10.80																																																																	
ElanCity UK	Vehicle Activated Signs x 3	£8,423.96																																																																	
Kennedys Solicitors	VAT Relating to Insurance Claim Rose Island	£83.33																																																																	
Andrew Billau (Clerk)	Salary July - August 2023 (by S/O)	£749.91																																																																	
HMRC	Tax & NI July - August 2023 (by S/O)	£212.23																																																																	
Yu Energy	Street Lighting Electricity *	£328.50																																																																	
Yu Energy	Street Lighting Sensor Electricity *	£31.36																																																																	
Acer Trees	Tree Felling, R/O The Grove	£625.00																																																																	
Cofton Spark	Street Lighting Maintenance	£1,014.00																																																																	
Truslove Estate Agents	Mission Hall Sale Estate Agent Fees	£4,290.00																																																																	
Astwood Law	Mission Hall Sale Solicitor Fees	£4,634.00																																																																	
Cofton Spark	Street Lighting Maintenance	£450.00																																																																	
Andrew Billau (Clerk)	Exchange Online Subs	£10.80																																																																	
Siteground Hosting	Hosting and Domain Fees (2 years)	£596.10																																																																	
Andrew Billau (Clerk)	Stationery via Viking	£117.55																																																																	
Gary Haynes	Grass Cutting	£650.00																																																																	
Gary Haynes	Lengthsman Services	£540.00																																																																	
Andrew Billau (Clerk)	Office Costs July - September 2023	£113.40																																																																	

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Discussion and Decisions</b>			<b>Action</b>
	Andrew Billau (Clerk)	Salary August - September 2023 (by S/O)	£749.91	
	HMRC	Tax & NI August - September 2023 (by S/O)	£212.23	
	* Approved and Paid During the Month			
<b>120/23</b>  120.1/23  120.2/23	<b>Community Services</b>  Cllr Pattison spoke about the potential for a biodiversity initiative on the Council owned land adjoining the Myhill Field allotments. A meeting with Worcestershire Wildlife Trust had to be postponed and will be rearranged.  Future of Bilberry Centre covered under item 114.1/23.			<b>Cllr Pattison</b>
<b>121/23</b>  121.1/23  121.2/23  121.3/23  121.4/23	<b>Planning</b>  Cllr Chatterley fed back on the on-line planning training he and Cllr Webb had attended in July. He said that the training was disappointing and did not follow a logical train of thought, He and Cllr Webb agreed they gained very little from the training.  The Clerk had circulated an email regarding an appeal decision at Baldwins Gate in Staffordshire, which appears to have dismissed their Neighbourhood Development plan. They are asking for support for proper consideration of NDPs nationally. Cllr Pattison had prepared a draft email to be sent to Sajid Javid, Councillor agreed this should be sent.  No new applications received this month.  Application 23/00885/FUL, Single storey extension, 496 Groveley Lane, to which the Council raised no objections, has been granted.			<b>Clerk</b>
<b>122/23</b>	<b>Communications</b>  Nothing to report.			
<b>123.23</b>  123.1/23	<b>Correspondence Received</b>  The Clerk reported on several items of correspondence received during the summer break and his responses to those.			
<b>124/23</b>	<b>Items for Next Meeting</b>  Cllr Deeming asked that planting of the planters be discussed.  Cllr Dale to provide update on speeding checks on our major roads.			<b>Clerk</b>  <b>Cllr Dale</b>
<b>125/23</b>	<b>Confidential Item</b> – feedback from the Clerk’s appraisal deferred to next meeting.			

Agenda Item	Discussion and Decisions	Action
126/23	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>The next Parish Council meeting is scheduled for <b>Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 7.30pm.</b></p> <p><b>The meeting ended at 9.00pm.</b></p>	