

Newbold Astbury cum Moreton Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting - Wednesday 11 January 2023 at 7.30pm

Present

Councillor J Critchlow (Chair)
Councillor N Plant (vice Chair)
Councillor N Barton
Councillor N Sharman
Councillor P Critchlow
Councillor I Parry
Councillor J Ward
Councillor P Cliff
Councillor M Bailey (arrived 7.45 pm)
Councillor L Wardlaw (Cheshire East) (arrived 8.10 pm)
Mr C Evans (Clerk)

Declarations of Interest

None

Part 1

Public and Press Forum

One member of the public was present to discuss traffic on Wallhill Lane.

Apologies:

- Councillor B Jelf (illness)
- Councillor R Sutton (travel commitments)
- Councillor R Lomas (travel commitments)
- Councillor A Banks (travel commitments)

01/23 Minutes

The Council **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2022 are a true and accurate record.

02/23 Accounts

The Council noted the balance of accounts to end December 2022

Account: **£20,915.28**

Of which: **£5,723.90** - Unspent Neighbourhood Plan Grant

The Council **noted** the following receipts:

- £114.00 – Somerford Parish Council for training reimbursement

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

- £121.60 – Andrew Thomson (Neighbourhood Plan).

The Council **noted** 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
- £394.70 – HMRC
- £375.64 Clerk's November salary
- £33.54 P Critchlow for village poppies
- £32.22 – Clerk's pension
- £30.00 ChALC training (N Sharman)
- £485.76 Crewe Colour Printers
- £76.50 A P Matthews (oak tree)
- £2,520.00 John Harding siding out
- £734.95 Clerk's December salary including back pay

03/23 Planning Applications

- **22/4871C – Brownlow Heath Farm**

The Council **resolved** not to object to this application. Council comments had already been sent to the Planning Department which remain on file.

- **22/4960C – field off Puddlebank Lane**

The Council **resolved** not to object to this application, but to make the following comments: There should be no external floodlighting, in accordance with Neighbourhood Plan Policy P16 (the introduction of external floodlighting including menage areas will not be supported because of the impact of the lighting upon the character of the area and the amenity of adjacent uses). In addition the field access should be altered and set further back so that vehicles can safely pull off the narrow roadway.

04/23 Donation Request from Astbury School

Councillors considered a request from the school for a donation to purchase commemorative coins for the King's coronation. After discussion the Council **resolved** not to support the request this time, especially as it was so soon after a donation for commemorative coins for the Platinum Jubilee. The Council did however express its desire to have more engagement with the school, and to support its educational activities. The Clerk and Cllr Parry will follow up with the Head Teacher.

05/23 Defibrillators

The Council discussed various challenges with the defibrillators around the parish, some of which were not working and/or obsolete. A local businessman had offered to provide several units to the Council at cost, rather than full price. These could replace the old units at the Smithy, Glebe Farm, the Egerton Arms and Ackers Crossing (assuming the telephone kiosk could be refurbished). Cllr Ward offered to investigate whether a unit could be located at the Garden Centre. The Council **resolved** to continue to set aside £2,000 for a replacement and associated electrical work at Ackers Crossing, and to purchase three additional units offered by the local businessman in question for Glebe Farm, the Smithy and potentially the Garden Centre.

06/23 Parish Newsletter

The next edition will be out in February and will advertise the annual meetings, seek volunteers for the May Day celebrations and give notice for the forthcoming local council elections. The Clerk will speak to Carrie Sutton about whether to include an article about the Christmas lights.

07/23 Neighbourhood Plan Refresh

Cllr Sharman reported that the answers to the questionnaire had been collated. The number of responses was a little disappointing but they were largely positive on the vision and aims. Some respondents had questioned the need to refresh the Plan at this time. He thought it might not be possible to complete and publish the Plan by the end of the Financial Year and so the grant money might need to be returned and reapplied for. Cllr Sharman will look at alternative estimates for the cost of printing.

08/23 Highways

Councillors noted that the siding out on the A34 had been completed. The Council will look at weeding in the Spring and entering into a multi-annual contract so the work is appropriately scheduled. The replacement road sign will need to be installed, Cllrs Plant and Barton will look into this. There has been dangerous flooding on The Flash and Mow Lane which Councillors will report to Cheshire East on the 'Fix My Street' portal and Cllr Wardlaw will contact CE Highways about it.

09/23 Common Land

Councillors reported that more seeds would need to be sown in the Spring and the Council will monitor the growth of nettles and make sure they are tackled appropriately.

10/23 War Memorial

Cllr P Critchlow reported that more names for the memorial had been sent for approval to Bill Ball at Astbury Church.

11/23 Cheshire East

Cllr Wardlaw reported on several matters. Sibelco will look into reports of run-off of sand and sediment in the watercourse at Pitcher Lane. CE bus fares have been capped at £2 per journey to help with the cost-of-living crisis. The Pick-Fit scheme to encourage litter picking in return for a free gym day pass has been paused until the Spring. The budget consultation is now open until 30 January – the proposals will mean an increase of 4.99% in Council Tax. Among many other impacts library opening times will likely be reduced to cut costs.

12/23 Chairman and Members' Reports

Cllr Critchlow reported on an anonymous letter received about fly-tipping and suspected unauthorised works at Brownlow Heath Lane. The Clerk has investigated, reported some fly-tipping of garden waste at the northern end of Sandy Lane but there doesn't seem to be evidence of unauthorised works. The Council's Personnel Group will meet soon to discuss the Clerk's performance and all Councillor feedback to the Group is welcome. Cllr Sharman does not intend to stand at May's elections, so some succession planning will need to be put in place for website management etc. He mentioned the website domain name renewal fee of a little over £10 and the council **resolved** to authorise payment for this. He noted that the caravan site at The Flash is being used for storage not camping/overnight use. Cllr Parry has spoken to the owners and this seems to be a temporary measure but he will monitor the situation. Cllr Sharman noted that the planning application for a railway track at Glebe Farm had been refused. The temporary track which had been installed for Christmas should be removed soon.

13/23 Clerk's Report

The Clerk pointed out that the letter of support to the Church had not yet been sent, and the Clerk and Cllr Sharman will follow up. The Clerk's name had finally been added to the Council Bank account. The Council **resolved** that Cllrs Parry and Plant should be added as signatories.

The Clerk will continue to look into the purchase of a new laptop to replace the current, aging PC, possibly one shared with Somerford but with an upgraded Microsoft 365 subscription to run separate Somerford and Astbury accounts. The Sibelco plans for a new quarry in Somerford to pipe sand back to Bent Farm quarry for processing will be discussed at the Somerford Parish Council on 16 January. The Council will return to the question of topics for the Annual Parishes Meeting and the timing of both that and the Annual Parish Council meeting.

The Meeting closed at 2100 hrs