

CLEE ST. MARGARET PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on Monday 18th March 2024

Attendance: Cllrs Helen Robinson (Chair), Ian Heighway, Ken Jackson, Richard Morgan and Tamsin Osler. H Coonick (Clerk/RFO)

1. **RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllrs John Heighway and Scarlett Penn. Cllr Cecila Motley (Shropshire Council).
2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Cllr Ian Heighway (Item 6.3) – potentially.
3. **TO APPROVE the MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on 26th February 2023:**
RESOLVED: To accept the minutes as a correct record. Signed by the chair.
4. **PUBLIC SESSION:** No comments.

5. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES

5.1. Shropshire Council – Cllr Cecilia Motley had sent a report: ‘You will have heard of Shropshire Council’s budgetary difficulties, there is a potential deficit of £62m for the next financial year. This is a revenue deficit so capital schemes such as the Northwest Relief Road and the Riverside rebuild are not affected. The deficit is mainly caused by increasing pressure in several areas: adult and children’s social care, special education needs transport and temporary housing for homeless people which are all statutory provisions. Some of the discretionary services will be badly squeezed including libraries, leisure centres, museums, sports grounds, theatre and the arts. The council continues to lobby central government to recognise the increased costs of providing services in rural areas. The adult social care service is due to have a Care Quality Commission assessment. Providing care for adults and children is by far the most expensive service provided by the council absorbing 77% of the council’s overall budget. The council is proposing to close the housing list for 12 months allowing the council to focus on those it has a statutory duty to house. Those already on the register will not be removed. The health and wellbeing van that visits livestock markets has been very successful and the service is being extended.’

5.2. Village Hall – The Committee has requested the representative for the coming year. The Clerk will confirm that it is Cllr John Heighway until the Annual Parish Council meeting in May 2024.

5.3. Commoners Association – Cllr Ian Heighway reported that there had been a meeting on the 5th March. They are applying for a scrub buster which can be used with the quad bike. Cllr Ian Heighway and Mrs Elizabeth Heighway are booked onto quad bike training. There is another butterfly transect planned from the 1st April until the 30th September. Also, a survey in May to see if there are any Wheatear present on the common. Mr Guy Chomeley suggested that 50 dead trees need replacing and new guards are required for those that have outgrown them. With stakes it is anticipated this will cost in the region of £150.

RESOLVED: To agree for Mr Cholemy to purchase the guards and consult with the Commoners Committee about the replacement trees.

6. THE COMMON

6.1. Update on the Countryside Stewardship Scheme: There had been no contact from the Rural Payments Agency.

6.2. Wildfire Risk Assessment – Mr Martin Steer presented the work he has undertaken on the wildfire risk. He has met with the fire service who are interested in holding a trial run at Clee Liberty Common. He has also contacted the National Air Traffic Service regarding the risks relating to the mast. He has used mapping software to identify routes, water supplies and sites on the common which could be used by the fire service in the event of a wildfire. He will circulate a draft plan via the Clerk. The chair and council thanked Mr Steer for his work on this matter.

6.3. Update on Permissions for Access Over the Common: The Clerk reported that she had requested Statutory Declarations from those properties claiming Prescriptive Rights of Access and had sent copy letters to those properties who have permission from the Parish Council to travel over the common to access their properties. It is anticipated that the Statutory Declarations will be considered at the Parish Council meeting in May.

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7. GENERAL COUNCIL BUSINESS

7.1. Consider Community Climate Connectors:

RESOLVED: to forward this information to Ms Ruby Reseigh.

7.2. Agree the Agenda for Annual Parish Meeting on the 22nd April 2024:

RESOLVED: to include a. Chairs Report b. Finance Report c. Community Climate Connectors

7.3. Consider Ordnance Survey Restricted Routes: Deferred to the next meeting.

8. FINANCE

8.1. Investment Advisory Group Report: Cllr Jackson reported that the investment income had exceeded the expectation for the year (£6,639.13 as of the 18th March 2024). The Clerk reported that Hargreaves Lansdown are continuing to review the status of the Council as is their legal requirement. The investment account holds £123,209.92 and the Cash Account £1,817.57 as of the 18th March 2024.

8.2. Review the Finance Report, Expenditure Against Budget and Bank Reconciliation: As of the 22nd January 2024 the Current Account holds £711.84 and as of the 9th January 2024 the savings account holds £23,355.58. There will be a forecast underspend of £3158.98 at the end of the financial year.

RESOLVED: To accept the report, expenditure against budget and Cllrs Ian Heighway and Richard Morgan signed the bank reconciliation.

8.3. Update on Donation/Grant to Clee St Margaret Village Hall: The requirement for the grant to the village hall to be used to continue providing low-cost events will be considered at the next Village Hall Committee meeting. If this is agreed the grant will be paid by to the Village Hall Committee.

8.4. Adopt the Budget:

RESOLVED: To adopt the budget with a total expenditure of £14,017.94. If the Countryside Stewardship Scheme is agreed the budget will be review by the council.

8.5. Authorise Payments: Commoners Committee (Compensation) £319.27, Bike Trac Ltd (Quad Bike Tracker for 3 years) £229, Mr Cholmeley (trees, guards and stakes) up to £150, Marsh Commercial (Quad Bike Insurance) £467, Mr C Rowe (Environmental Maintenance) £99

RESOLVED: to authorise the above payments.

9. ITEMS FOR POSSIBLE INCLUSION IN THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING at 7.30pm 20TH MAY 2024: a. Wildfire Risk Assessment.

Signed by the Chair:

Date: