

Whixall Parish Council

Chairman: Ian Mercer

Minutes of the Parish Council's Monthly Meeting held on 13 November 2019 at
Whixall Social Centre starting at 7:30pm

Present:

Councillors: I Mercer (Chair); R Harris; A Rawlinson; J Spenser; G Turnbull

Clerk: A Roberts

Members of the community: 0

Representatives of other bodies/ organisations: Phoebe Ashton (North Salop Wheelers)

112 Apologies for Absence

A Hague; M Howard

C Mellings (Shropshire Council)

113 Public Participation

Phoebe Ashton explained that NS Wheelers is losing volunteers and the age of those remaining is increasing. They are seriously thinking about ceasing to operate. However, they plan to have a recruitment drive over the coming months in an effort to get more volunteers. PA outlined that should they cease to operate they would leave a gap that cannot be filled by the few community car schemes that already operate, or from other members of the Shropshire Community Transport Consortium. It would affect over one hundred individuals, the majority of whom are elderly females from across the area. In addition, a number of groups would be affected.

The plans for the recruitment drive include advertising with a local newspaper article and notices in the vehicles. Cllr Turnbull suggested that social media would be an ideal way of promoting the service and asking for volunteers. In particular he encouraged the Wheelers to look at using local Facebook groups so that they could also emphasise the impact of not continuing to operate. He suggested that awareness of the service might not be very high at the moment.

Members suggested that information should go on the Parish Council website. The Clerk will action this.

Members recognised that if the service were to disappear it would not come back.

114 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

Members were reminded of their obligation to declare any interests/ gifts/ hospitality.

112 Shropshire Council Highways

As no representatives attended the meeting, the Clerk will contact Cllr Mellings to discuss issues that were to be raised.

113 West Mercia Police Report

No report had been received prior to the meeting

114 Minutes of Previous Meetings

Meeting of Whixall Parish Council held on 9 October 2019:

It was proposed by Cllr Rawlinson that the draft minutes, of the meeting detailed above, were an accurate record. This was seconded by Cllr Harris and agreed by all present.

115 Planning

a) Planning Applications Received

Reference	Details	Parish Council Response
19/04613/CPL	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for proposed change of use of an existing dwelling to children's residential home.	(For information only – not a formal consultation)
19/04305/FUL	Proposed tourism development, including change of use of land to allow siting of up to 6no.luxury holiday lodges, including conversion of existing buildings to holiday accommodation.	Support with the following comment: The Parish Council would like assurance that lighting levels will be controlled, with minimum light pollution from the site.

116 Clerk's Report

Correspondence

- a) The Clerk received correspondence from a member of the public raising concerns about building work which did not appear in line with the planning consent. The enquiry was well received by the planning enforcement team who clarified that, at this stage it is impossible to tell if there is a contravention as building work is incomplete.
The member of the public has been informed of the outcome.
- b) An email has been received from the company 'What3Words' about a website/app which gives a simple way to identify specific locations. The world has been divided in to a grid of 3mx3m squares each of which has been assigned a unique 3-word address which emergency services will recognise. This has potential advantages for the people of Whixall and will be put on a future agenda.
- c) Carole Newey-James has sent some photographs from Remembrance Day to the Whitchurch Herald.
- d) The clerk has received two planning notifications which were too late to go on the agenda for this meeting. They have sent to members. As the Parish Council is not scheduled to meet in December, Members must inform the Clerk if they wish to hold a special meeting to discuss either application.
- e) Councillor Edgerton has a new email address racklanefarm@gmail.com. The Clerk will ensure that this information is updated.
- f) Mr Reeves from Abbey Green has raised the issue of blocked gullies near Holly Farm and opposite No.3 Abbey Green. He questioned whether regular gully emptying is still carried out by Shropshire Council. The Clerk will raise this with Cllr Mellings.

Actions Since the Last Meeting

- a) The signed Bowling Club lease has been returned to Hatchers for completion.
- b) The Clerk carried out a number of actions relating to the Remembrance Sunday service which took place at St Mary's on Sunday 10 November.
- c) Councillor Vacancy
Shropshire Council has been informed of the vacancy following Darren Farrington's resignation. The official vacancy notice has been posted on noticeboards and on the Parish Council website and a copy has been sent to Shropshire Council for posting on their website. This notice closing date is 27 November.

If an election is not requested: An advert to fill a casual vacancy will be placed on the noticeboards and website. The closing date will be 24 December. Interviews will be held prior to the meeting on 8 January 2020. The Clerk reminded members that at least three members must be present for the interview.

Members discussed the report, with particular emphasis on the issue of gulley emptying and the impact of flooded roads. Cllr Turnbull suggested that the Council should be proactive and raise awareness with Shropshire Council. BH commented that Shropshire Council does not have the resources to deal with all highway drainage issues in Whixall and he referred to another parish council who have set up an action group to deal with issues that they can sort out for themselves.

Cllr Turnbull suggested that it would be good for Whixall Parish Council to set up an action group to address road flooding issues. It was recognised that this must be planned carefully as some issues, such as Slacks Corner, cannot be addressed by a local action group because flooding is caused by water backing up from the culvert. It was also acknowledged that there are local contractors whose livelihood depends on this area of work as well as others who do a lot voluntarily already. Cllr Harris reminded members that issues such as insurance will need to be addressed.

It was the feeling of the meeting that forming a local action group would be a positive thing to do. This will be considered for the Annual Meeting in May 2020.

117 Financial Matters

- a) To receive monthly bank balance record.

The Clerk advised the council of the council's bank balances.

DATE	ACCOUNT NAME	AMOUNT
29 October 2019	Community Account	£6,879.10
	Business Saver Account	£927.32
TOTAL		£7,806.42

- b) To resolve to approve outstanding accounts.

Orders for the payment of outstanding invoices (under "Power to Spend" LGA1972 s.112(2) and 124(1)). As per the financial report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)/ Clerk proposed by Cllr Spenser, seconded by Cllr Turnbull and agreed by all present.

Resolved: The outstanding accounts should be paid and the cheques signed by two authorised councillors

- c) The Clerk outlined the current financial situation, with spending predicted to be on-budget. Members were reminded that the precept will be set in January and any additional spending requirements for the 2020/21 financial year need to be discussed before the precept can be finalised.

118 Whixall Bowling Club Lease

No additional information was available.

119 Highways

The clerk reported that, at present there is no update on the proposal to install a mirror on Platt Lane cross roads.

120 Parish Matters

- a. The Marlot – Asset Management

Cllr Turnbull gave a verbal report to members: Along with Martin Spenser he had spoken with the grazier who will be installing 4 to 6 cows from mid-November until December. Natural England were keen to clear the pond and have agreed to give two days between now and February. However, to ensure that amphibians are not harmed, they are talking to Nicky Hunter (Harper Adams University) first. Spoil areas have already been identified. Brush cutting and tree felling work has also been identified.

Cllr Turnbull was disappointed to report that there is evidence that someone has been using the Marlot as a trail biking route, with areas of the site being damaged as a result.

Cllr Turnbull queried the rationale for revising the management plan as recorded in the minutes from the October meeting of the council. Cllr Mercer outlined that, following the recent site visit, members were trying to establish if there was a way of delivering the objectives of the management plan given the resources available – both labour and financial.

Cllr Turnbull clarified that there are three plans relating to the Marlot

1. Strategic Plan – the Council's plan for the use of the site.
2. Management Plan – the long-term plan for managing the ecology of the site
3. Action Plan - concerned with the day to day activities to manage the site.

After lengthy discussion it was agreed that responsibility for both the strategic plan and the management plan lies with the Council (because the Marlot is a Council asset), whereas the action plan is the responsibility of the Marlot Conservation Group (MCG) which manages the site on behalf of the Council.

It was also agreed that the Marlot, as a substantial asset, would be a standing item of the Council's Monthly agenda and this would be the forum for all strategic decision making relating to the Marlot.

b. Autumn/Winter Newsletter

Delivery routes were agreed and newsletters will be delivered shortly

c. Senior Citizens Christmas Party (13 December)

Because of the General Election on 12 December, the council cannot get into the Social Centre to set up tables etc. until the day of the party.

The Clerk went through the action plan which will be circulated to members.

121 Councillor Reports

a. **Parish Councillors**

Cllr Mercer attended the Helicopter Liaison Group on 16 October. He reported that no issues were raised from Whixall and that more interest is now being taken in planning applications that are within the flying zone.

b. **Shropshire Councillors**

Councillor Mellings report will be emailed to Members once it has been received.

Scheduled date of next meeting: **8 January 2020 at 7.30 pm**

The meeting closed at 9.28pm