Minutes of the meeting of Prees Parish Council held on Monday 18 August 2025

in Prees Village Hall at 7.15pm.

Present: Cllrs Mrs S Short, Mrs J Catterall, Mrs B Finch, Mrs L Baer, Ms N Young, Mrs A Allen, Mrs J Platt, D Pritchard, J Allen and M Myles-Hook. Also present was Mrs K Sieloff, clerk to the PC.

**125/25 Public Session**.

There were no members of the public present.

**126/25 Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Mrs S Jones, Dr J Redgate and T Nield.

**127/25 Declarations of interest** **in items on the Agenda.**

There were none.

**128/25 Actions Arising from the Minutes not on the Agenda**

None

**129/25 Community Policing Matters**

There was no officer in attendance. ‘On the Beat’ the monthly community policing on-line magazine had been received and circulated to all cllrs.

**130/25 Shropshire Council Report**

Cllr M Myles-Hook delivered a comprehensive report, which can be found in its entirety on the Parish Council website.

**131/25 Planning Matters**

**Current planning applications for consultation**

**25/02627/FUL:** Single-storey wrap around extension. Hivu, Fauls, Whitchurch, Shropshire SY13 2AS. Applicant: Miss Helen Bergin.

The Parish Council resolved to support this application. This was proposed by Cllr J Allen and seconded by Cllr Ms N Young. All were in favour.

**25/02643/TPO**: End reduction over neighbouring property by 1m (approx. 20%) of 1no. Beech (T3), fell 5 no. trees of various species (T4-6, T10, T11) and remove major deadwood overhanging road from 3no. Oaks (T7, 8, 14) protected by the North Shropshire District Council (Prees Higher Heath No 6) TPO 1975 (N/S00051/75) Arlington, 3 Sylvan Close, Higher Heath, Whitchurch, Shropshire SY13 2TB.

Applicant: Mr Justin Marshall

The Parish Council resolved to support this application. This was proposed by Cllr Mrs J Catterall and seconded by Cllr Mrs L Baer. All were in favour.

**25/02716/TPO**: Crown reduce by 2-3m 1no Oak (T1) remove overhanging limb of 1no Ash (T2), cut epicormic growth to height of 3-4m of 3no Oaks (T3, T4, T5), cut all overhanging ranches back to boundary fence and crown reduce by 3m 1no Beech (T6) protected by the North Shropshire District Council (Drumcote, Heathwood Road, Prees) TPO 1981 (Ref: N/S/00055/81) The Elms and 1 Fairholme, Heathwood Road, Higher Heath, Whitchurch, Shropshire SY13 2HG. Applicant: Chesters and Horrocks.

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

**25/02767/TPO**: Reduce by approximately 2.5m back to fence line 2no. Beech protected by The North Shropshire District Council (Prees Higher Heath No 6) TPO 1975 (N/S00051/75)

The Redwoods, 88 Twemlows Avenue, Higher Heath, Whitchurch, Shropshire.

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

**Planning decisions received from Shropshire Council.**

**25/02229/PMBPA:** Application for prior approval under Part 3, Class Q of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 for the change of use from agricultural to form 4no dwellings to include amenity space, parking and ancillary works. Decision: Prior Approval Required and Approved.

**132/25** **Parish and Parish Council Matters.**

**Hazardous parking at War Memorial**.

Cllr Mrs S Short reminded the meeting that the Conservation dept at SC has agreed to the PC erecting small plain No Parking signs around the War Memorial. She has delivered letters to the residences and been in contact with all the parties concerned to tell them what actions the PC is taking. All those affected are happy to have the No Parking signs put up.

The clerk was asked to obtain 6 signs and have them erected. She was given a maximum budget of £250. This was proposed by Cllr J Allen and seconded by Cllr D Pritchard. All were in favour.

Chair will write a letter of thanks to Dr Judith Hoyle, archivist at Whitchurch Museum, in appreciation of all her efforts to trace the owner of the land the War Memorial stands on.

**Demolition of Youth Shelter**.

The clerk reported that the demolition of the Youth Shelter has been completed. Unfortunately the CCTV camera inside was found to have been completely destroyed prior to the demolition. The clerk has ordered the framed photographs of the commemorative artwork which the Chair will deliver in due course.

**Update on roll-out of Full Fibre broadband locally**.

Cllr Dr J Redgate was unable to attend the meeting, but provided the following report which the clerk read out.

Building Digital UK, North Shropshire, Project Gigabit

1. Contract awarded May 2023 to Freedom Fibre.

2. 12,277 premises (10,752 in the Shropshire Council area) to be connected to high speed broadband via a fibre network.

3. Subsidy available £24,042,000, nearly £2000 per premise.

4. In June 2025, BDUK and Freedom Fibre mutually agreed to descope 8,500 premises, leaving around 3800 premises either connected or expecting to be connected.

5. Reason given: changes in the external market, thought to cause financial difficulties requiring Freedom Fibre to refinance the project and causing shifting investor confidence.

6. BDUK is working to put in place alternative solutions for premises in North Shropshire to gain access to a full-fibre broadband network. It is said that this may involve Openreach.

7. It is difficult to understand how an extensive network planned to be fully integrated can be split up and continue to function effectively and to include the redundancy facilities originally offered by Freedom Fibre. However use of the existing Openreach network does seem sensible. For example, an Openreach fibre connected distribution box is located near Fauls Church Hall serving Fauls and the surrounding area via existing copper telephone lines. I would have thought adding fibre to the premises from that box would provide a solution but perhaps not the Gigabit speeds that some had hoped for.

8. There of local reports of poles erected devoid of cables, unused cables taped in bundles to poles and cable spools dumped at the roadside.

9. I have no information regarding new contracts, new timescales or the position regarding the use so far of the subsidy or how much of it remains.

**Drainage problems in Fauls**

The clerk was asked to contact Severn Trent to report, again, the longstanding leak of dirty water on the road to Darliston from the B5065. It contaminates a brook.

Cllr Allen also mentioned that the culvert in the lane outside his home, which was blocked and caused flooding some time ago, still needs attention as the edges of the road currently fall away vertically and need reinstating to prevent vehicles going into the ditch. Clerk to follow up with Shropshire Council.

**Concerns from resident re vehicle speeds on Mill Street.**

A resident had contacted Cllr M Myles-Hook expressing concerns about the speeds she had witnessed vehicles travelling on Mill Street and Brades Road. She was particularly concerned because of the proximity of the childrens’ playground on the corner of Brades Road. She asked if a 20 mph limit could be imposed. Cllr Myles-Hook undertook to obtain more details from the resident.

The clerk was asked to invite a highways officer to come and meet with the Parish Council to discuss the Parish Councils concerns on Mill Street. It was noted that the PC is still waiting for the broad white line on Station Road to provide refuge for pedestrians, which it was told SC could provide after the PC had paid for the provision and installation of two new street-lamps.

**Vehicle-speed monitor for Lacon Street?**

The clerk reminded the Parish Council that the process of purchasing a vehicle speed monitor now has to be done exclusively through Shropshire Council, with its approval at every stage. The first hurdle is to obtain data showing that a speed monitor is needed. Clerk to research how this can be data can be obtained.

**Playground matters**

**Does the play provision at Higher Heath need enhancement**?

The Playgrounds Group will make a site visit and make some suggestions.

**RoSPA report 2025 received**.

The clerk explained that this is a detailed annual safety-check of the play equipment on both PC playgrounds. It advises on necessary repairs. Clerk to compile list of works to be done and share findings.

**Standing Orders**.

Led by the clerk, the Parish Council considered and agreed some minor statements that were open to variation in the Standing Orders. The amendments were proposed by Cllr Mrs B Finch and seconded by Cllr Mrs A Allen. All were in favour.

**Whitchurch Road Community-led development**.

Clerk reported that Wrekin advises that the two Shared Ownership homes that have not sold will probably be rented out.

She has reported concerns that the rope on the life-buoy on-site does not look long enough. She has been told that the raised manholes currently studding the drive up to the development will be level when the final finishing of the surface is completed.

Clerk was asked to check if the hole in the pavement on Whitchurch Road, almost opposite Wrafton Terrace, and left after the electrical connection works had been completed, had been properly dealt with.

**133/25 SALC news.**

There was none.

**134/25 Accounting Matters**

Accounts for Payment August 2025.

It was resolved that the following accounts should be paid. This was proposed by Cllr Mrs B Finch and seconded by Cllr Mrs J Catterall. All were in favour.

K D Sieloff clerk’s salary August 490.68

HMRC PAYE 122.67

K D Sieloff clerk’s expenditure (16.7.25- 12.8.25) 197.99

Bernard Townson (internal auditor) 110.00

Pimlotts Ground Maintenance Ltd: (lengthsman July) 320.00

Pimlotts Ground Maintenance Ltd (grass-cutting) 212.00

O Gittins Construction Ltd (demolition of Youth Shelter) 1440.00

Garoll Construction Services (securing of bus shelter bench) 50.00

Playsafety Ltd (annual safety assessment of playgrounds) 326.40

TOTAL 3,269.74

Clerk’s expenditure 16.7.25-12.8.25

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

*Stamps:3 x second class stamps @ 87p = £2.61*

*One trip to noticeboards for July Agenda: 8 miles @ 45 ppm= £3.60.*

*Two return trips to internal auditor to deliver/collect books for audit. Total of 52 miles@45 ppm=£23.40 (These trips actually took place 31 May and 7 June 2025.)*

*Annual subscription to Zoom 20.4.25-19.4.26: £155.88*

*Total = £197.99*

**Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024-25.** The relevant documents are currently with the external auditor. The period for public scrutiny of the unaudited accounts has ended.

**PC current funds.**

Clerk reported that PC had total balance of just over £85,000 in the bank at 11 August. £32,050 of that is Neighbourhood Fund monies that can only be spent on infrastructure associated with development. Of the £36,660 budgeted for expenditure in the current financial year 2025-26, £24,540 remains. Reserves stand at £28,400. The list of allocated reserves is very out of date and needs review.

**Clerk requested authorisation to implement new National Joint Council pay-scales** for clerks agreed July 2025 and to be back-dated to 1.4.25. Authorisation was proposed by Cllr L Baer and seconded by Cllr D Pritchard. All were in favour.

**Clerk requests authorisation** to attend Parkinson Partnership Budget training 30.9.25 at a cost to the Parish Council of £35.00. Authorisation was proposed by Cllr Mrs J Catterall and seconded by Cllr D Pritchard. All were in favour.

**135/25 Housekeeping**.

1. Clerk was asked to have the ailing trees on the Station Road boundary of the PC playground checked by an arboriculturalist.
2. Cllr Mrs J Catterall reported that a resident on Brades Road was upset that a large van was often parked overnight on the road outside her house. Clerk asked to check what the legal situation is and advise Cllr Mrs Catterall.

**136/25 Facebook.**

Nothing to report.

**137/25 Correspondence.**

Nothing outstanding.

**138/25 Items for next Agenda**

History of zigzags outside Prees School. Higher Heath playground.

**Next meeting** is Monday September 15 2025.

Signed…………………………………………….. Date…………………………………………………

\*\*\*