**Minutes of the Prees Parish Council Meeting held on 20 January 2025 in Prees Village Hall.**

Present: Cllrs Mrs S Short, Mrs J Catterall, Mrs S Jones, Mrs L Baer, Mrs R Clutton, R Hirons, J Whelan, Dr J Redgate, M Lanham and D Ladd. Also present were one member of the Public and the clerk Mrs K Sieloff.

**001/25** **Public Session.** There were no contributions from members of the public.

**002/25** **Apologies** had been received from Cllrs Mrs B Finch, J Allen and P Wynn.

**003/25** **For Members to disclose Pecuniary/Non-Pecuniary interests** in items on this agenda. There were none.

**004/25** **Minutes** of the Parish Council Meeting held on December 16 2024 (previously circulated) were agreed to be a true record. It was proposed by Cllr J Whelan that they should be signed and this was seconded by Cllr R Hirons. All were in favour.

**005/25** **Actions arising from the Minutes** (which are not included on the Agenda.) There were none.

**006/25** **Community Policing Matters.** The clerk had heard from local officers regretting that there was no one available to attend tonight, but it was hoped that somebody would attend the February meeting.

**007/25 Shropshire Council Report.** Cllr P Wynn was not in attendance due to illness and had sent his Apology. There was no report available.

**008/25** **Planning Matters**

**Current planning applications for consultation**

24/04456/FUL: Erection of 1 dwelling. Amadeus House , 1 Sylvan Close, Higher Heath, Whitchurch, Shropshire. APPLICANT: Mr And Mrs Percival.

The PC resolved to support this Application, but the clerk was asked to register its concern that the proposed new driveway may clutter the street-scene. She was also asked to register disappointment about the removal of six established oak trees and to enquire about the potential need for a bat survey. Proposed by Cllr J Whelan and seconded by Cllr R Hirons. All were in favour.

24/04835/VAR : The Nook Farm, Whitchurch Road, Prees, Whitchurch, Shropshire, SY13 3JZ
Proposal:  Variation of condition no.2 (approved drawings) attached to planning permission 24/00376/FUL
Applicant: Mr and Mrs Bennett.

The PC resolved to support this Application. This was proposed by Cllr Mrs J Catterall and seconded by Cllr D Ladd. All were in favour.

24/04714/FUL: Skydive Tilstock, The Parachute Centre, Higher Heath, Whitchurch, Shropshire
Proposal:  Erection of extension to existing aircraft hangar. Applicant: Mr E Matson.

This application had been included on the Agenda in error, as the site is actually within the boundary of Whitchurch Rural Parish Council.

25/00061/FUL: Replacement of conservatory, and existing window openings and the insertion of double doors and glazed screen balcony to first floor front elevation .Woodside, Lacon Street, Prees, Whitchurch, Shropshire. Applicant: Mr And Mrs Lee

The PC resolved to support this Application. This was proposed by Cllr J Whelan and seconded by Cllr Mrs R Clutton. All were in favour.

**Notice of an Appeal** against a planning decision under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Application reference: 23/04624/FUL: Land To The South Of, Nook Lane, Weston Under Redcastle, Shropshire. Description of development: Erection of a building for private horse-riding practice and associated works, to include change of use of land. (Resubmission of Application Ref: 23/00910/FUL) Appellant’s name: Mr P Sutton Planning Inspector ref: APP/L3245/W/24/3356499 Appeal reference: 25/03319/REF Appeal start date: 7 January 2025.

The PC noted the Notice of the Appeal but had nothing new to add to the body of comment it had registered previously.

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

24/04763/CPL: Certificate of lawfulness for the siting of a static caravan. 1 The Bungalow, Steele Bridge , Steel Heath, Whitchurch, Shropshire. Applicant: Mr Scott Wiffen.

The PC noted the application.

**Planning Decisions received from Shropshire Council**.

24/04569/PAAFC. Brades Farm, Brades Road, Prees, Whitchurch, Shropshire, SY13 2DX
Change of use from agricultural building to flexible commercial use under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class R. Decision:  Prior Approval Required and Approved

24/04527/FUL: Hough Cottage, Weston Under Redcastle, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY4 5LR
Proposal:  Application for the continued siting of two poly tunnel structures
Decision:  Grant Permission

**009/25 Parish and Parish Council Matters.**

**Future of the Youth Shelter.**

Cllr Mrs S Short reported that she and Cllr Mrs J Catterall had spoken to the parents of one of the young men whose tragic deaths were commemorated by artwork inside the Youth Shelter, and they had declared that they had no objection to the proposed demolition of the structure. The parents of the other young man are said to now reside in Wem. Cllr Mrs S Short and the clerk will make every attempt to locate them. It was agreed that there was now a need to find the cost of photographing the artwork for display in the Village Hall and to review the quotes for the demolition work, obtained a while ago. It was also necessary to speak to the committee at the Club. Cllr J Whelan suggested that there was a need for a public statement, perhaps made by the PC and the Club combined, to be circulated locally by all means available.

**Parking situation at Lower Heath School**.

Cllr M S Short reported that the planning application for additional off-road parking at Lower Heath School has not yet been decided as Shropshire Council has asked for additional reports. An anonymous donor had provided the £1500 needed to fund this additional work, in order that the scheme should not be delayed. The project in its entirety will cost in the region of £40,000. It is hoped that the work will take place in the Summer holidays.

**Government domain address needed for Parish Council**. The clerk reported that she had contacted five of the recommended providers for quotes for the costs involved but had only so far received one response. The information received suggested that the costs in the first year would be in the region of £1,000. She will aim to bring three quotes to the February meeting.

**Local parking issues.**  Cllr Mrs S Short had met with Cllr Mrs B Finch and the clerk to discuss the local parking concerns and current progress. She referred to the previous item for an update on the situation at Lower Heath School and confirmed that the planning application that will hopefully provide off-road parking at Prees School has been submitted. At the crossroads by Jackie’s Shop, cllrs who are routinely in the vicinity are watching and reporting transgressors to Shropshire Council. It is hoped that at the next meeting Cllr P Wynn will be able to report what action SC takes when it receives reports of vehicles parking on the double yellow lines.

The Chair and the clerk are to meet with Nigel Thomas, who has advised the PC about security cameras previously, to see if CCTV would be able to help at the Crossroads.

**SC Consultation on its own 2025/26 Budget**. The clerk confirmed that the consultation would close on 26.1.25. and that all contributions were welcome.

**Playground matters**. Cllr R Hirons confirmed that due to a restructuring made necessary by current budget difficulties Shropshire Council Playgrounds team had withdrawn from the agreement to supply and install additional equipment for Prees playground and Higher Heath playing-field.

Kompan, the manufacturers of most of the equipment, had subsequently been asked to quote for the supply and installation. The figure quoted was £57,405.87 which was £1,329.42 more than the SC one. The PC resolved to accept Kompan’s quote, in the interests of avoiding further delay to the project and in the knowledge that costs of materials and manufacture etc are constantly rising. This was proposed by Cllr D Ladd and seconded by Cllr M Lanham. All were in favour. The clerk was asked to press Kompan for commitment to a delivery date.

**Rubbish dumped in the brook on Station Road.**

The clerk reported that she had spoken to the land-owner, who was understandably unhappy about any expectation that it should be his responsibility to clear rubbish wilfully and irresponsibly dumped on his land by other people. The Parish Cllrs in discussion were sympathetic to his position. The clerk was asked to raise the issue with Shropshire Council and to copy in the Dept of the Environment as the watercourse was in danger of pollution, if not already being polluted. Clerk also asked to advise the land-owner of this action.

**Parish waste bins**.

The clerk reported she had asked Shropshire Council to provide larger bins outside Jackie’s Shop and the Convenience Store. She had reported the damaged dog waste bin halfway up Church Street some time ago. She was asked to find out whether SC had removed the general waste bin at Higher Heath playing field car park as it has disappeared without trace although the dog waste bin remains.

**Hounds running amok in Fauls 14.1.25.**

In Cllr J Allen’s absence, Cllr Mrs S Short described how rampaging hounds had caused havoc on Cllr Allen’s land at his home in Fauls. They were accompanied by mounted huntsmen and were on his property without permission and causing distress to the pets and livestock he keeps. The hounds were out of control and one was injured on the A41. The PC resolved that the Chair should write to the Master of the North Shropshire Hunt to protest. Proposed by Cllr J Whelan and seconded by Cllr Mrs J Catterall. All were in favour.

**PC to host Community Engagement Coffee Mornings**? Cllr Mrs S Short explained that she is keen to have regular Coffee Mornings, hopefully in all three wards of the Parish, to provide an opportunity for Parish Councillors to engage with local residents, hear their concerns and signpost them to organisations that could help. Current issues such as Carbon Literacy and Project Gigabit could be talked about and actions supported. Cllr D Ladd, who is also on the Village Hall committee, advised that National Village Hall week will take place at the end of March and would maybe present an opportunity for the PC to launch its new activity. Cllr Mrs Short to bring a plan to the February meeting.

**010/25** **SALC.**

There was no parish cllr in attendance at the North Shropshire Area Committee Meeting held on the same evening as the PC meeting. The Chair is keen to encourage cllrs to take an occasional turn to attend instead of coming to the PC meeting with which it routinely clashes. Cllr Mrs J Catterall offered to attend the next one. Clerk to advise her of the date.

**011/25** **Accounting matters**

**Accounts for Payment January 2025**.

Cllr J Whelan proposed that the following accounts should be paid and this was seconded by Cllr R Hirons. All were in favour.

K D Sieloff salary January 2025 537.55

HMRC PAYE 75.80

K D Sieloff clerks expenditure (11.12.24-14.1.25 ) 19.50

Scottish Power (1.12.24 – 1.1.25) 213.64

 Total £ 846.49

Clerk’s expenditure 11.12.24-14.125

*BT line rental contribution January 2025: £ 12.50.*

*Petrol: one trip to notice-boards December Agenda etc: 8 miles @ 45p per mile = £3.60.*

*Stamps:4 x second class stamps @ 85p = £3.40*

Total = £19.50

All were in favour.

**Spend against Budget at end of third quarter.**

The Parish Council reviewed the Spend Against Budget as at the end of the third quarter of 2024-25.

It was agreed that there were no concerns, but the clerk was reminded to make a note against the large expenditure on streetlamps to explain that this was to complete the planned conversion of the lighting-stock to LED, the cost of which was met by Reserves.

**Budget for 2025-26 to be agreed.**

The PC considered a draft operational Budget for 2025-26 of £36,660. The document had been previously circulated by the Budget working-group and was now unanimously approved.

After discussion it was resolved that the contribution toward the Precept collected from each Band D household would be increased by 5% as compared to the contribution in 2024-25. This means that each household would pay £25.56 in 2025-26 compared to £24.34 paid in the current year. The Precept figure requested would be £30,723.12 and the shortfall in the operational Budget of £5,936.88 will be met by Reserves.

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs L Baer and seconded by Cllr M Lanham. All were in favour.

**012/25 Housekeeping**

* Millenium Walk: Cllr Mrs S Short reported that the PC’s current grounds maintenance contractor has offered to complete a one-off cutting-back of the growth below the trees for £100.00. Cllr Mrs R Clutton proposed that this should be accepted and this was seconded by Cllr Mrs J Catterall. All were in favour. Cllr J Whelan reminded the PC that at some point the trees themselves will require attention again (crown-lifting.)
* Mill Street and Church Street: two of the Parish cllrs noted that there was a bad problem with dog-fouling on these two streets. Clerk has some signs encouraging responsible dog-ownership and will put them up in these areas.
* Clearing local pavements of mud. An email had been received from a resident living on the A49 close to the end of Shrewsbury Road pointing out that mud and debris from the fields on the pavements on the way into the village made the walk tricky. Coincidentally, the Lengthsman has been working in this area over the last few days.
* Cllr M Lanham reported that the triangle of trees at junction of Shrewsbury Rd/A49 has moss beneath making it slippery.
* Cllr R Hirons reported that Twemlows Avenue in Higher Heath is very slippery with wet leaves.

Cllr Mrs S Short noted that the Lengthsmen are repeating their schedule of work established last year, and some of these issues will be tackled then.

* Cllr M Lanham noted that the two new streetlamps on Station Road are appreciably increasing safety for pedestrians there, but encroaching foliage needs to be cut back. The clerk said that this is work that our lighting contractors undertake when asked and that she would contact them about it.

**013/25** **Facebook.**

There are comments on facebook concerning the delay to the completion of the new homes on Whitchurch Road. Currently there is an impasse as complications to the work required to complete the electrical connection need Shropshire Council to arrange new road closures which have to go through an agreed process. The Chair said she would contact parties concerned to ask if the PC could help the process along in any way.

**014/25** **Correspondence.** None outstanding.

**015/25 Items for next Agenda**.

Social Media and the PC. Path from village to Brookdale. Aspirations.

**016/25 Resolution to exclude Public and Press.**

Cllr Mrs S Short proposedthat under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. Cllr Mrs J Catterall seconded the proposal, all were in favour and the meeting continued in Private Session.