

UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD ON THE 5TH DECEMBER 2023
AT CHURCH EATON VILLAGE INSTITUTE

PRESENT: Parish Councillors, Mrs S. Dodd, Messrs, P. Bailey, A. Brown, J. Gibbs, A. Lloyd (Vice Chairman), D. Massie, S. Moore (Chairman), Staffs County Councillor Mr M. Winnington, Stafford Borough Councillor, Mr J.Rose, nine members of the public and the Clerk, Mrs D. Key.

APOLOGIES: were received from PCSO Patrick Wright and Stafford Borough Councillor Ms E.Carter.

MINUTES: There was a slight amendment made to the minutes from the meeting held on the 7th November 2023. This was in relation to the recent maintenance of the rocking horse which was actually carried out by the Chairman, S.Moore and Councillor, J.Gibbs, and not the Vice Chairman, A.Lloyd. The minutes were then proposed for approval by Councillor J.Gibbs, seconded by Councillor S.Dodd. All were in favour.

MATTERS ARISING: Any matters arising from the last meeting were covered by the agenda and would be taken in the order they appeared.

LATE ITEMS: There were no late items.

OPEN FORUM: During Open Forum, Mr Steven Caplan requested that the Parish Council and local members of the Borough and County Councils query why the application for Village Green status had not yet been decided. The application had been lodged with Staffordshire County Council in June 2022 by Mr Caplan, who was representing 20 local residents in this matter. The Chairman thanked Mr Caplan for his attendance at the meeting and for bringing this matter up. Given the long delay in deciding this matter it was thought reasonable to urge the County Council to decide this application. Staffordshire County Councillor, Mr M.Winnington agreed to chase this up with the County Council as a matter of urgency.

COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH SCHEME (CSW): Since the last meeting there had been no further progress on finding funding for the CSW signs. In order to expedite this matter, the Parish Council agreed to purchase the signs in the first instance, initially with a budget of £100, and then to continue to look to find external funding. This action was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor S.Dodd. The Clerk was asked to retain this item on the next meeting's agenda.

CHURCH EATON VILLAGE PLAYGROUND: The Chairman reported that the annual playground safety inspection had been carried out on the 30th November by Sportsafe. A few matters had been raised but nothing was of a serious or urgent nature. These included the replacement of a couple of hand grips on equipment and the firming up of the basket ball hoop pole. There was a need to replace the wooden goal and some of the rubbers were worn on the gym equipment. The recent repair of the spring chicken mobile was deemed fit for purpose. A working party of Councillors was to convene in the New Year to carry out these repairs and maintenance. It was proposed by Councillor Dodd that new grips should be purchased, seconded by Councillor P.Bailey. All were in favour.

PLANNING: A planning application for an orangery at 3 St Eitha's Close, (Reference: 23/37897/HOU) had been considered by all members with no objections. The Clerk was to respond on this matter to the Borough Planning Department. A retrospective planning application had been received on the 2nd December for the erection of a fence at Moorfields Cottage, Goosemoor Lane. There were no objections to this, although members expressed their preference for hedging as a means of providing boundary fencing. However the Parish Council did understand that hedges take a long time to grow and that the householders required a more secure option in the short term. The Clerk was asked to convey this to the Planning Department before the 22nd December.

HIGHWAYS: Following the report from Ms Janet Bennett over ongoing concerns about footpaths and bridleways gates being left open on her land, the Clerk had further requested a form from Dominic Ward, the County Council's North Rights of Way Officer to start the process of being able to install new stile/hunting wicket. Ms Bennett was also receptive to the suggestion that a kissing gate(s) might be a good solution depending on what stock were grazing. Councillor Winnington suggested that it would be more effective for Ms Bennett to write to the County Council to inform them of the impact of this problem and to discuss what could be done to alleviate it. The Clerk was to contact Ms Bennett to assist.

Councillor A. Brown reported on the flooding which was occurring again at Laurel Cottage which has a long history of flooding problems. The flooding this time had also been quite severe on the road adjacent to the cottage. Councillor Brown had been out and had dug out grip and ditches and had also rodded the drains but the water was still backing up. The Chairman was to go out and inspect the watercourses near to the cottage to see if anything could be done.

The Chairman also reported on an email relating to flooding he had received from Mr and Mrs Pearson of Smithy Croft.

A discussion took place on existing flooding problems in the Parish and it was agreed that where flooding was occurring it was very useful to keep diaries and notes to help articulate these problems.

The Clerk enquired on the progress of repairs to Apeton ford but Councillor Winnington reported that the ford required far more work than was originally thought and would be closed for the foreseeable future. The Clerk was to inform Karen Reeves who had recently reported pothole problems with the ford. Flooding on Mr Hitchens property had now abated but highways had been contacted.

The poor road condition of the High Onn Road adjacent to the playground had been reported as urgent to Highways. A temporary repair to the pot hole had been made. The poor road condition of the High Onn Road adjacent to the playground had been reported as urgent to Highways.

PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS: The Clerk was asked to retain this item on the agenda for the next meeting as Councillors requires more time to look through the proposed revisions.

FINANCE: The following invoices were presented by the Clerk for payment.

- £270 Sportsafe Safety Inspection of play ground.
- £110 CEVI Hire of Hall fees (July – December)

These were proposed for payment by Councillor S. Dodd, seconded by Councillor J.Gibbs
All were in favour.

The Clerk reported that since the November meeting she had paid an invoice for £55 to JWH for grass cutting.

The setting of the 2024/25 precept was discussed, with Councillor A. Brown laying out how he proposed to approach this for the January meeting when a decision on the precept would be made. Contingency planning was also discussed and the Chairman was to review this prior to the next meeting. The Clerk was to supply further information to Councillor Brown.

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

The Clerk had received a crime incident report from PCSO Pat Wright which showed no real concerns albeit there had been a few rural based thefts. The Chairman had received notification of the Local Government pay agreement which had now been agreed and would be applied to the Clerk's next salary payment.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Parish Council would take place in the Village Institute on Tuesday 2nd January 2024 commencing at 7.30pm. The meeting closed at 9.15pm.