

# Newbold Astbury cum Moreton Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting - Wednesday 9 November 2022 at 7.30pm

## Present

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Councillor J Critchlow (Chair)  
Councillor N Plant (vice Chair)  
Councillor N Barton  
Councillor R Sutton  
Councillor N Sharman  
Councillor I Parry  
Councillor A Banks  
Councillor R Lomas  
Councillor J Ward  
Councillor P Cliff  
Councillor B Jelf  
Councillor L Wardlaw (Cheshire East)  
Mr C Evans (Clerk)

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## Declarations of Interest

Councillor B Jelf (Walhill Lane)  
Councillor R Sutton (Walhill Lane)  
Councillor P Cliff (Brookfield Stables)  
Councillor M Bailey (Brookfield Stables)

## Part 1

### Public and Press Forum

Several members of the public were present to discuss traffic on Wallhill Lane. They were generally unhappy that traffic volumes have increased since the opening of the CLR. They did not support the total closure of Wallhill Lane but pressed for additional traffic calming measures to be put in place.

### Apologies:

- Councillor P Critchlow (conflicting appointment)
- Councillor M Bailey (prior engagement)

### 139/22 Minutes

The Council **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 September are a true and accurate record.

## **140/22 – Wallhill Lane**

Cllr Jelf referred to an informal meeting some Councillors had had with representatives of Cheshire East Highways. This was not a Parish Council meeting but one arranged by the Clerk primarily for his own information and some other members of the Council had joined him. Cllr Jelf maintained that the CEH figures showing a 40% increase in traffic were indeed substantial, though CEH believed this was not the case since overall volume of traffic was still relatively low. Councillors noted that many of the traffic calming measures considered previously had been implemented. Other measures such as a reduced 20mph limit and speed bumps had not been taken up. They felt signage could be improved to direct traffic away from the area, but the CEH data showed that during the temporary closure the traffic had just been forced to use other unsuitable routes.

Neither the Council nor parishioners support full closure of the lane. After a vote, the Parish Council made two resolutions:

- The Parish Council **resolved** not to support any discussions on the closure of the lane.
- The Parish Council **resolved** to continue to discuss Walhill Lane with parishioners and Cheshire East Highways and ask CEH to consider improved signage and possible additional traffic calming measures.

The Clerk was asked to write to Cheshire East Highways accordingly.

## **141/22 Accounts**

The Council noted the balance of accounts to end October 2022

Account: **£28,651.31**

Of which: **£6,273.80** - Unspent Neighbourhood Plan Grant

The Council **resolved** to approve the following payments:

- £1,020.00 - Forest Stump for Common Land
- £120.00 – Cllr Sharman for website maintenance
- £485.76 – Crewe Colour Printers (Newsletter)
- £482.40– Crewe Colour Printers (NP Questionnaire)
- £63.00 – TCS Payroll Management
- £67.50 – Astbury Village Hall for NP open day

The Council **noted** the following payments:

- £20.98 – Cllr Sharman replacement battery
- £287.94 – Cllr P Critchlow for bulbs etc.
- £375.84 – Clerk September salary
- £171.00 – Clerk SLCC membership
- £25.00 – Cllr Bailey ChALC training
- £276.20 – Clerk PAYE
- £368.20 – A Thomson NP

- £32.22 – Clerk Pension
- £400 – David Kaiserman training
- £96.00 – Parish Online subscription
- £120 – Cllr P Critchlow for additional commemorative poppies

The Council discussed how to speed up payments to contractors. Current practise means that if an invoice arrives after a meeting agenda has been published it cannot be considered then but has to wait until the subsequent meeting approves payment. The Council **resolved** to try where possible to 'pre-approve' payment for goods and services they wish to contract, up to indicative ceilings, so that both procurement and spend can be speeded up.

### **142/22 Planning Applications**

- **22/3897C - GREAT MORETON HALL,**

An extension to form a private leisure facility, alterations to adjoining outbuildings and repair of outbuildings, garden walls and adjoining stable building and associated works.

The Council **resolved** to approve this application.

- **22/3898C - GREAT MORETON HALL,**

Listed building consent for an extension, alterations to adjoining outbuildings and repair of outbuildings, garden walls and adjoining stable building and associated works

The Council **resolved** to approve this application.

- **22/3743C - Lavender Farm, GORSE LANE**

Proposed Menage

The Council **resolved** to object to this application on the grounds that the documentation is incomplete and it goes against Neighbourhood Plan Policy P25 on the built environment.

- **22/3834C - The Holding, WATERY LANE,**

Demolition of existing stable buildings and construction of new bungalow and stable block.

The Council **resolved** to object to this application on the grounds that it contravenes Neighbourhood Plan Policy P13 on new developments in the open countryside or Green Belt. If it were to go ahead then at the very least the applicant should be required to make sure that existing trees and hedges are retained (as per our policy P12 - Woodland, Trees, and Hedgerows) and there should be an agricultural tie to the property.

- **22/4136C Land Adjacent Railway Following The Flash, Moss Road, Astbury,**

Proposed creation of vehicular access onto The Flash, and the erection of palisade gates.

The Council **resolved** to approve this application.

- **22/3678C - Whetstone Edge Farm, Sandbach Road, WALLHILL**

Operational development relating to the change of use of a former agricultural building to use class C1 following Class R notification

The Council **resolved** to approve this application.

### **143/22 Code of Conduct**

The Clerk reported that Cheshire East had approved a revised Code of Conduct. ChALC are recommending it is introduced at the time of the new Council elections in May 2023.

### **144/22 Budget use for the financial year 23/24 and precept request**

The Council discussed the various workstreams within the current budget and plans for next year. The Council noted that the grant for the Neighbourhood Plan would likely be fully spent this financial year. The Council **resolved** to contract John Harding to go ahead with the siding out of the A34 from Brownlow Heath Lane to the boundary towards Moreton Hall planned for late November. Their estimate of £2,520 was significantly cheaper than estimates from other contractors. The overhanging branches would need to be done at the same time, which the Clerk will discuss with John Harding. Weeding would need to be done in the Spring. The Council **resolved** to draw up a longer-term schedule of siding out, weeding and branch trimming, and Cllr Sharman and the Clerk will attempt to plot the works using Parish Online so that it's clear what needs to be done when over the coming years.

The Council also noted that the cost of the possible alterations to the War Memorial could be very substantial, and the money currently set aside for this might not be sufficient. Building up a larger contingency for this seemed prudent, and therefore the Council **resolved** to request a precept at the same level as this year - £15,000.

### **145/22 St Mary's Church**

The Council discussed a letter of support for the Church's plans for development. The Council resolved to approve the draft prepared by Cllr Sharman subject to a minor edit.

### **146/22 Astbury School Admissions Policy**

The Council **resolved** to support the proposed change to the School's admission's policy. Cllr Jelf will inform the School accordingly.

### **147/22 Defibrillators**

The Council discussed various challenges with the defibrillators around the parish. Many of them are old and getting spare parts is difficult, for example the one at the Smithy is awaiting spare parts while the one at the Egerton pub doesn't work. The Horseshoe pub has raised enough money to purchase their new one outright. The Council also discussed the unit that had been destroyed at Ackers Crossing and **resolved** to spend up to £2,000 on a new one as soon as possible and discuss the insurance position with Zurich. Cllr Cliff and the Clerk will investigate replacement units for all the old units.

### **148/22 Parish Newsletter**

The next edition will be at the end of November to include Christmas items at the Church, Glebe Farm etc. It will provide a good opportunity to advertise things such as the siding out and defibrillator.

### **149/22 Tree at Ackers Crossing**

The oak tree is ready for delivery. The Council will plant it on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> and invite local residents to participate. Items such as a plaque, decorative guards etc. will be considered in due course and possibly a circular bench in the future.

### **150/22 Neighbourhood Plan Refresh**

Cllr Sharman reported minor delays due to Covid but progress too with some policies drafted. The questionnaire will close soon and responses collated with the aim to produce a draft in the New Year.

### **151/22 Highways**

Councillors noted the Cheshire East consultation on safety along the A34 and the Clerk has already sent comments and photos.

### **152/22 Common Land**

Cllr Jelf reported on progress so far. Some £365 of seeds have been bought, the contractor has cleared part of the land and Councillors have recently planted daffodil bulbs and bluebells and sown some seed. The rest will be sown in Spring next year.

### **153/22 War Memorial**

Cllr J Critchlow reported that Cllr P Critchlow has researched 5 more Soldiers which will now require verification.

### **154/22 Cheshire East**

Cllr Wardlaw reported on several matters. The opening of the refurbished Congleton Leisure Centre had been delayed til next year. Various 'warm place' venues such as libraries are available across the Borough. The consultations on the cemetery strategy and town centre vitality are ongoing. Despite advertising how much winter gritting will be done across the Borough Cheshire East Highways are also putting up road signs to show where gritting will not take place.

### **155/22 Chairman and Members' Reports**

Cllr Jelf reported on the Sibelco liaison meeting. A new quarry in Somerford is being considered which would pipe sand underground back to the Bent Farm Quarry processing plant. A consultation has been launched in advance of a possible planning application next year. After the deposit has been exhausted the site would be partly landscaped with a lake and the rest returned to farm land. Cllr Sutton reported that the Christmas tree lights at the

green would be arranged shortly. Cllr Sharman had been approached by a parishioner concerned about possible plans to put another phone mast on the Flash, but Councillors felt there was no obvious role for the Council at this time. Cllr Sharman encouraged all to explore the features of Parish Online, and the Chair J Critchlow reminded the meeting that the date for the King's coronation had now been fixed and invited suggestions to celebrate the event.

### **156/22 Clerk's Report**

The Clerk reported that it was very inconvenient operating with a single, old PC he had inherited for both Astbury and Somerford Parishes, and he will investigate a replacement laptop for exclusive use at Astbury and return to the Council with costings. He brought attention to the NALC pay agreement on employee salaries. The Council **resolved** to implement the new pay scale increase, backdated to April. Cllr Plant will inform TCS Payroll Management. The Clerk also posed the question of whether to increase his contracted hours to take account of the extra hours needed for his training, rather than claim overtime which would be more expensive. The Council will return to this matter. The Clerk confirmed that any costs associated with the parish council elections next year will be covered in full by Cheshire East.

**The Meeting closed at 2155 hrs**