

Minutes of the Meeting of Prees Parish Council held on Tuesday 17 March 2020
at 7.00 pm in Prees Village Hall.

Present were Cllrs R Hiron; Mrs S Short; Mrs L Baer; Mrs B Rainford; M Lanham; and J Allen. Also in attendance were one member of the public; Mrs K Sieloff clerk to the Parish Council and two police officers.

009/20 Public Session. A resident raised the matter of the potholes currently causing problems in Church Street. He suggested that a total re-surfacing was required. Mentions was made of similar problems at Heathgates Crossroads and also in Mill Street, by the Congregationalist Church. Clerk to write to SC to ask for remedial action.

010/20 Apologies had been received from Cllrs Mrs D Foster; Mrs S Short; J Whelan and P Wynn.

011/20 Disclosure of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest. Cllr R List declared a non-pecuniary interest in a Planning Application under consideration: 20/00806/FUL and completed a disclosure form.

012/20 Minutes of the meeting held on February 18th had been previously circulated. Cllr Lanham advised that an amendment was necessary as follows under 022/20 (g.) The last sentence should read "The outcome is that Wem Rural Parish Clerk is contacting Transport for Wales to request that the site of the old signal box should be laid with tarmac and marked with parking spaces." With this amendment, the minutes were agreed to be a true record and it was proposed by Cllr Lanham that they should be signed and this was seconded by Cllr Mrs Rainford. All were in favour and the Chair duly signed.

013/20 Actions Arising from the Minutes of the last meeting (which were not on the Agenda.)

Vehicle speed monitors: We are awaiting the installation of the posts to hold the monitors. This was initially hoped to be before the end of March. Highways have confirmed that in the interim they would be happy for us to use the monitors on the A49 to support the 50 mph limit in the meantime, with the proviso that a Risk Assessment was adhered to (DG kindly provided me with a model) and that the signs are not placed right at the *entrance* to the speed-restricted stretch.

Rabbits at HH playing-field: The gentleman who offered to cull the rabbits with the help of ferrets was furnished with the Parish Councils written permission shortly after the last meeting. He was given 28 days to undertake culling activity and asked to inform either the Chair or the clerk when the cull was finished. Have not heard anything so far.

New grass/grounds maintenance contract for 2020-21. The contractor who won the contract, Groundforce Landscaping of Oswestry, has signed and returned the contract and this is now in force.

Trees in verge by Prees playground. We were advised by the report we had done that these trees need some attention, but so far SC have been unable to confirm whether they are owned by SC or the Parish Councils. Clerk has emailed to chase.

014/20 Shropshire Council report. Cllr Wynn had sent his Apologies for the meeting and had provided a report, summarized as follows.

- The Auction Site at Higher Heath will be coming to committee on the 28th April. Most probably up for approval.
- We had a meeting about The Square last week. Now advised it will hopefully be sold.
- The traffic lights at Sandford. An emergency fix on the bridge has been arranged, hopefully within the next ten days, to get the traffic moving. At some time the road will have to be completely closed for the bridge to be fixed. Do not know the time-scale for this.
- The Coronavirus situation is developing quickly and SC is having to respond on a day-to-day basis. Seems like a good idea for Parish Councils to consider putting in place arrangements that will help if meetings are cancelled or are not quorate.

015/20 Community Policing Report.

No report was available. Cllr Hiron reported that the defibrillator at Higher Heath had been used. The local Police had helped in the incident and Cllr Hiron wanted his appreciation of their help to be recorded.

016/20 Planning matters.

Current planning applications.

20/00686/FUL: Conversion of traditional agricultural barns into 3No dwellings and installation of package treatment plant; demolition of farm buildings. The Lighteach, Lighteach Road, Prees SY13 2DR. Applicant: Mr Towers.

It was resolved to support this Application as long as the Highways Dept at SC is happy with it. Proposed by Cllr Lanham and seconded by Cllr Mrs Baer. All were in favour.

For information only: Amendments received to 19/02796/FUL: Change of use of land to commercial vehicle and plant auction site to include provision of customer parking, erection of an office and preparation building; creation of 2m high perimeter bund and 10m landscaping strip to SE boundary (relocation of Existing Auction Site from the A49 Grain Store site) (re-submission.) Land and buildings at The Firs, Higher Heath, Whitchurch, Shropshire. Applicant: Malcolm Harrison Auctions. *14 day consultation period only on this. Clerk responded to reiterate Parish Council's continuing objection.*

20/00768/FUL: Erection of single storey extension and conversion of garage to residential accommodation. Heatherdene, Steel Heath, Prees Heath, Whitchurch, Shropshire. Applicant: Mr and Mrs S Parr.

It was resolved to support this Application. Proposed by Cllr Lanham and seconded by Cllr Mrs Rainford. All were in favour.

20/00806/FUL: Conversion of garage to annexe to include first floor extension. Laurel Bank, Painters Lane, Fauls, Whitchurch, Shropshire. Applicant: Mr Jon Scarratt.

It was resolved to object to this Application on the basis that it was not materially different from the previous application which had been refused. It too represented over-development of the site and was not in keeping with the surrounding properties, and would be an over-bearing and dominant presence on the lane. Proposed by Cllr Hirons and seconded by Cllr Mrs Finch. All were in favour.

20/02803/REF: APPEAL has been made to the Secretary of State against the decision of Shropshire Council to refuse to grant planning permission for the following proposal: Removal of condition no 4 attached to planning permission reference NS/95/00558/FUL dated 05/09/1995 to allow the removal of the agricultural workers occupancy restriction. Application reference: 19/01927/VAR. Planning Inspector ref: APP/L3245/W/19/3241312 . Appellants name: Mr and Mrs Fawcett. The Parish Council noted the Appeal, but had no further comment.

Planning Decisions.

There had been no recent planning decisions received from Shropshire Council.

017/20 Parish and Parish Council Matters

Problematic streetlamp in Lighteach Road. A resident in Lighteach Road had contacted the Parish Council to ask for help as a streetlamp in the road was causing a nuisance by shining intrusively all through the night. Cllr Lanham offered to go and look at this problem. The same resident was also disquieted by a neighbours intrusive security lighting that also operated throughout the night. Clerk to advise SC of the nuisance being caused.

Community-led building development. Members of the Project Board reported that the meeting held on 25 February 2020 had not been very productive. The idea of hydro-power seemed not to have been given consideration whilst a scheme based on gas (there is no gas in Prees) had been priced up! It was felt by some members of the Project Board that more details on funding were needed: is the Passivhaus model achievable in this development, or not? It was also felt by some that a Public meeting about the development should happen sooner rather than later. Notwithstanding these reservations, the design and layout suggested by the architect met with approval.

On Friday 28 February, Cllrs Hirons, Mrs Short and Mrs Finch, accompanied by the clerk, met with representatives from Stoke-on-Tern Parish Council to appraise them of the process so far, as Stoke-on-Tern are themselves thinking of pursuing a community-led build.

Coronavirus update. In the face of the worsening epidemic, Cllr Hirons asked the meeting to give its full consideration to the following proposals (which had been circulated previously) which he hoped would keep the Parish Council functioning as effectively as possible during the developing crisis. Cllr Hirons' proposals were as follows;

- 1 "That the clerk shall be given delegated powers to cancel (after

Consultation if possible with the Chair/Vice-Chair) the Meeting of the Parish Council scheduled for April 21st 2020 if that becomes necessary. Any such cancellation will be advertised through all the channels usually used by the Parish Council, and if possible it will also be advertised on the door of the venue. “

This proposal was seconded by Cllr List and all were in favour.

2 “That the clerk shall be given delegated powers to approve the making of any payments required to ensure the business of the Parish Council continues effectively if a regular meeting of Parish Councillors to approve such payments is not possible. Such expenditure will be in accord with the Budget previously agreed by the Parish Council.”

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Ladd and all were in favour.

3 “That if an extreme point is reached where the Government imposes a curfew on residents leaving their homes, at that point a reasonable number of cheques (depending on the expected duration of curfew) will be signed for the use of the clerk during the period of curfew.”

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Mrs Finch and all were in favour.

4 “That the clerk shall be given delegated powers to respond to any planning applications on behalf of the Parish Council if a regular or extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council is not possible. Where possible, this response will be made after consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair.”

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Mrs Rainford and all were in favour.

5 “That the clerk shall be given delegated powers to make necessary rearrangements (in consultation with the Chair and/or the Vice-Chair) for the Annual Parish Meeting scheduled for May 19th 2020 (noting such meetings must be held before June 1) and the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council (noting such a meeting must be held in May) **IF** Government advice is received enabling and recommending that this is the correct course of action”.

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Lanham and all were in favour.

6 “That the clerk shall be given delegated powers, during the current period of uncertainty, to act in any unforeseen circumstance on the Parish Council’s behalf, in accordance with the Parish Councils Standing Orders and Financial Regulations where this is appropriate or in line with Government directives when these are received. The clerk will act in consultation with the Chair or Vice-Chair where this is possible and all Parish Councillors will be advised of action taken.”

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Mrs Baer and all were in favour.

The clerk was also asked to put an item on the PC website offering help to anyone in the Parish who needed it during the current difficult times. This also to go on the Facebook page.

It was mentioned that in the days ahead video-conferencing of meetings might be of use, but as yet Parish Councils had not got permission to meet in any way other than face-to-face.

The Square, Prees. Cllr Hirons reported on a site meeting with Mike Seager from Shropshire Council Building Control where the PC reiterated its frustrations on the seemingly stationary state of the development. The clerk had since been advised by the executor for the estate that it was hoped that the site would be put on the market ‘within the coming months’.

Housekeeping matters. Nothing new to report. The clerk was asked to ensure that the list of matters which had been promised attention by Environmental Maintenance should not be lost sight of.

Concerns about parking at Lower Heath School. Clerk reported that a letter from Rod Lake, Traffic Management Advisor at West Mercia Police, explained that West Mercia Police had felt unable to support a proposal made by SC in 2009 to lower the speed limit unless the Highway Authority gave a commitment to address the travelled speeds by the introduction of adequate and appropriate engineering methods. This was

because data showed at the time that travel speeds were in excess of those required to introduce a 40 mph limit, let alone the 30 mph one proposed. Due to the very character of the road at this location, it was pointed out by Police that it was unlikely that motorists would find the proposed speed limit realistic unless adequate and appropriate engineering methods were introduced. After the speed limit had been introduced, speed data collected in 2018 by the Safer Roads Partnership showed travelled speeds still to be way in excess of the speed limit and SC were requested to address this. Mr Lake says he is more than willing to meet on site to discuss the matter but he would advise that SC must also be included in any discussions. In the meantime he will ask that a visible presence is made by the Safer Neighbourhood Police Team when time and resources allow.

A response from David Gradwell Traffic Engineer at SC advises that SC passed a motion on 19th December 2019 to support the principle of a 20 mph speed limit outside all schools in the county. A report is due to go to Council in May 2020 that will enable Members to make a decision on how to progress. Mr Gradwell also reported that he will add our request that the yellow zigzag markings outside the schools be made enforceable to the list of schemes considered as part of our Traffic Management Minor Works Programme for the new financial year starting April 2020.

Playground checks/repairs. Clerk met with Ray Parry of Ray Parry Playground Services Ltd and together they went round both playgrounds reviewing the actions required by RoSPA. The clerk has asked Mr Parry to quote for the work they had agreed as necessary.

VE Day. The meeting recognised that it was currently necessary to postpone all events to commemorate VE Day for the time being. It was hoped that perhaps a joint commemoration with VJ Day later in the year will be possible.

Outside storage of textiles at Industrial Estate. Clerk had had no response to her email and is to contact the Company again.

Storage of old Parish Council documents. Clerk to research the recommended optimum methods for storage of old paper documents. Cllr Ladd suggested that once suitably packaged the items could be housed in the Village Hall.

Possible Youth Council in Prees. Item carried forward.

Calor Gas Rural Community Fund. News of grants of up to £5000 available had been received. It was noted that match-funding is required.

Highways Improvements Plan/2020-21 Capital Works Programme received from Shropshire Council. Cllr Hirons suggested that someone might like to read and report back on the impact on our Parish.

West Mercia PCC Road Safety Strategy. Cllr Hirons advised that the PC could respond as a body or individual cllrs could respond but closing date was tight (20 March.)

018/20 SALC. Cllr Mrs B Rainford reported that the meeting due to be held the evening before had been cancelled.

019/20 Accounting Matters

- It was minuted that cheque no 102616 for £960.00 had been raised between meetings, with the approval of the Parish Council, and signed on 27 February 2020, to pay Garden Services for the two outstanding invoices. The clerk had overlooked them when preparing the Accounts for Payment at the February meeting, for which omission the clerk apologised.
- Payment of Accounts for March 2020

	£
Mrs K Sieloff clerks salary March 2020	459.72
HMRC (PAYE)	8.40
Clerks expenses (detailed below)	20.18
Jones Lighting Ltd (streetlamp repairs January 2020)	751.80
Jones Lighting Ltd (streetlamp repairs February 2020)	81.24
J S Ridgway & Sons (cutting brash back at HH p/ground)	93.60
Scottish Power (streetlight energy 31.1.20 – 29.2.20)	119.57
SALC training June 7 2019 (Planning and CIL)	<u>27.00</u>
Total	1561.51

Clerk's expenses

Delivery of February mins/agenda: 13 miles @45ppm= £5.85

March BT line rental contribution: £12.50

3 x second class stamp @ 61p =£1.83

Total = £20.18

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs Baer that the accounts should be paid and this was seconded by Cllr Mrs Finch. All were in favour.

- Bank Reconciliation for quarter ending 30.6.19 back from checking. Jonathan Smith had pointed out an error in a VAT allocation which has now been corrected.

020/20 Correspondence

- Public discussion “Public Transport in Shropshire: Surely it can be Better!” to be held Wednesday 18th March 2020 4pm at the United Reform Church Hall, Coleham Head, Shrewsbury.
- Link now live for the draft Local Economic Growth Strategies for Whitchurch, Bridgnorth, Ludlow, Oswestry and Market Drayton consultation. <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/draft-local-economic-growth-strategies/> Consultation ends on May 1 2020.

021/20 New items for next Agenda. (April 21st 2020) No current new matters identified.

Meeting closed at 8.25 pm.

Signed.....

Date.....