

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE**  
**5<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021**

**(Meeting held remotely via Zoom at 7.30pm)**

**PRESENT:** Parish Councillors Mrs S.Dodd (Vice Chair) and Mrs K.Reeves, Messrs P. Bailey, A. Brown, P. Harriman, S. Moore (Chairman), one member of the public and the Clerk, Mrs D. Key.

**APOLOGIES:** These were received from Parish Councillor Mr D. Massie and Stafford Borough Councillor Mr R. Sutherland and Stafford Borough and Staffordshire County Councillor, Mr M. Winnington.

**MINUTES:** The minutes from the meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 were approved as a true record however the parish trough section was expanded to include thanks to Mrs J.Harriman, Mrs J .Moore and Mrs D. Gibbs for their help with planting. The minutes were proposed for approval by the Chairman and seconded by Councillor Harriman. All were in favour.

**MATTERS ARISING:** Councillor Bailey reported that he had reported the broken 30mph sign on the Wood Eaton Road to Staffordshire County Council Highways Department. The Chairman asked that Councillor Bailey forward him the reference number. Other matters arising were taken as they appeared on the agenda.

**LATE ITEMS:** Councillor Harriman informed the meeting he would be resigning from the Parish Council in March to enjoy a well earned retirement. Following Councillor Harriman's resignation, it agreed that the vacant position would be publicised after clarifying with the Borough Council on procedure for co-option.

**OPEN FORUM:** This was not required.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH:** It was reported that Mr John Edwards had been in touch and was hoping to create a Whatsapp group for the village. Unfortunately, due to lockdown, John's plans to hold a public meeting to discuss Neighbourhood Watch had again been put on hold.

The Clerk had not received any reports since the last meeting.

**CHURCH EATON VILLAGE PLAYGROUND:** The opening of the playground was discussed again but sadly would remain closed. This was due to concerns that the Parish Council still had over being able to fulfil the current Government guidance relating to the cleaning of high traffic areas in open play areas. Despite the guidance being updated on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2020 there was still the requirement for equipment to be cleaned in between use. Re-opening of the playground would be reviewed at the next meeting.

Councillor Bailey had continued with the weekly playground inspections and not only reported that everything appeared to be in order, but also that he was happy to continue with inspections.

The Clerk reported she had been in contact with Wicksteed in order to obtain a quote for a replacement flat swing seat. This was quoted as £44.00 plus Vat and there be a carriage cost plus VAT. Following a short discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should ask Wicksteed for a revised quotation to include replacement chains and shackles and to potentially replace both swing seats.

**PLANNING:** The Clerk reported that since the last meeting she had received two new planning applications. The first was for the removal and replacement of a fireplace at Briar Cottage, Church Eaton (20/33456/LBC). There were no objections made to this proposal. The second was for the demolition of a C20th garage at the Old Rectory (20/33456/HOU and 20/33425/LBC). There were no objections to this application.

**HIGHWAYS:** It was reported that there had been no updates on reducing traffic speed in the High Street since the last meeting where Stafford Borough and Staffordshire County Councillor Mark Winnington had agreed to explore whether a 20mph speed limit could be imposed. The Chairman agreed to contact Mark to see whether he had been able to make any progress with this matter.

Concerns were expressed over the amount of pot holes now appearing on the Parish roads due to the recent icy weather and thaw. These were being logged and would be reported to the County Council's Highways Department.

**FINGERPOSTS:** The Chairman reported that he had discussed re-painting the fingerpost bases with Mr Robert Cox who had provided the recommended paint specification and brand name. The cost would probably be in the region of £100 and could possibly be carried out in the Spring by a Parish Council working party.

**FLOODING DRAINAGE ISSUES HIGH STREET:** Following the recent concerns expressed by several residents about flooding, Chairman Councillor Simon Moore had spoken with Liz Fowler from the Environment Agency who has the public facing remit. It would seem from early investigations that the County Council may have responsibility for alleviating the problem, albeit working with the landowners concerned. As a result affected residents had been asked to complete a questionnaire from the County Council's Flood Team who the chairman has also been in contact with as well as liaising with local residents.

**VILLAGE MAP:** Mr Trevor Houghton, as agreed at the last meeting, had checked that the current map was up to date in terms of showing all properties before re-printing commenced. The Clerk was then to check with Mr John Edwards as to whether he had a copy of the map for re-printing purposes and speak with Chris Byford about arrangements for re-printing. The proposed location map for Marston was still under discussion as in regards to due diligence, residents were to be asked for their opinions as to whether they wanted their properties including.

**FINANCE:** The Clerk reported she had received an email from Stafford Borough Council asking for the Parish Council's precept requirement for 2021/2022. Following a brief discussion it was agreed to request a 1.2% increase on last year's precept (in line with inflation). The Parish Council generally felt that given the poor economic situation due to the current pandemic a modest increase was more appropriate. This was proposed by Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor Brown. All were in favour. The Clerk confirmed that she had paid JWH £48 for the last grass cutting invoice and £25 to the Institute towards the cost of the Christmas tree. The Clerk's fee

of £491.56 (including back pay of £31.22 from increase in April 2020) and tax of £122.80 was also approved.

The Bradford Estate's kind offer of a donation of up to £1,000 towards a project which is deemed to enhance the Parish was further discussed. The Parish Council had discussed various projects such as tree planting, playground improvements and the current refurbishment of the parish fingerposts. This matter will be discussed at the February Parish Council meeting so any suggestions from local residents could be considered.

**WELCOME PACK:** The Clerk reported that she had not heard from Helen Bellamy, the school secretary who was to look at updating the school section. This was not likely to be done soon due to work commitments but hopefully in the New Year the Welcome pack revisions would be complete.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** The Clerk informed the Council she had received an email from Dan Cooke the Census Engagement Manager at the Office of National Statistics. He had offered to give a brief presentation at the next meeting concerning the forthcoming national census which will be held on 21st March 2021. More details about this presentation will be posted on the village notice board once it has been confirmed. However the time frame for this is quite tight as the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held in early February.

All other items of correspondence had been forwarded to members as it had arrived.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 at 7.30 pm. This was again most likely to be held remotely due to current COVID-19 protocols and second lockdown. The meeting closed at 9.10pm.