Minutes of the Prees Parish Council meeting held on February 17 2025 7.15 pm in Prees Village Hall.

**Present**: Cllrs Mrs S Short, Mrs J Catterall, M Lanham, J Allen, D Ladd, J Whelan and P Wynn. Cllr Kate Hague also attended. There were two members of the public and Mrs K Sieloff clerk to the PC also present.

**018/25 Public Session**

Cllr Kate Hague, the prospective new Conservative candidate for Prees attended to introduce herself to the Parish Council.

Mr Tom Monaco, a Fauls resident with political aspirations, attended to introduce himself to the Parish Council. He also had comments to make about the incident with the marauding hounds in Fauls a month ago. (This matter was dealt with comprehensively at the January meeting.)

**019/25 Apologies** had been received from Cllrs Mrs B Finch, Mrs L Baer, Mrs S Jones, Mrs R Clutton, R Hirons and J Redgate.

**020/25 For Members to disclose Pecuniary/Non-Pecuniary interests**.

Cllr D Ladd declared a non-pecuniary interest in the application for funding from Prees Village Hall as he is a key member of the Village Hall Committee. It was agreed he would refrain from voting on the matter.

**021/25 Minutes** of the Parish Council Meeting held on January 20 2025 (previously circulated.) The clerk reported that she realised that she had omitted to record under Financial Matters that the Bank Reconciliations for the third quarter had been passed to Cllr Mrs L Baer for checking at that meeting. She asked for this omission to be rectified as it was important evidence for the internal auditor.

Cllr J Whelan advised that he had an amendment to suggest, but that it related to the content discussed in the Private Session so this would be dealt with after the public meeting tonight was closed. The signing of the Minutes was therefore temporarily postponed.

**022/25 Actions arising from the Minutes**. There were none not on the Agenda.

**023/25 Community Policing Matters.**

There was no police officer present. The February edition of the Safer Neighbourhood Team’s newsletter On the Beat had been received and circulated. The clerk had been told that an officer hoped to attend the March meeting.

**024/25 Shropshire Council Report.**

Cllr P Wynn’s report made the following points

* The requirement that visitors to the recycling centres should first book on-line has been abandoned for those arriving by car but proof of local residence is necessary. Vans/trailers still need to book.
* The new swimming pool complex in Whitchurch will be open by Easter.
* The Civic Centre can be re-roofed at a cost of £4m. Match-funding may be available if a decision to completely rebuild is made. The people of Whitchurch will decide which option to pursue.
* The fly-tipping at the Brook on Station Road represents a potential source of pollution and a potential blockage of the culvert. Cllr Wynn has spoken with the land-owner and is sympathetic to his plight. He is pursuing the matter with Shrophshire Council.
* The sewage problem at The Pines development in Higher Heath is a matter for Building Control or the utility provider. Building Control reports that planning conditions were complied with, and that it cannot intercede with Severn Trent. Severn Trent are currently saying the problem is not theirs. Could Ofwat (The Water Services Regulation Authority) help?

Cllr J Allen added that similar problems are experienced in Fauls.

On another matter, Cllr Wynn advised that he had so far not been able to elicit a response from SC concerning what happens in response to reports of vehicles parked illegally on the double yellow lines around the crossroads.

**025/25 Planning Matters**

**Current planning applications for consultation**

(This first is For Information Onlyas consultation period has closed)

**25/00276/TCA:** Fell 1No Holly within Prees Conservation Area. Old Vicarage, Church Street, Prees, Whitchurch, Shropshire.

The Parish Council noted the Application.

**25/00219/VAR:** Variation of condition 4 attached to Planning Permission 24/00262/VAR to substitute 6 camping pitches for 6 static caravan pitches. Caravan and Camping Site, Green Lane Farm, Green Lane, Prees, Nr Whitchurch. Applicants: Mr and Mrs Boswell.

The Parish Council resolved to support this Application. This was proposed by Cllr J Allen and seconded by Cllr J Whelan. All were in favour.

**Planning Decisions received from Shropshire Council**. There had been none since the last meeting.

**026/25**  **Parish and Parish Council Matters.**

**Sewage problems at Higher Heath**.

Cllr Mrs S Short suggested this item had been largely dealt with in Cllr Wynn’s report. She recorded her commitment to supporting the parishioners who were currently having such a difficult time.

Future of the Youth Shelter**.** The clerk reported that Oliver Gittins was prepared to honour his earlier quote to demolish the Youth Shelter including its concrete base, remove all debris and leave the site clear and level for £1200 ex VAT. The Parish Council resolved to accept this quote. This was proposed by Cllr M Lanham and seconded by Cllr D Ladd. All were in favour. The clerk was asked to explain to Oliver Gittins that the PC is not quite ready for the work to go ahead.

It was agreed that the clerk could attempt to contact the family of Tom Nixon, the other young man whose tragic and untimely death is commemorated by the artwork in the Youth Shelter, through the Parish Council’s facebook page.

The clerk advised that the services of a professional photographer could be engaged at a cost of £50.00 to photograph the memorial art the Youth Shelter houses. Photographs of a size yet to be decided could be produced at a modest cost and framed. It was mooted that these photographs could be more appropriately hung in the Recreation Club clubhouse, rather than in the Village Hall. Cllr J Whelan to discuss this with the Committee at the Rec Club. It was agreed that the decision to demolish the Youth Shelter now needs to be widely publicized. Chair and clerk to work on a draft announcement.

**Government domain address needed for Parish Council.**

The clerk brought three quotes to the PC for services that would provide a gov.uk domain address for the Parish Council including its website and email addresses for all cllrs and the clerk. The Parish Council resolved to buy these services from Cloud Next. This was proposed by Cllr J Whelan and seconded by Cllr D Ladd. All were in favour. Costs would be £50.00 per annum for the domain name and hosting of up to 25 email accounts would cost £49.99 per annum. Cloud Next could arrange for the new address to be linked to the PC’s existing website and also hopefully migrate the clerk’s current in-box to her new email account.

**Local parking issues**.

Cllr Mrs S Short reported that she and the clerk had met with Nigel Thomas from a local firm supplying CCTV cameras. The outcome of the meeting was the belief that it may be possible to put cameras at the Crossroads to deter parking on the double yellow lines at a cost of about £500 per camera. Clerk to ask Mr Thomas if he might be able to attend the next PC meeting to discuss the matter.

**Playground matters**.

The clerk confirmed that the final cost of sourcing the playground equipment through Kompan (who manufactures much of it) is actually cheaper than the original quote from Shropshire Council: £51,838.23 ex VAT as compared with £56,076.45 ex VAT.

The clerk is waiting for the date of a site meeting with the installation team.

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

Cllr P Wynn has spoken to the land-owner and is pursuing the matter with Shropshire Council.

Members of the PC expressed views sympathetic to the land-owner, appreciating the unfairness of the expectation that he would clean up the mess and also the difficulties involved in disposing of the waste.

The clerk reported she had contacted the Environment Agency as requested. The EA had taken all the details of the matter and advised that an assessment would be made and a decision taken on whether action was appropriate. If it was, the Agency would pursue the matter to a conclusion.

**Community Engagement Coffee Morning.**

Cllr Mrs S Short proposed that bi-monthly Coffee Mornings should be hosted by the Parish Council. All three Wards would be included on a rota. The events could be an opportunity to signpost residents to organisations that could help them. It was recognised that Coffee Mornings tend to appeal to a particular demographic, but Cllr Mrs Short was keen to at least make a start. It was proposed by Mrs J Catterall that the Chair should organise the first three events, the first one being in Prees during National Village Halls week in late March. This was seconded by Cllr J Allen. All were in favour

**Donation request received from Prees Village Hall.**

Prees Village Hall had requested a donation of £5,120.00 which is the cost of vital refurbishment of its cloakrooms. The application had been circulated to all cllrs prior to the meeting. Having ascertained from Cllr D Ladd that the work proposed was vital and that Prees VH Committee did not have sufficient funds to cover it, Cllr J Whelan proposed that the sum in its entirety should be given. This was seconded by Cllr M Lanham and all were in favour. Cllr D Ladd, who is a member of the VH Committee, refrained from voting.

**Aspirations**

Cllr Mrs S Short recapped the Parish Council’s aspirations as recorded in the Whitchurch Place Plan. Cllr M Lanham suggested that the idea of a footway along Station Road, perhaps from the last house to Brookdale, with its Heritage Centre and café, should be pursued, as it had been an idea suggested in response to an appeal to parishioners. Cllr J Whelan reminded the meeting that the path would have to have a hard surface suitable for all kinds of users including wheelchairs and buggies etc like the one at Calverhall/Ightfield. Cllr Lanham suggested that a first step would be to speak to the land-owner, as the hope was that the footway would be accommodated inside his hedge-line. Cllr P Wynn supported this idea. The Chair asked for authorisation from the PC to take this first step. Cllr J Allen proposed that she should, and this was seconded by Cllr Mrs J Catterall. All were in favour.

**Call for 30mph limit on Whitchurch Road.** Resident requests support from PC. Clerk to contact SC to ask for the extension of 30mph limit, the case for which is presumably much strengthened by the near completion of the 27 new homes on the new development behind the Medical Centre.

**Community-led build on Whitchurch Road: final electrical connection works scheduled**.

Cllr Mrs S Short reported that the final phase of the works to connect electricity to the new development on Whitchurch Road is scheduled to start on March 3 2025 and last for two weeks. Whitchurch Road will be closed temporarily but single-lane through-traffic will be maintained on Mill Street.

**PC and social media**. Cllr D Ladd had suggested that a consultation with the public would ascertain the preferred modes of communication from the Parish Council. Cllr Mrs Short asked Cllr Ladd if he would put his ideas down on paper for discussion.

**027/25** **SALC news.** Nothing to report.

**028/25** **Accounting matters**

Accounts for Payment February 2025.

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

K D Sieloff salary February 2025 537.55

HMRC PAYE 75.80

K D Sieloff clerks expenditure (14.1.25 – 11.2.25) 17.80

Technochip Computers Ltd 255.00

Pimlotts Ground Maintenance Ltd 420.00

Pimlotts Ground Maintenance Ltd 212.00

Scottish Power (1.1.25-1.2.25) 213.64

 **Total £1,731.79**

Clerk’s expenditure 14.1.25- 11.2.25

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

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

*Stamps:2 x second class stamps @ 85p = £1.70*

Total = £17.80.

**029/25**  **Housekeeping**. Cllr M Lanham commended the long-standing group of local voluntary litter-pickers who were regularly out on local streets. He suggested that a note of thanks/certificate of appreciation should be sent to all members. The Chair agreed that recognition of such a sterling contribution was certainly necessary, and said that she and the clerk would see to it.

**030/25** **Facebook.** Nothing new currently.

**031/25 Correspondence.** The Chair reported she had received a letter of thanks from Prees Baptist Church for the recent donation from the PC.

**032/25**  **Items for next Agenda:** Youth Shelter. Playgrounds. Coffee Morning.

**033/25 Resolution to exclude Public and Press.**

Cllr Mrs Short proposed that 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. This was seconded by Cllr J Whelan and all were in favour. The meeting continued in Private Session.