

WHITTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Whittington Parish Council held remotely on Tuesday 23rd February 2021 at 7.30pm via Zoom Video Conferencing.

Councillors Present: Frank Davies (Chair), Lucy Beaumont (Vice Chair), Jill Whitby, Steve Charmley, Rupert Harvey, Sue Manford, Keith Stanton, Steve Pugh, Greg Hickman.

Also in attendance: Mrs Amy Jones (Clerk).

Parish Council MINUTES

15.21 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence received from Cllr Ian Johnson and Paul Thompson-Lawrence.

16.21 Declarations of interest regarding the agenda

Members are reminded that the Council's Code of Conduct requires that any Member, having a financial or other interest (bias or predetermination) in any of the business to be transacted, must declare all such interests either at the start of the meeting or immediately before the item is discussed. Members are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable interest.

- a) Declaration of any disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed at the meeting and which is not included in the register of interests.

None declared.

- b) To consider any applications for dispensation.

None received.

17.21 Confirmation of the Minutes

To approve and authorise the signing of the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 26.01.2021, including the 2021/22 Budget (Appendix A).

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm the minutes (including the 2021/22 budget) of the Full Council Meeting held on the 26.01.2021 and that a copy be signed at the next Face to Face meeting of the Council.

18.21 Public Participation

To allow public participation in accordance with the Council's Standing Order procedure (members of the public who are participating in the Zoom session are invited to speak).

No members of the public present.

19.21 Reports

- a) **Chair's Report** – Consider matters arising since the last meeting.

No matters to report since the last meeting.

- b) **Clerk's Progress Report** – Consider matters arising since the last meeting (including the latest Covid guidance in relation to Local Authorities and information on the forthcoming elections).

Road Safety / Highways	On-going
Signage along Castle Street – An update on the following has been requested 1. The Oswestry directional sign sending people up Castle Street rather than Station Road – SC have confirmed that they will look to renew this sign/posts as part of their works programme. They will also relocate sign	

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<p>to resolve issue with vehicles turning into the dead-end bit of Castle Street.</p> <p>2. 30mph signage – This is currently being discussed with the Traffic Manager.</p> <p>Station Road / Oswestry Road Resurfacing has been included in SC’s 2021/22 Financial Budget – timings are being agreed with Network Rail.</p> <p>Speed monitor – Castle Street Awaiting an update on the outcome of the surveys.</p> <p>VAS – installed.</p>	
<p>2021 Elections Clerk is booked onto a course with Shropshire Council in early March. Section added to the website ‘About Whittington Parish Council’ and a dedicated page ‘2021 May Elections’. More to be added as information about the forthcoming elections is released. Publicity on elections to follow.</p> <p>Key Dates for an Election on Thursday 6th May 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purdah period begins when the Elections Notice is published – 15th March and runs until the end day of poll. During this period the Parish Council should be mindful not to publicise controversial issues or report views or proposals in such a way that identifies individuals or groups of members. This includes council newsletters, magazines, press releases and social media. Any quotes made during this period should come from the Clerk/Proper Officer. • Current councillors retire on the 4th day after the elections – Monday 10th. It is on this day that the new councillors take office. • The annual meeting of the council must take place within 14 days of the new councillors taking office. • A meeting summons must be issued 3 clear days before a meeting, therefore the earliest a meeting could take place is 14th May and the last date it could take place is Monday 24th May. • All councillors must sign their declaration of acceptance of office before the May Annual Meeting of the Council. • The annual parish meeting should take place between 1st March – 1st June – Legislation currently permits them to be conducted remotely (up until 7th May 2021 if legislation is not extended). However, the 2020 regulations removed the requirement to hold an annual parish meeting. <p>The deadline to publish the notice of election is no later than Monday 29 March 2021. Shropshire Council are expecting to publish the town and parish notices of election on Monday 15 March 2021. The delivery of nominations papers, consent to nominations and home address forms will commence from Tuesday 16 March 2021. Further details will be published shortly.</p> <p>Nomination papers can be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downloaded from the Electoral Commission’s website • Provided by the town / parish clerk. Please note that town / parish clerks will have paper copies of the nomination packs available towards the end of February; or 	<p>To note</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided by Electoral Services at Shropshire Council. Send an email to elections@shropshire.gov.uk providing your name, address and the area you wish to stand in. Please note that despatch of nomination packs is expected to commence mid- to late-February. <p>Nominations and campaigning (taken from the Govt website)</p> <p>The nominations process is a key part of our electoral system and it is important that all candidates have local support, but we must balance this with the need to minimise contact. For potential candidates standing for elected office, we are introducing measures to reduce the travel and contact involved in completing their nomination form. Further detail on the change will be provided in secondary legislation that will be laid on 8 February, followed by further guidance in mid-February.</p> <p>Campaigning is an essential part of the democratic process, and voters deserve to be well informed before going to the polls. Many forms of campaigning can be carried out without increased face-to-face contact – including online campaigning, campaigning by telephone, and delivery of leaflets by post or other commercial delivery services (who are already operating, without causing additional circulation of campaigners).</p> <p>Read more - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/may-2021-polls-delivery-plan/may-2021-polls-delivery-plan</p>	
<p>Streetlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several out on Station Road (including the VAS) – SP Repair booked for 18/02/21 – complete and working. • Light o/s 21 Rosehill Drive was Glowing Red. Part of Project A (Column and LED replacements) – repaired in the interim. • Couple of lights out in Drenewydd - The streetlight outside 8 Drenewydd and the one across the road from 19 Drenewydd are not working – reported to Highline 16.02.21 • Lights in Hindford – maint. work to the brackets booked in with Highline and the LEDs to then be installed (paid for in project B) 	To note
<p>Planting of a Christmas Tree</p> <p>Discussed with Cllr Charmley following the January meeting and agreed that it would be best for the Clerk to source a tree and bring details to a Spring meeting.</p>	To note
<p>Remote Meetings</p> <p>SALC issued a Special News Bulletin (5th Feb) to warn councillors and clerks about the possible return to Face to Face meetings when the regulations permitting remote meetings expire on 7th May. This means that, without any further action from the government, all local authorities including local councils must return to face to face meetings from 7th May. NALC is working with several national bodies to press the government to extend these regulations beyond this date and will continue to stress the urgency and importance of this issue. However, at this time government has no plans to extend these regulations and so councils should start preparing for the real possibility of face to face meetings from May.</p> <p>The Parish Council has a Risk Assessment for the return to Face to Face meetings and this will be kept under review.</p>	To note

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- c) **Whittington play area at Fitzgwarine** – Consider the latest visual inspection report provided to the council verbally by Cllr Frank Davis.
Cllr Davis reported that he had attended the play area last week to carry out the visual checks but due to the high volume of people using the equipment, it was felt that the checks would be best carried out on another occasion so he will return later in the week to carry out the checks.
RESOLVED to note.
- d) **Police Report** – Consider.
It was noted that a written report from the Police had not been received this month.
- e) **Shropshire Councillors Report** – To receive a report from Cllr Steve Charmley.
Cllr Charmley reported on the following matters:
- **Pot holes!** An issue across the county. Station Road is scheduled for major remedial works in the next week.
- f) **Church Report** – Consider a report from the Rector about Oswestry Beam Hub.
Councillors considered a report submitted by the Rector about the Oswestry Beam Hub.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the information and support with sharing the information to raise awareness in the local community.
- g) **Councillor Reports** – To consider reports from Councillors (training courses, meetings attended as council representatives, roles carried out as a councillor).
Cllr Greg Hickman reported that he attended a recent SALC Executive Meeting.

20.21

Planning

- a) To note recent planning decisions published by Shropshire Council – none received.
- b) Planning applications for consideration
- I. **Reference:** 21/00295/FUL (validated: 21/01/2021)
Address: 5 Penybryn Crescent, Whittington, Shropshire, SY11 4DP
Proposal: Erection of single storey rear extension

It was **RESOLVED** to **MAKE A REPRESENTATION** on the application with the following comments:
 - The Parish Council have no comments to make on this application.
- c) Consider Planning applications not listed above that are received after the issue of this agenda and are included on Shropshire Council’s website. None received.

21.21

Finance and Accounts

- a) Consider the following accounts for payment. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following payments:

CHEQUE NUMBER	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	NET	VAT	GROSS
BACS64	Clerk	Salary 1 st – 28 th February plus expenses (16.00 home office allowance)	959.84	0.00	959.84
BACS65	HMRC	Clerk - PAYE Payments (Month 11) Employer NI	72.90	0.00	72.90
BACS66	D & R Brewer	Grounds Maintenance – Month 11	87.50	0.00	87.50

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BACS67	ICO	Data Protection – Annual Fee Renewal	40.00	0.00	40.00
BACS68	Shropshire Council	4 th Quarter S/Light Energy Charges	622.17	124.43	746.60
BACS69	Highline Electrical	Installation of two new VAS (as per quote)	278.00	55.60	333.60
Direct Debit	NEST	Pension (Employer & Employee Contribution)	33.53	0.00	33.53

b) **Income** – To note income received. **RESOLVED** to note.

Date Received	From Whom and Description	Amount
31.01.21	NatWest – Interest	£0.28
29.01.21	HMRC – Statutory Repayment (receipt number 100207)	£808.83

c) **Reconciliation** - To approve bank reconciliation up to and including 31st January 2021.

RESOLVED to approve.

d) **3rd Quarter Internal Controls** – To receive a report from Cllr Beaumont.

Cllr Beaumont reported that the 3rd Quarter Checks on the Accounts had been carried out and no concerns were raised. The only point to note was that the bank details on a personal account (reimbursement to a Cllr) should be redacted from an invoice and this will be done by the Clerk. **RESOLVED** to note.

e) **Banking** – Consider the Clerk’s Report regarding opening a Current Account with Unity Trust Bank.

Cllrs considered the Clerk’s report, and it was **RESOLVED** to open a Current Account with Unity Trust Bank and to transfer £10,000 from the NatWest Account as an opening balance. It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** to continue to pay any Direct Debits already set up out of the NatWest Account until agreed otherwise and for the 2021 precept payment to be paid into the NatWest Account and then money transferred as required. The Clerk will prepare all the paperwork to open the account and to set up signatories as authorisers on the account. It was agreed that the new bank account be reviewed three months after opening and the Clerk and Signatories to report back on their experience using the online banking system.

22.21

Park Hall

a) Receive an update regarding the installation of a pavement between The Venue and Inglis Road.

Cllr Charmley reported that within the outstanding 106 agreement funds have now been allocated to funding a pavement between The Venue and Inglis Road. It was further noted that any shortfall in funding will be made up by Shropshire Council (through CIL payments). It was **RESOLVED** to note this update and continue to monitor progress monthly by retaining this as a standing item on the agenda.

b) Receive an update regarding the flooding of Burma Road (by the traffic calming, near the Venue).

It was noted that the Burma Road Closure has now been extended: 4th February - 26th February 2021. It was noted that the works required in the Woodland area to alleviate the flooding issue will not be possible until the Summer months. It was **RESOLVED** to continue to monitor progress monthly by retaining this as a standing item on the agenda.

c) Receive an update on the clearing of the Fly Tipping.

It was reported that clearing has taken place, but now further rubbish has been tipped. Rubbish has also been tipped at Tinkers Green. **RESOLVED** that this be followed up with Shropshire Council and reported.

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- d) Receive an update on the recent request for more Dog Fouling Bins and Salt Bins in Park Hall. The Clerk reported that Shropshire Council had responded to the requests and due to current financial pressures, there are currently no plans to install additional units. This information was noted and it was suggested that the Clerk liaise with the Clerk at Ruyton XI Towns as they have bold signage around the parish that may help in deterring dog fouling.

23.21

Road Safety / Highways

- a) Consider the response received from the Safer Roads Team (in response to the letter sent to the Police and Crime Commissioner – December 2020 – minute 188.f.20 refers).

In their letter to the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Parish Council conveyed their disappointment at the lack of support they are receiving from Shropshire Council and the West Mercia Police Road Safety Team, to address the speeding issues in Whittington. The letter explained that the new Vehicle Activated Signs were recording alarmingly high speeds and the Parish Council find it very disappointing and frustrating that, despite the fact that the VAS are gathering evidence that demonstrates a serious safety issue, the VAS data is not being taken into consideration by the Safer Roads Team. The Parish Council have raised with Shropshire Council the possibility of extending the 30mph zone and moving it further out towards Oswestry, however, this has been rejected.

Councillors considered the response they had received from the Safer Roads Team which, explained that the data that VAS produce as a secondary function can be of general guidance to parish council's however any speeds recorded will be impacted by the influence of the sign on the drivers/riders. The position of VAS signs can also be an influencing factor as radars when detecting speeds do not record the distance from the device the reading was taken, and this potentially could have speeds recorded very close to or at the speed limit change. They confirmed that once the Community Speedwatch Group can get up and running (when restrictions allow), the data they obtain will be analysed and they can work more closely with the Parish Council to address concerns.

In addition, under the topic of Road Safety, the Clerk presented details on the Road Safety Trust funding as a possible avenue for the parish council to explore. Their Themed Grant Scheme opens on 25th February and this year's theme is: "How can technology be used to reduce road offending and improve road safety". The Clerk reported that she had been in touch with the Head of Transport at Shropshire Council and the advice given was to identify, as a parish, what the problem is and what we are trying to solve. Once this is clear, the Parish Council could work with Shropshire Council to identify a project that would fit the criteria for the grant.

It was agreed that the lack of a safe crossing at Pen-Y-Bryn is a serious road safety concern and this would possibly fit the grant criteria. Large numbers of children cross the road at this point on their route to school. The new VAS gives advanced warnings to reduce speed for traffic approaching the Village but a safe crossing point would slow traffic leaving the village and ensure that pedestrians can safely cross the road.

Whilst concerns were raised regarding the timescales for applying and the match funding that would be required, it was **RESOLVED** to share this information with Shropshire Council and ask whether a project could be identified that would fit the grant criteria.

- b) Receive an update on Oswestry Road / Station Road.

It was reported that resurfacing works would take place in April and that remedial repairs are booked in to take place in the next week, with over-night road closures being put in place.

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24.21 Community Car Park

- a) Receive an update on the new road markings and parking enforcements.

It was **NOTED** that this work will not be carried out until after the road has been resurfaced, however, draft plans have not yet been circulated. It was **RESOLVED** that this item be brought back to the March meeting.

- b) Consider quotes and proposals for improving the lighting of the area.

Councillors considered proposals for improving the lighting of the Car Park and it was **RESOLVED** to purchase and install one t-bracket on the column as you turn into car park and install a new column at the end of the car park by footpath (at the new estate end). The work to install a new column may be subject to a Section 50 permit and it was **FURTHER AGREED** that this work (at an additional cost) be approved, if required.

The matter of the footpath being obstructed was raised as this has not yet been rectified. It was **RESOLVED** that this be given further consideration and brought back to the March meeting to be discussed.

25.21 Social Media

- a) To consider a request from Cllr Steve Charmley to publish contact information on the Parish Council's Facebook Page.

Councillors considered the request to publish information on the Parish Council's Facebook page relating to 'Ask Steve' – a dedicated email address set up by Cllr Charmley to improve communication links while Covid-19 restrictions prohibit the normal activities such as Cllr Surgeries from taking place. When considering the request, Councillors referred to guidance received from the Legal Department at NALC.

It was **AGREED** that, publishing such information would breach the Local Government Act 1986 S.2 and the current circumstances do not justify such a breach. It was, however, **RESOLVED** that a link be placed on the parish council website to Cllr Charmley's contact details on the Shropshire Council website and post to be published on Facebook that links to the councillor contact page on Facebook, reiterating that councillors are here to support people in these challenging and unprecedented times. This will help to signpost people to their parish councillors and their elected representative for the parish. It was noted that the two noticeboards in the parish have Cllr Charmley's contact details displayed.

- b) To receive an amendment made by the Clerk to Parish Council's Press and Media Policy.

It was **AGREED** to include additional text on the Local Government Act 1986, S2 which states that a Local Council shall not publish any material which, in whole or in part appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party and further clarify the details relating to the Purdah Period.

26.21 Council Reports / Areas of Concerns / Items for future Agendas

Each Councillor is requested to use this opportunity to report minor matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas. **Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision making.**

- Litter – along the Ellesmere Road out of Whittington – Report to Shropshire Council.
- Play Area – A lot of usage throughout the pandemic. The views of users' needs to be obtained before any money is spent to improve the area. It was agreed that information be put in the school newsletter, on facebook and a notice on the Play Area fence, asking people to share their views on the type of equipment they would like to see in the play area.

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- Extension of the 30mph at the entrance to the village – to be included on the March agenda.
- Fibre to premises is being explored with BT Openreach by residents in Park Hall.

27.21 Correspondence

To note correspondence received:

1. SALC / NALC – Bulletins, News in brief bulletins, Covid-19 updates
2. Shropshire Council – Covid-19 Updates (published on the website)
3. PCC Newsletter – Funding Crime Prevention
4. Thank you letters for the Parish Grants
5. SP – North Shropshire Reinforcement – Update Jan 2021
6. Shropshire Council: Road Closure: From A495 junction to former railway, Whittington. 15th March. Examination of structure at Disused Railway carried out by Balfour Beatty.
7. Shropshire Council – Highways Winter Maintenance Update
8. Shropshire Council – Emergency Road Closure, Burma Road, Park Hall 4th-12th February
9. Postponement of Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Shropshire Garden Party planned for June this year. Rescheduled for June 2022.
10. PCC newsletter: What does the police budget mean for you?

RESOLVED to note.

For consideration:

1. Community Governance Reviews – Consider. **RESOLVED** to note the information and wait until further information on the reviews is shared after the elections.
2. Consultation under clause 60 of the High Speed Rail (West Midlands – Crewe) Bill as amended in the House of Lords – HS2 - consultation documents and for details on how to respond, please visit: www.hs2.org.uk/phase2a.
RESOLVED to complete as individuals.
3. Future Oswestry Plan stakeholder workshop – Thursday 4th March – 7pm – 8.30pm on Zoom.
RESOLVED that Cllrs let the Clerk know if they would like to attend.
4. SALC Survey – Consider. **RESOLVED** that the Clerk complete the survey on behalf of the Council.

28.21 Date and Time of Next Meeting

a) **To note the date and time of the next meeting.**

Tuesday 23rd March – 7.30pm. On Zoom.

Prior to this, there will be a meeting of the F&E Committee at 6.15pm on Zoom.

b) **2021 Annual Parish Meeting – Receive a report from the Clerk and agree a date.**

It was **AGREED** to hold the 2021 Annual Parish Meeting on Tuesday 30th March at 7pm on Zoom. It was **RESOLVED** not to have a specific speaker but to have reports from Village Groups and an Open Forum Session.

c) **To note future meetings dates.**

Meetings will take place on 4th Tuesday of the month (unless otherwise Agreed).

The Meeting was closed by the Chairman at 21.10