

Newbold Astbury cum Moreton Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting - Wednesday 12 May 2021, 1930 hrs

Present

Councillor J Carter, Chairman

Councillor J Critchlow, Vice Chairman

Councillor A Banks

Councillor P Cliff

Councillor B Jelf

Councillor I Parry

Councillor N Plant

Councillor N Sharman

Councillor R Sutton

Councillor J Ward

Councillor R Lomas

Councillor P Redstone CE Ward Councillor (left at 8.25pm)

Ms J Mason – Clerk

Mr Carlton Evans - Clerk

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Roger Sutton (Sand Quarry, planning application 21/1727W)

Cllr Barbara Jelf (Wallhill Lane discussion)

43/21 Election of New Chairman

In light of the resignation of Cllr John Carter as Chair and after a vote by the Council.

Resolved: Cllr Judith Critchlow was elected as Chair. Cllr J Critchlow read the Chair's declaration and signed the acceptance document.

Part 1

Public Forum

One member of the public explained the inadequate and inappropriate signage at Wallhill lane, including at the 'pinch-point'. Maximum speed limit signs were different depending on which direction cars were travelling in. Priority traffic signs were too close to the pinch point and so didn't give adequate warning to vehicles until it was too late. They seemed to be in the wrong order (road narrows and priority vehicle signs) and were partly obscured by the hedges. As a consequence vehicles frequently did not give way when they should. Proper measurement of the impact of the new road markings on traffic volume would not be possible until after Covid-19 movement restrictions. In addition, CEC guidance on increases in traffic volume only referred to 'substantial increases', but this was not defined or quantified.

The parishioner also questioned the impartiality of some of the councillors who had declared an interest in the Wallhill Road works and suggested that the matter should be put to CEC for decision, to see whether they should recuse themselves from commenting or voting.

Apologies

Cllr Phill Critchlow due to ill health.

Cllr Liz Wardlaw due to prior commitments (vaccinating).

44/21 Minutes

Resolved: The draft minutes of the meeting on 14th April 2021 were agreed and signed as a true and accurate record, subject to a minor amendment to show that the meeting on 12 May was an in-person meeting, rather than virtual, because of Government regulations.

45/21 Election of the Vice Chairman for 2021/22

After nominations from the Councillors present:

Resolved: Nick Plant was elected to serve as vice-Chair of the Council. Cllr Plant read the vice-Chair declaration and signed the acceptance document.

46/21 To agree Councillor Responsibilities

Resolved: Councillors agreed to the revised list of responsibilities as proposed by the Clerk.

47/21 Register of Interests

Councillors reviewed their registers of interest and any amendments were made in writing.

48/21 Approval of three Parish Council policies

Three policies were reviewed and approved:

Resolved: Standing Orders,

Resolved: Financial Regulations, and

Resolved: the Code of Conduct.

49/21 Councillor Emails

Councillors discussed the fact that very many emails sent to them were not being received, and there seemed not to be any pattern as to which arrived and which did not. Councillors agreed that they should share their personal email details as an interim measure. Councillors Parry and Sharman will take this matter forward with the ISP.

50/21 Cheshire East Report

Resolved: to accept a report from CE Ward Councillor Patrick Redstone. He updated the meeting on the fly tipping along Sandy Lane, which remains unresolved.

Councillor Redstone said that the Highways Agency wanted to run a pilot scheme which would involve Parishes taking on a greater proportion of carriageway repair costs. He and Councillor Wardlaw did not support this.

Councillor Redstone wondered if he and Councillor Wardlaw could use their £4.2k budgets, which were for use at their discretion, to speed up some small repairs. The Council felt these budgets would not go very far, especially as each CE Councillor covered several other Parishes. The unit cost for pothole repairs was between £50-£100, though this did not reflect the full costs including assessments etc. Councillors felt this pilot scheme would effectively mean double paying for the repairs, through the precept and these additional payments.

Councillor Redstone left the meeting at 2025 hrs.

51/21 Common Land

The Clerk updated the meeting on the increase in traffic along the Public Right of Way (PROW). Barry Poole (Cheshire East) would not let the Parish put a bollard across the entrance to deter vehicles. Complaints about the increase in traffic had however not been put in writing so Cheshire East Council were unwilling to act. There was a difference of opinion among Councillors as to whether to put logs down at the entrance, as some voiced safety concerns.

Resolved: the Council agreed to put a notice about this in the Parish Newsletter, asking people to take details of any cars using the route so that we had written reports.

The Council agreed that a low step-over fence might be put down the west side of the common land, with gaps for walkers, cyclists etc., to deter cars.

Resolved: The Clerk will put out three calls for tenders for the low fence, as the cost is likely to be above £500.

Councillor Peter Cliff and the Clerk will pursue the matter further, go back to Mr Barry Poole and ask for signs to be put up.

52/21 War memorial

John Carter explained that letters from the Diocese approving the work had been sent, and they just needed legal authority to proceed. There needed to be good reasons for adding additional names (links to the Parish, proof that they died in the war etc.) to justify further research.

Resolved: the Council agreed that Councillors P Critchlow and Carter, and the Clerk, would meet to vet names.

53/21 Planning Applications

21/0885C - The Long Barn, Sandbach Road, Wallhill Lane CW12 4TE – drop kerb to access the long kerb. **Resolved:** No Objection.

21/2156C The Willows, Sandbach Road, Wallhill CW12 4TE. Demolition of outbuildings and construction of single storey extension. **Resolved:** No Objection.

21/1521C Lavender Farm, Gorse Lane, Astbury CW12 3NR – stable building. **Resolved:** No Objection, but the Stable should not be so close to the road.

21/1727W Bent Farm Quarry, Wallhill Lane Brownlow, CW12 4HW – Proposed extension to Silica sand extraction with progressive restoration at Bent Farm Quarry, Brownlow Farm, Wallhill Lane, Brownlow Congleton CW12 4HW. **Resolved:** No Objection.

21/0306C Proposed miniature railway at Glebe Farm, Astbury, CW12 4RQ. **Deferred til June meeting.**

The following proposals had been deferred from the April meeting and the Chair and Clerk undertook to respond as follows:

21/1678C Orchard House, School Lane, Astbury CW12 4RG – **Resolved:** No Objection

21/1343C Greenbank, Astbury CW12 4RQ – **Resolved:** No Objection

21/1342C Greenbank, Astbury, CW12 4RQ – **Resolved:** No Objection

21/1435C Lavender Farm, Astbury CW12 3NR – **Resolved:** No Objection

Enforcement at The Stables on Watery Lane – on the observation of pony classes on this site. The Council noted that this activity would need licences, environmental assessments, insurance etc.

Resolved: the Council agreed to go back to Planning Department and HSE to ensure the restrictions on the use of the site were met.

20/01022E Fence Lane Astbury; Touring caravan placed on site:

Resolved: to follow up the priority 3 decision from December 2020.

Local plan – SAPD sites consultation, Councillor Sharman advised there was no impact for Astbury, so no comment made.

54/21 Internal Audit

Resolved: the audit was approved by the full Council.

55/21 The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1)

Resolved: the annual governance statement (Section 1) was approved by full Council.

56/21 The Annual Governance Statements (Section 2)

Resolved: the annual governance statement (Section 2) was approved by full Council.

Resolved: the notice will be displayed on 11 June 2021 on Parish Council notice boards.

57/21 Certificate of Exemption

Resolved: Astbury were eligible for a certificate of exemption.

58/21 Highways

Cheshire East Place Consultation session, Councillor Ian Parry will attend the meeting.

Wallhill Lane – it was noted that a Parishioner had sent an email detailing his concerns.

Resolved: The Council agreed to go back to Paul Griffiths and Sean Halewood (CEC) for a review of signage etc. A traffic analysis should be deferred til after Covid restrictions were fully lifted and 'normal' traffic resumed.

Footpaths along the A34.

The chairman and other councillors commented that they were pleased with the recent clearing works. The state of the footpaths was noted. A potentially dangerous tree root near Astbury Garden Centre should be reported on the Highways website.

Weight limit on Wallhill Lane – Clerk report including PCSO responses.

The Clerk reported on unsatisfactory responses from the PCSO. The Council agreed to escalate the matter to a more senior level.

Site visit on Mow Lane / Fence Lane and A34

Councillor John Ward reported that the clearance works on the grids had not been done, despite assurances that they had been, and the drains joining the gullies also need clearing.

Resolved: Council agreed that the Clerk should ask Richard Cooper (CEC) to a site visit again.

Mr S Halewood's Highways Report for the village

Not received. This should be chased up for the next meeting.

Adoption of the roundabout on the A34.

After discussion, Council agreed to continue the adoption of the Congleton Link Road roundabout.

Resolved: the Clerk will approach Paul Griffiths and Graham to pursue this as a Parish rather than Congleton Town resource.

Fly Tipping in Sandy lane

The Council have pursued this matter for some time. Despite enlisting assistance from the Ward Councillor, it has been unsuccessful in securing any action from Cheshire East. The Council have therefore decided not to pursue this.

59/21 Lost Footpaths

Councillor Barbara Jelf reported that the Archives had been closed during the pandemic but now that they were open she would pursue this. It would entail some small expenditure on maps (max £40).

Resolved: Council approved this expenditure.

60/21 Accounts

To note the balance of the accounts was £16,660.01

Payments

£367.20 to Crewe colour printers

£120 to Mr Sharman for website 1 October 2020 to 31 March 21

£66 Crewe colour printers

£1,618.16 CPC Clerk's Salary January to March including £110.04 HMRC

£102.48 Congleton Chronicle

£2,280 John Harding and Sons LTD

£216.36 CHALC affiliation fee

£668.43 Came and Company (insurance)
£30 Mr Gary Roberts (internal audit)
£500 St Mary's Church Astbury – assistance in maintaining graveyards.
£12.10 Mr N Barton (expenses)

Receipts £7,500 Cheshire East

Resolved – the above payments to be approved and signed for.

Council noted that the Parish insurance cost was rising steeply. They agreed that the Clerk should seek additional quotes from other providers (i.e. Zurich, who also provide similar cover).

61/21 Community Resilience Plan

Postponed til next meeting.

62/21 Chairman and members' Report

There was to be an event at Rushey Hey Farm (Ginvincible) on 31 July.

Councillor Sharman reported on noise from gym classes at Glebe Farm. This was because the classes had had to be taken outside due to Covid restrictions. Councillor Rob Lomas offered to ask the owners to turn the volume down.

Councillors discussed the recent accident at the Brownlow crossroads. Clerk Julie Mason will get an incident number from the PCSO (Jeanette Carter). Given the number of accidents that had occurred there, the new Clerk Carlton Evans will keep a register of incident numbers to support any further action.

The next meeting will be in the Village Hall. Councillor Carter will inform Sally Brightwell who organises the Hall.

Part 2

Resolved: that in accordance with the public bodies (admission to meetings) act 1960 as extended by the Local Government Act 1972, section 100, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for discussion of the undermentioned item on the grounds that the publication of the matter would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business transacted.

[REDACTED]

Meeting closed at 2155 hrs.