

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD ON THE 6TH FEBRUARY 2024
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), Stafford Borough Councillor, J.Rose, three members of the public and the Clerk, Mrs D. Key.

APOLOGIES: were received from Staffs County Councillor Mr M. Winnington.

MINUTES: The Chairman reported that there had been no meeting held in January due to the extreme wet weather and flooded roads. The minutes from the meeting held on the 6th February 2024 were proposed for approval by the Chairman, Simon Moore and were seconded by Councillor Jon.Gibbs. 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, a local resident queried whether a building required planning permission near to the canal at Little Onn. Stafford Borough Councillor, Jack Rose agreed to look into this matter. A large hole in the tow path in the Little Onn area was also reported. The Chairman was to chase this matter up with the Canal and River Trust whose were responsible for the maintenance of tow paths.

Miss Janet Bennet had brought along a letter which the Clerk has asked Miss Bennett to provide outlining the problems that she was experiencing with gates being left open on the bride paths and footpaths situated on her land. The letter also contained a request for the installation of a new stile and or kissing gate to help alleviate these problems. The Clerk was to send this to the Borough Rights of Way Officer.

COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH SCHEME (CSW): The Chairman was chasing up the order for the new Community Speedwatch signs as they had not yet been received. Haughton Parish Council was to information share about sign installation.

CHURCH EATON VILLAGE PLAYGROUND: Following the recent annual playground safety inspection and the need to replace e.g. the wooden goal, the longevity of the current play equipment was discussed. It was agreed that while the inspection had found the playground to be fit for purpose, it was agreed that in the long term more equipment would have to be replaced. With this in mind, the Clerk was asked to include in the next Parish Magazine report that the Parish Council would be keen to hear from parishioners with any suggestions as to what equipment or facilities might be considered. The cost of updating and replacing equipment would be prohibitively expensive however, an investigation into securing funding or obtaining a grant was to be continued.

The fallen tree had now been chopped up and the large section of trunk had been moved to the side by the hedge for safety by the Chairman and Councillor J.Gibbs. There were some discussions as to what the trunk could be used for but it would more than likely be removed.

Other playground maintenance jobs included looking at the chain link fencing which was bent from when the tree had fallen. In relation to the basketball post this would be either concreted back in or removed. Pollarding the hawthorn trees was also discussed.

PLANNING: There were no new or ongoing planning matters discussed.

HIGHWAYS: The Chairman reported that Severn Trent Water had been out to inspect the recent discharge of sewage following flooding in Smithy Croft and the garden at The Old Post Office which had initially resulted in residents contacting Severn Trent Water. Damage to both sewerage and storm water drains had been identified and repaired and there were plans to install an additional valve to help alleviate this problem.

The poor surface condition of the High Onn Road adjacent to the playground has again been reported as urgent to Highways although a temporary repair has been carried out.

There had been no progress since the last meeting of repairs to Apeton ford. The Clerk had informed Karen Reeves, who had originally reported pothole problems with the ford, that repairs were planned but not likely to be progressed in the near future.

Thanks were also expressed by the Parish Council to the local resident who had been digging out ditches near to Joan Eaton's Cross to help alleviate flooding.

PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS: The Chairman was continuing to review the Council's current standing orders with assistance from the Staffordshire Parish Councils Association and was to circulate a draft. In the interim the Chairman had amended and produced a final draft of notes for public participation by the public at Parish Council meetings. These were proposed for use by the Vice Chairman, seconded by the Chairman. All were in favour. The Vice Chairman thanked the Chairman for all the time and effort that had been put into these reviews.

FINANCE: The Clerk had received an email from the Village Institute requesting a donation towards the purchase of the Institute Christmas Tree. A donation of £25 was agreed and proposed for payment by Councillor J.Gibbs, and seconded by the Vice Chairman. Two members were against the motion. The majority were in favour.

The setting of the 2024/25 precept was discussed, with Councillor A. Brown providing a report of his budgetary findings and forecasting. In conclusion it was agreed that an increase would need to be requested in order to meet rising running costs and for works to be carried out to maintain the playground. Councillor A.Brown requested that it be minuted that he was unhappy with the Parish Council's current expenditure planning and that he would like to see more contingency reserves retained.

Following a lengthy discussion it was proposed by Councillor A.Brown that a 9% increase be requested. This was seconded by the Vice Chairman. There was one abstention with the rest in agreement.

CORRESPONDENCE: All items of correspondence had been forwarded to members as it had arrived. Other items of correspondence included a request for Parish Council meeting dates for 2024 from the Community Engagement Officer at Stafford Police. The Clerk had replied to this and forwarded the meeting dates etc. There had been some further emails from

Amy Watson the Clerk for Wheaton Aston PC in relation to the proposed airfield marker. Locations were still being considered but further updates would be forwarded. Karen Reeves had enquired as to whether a poster warning about Asian Hornets could be displayed on the notice board. The Parish Council were in agreement to this. The Chairman had attended the recent 'Chairs Meeting' organised by the Haughton PC Chairman Ian Sunley.

Following a query from a local resident about the proposed new telephone mast by the turn for Woollaston Lane, the Chairman had been in touch with the company who stated that it is scheduled to go live in the spring of 2024. They have also advised that the mast will provide coverage for Vodafone and O2. This is understood to include VOXI, Asda Mobile, Lebara Mobile, Talkmobile, GiffGaff, Sky Mobile, Tesco mobile and Virgin Mobile and maybe others who use either Vodafone or O2 technology. While the Chairman has not been able to verify this information this is an indication of the networks which should hopefully improve whilst also suggesting Three and EE coverage will remain unchanged.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Parish Council would take place in the Village Institute on Tuesday 5th March 2024 commencing at 7.30pm. The meeting closed at 9.35pm.