

CLEE ST. MARGARET PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting on Monday 27th February 2023

Attendance: Cllrs Helen Robinson (Chair), Ian Heighway, Ken Jackson, Tamsin Osler, Scarlett Penn. Cllr Cecilia Motley (Shropshire Council) and Heather Coonick (Clerk).

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllrs John Heighway and Richard Morgan.
2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
3. **MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on 9th January 2023.** Item 9.4 incorrect spelling: Mr Godrich (Church warden)
RESOLVED: Approved with the alteration and signed by the chair.
4. **PRESENTATION BY ALLAN WILSON AND RICHARD WATKINS, SAVE OUR SHROPSHIRE (SOS), AMBITIONS TOWARDS A NET-ZERO FUTURE.** Save Our Shropshire is a charitable organisation set up to educate and improve the understanding of climate change. They estimate that Clee St Margaret households produce approximately 22.7 tons of CO₂ each per year compared to the average household in Shropshire producing 17.61 tons of CO₂. This is because the parish is a rural one with no public transport or local services. SOS is educating Shropshire Council which has now bought its net zero target forward to 2030. The Parish should consider appointing a champion for climate change and the Parish Council should declare an aim to become carbon neutral. He suggested 5 methods to help move towards being carbon neutral A. Change your diet to a more vegetable-based diet. B. Reduce energy usage C. Active travel (walking and cycling) and reduce air travel D. Reuse/Recycle E. Utilise the countryside for activities like tree planting. Members of the public asked whether there was sufficient electricity production and infrastructure to cope with the increase in electricity use (related to electric cars etc), Allan agreed this was a major issue. Allan agreed with members of the public that there was not an overall approach to net-zero by the government which needs to improve. Stroud Council are a good example of how to involve the community in the aim. Cllr Robinson thanked Allan for his presentation.
5. **PUBLIC SESSION**
A member of the public asked several questions: A. Who would use public electric vehicle chargers if installed in the parish? B. Could the Council consider the purchase of mugs to celebrate the coronation? C. They did not feel that a donation to the Village Hall was necessary as the village hall had plenty of money and they would prefer the donation to go to the church for mowing. D. What was the Robocutter going to be used for and where? E. What is the purpose of the quadbike? F. What is the purpose of purchasing a first aid kit for the common? Cllr Robinson stated that each issue would be dealt with as it was discussed by the Council in the order on the agenda.
6. **GENERAL COUNCIL BUSINESS**
 - 6.1. **Carbon Literacy and Net-Zero Future:** Deferred to the next meeting to allow councillors to consider the presentation by SOS.
 - 6.2. **Electric Vehicle Chargers:** Deferred to the next meeting to allow the Clerk to investigate further. Any potential charger would likely be sited in the village hall car park for use by the public. This could contribute to creating network of electric chargers across Shropshire to make electric vehicles more viable/desirable in the region. It was recognised most parishioners would probably charge at their own home unless charging was cheaper at the charging point.
 - 6.3. **SmartWater Roll Out and Signage:** The signs for entrances to the parish have been ordered. There are still some SmartWater kits available for parishioners.
 - 6.4. **Annual Parish Meeting:** The annual meeting could include the following a. Clee Liberty Maintenance Plan b. Parish Plan c. Climate Change d. Electric Vehicle Charger e. Car Share Plan. The agenda will be finalised at the next meeting.
 - 6.5. **Plans for the Coronation:** The village hall is planning events and will inform the Parish Council of the likely cost. Council decided they did not want to purchase coronation mugs. Deferred to the next meeting.
 - 6.6. **Donation to the Village Hall:** The Council agreed that any grants made should be based on a. is it necessary? b. how will it improve the lives of parishioners and c. can the council afford to make the donation. The Council has paid the village hall hire fee of £200 for this year and is being asked for

CLEE ST. MARGARET PARISH COUNCIL

a donation as the village hall committee were expecting the normal grant of £750 and as their strategy was to provide activities at low cost to the public their income was low. Funds they have are ring-fenced money for a capital project (improvements to the bar and kitchen)

RESOLVED: To donate £550 to the Village Hall Committee.

6.7. Tree Scheme: The scheme has closed.

6.8. Environmental Maintenance Grant: Shropshire Council can provide a match funded grant to Parish Councils to maintain ditches/drains/signposts etc in the parish. The Council agree this would be a good idea but need to consider the expenditure when finalising the budget. The Clerk will prepare an application to Shropshire Council based on £500 contribution from CSM Parish Council for consideration at the next meeting.

6.9. Priorities for the Police Charter:

RESOLVED: The three priorities will be a. Thefts b. Antisocial driving c. Fly tipping. To be updated annually.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1. Bill Lewis re: Brown Clew Medical Practice: The practice will experience difficulties as all three doctors plan to retire in the next five years. Ms Reseigh and Ms Peake are local contacts for the practice.

RESOLVED: To write in support of the practice and pass information to the local community

8. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES

8.1. Shropshire Council – Cllr Cecilia Motley reported that the Local Plan was still being considered by the inspectors. Shropshire Council had won a legal case with Black Country Council regarding provision of land for housing. It appears there are not enough long-term gypsy and traveller sites being provided. Shropshire Council have proposed an additional division to the Boundary Commission and are awaiting its decision.

8.2. Village Hall – Cllr John Heighway was absent. Ms Reseigh was asked to comment: the committee are seeking quotes for a new oil boiler. Unfortunately, alternatives to oil are not suitable at the moment. Funds have been set aside for refurbishment of the kitchen and bar. The committee would like to install an integrated sound system and hearing loop.

8.3. Commoners Association – Cllr Ian Heighway reported that they are considering alternatives to chemical for bracken control.

8.4. Our Upland Commons – Cllr Ian Heighway/Cllr Robinson reported that the government has closed applications to the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FIPL) fund. They are looking at ways to block channels to allow rewetting as there is no support for plastic barriers. The Stiperstones team are producing a fire risk assessment. They are looking at mapping software. There had been two rush cutting sessions with volunteers in February which were very successful.

9. THE COMMON

9.1. The New Maintenance Plan: Clive Fisher (Plan Drafting Group) had produced a report on progress. This was discussed by the council and is available to the Commoners Association before being made available more widely. Comments from the public are welcome. It is hoped that a proposals document will be available for the Annual Meeting. Cllr Robinson thanked Clive for his work on the Drafting Group.

9.2. Trees on the Boundaries of The Common: The landowner has been asked to trim the trees to allow better access for vehicles using the Stone Road.

9.3. Update on Robocutter insurance: The NFU will not insure the robocutter, Renee Wallace will be asked to continue to look at alternative insurance. The robocutter is particularly useful as it can be used to cut bracken in areas where a tractor is unable to access or would cause damage. It may be possible to engage a contractor to do this work with their own robocutter.

10. FINANCE

10.1. The Accounts, Expenditure Against Budget and Bank Reconciliation. As of the 12/1/23 the current account holds £647.86. On the 9/1/23 the savings account holds £20,147.18. The Hargreaves Lansdown Investment and cash account hold £127,564. There is expected to be in the region of £2,000 surplus for the year.

RESOLVED: To accept the accounts report, expenditure against budget and the bank reconciliation was signed by the chair.

CLEE ST. MARGARET PARISH COUNCIL

10.2. Investment Advisory Group Report: Cllr Jackson reported there had been no activity regarding the group but there was a steady income from the investments, and it is predicted that approximately £6000 will have been received this financial year from investments.

10.3. The Budget: There remains several outstanding issues regarding the budget – churchyard mowing, environmental maintenance (see item 6.8) and a donation to the village hall to enable low/no cost events to benefit the parish.

RESOLVED: To reconsider the budget at the next meeting considering the above issues and potentially reducing the budget set aside for the Management of Clee Liberty to £4,500 and reducing the contingency to £1,000. The Parochial Church Council would be asked to take over the contracting of the church yard mowing and the Parish Council will donate £500 to the church for this purpose.

10.4. Payments – H Coonick (Jan-March Salary £957.84 and expenses £47.25), M Heighway (Churchyard Mowing) £645, NFU Quadbike Insurance £510.76. (The quadbike enables management of the hill to be done 'in house' at half the cost of getting a contractor in, it is also for the commoners to use and parish functions and has been particularly useful during the surveys in preparation for the new management plan), Commoner Compensation £319.27, C&J Supplies Key cutting £20.22. A First Aid Kit for the hill was donated by Cllr I Heighway – the Council thanked him. (As Hill Manager he will keep the first aid kit which will be used whenever volunteers are working on Clee Liberty.)

11. ITEMS FOR POSSIBLE INCLUSION IN THE NEXT MEETING at 7.30pm 27th March 2023. a. Review residents' access and wayleaves over the common. b. budget c. electric vehicle charger d. coronation plans e. annual meeting agenda f. aim to become carbon neutral.

Signed by the chair:

Date: