Minutes of the Meeting of Prees Parish Council held on Tuesday January 17 2023

at 7.00 pm in Prees Village Hall

Present were Cllrs J Whelan (who took the Chair in Cllr Hirons’ absence); Mrs L Baer; Mrs J Catterall; J Allen; R List; M Lanham and P Wynn. Mrs K Sieloff clerk to the Parish Council was also present.

**001/23** Public Session. There were no members of the public present.

**002/23** Apologies received from Cllrs R Hirons; Mrs S Short; Mrs S Jones; Mrs B Rainford; Mrs B Finch and D Ladd.

**003/23**. Declaration of Interests. There were none.

**004/23** Minutes. The Minutes of the meeting held on December 20 2022 which had been previously circulated were agreed to be a true record. Cllr J Allen proposed that they should be signed and this was seconded by Cllr M Lanham. All were in favour.

**005/23** Matters Arising from the Minutes (which are not included on the Agenda.)

* The bench in the bus shelter on Whitchurch is now installed.
* Highway Development has approved the siting of the proposed bike racks outside Jackies Shop at the Crossroads in Prees, but would prefer an alternative choice of rack. Clerk to research.
* Clerk to enquire about Hodnet and Wem Councils’ approach to protecting their Conservation areas.

**006/23** Shropshire Council report. Cllr Wynn delivered his report which made the following points:

* He is himself supporting the PC’s request to SC that the 30 mph speed limit be extended to the entire length of Whitchurch Road. He is suggesting to Shropshire Council that this is surely a simple matter to implement and necessary.
* SC officers have still been unable to elicit a response from the owners of the former Anvil Café.
* The requirement for Photo ID for those voting elections is to be introduced.
* Applications are invited to a new subsidised Tree Fund which offers trees at half price, funded jointly by Shropshire Council and the Government.
* Anvil Café site: the owner has advised Shropshire Council that he is keen to tidy the site but has no intention of building.

**007/23**  Community Policing Report. Cllr Whelan read out the following report as supplied.

Incidents to be aware of for month 1-31 December 2022.

* 3 x RTC A49 Prees, Prees Heath and Prees Green.
* 2 x Theft Holly Farm Garden centre and B5065 Wem Lane
* Vehicle theft in Prees.
* 3 x Concern for safety Prees, Higher Heath and Lower Heath.
* Criminal damage/Mental Health Prees.
* 2x Suspicious Circumstances Twemlows Woods and Higher Heath.
* Highway Incident Prees.
* ASB Prees Heath Nature reserve.
* Domestic incidents Higher Heath.

We are aware of parking issues at the main crossroads in Prees and at the school at pick up time. We are moving on vehicles when seen but as you are probably aware Shropshire Council deal with parking enforcement. We have been in touch and made them aware so hopefully they will start to show a presence in Prees.

Whitchurch SNT are continuing to patrol the Prees area targeting any hot spot areas that we are made aware of.

**008/23 Planning Matters**

There are no current planning applications for consultation.

**Planning decision** from Shropshire Council.

22/04210/VAR: Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) attached to planning permission 11/03321/FUL dated 8 November 2011. Miami Cottage, Weston-under-Redcastle, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY4 5LR. Decision: Grant Permission

**Other planning matters**

* The Square, Prees. Helen Morgan MP has offered to meet on site with members of the PC on the afternoon of Thursday February 2 2023. It is hoped by the Parish Council that she will be able to use her influence to move things along, perhaps by acting as a mediator between all parties concerned. Clerk will circulate details of meeting when available. She will also provide a concise report of the history of the site with actions to date, etc.
* Article 4 directive. It was unanimously agreed that there was no appetite in the PC, currently, to ask for the removal of the Article 4 restrictions on certain houses in the Conservation Area. It was also agreed that a mail-shot to residents outlining the responsibilities incumbent upon those inhabiting homes in the CA would be helpful. Cllr P Wynn was asked to find out if the Conservation Officers at SC could provide any such document for distribution.
* Several residents have reported the appearance of a Portakabin on the frontage of Prees Autos in Shrewsbury Street. The clerk had spoken with one of the mechanics, in the absence of the owner, and asked him to remind the owner that the site is within the Conservation Area and any structures erected would need to be approved by the Planning Department at Shropshire Council. The clerk was told that the new structure is temporary, while refurbishment of the main building is carried out. She advised that this does not mean that Planning permission is not necessary.
* Twemlows Wood. It was reported that at the front of the wooded area bordering the A41, security fencing 2m high is being installed. It is outside the property’s fence, so encroaching on the highway’s verge. Clerk to investigate.

009/23 Parish and Parish Council Matters

**Lack of burial space at St Chads Prees**.

Cllrs R Hirons and M Lanham, along with the clerk, attended a meeting on 10.1.23 with representatives from the Parochial Church Council and the Diocese. It was a courteous and instructive meeting comprising further discussion of this pressing and complex problem. The matter is to be kept on the PC Agenda going forward.

**Station Road Pedestrian Safety**

Several cllrs expressed their frustration about this matter. When consulted on the new builds on Station Road the Parish Council’s opinion had always been that youngsters will always use the shortest route between two points. It had suggested that Shropshire Council’s assumption that instead of walking the quick route along the road to access the school bus students would use the longer safer route through Whitebrook Meadow and Harvern Gardens was naïve and unrealistic. However, the Parish Council’s voice had been ignored.

The clerk had contacted local Community Police to ask advice and they had replied that the responsibility to ensure the highway is safe sits with Shropshire Council and suggested that additional lighting would help, as well as, if possible, pedestrian signs/warning lights to be activated during school transport hours. Clerk to invite representatives from SC to come and have a look and offer suggestions for a solution. Cllrs Mrs J Catterall and J Allen said they would be happy to meet with the officers on site.

Clerk was asked to find costings/procedure for provision of extra streetlamp in the unlighted stretch of Station Road. Clerk also to ask our lighting maintenance contractors to cut back the tree-growth obscuring the street-lamp at the western corner of the playground as much as they could and to change this lamp to LED as soon as possible.

**Prees Press and Media Policy**

The draft policy, previously circulated, was with a few minor alteration agreed to be reasonable and fit for purpose. Cllr M Lanham proposed that it should be adopted and this was seconded by Cllr J Allen. All were in favour. Clerk to tidy document and print out for signature/date.

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

Cllr Whelan read out a report from Charlotte Prince at Wrekin Housing Trust which advised that the new contractors, Morris, were hoping to start work by the end of the month. In the meantime contracts were being finalised and information was awaited concerning the electricity supply being brought on to the site.

**Dead trees on verge outside Prees playground, Brades Road.**

Clerk had been contacted by Trees department at SC asking that the PC should remove the two dead trees. Clerk replied to SC advising that they are outside the boundary of the playground and the clerk can find no evidence that they belong to the Parish Council. SC are endeavouring to establish where ownership actually lies.

**Housekeeping.**

* Clerk to ask Higher Heath Village Hall Committee to liaise directly with Cllr J Allen at Holly Farm Nursery to obtain their Bramley Apple tree which will commemorate the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth ll. Clerk to ask Fauls if they have made their selection.
* Youth Shelter Roof repair. A unanimous decision was made to delay accepting the quote for this work until a decision has been made by Prees Cricket and Recreation Club concerning whether they will renew the lease for the ground it stands on, when it expires in a few years’ time.

010/23 **SALC.** Nothing to report.

011/23 **Accounting Matters**

Accounts for Payment January 2023

There was one addition to the Accounts for Payment that had been previously circulated (see below.)

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

**£**

Mrs K Sieloff clerks salary January 2023 481.62

HMRC (PAYE) 8.12

Clerk’s expenditure (13.12.22-9.1.23) 16.46

Prees Village Hall (hire 17.1.23; 21.2.23; 21.3.23) @ £20 60.00

Scottish Power ( streetlight energy 1.12.22 – 1.1.23) 222.57

Groundforce Landscape Ltd ( Dec 2022) 26.64

Highline Electrical Ltd (Dec repairs) 477.60

Total £ 1293.01

Late-arriving invoice

Prees Village Hall (hire 17.11.22; 20.12.22) @£20 40.00

GRAND TOTAL £ 1333.01

Clerk’s expenditure 13.12.22-9.1.23

*BT line rental contribution January 2023: £ 12.50*

*Stamps:6 x 2nd class stamps @ 66p= £3.96*

*Total = £16.46*

Budget 2023-24

The proposed budget as presented at the last meeting and circulated to all, was perused one final time.

The spend proposed for 2023-24 was £28,510.00. This would be off-set by a contribution from Reserves of £705.52 which would mean that the increase in the Precept could be kept to 3%.

One cllr expressed disappointment that there was a proposed increase in the Precept, which is comprised of contributions collected from each household in the Parish, but the majority were of the opinion that small regular incremental increases are better than occasional huge ones and were in favour of the proposed 3% increase for 2023-24.

This would mean an increase of 69p to what Band D properties will pay for the year 2023-24. The charge for the year for Band D properties will be £23.63.

Cllr J Allen proposed that the proposed Budget of £28,510.00 should be accepted, and that a Precept of £27,804.48 should be requested for collection by Shropshire Council, with the shortfall of £705.52 being met by Reserves. This was seconded by Cllr M Lanham. All were in favour.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair thanked the members of the Finance Group for their work on the Budget.

**012/23 Correspondence**

* Funding request received from North Salop Wheelers. To be carried forward to May meeting.
* Jeremy Chambers duty manager at Prees Fire Station approached the clerk to register again his extreme concern about the parking in the centre of the village which sometimes leaves moving vehicles ‘nowhere to go.’ He reported there were three vehicle collisions in the previous week. He is alarmed by the possibility that the fire engine may not be able to get out quickly when it needs to. He asked whether one side of Shrewsbury Street could have double yellow lines. Item for next Agenda. In the meantime clerk to write courteously asking the few residents who park on the opposite side of Shrewsbury Street to everyone else, so causing a chicane effect, to consider not doing so in the interests of safety.

**013/23 Items for next Agenda**

The Square - Burial Ground – Station Road – Linesman – Village Centre parking - Heathgates Crossroads.

Signed………………………………………… Date…………………………………………