Minutes of a Meeting of Prees Parish Council

held on Monday February 19th 2024 at 7.15pm in Prees Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs Mrs S Short; Mrs B Finch; Mrs L Baer; Mrs S Jones; Mrs J Catterall; J Whelan; M Lanham; J Redgate; J Allen and P Wynn.

Also present were one member of the public and Mrs K Sieloff clerk to the PC.

**016/24 Public Session**

A member of the public shared his concern about the state of the PC’s planting outside Wrafton Terrace and also a tree leaning over the road from the lefthand verge on Whitchurch Road going out towards the A49.

Cllr Mrs S Short reassured the resident that the Wrafton Terrace planting is under review. The clerk advised that she would write to SC to ask them to contact the land-owner about the offending tree.

**017/24 Apologies**

Before Apologies were recorded, the Chair extended a warm welcome to our new Parish Cllr, Dr John Redgate, who represents the Fauls Ward of the Parish. He had signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in front of the clerk some days before the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Mrs R Clutton; R Hirons and D Ladd.

**018/24 Disclosures of Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interest.**

Cllr J Allen disclosed a non-pecuniary interest in planning application 24/00376/FUL.

**019/24 Signing of Minutes of Previous Meeting.**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 15.1.24, which had been previously circulated, were agreed to be a true record. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs S Jones that they should be signed and this was seconded by Cllr Mrs Catterall. All were in favour.

**020/24 Actions Arising from the Minutes not included on the Agenda.**

There were none.

**021/24 Community Policing.** There was no police officer in attendance and no report had been received. Cllr Mrs S Short had met with PCSO Dave Andrews concerning the Crossroads (see below.)

**022/24 Shropshire Council report.**

Cllr P Wynn reported that the financial situation that SC is grappling with is depressing: it has got to save £64m. This will mean huge and difficult cuts to services. The demographic of the population means that currently 80% of the Budget is spent on 3% of the residents.

Regarding the Village Hall car park (which is owned by SC) Cllr Wynn has been pushing for remedial work there, to get the potholes fixed and the car park sign re-erected. He asked if PC would like to see the car park marked with spaces (the response was Yes please) and whether the single clothes-recycling bin was to be retained or let go. As there is also one at the Fire Station the PC agreed unanimously that the one in the car park could be removed.

On the subject of the double yellow lines at the Crossroads, Cllr Wynn reported the Shropshire Councils Traffic Regulation Officers have been doing spot-checks and they have not been allowing the usual ten minutes ‘grace’ to offending drivers. Cllr Wynn has asked the visits to continue on a ‘semi-regular’ basis, with times of visits to be varied to keep the element of surprise.

**023/24 Planning Matters**

**Current planning applications for consultation**

**24/00376/FUL**: The Nook Farm, Whitchurch Road, Prees, Whitchurch, Shropshire, SY13 3JZ
Proposal:  Demolition of existing sub-standard dwelling, garage and associated works and replace with new dwelling and sewage treatment plant. Applicant: Mr and Mrs Bennett (c/o Agent, Shropshire, UK)

The Parish Council resolved to support this application. Proposed by Cllr J Whelan and seconded by Cllr Mrs J Catterall. All were in favour.
**Amendments to 23/04624**/**FUL**: 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) Land To The South Of, Nook Lane, Weston Under Redcastle, Shropshire, Applicant: Mr P Sutton.

It was noted that the consultative period had closed for the Amendments, but the PC resolved to submit its comments anyway in case they could still be taken into account.

The clerk was asked to reiterate the PC’s reservations, which were not addressed by the Amendments. The Parish Council objects because the proposed building is a large, non-agricultural structure in open fields. Its appearance is not in keeping with its surroundings and it is of no benefit to the local economy or community. This is also an area prone to flooding. It was proposed by Cllr J Whelan that the continuing objection should be relayed to the Planning Officer and this was seconded by Cllr Mrs B Finch. All were in favour.

**24/00262/VAR**: Variation of condition 5 attached to Planning Permission 21/00943/FUL for revisions to site lay-out including the provision of 15no additional touring pitches. Green Lane Caravan and Camping Park, Green Lane, Prees, Nr Whitchurch, Shropshire. Applicant: Mr and Mrs Boswell.

The clerk was asked to register the PC’s support for this Application. Proposed by Cllr Mrs B Finch and seconded by Cllr Mrs S Jones. All were in favour.

**Planning Decisions received from Shropshire Counci**l.

23/05516/TPO: 15 Birchwood Grove, Higher Heath, Shropshire SY13 2EX. Various works to 3no. Oaks (T1-3) (as per schedule) and to fell 1no. Silver Birch (T4) protected by the North Shropshire District Council (Prees Higher Heath No 6) TPO 1975 (ref NS/00051/75.)

Decision: Grant Permission.

**Other Planning matters**.

The clerk advised that the Planning Enforcement department had been in contact with all town and parish councils to remind them that potential enforcement matters are to be treated as strictly confidential and are not to be identified or discussed in open session and therefore not recorded in any way in Minutes. If discussion of an enforcement matter is necessary, it must be done in private session.

It is only if a formal enforcement notice is served that the matter becomes one of public record and at that point all details of the case will be displayed on SC’s public access website.

**024/24 Parish and Parish Council Matters**

**Vehicles parking on double yellow lines at the Crossroads.**

Cllr Mrs Short recapped on actions taken: Cllr Wynn and the clerk have both contacted Traffic Officers at SC to ask for their support in enforcing the double yellow lines and have also spoken to local Police. Cllr Mrs Short has met with PCSO Dave Andrews who has advised that the most effective action that everyone can take is to report the registration number of offenders to SC on-line: just go to Parking on the Shropshire Council website. Your report can remain anonymous, if you wish, and takes only a few moments. Alternatively you can telephone Shropshire Council on 0345 6789019

The clerk has requested Environmental Maintenance at SC to address the repairs needed to the car park’s surface and re-erect the signage.

Cllr Mrs S Short has written to all organisations who are affected by the inconsiderate parking to see if they would provide a statement for publication on social media platforms, the website, in the Venture etc in an effort to communicate with all parts of the population and explain the need for changes in parking behaviour. Responses from the organisations are awaited.

Cllr Mrs Short suggested that the PC notice on the wall of Jackie’s shop needs to be made more impactful. Cllrs were asked to consider how this could be done.

The Chair advised that she had been in contact with Mr and Mrs Whitfield in response to their concerns about the parking situation.

Cllr M Lanham suggested that a response should be made to all those who had contributed to discussion about the Crossroads on the Facebook page. Cllr Mrs Short agreed that this would be addressed.

**Parish Council donation requests update**.

**The previous request from Prees Baptist Church** for a donation to fund the purchase of a water-boiler was now fully backed by detailed costings. After discussion it was resolved that the requested donation of £851.99 should be awarded. This was proposed by Cllr M Lanham and seconded by Cllr J Allen. All were in favour. Cllr Lanham suggested that an accompanying note could record that the PC was very glad to encourage activities that invite and include members of the wider community.

**Lower Heath School parking**. The School has asked the PC to donate £4000 for architect’s and planning application fees. The PC was unanimous that the answer must be No. The Chair was asked to write back advising that the PC could consider making a donation once planning permission was gained. This action was proposed by Cllr Mrs S Jones and seconded by Cllr M Lanham. All were in favour.

**Proposed Daily Mile All-Weather track at Prees School**. The total cost of this project will be £16,545. Including a generous donation from the Grocott family, the School currently has just over £5000. There is a long way to go in securing sufficient funding and it is currently not at all certain that the project will reach fruition. The PC does not feel it would be right to risk public money by promising it at this point. It was suggested that the Chair communicate the PC’s feelings to the Headteacher and ascertain whether applications for funding have been made to national charities such as The National Lottery; Children in Need and Sport England, as well as charities close to home such as Twemlows Foundation and Veolia Foundation.

**Aspirations.**

Cllr J Whelan has been working on a draft document, bringing all the Parish Council’s aspirations together, for consideration. He will circulate this to all members of the PC.

He reported that the Place Plan currently records Prees aspirations as being: a toddler playground at Manor Place; allotments; a path to the rail station; streetlighting in Higher Heath and an upgrade of the sewage pumping station in Prees.

Cllr Whelan invites all cllrs to respond to and comment on what his document contains and he will edit it accordingly. The projects that are confirmed as still pertinent can then be put into an order of priority.

Cllr Whelan explained that Cllrs Mrs R Clutton and Mrs S Short have worked with him on this project.

**Streetlighting.**

* Station Road.

Cllr Mrs S Short met with Andy Vaughan from Highline Electrical Ltd. He had suggested that two additional streetlamps on the southern side of Station Road would be sufficient to considerably increase pedestrian safety along this stretch. The two lamps, with the additional work required to the bank and fencing, would cost £11,800 plus VAT. Highline could undertake the work within 3 months. The PC resolved to accept Highline’s quote for the installation of the two new streetlamps. Proposed by Cllr M Lanham and seconded by Cllr Mrs B Finch. All were in favour.

It was suggested that Shropshire Council could be asked to pay for and install the painted broad white line on the surface of the road that would offer further protection to pedestrians. (This had been suggested by Jason Hughes from the Streetlighting dept at SC.) It was also suggested that some signage would be necessary to draw attention to the use of the area by pedestrians. Clerk to enquire of SC if they could provide these.

* **Solar lamps.**

It was accepted by the PC that these are not suitable for street-lighting, but are ideal for supplementary lighting in dim corners, by bus-stops and on dark paths. The cost is approximately £1500 each. Cllr Mrs Short said that appropriate sites need to be identified and cllrs were invited to make suggestions.

**Updating of playgrounds.**

Cllr Mrs J Catterall reported that she and the clerk had visited the Bull and Dog in Coton to see the rustic play equipment that had been installed there by a local company. They had both agreed that the equipment was robust and of good quality, and offered various appealing challenges to the user.

It was suggested that something similar might be suitable for the new enlarged space in Prees playground.

Clerk to see if a company representative can attend the next PC meeting. Members of public to be invited through Facebook.

Clerk to enquire if there is any Big Lottery funding currently available for projects such as this.

**Community-Led Build on Whitchurch Road**.

Cllr Mrs S Short reported that the Project Board had met on 6 February 2024. Delays mean that the anticipated hand-over date of the new homes is November 2024. The delay is caused by legal processes being undertaken as it has been found necessary, in order to be sure that Shropshire Council will adopt the access road to the new estate, for access over a bit of land currently leased to the Medical Centre to be agreed.

**Parish Map.**

The clerk reported that an A0 size paper copy of the map could be printed for the meagre sum of £22.00, but a guaranteed-waterproof external display for it would cost getting on for £1000.

Clerk to investigate whether the map could be printed onto a more durable material which would enable a cheaper housing to be used.

**SOS Carbon Literacy training**

The Chair and the clerk had attended two mornings of Carbon Literacy training organized by Save Our Shropshire, which had the aim of raising awareness of individual and corporate carbon footprints and how to reduce them. The course asked individuals and the councils they represented to commit to actions.

Cllr Mrs Short had circulated “Ten Steps to Net Zero” produced by SC.

A suggestion that she made was to organize a Repair Café in Prees, combined with a Coffee Morning and dissemination of information on how to reduce carbon emissions.

Clerk was asked to put this matter on the March Agenda. Cllr M Lanham commented that it strikes him that locally we are still very much slaves to ‘car culture’ and this needs addressing.

**Auhorisation for attendance on training courses**

It was resolved that the Parish Council would pay a total of £120.00 for Carbon Literacy training attended by Cllr Mrs S Short and the clerk. This was proposed by Cllr Mrs J Catterall and seconded by Cllr M Lanham. All were in favour.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would pay £35.00 for Cllr Mrs R Clutton to attend ‘What Councillors Need to Know’ training on 20.3.24 and £35.00 for Cllr Mrs J Catterall to attend Biodiversity training on 28.3.24. This was proposed by Cllr M Lanham and seconded by Cllr Mrs L Baer. All were in favour.

**Grounds Maintenance**

Cllr Mrs S Short advised that as the current grounds maintenance contractor wishes to conclude the contract at the end of March, she had met with Cllrs D Ladd and J Allen to talk about finding a new contractor. Three local companies had been invited to quote for the contract and their responses will be brought to the March meeting.

**025/24 House keeping**

* The clerk confirmed that the hedges and brash around Higher Heath playing field had been cut back by Mr Ridgway.
* Fauls residents are finding access to postbox and notice board by Fauls Church Hall hazardous. Has been discussed before: clerk to check history of this and put matter on next Agenda.
* Cllr Mrs J Catterall reported again that surface of Shrewsbury Street outside Furbers/nr The Dell is badly damaged. Clerk to report again to Environmental Maintenance at SC
* Cllr Mrs S Jones reported dog excrement is still causing offence in Higher Heath. Clerk to erect sign at Manor Place and also to purchase cheap adhesive signs for bins to indicate that ordinary litter bins can take bagged dog poo.

**026/24 Facebook**

Cllr M Lanham expressed a keenness to see the PC engage productively with social media. Cllr Mrs Short said she would consult with Cllr D Ladd concerning this matter.

**027/24 SALC**

Nothing currently to report.

**028/24 Accounting Matters**

Payment of Accounts for February 2024.

The clerk explained the amendments that were necessary to the list originally circulated. Cllr Mrs J Catterall proposed that the amended Accounts for Payment should be paid and this was seconded by Cllr J Allen. All were in favour.

Amendments to original document circulated:

* Cllr Mrs Short has already paid the invoice for two delegates’ training from Save Our Shropshire CIO (£120.00) on their applying to her, so reimbursement of that amount needs to be paid to her.
* SLCC membership annual renewal is actually £144.00, not £112.00 as previously recorded.
* New total of payments to be made is £5,553.90.

**Amended Accounts for Payment February 2024**

 £

K D Sieloff salary February 2024 552.54

HMRC 31.20

K D Sieloff (clerk’s expenditure 11.1.24 - 8.2.24) 34.65

Groundforce Landscape Ltd ( January 2024) 264.22

Scottish Power (streetlight energy 1.1.24-1.2.24) 408.58

Pimlotts Ground Maintenance Ltd (works 11/12/26 Jan 2024) 480.00

Salop Fencing Ltd 435.00

O Gittins Construction Ltd 2784.00

Mrs S Short (reimbursement for Save Our Shropshire’s invoice) 120.00

Prees Scouts (PC donation: cheque payable to Claire Trump) 299.71

SLCC membership annual renewal 2024-25 144.00

 **Total 5,553.90**

Clerk’s expenditure 11.1.24 – 8.2.24

*BT line rental contribution February 2024: £ 12.50*

*Petrol:1 x trip to noticeboards (January Agenda etc) 8 miles @ 45p per mile =£3.60*

*1 x trip to Market Drayton (sign-writer): 9 miles @ 45p per mile= £4.05. Total petrol: £7.65*

*Stamps:6 x second class stamps @ 75p = £4.50*

*Cash payment to Roy Bickley sign-writer for chairmanship board update: £10.00*

Total = £34.65

**029/24 Correspondence**

* Thanks received from North Salop Wheelers for PC’s donation of £400.
* Donation request received from Crane Qualtiy Counselling. Matter to be on March Agenda.
* Higher Heath resident has suggested infrastructure improvements. Chair has been in contact to exchange ideas. Matter to be on March Agenda.

**030/24 Items for next Agenda**

As identified in Minutes.

Meeting was closed at 9.25 pm.

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