

CLEE ST. MARGARET PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on Monday 26th February 2024

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

- 1. RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr Cecilia Motley (Shropshire Council).
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Cllr Ian Heighway (item 6.33) and Cllr John Heighway (item 6.1).
- 3. TO APPROVE the MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on 15th January 2023:**
RESOLVED: to accept as a correct record. Signed by the chair.
- 4. PUBLIC SESSION:** Five members of the public were present. MP1 asked about if the National Air Traffic Services (NATS) could be asked to improve the condition of the Stone Road. The Clerk agreed to write to NATS raising the concern.
- 5. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES**
 - 5.1. Shropshire Council** – Cllr Cecilia Motley had sent a report: *Financial challenges are causing major constraints for councils all over the country at present and Shropshire too is affected by these. Rocketing costs in service delivery are forcing many local authorities to consider deep service cuts in order to manage their budgets. In Shropshire a whopping 80% of our disposable budget is sucked into the growing demand for adults and children's social care services, increased temporary accommodation and pressure on Special Educational Needs transport. Shropshire's rising social care costs are exacerbated by our rural and sparsely populated geography, as well as the growing number of adults aged 18 – 64 who need care, and over 65s with increasingly complex needs, particularly dementia. Currently we have over 700 children in the care system. We are not allowed to carry forward a deficit budget and the pressure on our 2024/5 budget means we must review all our services: some will change, some will reduce, and we may have to stop other services. We know this situation will have a considerable impact on our communities, but we have no choice. Our budget decisions are likely to include reviewing the strategy for library provision, reducing support for leisure provision, reviewing and reducing the number of household recycling centres, charging for green waste collections (households could opt out of this collection), reducing the number of council buildings and other assets and accelerating the move from Shirehall, reorganising the transport needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. Significant changes will go through further consultation involving both public and Council staff, but some redundancies will be inevitable to meet our savings targets. We are already exploring alternative ways of delivering or reducing non-essential services and we are determined to minimise compulsory redundancies. The challenge would be much greater without the savings of £41.3m that we have already made in this financial year. My own portfolio responsibility, adult social care, has to date contributed over £13m of savings to the overall figure. We have been lobbying government hard for funding reform that takes account of the challenges faced by local government, and the unique set of circumstances that makes Shropshire's position even more challenging. I will keep Corvedale residents updated on the budget situation. We are determined to continue to provide the best quality services possible to our residents.*
 - 5.2. Village Hall** – Cllr John Heighway reported that a request had been made to return the small room to a meeting room and the Village Hall committee was seeking the view of the Parish Council. Dealt with in item 7.5.
 - 5.3. Commoners Association** – Cllr Ian Heighway reported that Matt Williams from Fearn Archaeology had given a resume of the work carried out on the common. It was well attended. He thanked Mr Chomeley and Mr and Mrs Nicholson for cutting back the tree branches over the Stone Road.
 - 5.4. South Shropshire Area Committee** – Heather Coonick (Clerk) reported that there had been a presentation from the Planning Enforcement Team on their new protocol.
- 6. THE COMMON**
 - 6.1. Consider the Countryside Stewardship Scheme and the Internal Agreement:** The Commoners Committee have not heard anything from the Rural Payments Agency.
 - 6.2. Update on the Wildfire Risk Assessment:** Deferred to the next meeting.
 - 6.3. Consider Responses to Permissions for Access Over the Common**
 - 6.3.1. Pilgrims Cottage:** There had not been a response to the letter from the council. The ownership of the cottage needs to be established as it may have changed hands.
 - 6.3.2. Pole Gutter Cottage:** There had not been a response to the letter from the council. The Clerk will check that they have received the letter.
 - 6.3.3. Upper Hill House:** Council considered the letter from the owner.
RESOLVED: The Clerk will respond explaining the reasons for limiting permissions.

CLEE ST. MARGARET PARISH COUNCIL

6.4. Consider Claims of Prescriptive Rights of Access

6.4.1. Lower Hill House: The council is waiting for the owners to clarify the route for which they are claiming a prescriptive right of access.

6.4.2. Yew Tree Cottage: The claim was considered, and the council requires further information to be provided to consider this further, and to take legal advice if necessary. The plastic grids have now been removed by the owners, but it was noted that groundwork appeared to have been carried out to flatten the area prior to laying the mats. Any groundwork carried out did not have the permission of the Parish Council or the Planning Inspectorate.

RESOLVED: To request a Statutory Declaration from the owners regarding the prescriptive rights claim and investigate the lack of permission for any groundworks.

6.4.3. The Yeld Farm: The claim was considered, and the council requires further information to be provided to consider this further and to take legal advice if necessary.

RESOLVED: To request a Statutory Declaration from the owner.

6.5. Consider the Ownership of the Quad Bike, Insurance and Tracking: The Quad Bike will be used for various activities on the common. A Scrub Buster would add approximately £50 to the annual insurance.

RESOLVED: to retain the quad bike and increase the insurance if necessary to cover additional equipment.

6.6. Consider the New Community Fund for Green Spaces and Active Travel: Deferred to the next meeting and pass on the information to the village hall committee.

6.7. Consider Defra Guidance on Pesticides: If the council or its contractors use pesticides they are required to register with Defra.

RESOLVED: The contract with the Environmental Maintenance worker will be updated to include a statement that pesticides will not be used. The Council is not aware of any pesticides being used by any contractors on land owned by the parish.

7. GENERAL COUNCIL BUSINESS

7.1. Consider Ordnance Survey re Restricted Routes: defer to the next meeting.

7.2. Consider Requesting a Restriction to the Size of Vehicles Entering the Village:

RESOLVED: to not request a restriction.

7.3. Update on Ludlow Hunt: there had been a recent incident where Ludlow Hunt hounds had gone onto ground where they did not have permission from the landowner

RESOLVED: The council will keep a record of incidents (email the clerk to report an incident, but also report it to the police in the normal way). The Council will also write to Ludlow Hunt to remind them that they do not have permission to hunt on Clee Liberty Common.

7.4. Update on the Health and Wellbeing Survey: Cllr Osler reported that the Council were investigating the best methods of getting members of the parish to complete the survey. They will put information in local parish magazines.

7.5. Consider Using the Small Meeting Room for Future Meetings:

RESOLVED: To use both the small room and main hall depending on the numbers of members of the public in attendance.

8. FINANCE

8.1. Investment Advisory Group Report: Cllr Jackson reported that the investments account holds £122,000 and is providing an income of approximately £500 per month.

8.2. Authorise Payments: C Rowe (Environmental Maintenance) £108, H Coonick (reimbursement for stationery, postage) £46.02 and (salary and travel Jan-March) £1,063.35.

8.3. Consider the Draft Budget: Deferred to the next meeting.

8.4. Consider Donations:

RESOLVED: Parochial Church Council of Clee St Margaret: £500 (to assist with mowing costs), Clee St Margaret Village Hall: £500 to assist with providing low-cost events. Midlands Air Ambulance £500.

8.5. Update on Hargreaves Lansdown: The Clerk has provided HL with evidence of the Parish Council as a legal entity for money laundering purposes.

9. ITEMS FOR POSSIBLE INCLUSION IN THE NEXT MEETING at 7.30pm 18th March 2024 a.

Ordnance Survey Restricted Routes b. Wildfire Risk Assessment c. Agree the budget.

Councillors Robinson, Osler and Penn informed the council that they did not intend to re-stand at the council elections in 2025.

Signed by the Chair

Date:

CLERK/RFO: Heather Coonick, Hopton Gate Cottage, Haytons Bent, Ludlow Shropshire SY8 2BE

Tel: 07817607355 email: clee.org.uk@gmail.com