

Newbold Astbury cum Moreton Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting - Wednesday 13 October 2021 at 7.30pm

Present

Councillor J Critchlow (Chair)
Councillor N Plant (vice Chair)
Councillor P Cliff
Councillor N Barton
Councillor R Sutton
Councillor P Critchlow
Councillor N Sharman
Councillor R Lomas
Councillor L Wardlaw (Cheshire East)
Mr C Evans (Clerk)

Declarations of Interest

Councillor B Jelf (Walhill Lane)
Councillor R Sutton (Walhill Lane)

Part 1

Public and Press Forum

No members of the press or public were present.

Apologies:

- Councillor I Parry (work commitments)
- Councillor A Banks (travel)
- Councillor J Ward (work commitments)

121/21 Filling the Councillor Vacancy

After a unanimous vote the Council **resolved** to select Miss Megan Bailey as a new Councillor for the Parish. Miss Bailey duly read and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

122/21 Minutes

The Council **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 08 September 2021 are a true and accurate record subject to some minor amendments: to add two Councillor declarations of interest; to correct the name Andrew Parkinson to Andrew Thompson, and; to clarify that a scale plan of the plaques for each panel of the war memorial would be made by John Carter.

123/21 Common Land/Sandy Lane

Councillors discussed the three quotes received for fencing/barriers across the Common Land. Cllr Ward had previously said he could provide telegraph poles to use as a low barrier and the Clerk will investigate further with him size, condition etc. Cllr Jelf offered to contact the Woodland Trust to see if they could provide saplings etc. for the Common Land including for the perimeter area. She will draw up some specifications based on measurements to be provided by Cllr Plant. Once that has been done the Council can decide on suitable fencing/access arrangements.

124/21 Planning Applications

- **21/5029C** - Corda Well Cottage. The Council **resolved** not to object.
- **21/4798C** Brook Farm. The Council **resolved** not to object
- **21/4698C** – Brownlow Heath Farm. The Council **resolved** to object to the application based on the materials proposed – not the architectural design itself – as they were not in keeping with the local surroundings, and not consistent with sections P4 and P27 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- **20/5718C** - Appeal, land at Mow Lane, Astbury. No further representation to the Cheshire East appeals team is necessary as the previous objection will be taken into account.

125/21 – Policies to Review

The Council considered the Disciplinary Policy (last reviewed September 2017) and the Grievance Policy (last reviewed September 2016). The Council **resolved** to approve the policies with some minor edits and corrections as proposed by the Clerk (correcting spelling mistakes, removing square brackets, removing references to the Clerk's fellow employees etc.).

126/21 Accounts

The Council noted the balance of accounts, the receipt of the precept and the previously approved payments which had now been made. The Council noted that the Precept and Budget for FY 22/23 would be discussed and decided at the November meeting.

127/21 Community Governance Review

Cllr Jelf summarised the proposals from Cheshire East - reducing the numbers of Councillors to 8, retaining the parish boundaries but abolishing Moreton as a separate ward. Councillors reiterated their view that the Council needed to ensure fair representation across the whole Parish, particularly to avoid the area being dominated by the needs of Astbury alone. Cllr Sharman had made some suggestions to even up representation between Moreton and Astbury as an option. All agreed that the Cheshire East proposal was a flawed administrative exercise without any value added to the Parish. The Council **resolved** that Cllr Jelf should make a formal submission to Cheshire East on behalf of the Council rejecting their proposals.

128/21 Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Sharman reported that the working group had not been able to meet as planned and had postponed their meeting til 26 October, though Andrew Thompson had commented in detail which would give the group plenty to consider in the revision.

129/21 Highways

Walhill Lane – Cheshire East will do some ‘before and after’ monitoring of traffic levels once a date for the temporary closure of Walhill Lane is decided (for the Sibelco tunnelling under the road). Cllr Lomas will contact PCSO Jeanette Carter about monitoring vehicle speed on the lane. Cheshire East had undertaken to investigate if there was any way to influence companies such as Google to indicate on their maps whether the route had weight restrictions.

Footpaths on the A34 - although he had contacted John Harding several times the Clerk had not received a substantive response on repeating the siding out exercise. The path was also overgrown and potentially dangerous between the parish boundary sign and Little Moreton Hall. The Clerk will also contact Cheshire East about overgrown paths by the bus stop at the top of Walhill lane which meant passengers waiting there were potentially put at risk.

Damage to the Parish Boundary sign - Cheshire East were denying all responsibility although their contractors had been working there after John Harding had done the siding out (when the sign was undamaged). The Clerk will investigate the cost of a replacement.

Daffodil planting – Sibelco had agreed to dig holes for the bulbs on Walhill Lane and Brownlow Heath Lane. Councillors will meet up on 23 October to plant the bulbs.

Adoption of the roundabout on the Congleton Link Road – despite contacts between the Clerk and Cheshire East Highways no progress had yet been made.

130/21 Forgotten Footpaths

Cllr Jelf had contacted the National Archives to get a legal copy of the land survey map to show the footpath. The Council **resolved** that Cllr Jelf could spend up to £40 for the copy.

131/21 Cheshire East Report

Cllr Wardlaw was still investigating with Cheshire East having a speed limit assessment on the stretch of road by the village green, but had not yet received a satisfactory response. On the grid on Peel Lane that had been covered up with tarmac she had been assured that United Utilities would return to rectify the problem.

132/21 Chairman and Members’ Report

Councillor training – Cllr Jelf reported on a recent training course she had attended on Roles and Responsibilities, which was important as it covered among other things the relationship between the Clerk as employee and the Council as employer. The Personnel Committee will meet soon to make sure there is effective management by the Council and provide the Clerk with appropriate guidance and support.

Cllr Sutton offered to enquire if the Christmas lighting would be available for the village green this year.

Brownlow Crossroads – Councillors reiterated that the junction was dangerous not least because of the road markings which were heavily degraded and difficult to see. Cllr Wardlaw reported that she had been in touch with Cheshire East, following up on the Clerk's contacts, and they had promised to visit the junction very soon.

Bollard on the village green – the Clerk undertook to visit the site to see the extent of any damage and investigate how the bollard can be reinstated, as well as speaking to the garage about dissuading people from parking on the path in front of the parking bays.

Cllr Lomas reported that the recent May Day celebrations had raised over £6,000. He also reported that the signs for the entrance to the Congleton Plant Centre on Moss Road were dangerous as they impaired visibility for large (high) vehicles such as tractors who couldn't then see vehicles exiting the centre. The Clerk will investigate.

Councillor emails – some Councillors reported having difficulties synchronising emails between different devices. Cllr Sharman will investigate.

133/21 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on the recent ChALC questionnaire about services during Covid lockdowns and will respond.

A new Code of Conduct from ChALC – the deadline for comments has been extended til 12 November, though there doesn't appear to be anything controversial in the new draft.

Clerk's SLCC membership – the Clerk confirmed he has subscribed to SLCC and would be on the pathway to the CiLCA qualification over the next 12 months or so. The Council **resolved** that the Clerk should undertake this training/qualification and that they would share the costs with Somerford Parish Council.

The Council **resolved** that the Clerk should replace the printer inherited from the previous Clerk and share the costs with Somerford Parish Council.

Meeting closed at 2130hrs