

Whixall Parish Council



Chairman: Ian Mercer

Minutes of the Parish Council's Monthly Meeting held on 13 April 2022 at Whixall Social Centre starting at 7:30pm

Present:

Councillors: B Harris (Chair); A Rawlinson; P Rodenhurst; M Evans; and M Howard

Shropshire Councillors : E Towers; P Broomhall

Clerk: A Roberts

Other Organisations 0

Members of the Public 4

24/22 Public Session

L Costello, M Costello, D Costello and V Costello attended. L Costello spoke in relation to planning application ref 22/01078/FUL. All members of the public left following the public session.

25/22 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Spenser (Holiday); Cllr Mercer (Family Commitment); Cllr Edgerton (Work Commitment); and Cllr Weedall.

26/22 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None declared

27/22 Minutes of Previous Meeting

It was proposed by Cllr Rawlinson that the draft minutes, of the Ordinary meeting of the Council held on 9 February 2022 were an accurate record. This was seconded by Cllr Evans and agreed by all present. **Resolved**
The Chair signed the minutes.

28/22 Reports

- a. Councillors Broomhall and Towers had circulated their report in advance of the meeting (Appendix A). They highlighted the information about foster care and Wem Economic Forum.
- b. The Clerk gave a verbal report (Appendix B).

29/22 Parish Matters

- a. The Marlot
Graham Turnbull provided an activity report (Appendix C). The proposed date for the meeting with MCG is 21 April.
- b. Grant Funding
Proposed Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Rawlinson.

Resolved: Grant funding of £300 will be paid to NS Wheelers

The Clerk will write to NSW to clarify that this is an exceptional payment due to the required investment in new equipment.

- c. Parish Meeting
The meeting will take place on 18 May 2022 and will serve as the official launch of the Marlot LNR.
- d. Flooding Issues
Following the departure of Mike Crawshaw the formal liaison role no longer exists. Proposed Cllr Reynolds, seconded Cllr Evans, agreed all.

Resolved: A Parish Councillor will be nominated to act as a liaison between agencies and the Parish Council in relation to flooding issues.

e. Replacement and Disposal of IT Equipment

Proposed Cllr Evans, seconded Cllr Rawlinson, agreed all.

Resolved: A new laptop and software, to a maximum value of £465 +VAT will be purchased and the obsolete IT equipment will be disposed of with due regard to GDPR.

30/22 Planning

a. To Consider Applications

22/01156/FUL	Application under Section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for a replacement dwelling. Garden Cottage, Church Lane	Support No comment
22/01078/FUL	Erection of extension and improvements to existing detached garage. 3 Maltkiln Lane, SY13 2QH	Object with comments*.

* The Parish Council still has outstanding concerns that the size of the proposed building, coupled with redacted information on the supplied drawings, implies that the development is not intended to be used solely as a double garage. Our objection is on the grounds of overdevelopment and that the proposed development is not in character with local dwellings due to its size and standard of finish.

b. To Receive Planning Application Decisions

i.22/00790/FUL	Erection of two storey rear extension and demolition of single storey a structure. New House Farm, Chapel Lane.	Support No comment
22/00883/FUL	Erection of single storey extension to the side. 1 Canal Side, SY13 2PQ	Refuse

31/22 Financial Matters

a. To receive monthly bank balance record.

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

DATE	ACCOUNT NAME	AMOUNT
31 March 2022	Current Account (Working Budget)	£1340.04
	Savings Account (Reserves)	£10,557.62
TOTAL		£11,897.66

b. To resolve to approve outstanding accounts

Orders for the payment of outstanding invoices and all payments approved remotely (under "Power to Spend" LGA1972 s.112(2) and 124(1). Proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Rawlinson and agreed by all.

Resolved: The outstanding accounts should be paid and the payment transactions authorised by two authorised councillors.

Recipient	Reason for Payment	Amount	Power of Expenditure
Employee	Salary (for February)	£247.25	LGA 1972 s112
Employee	Reimbursement	£43.83	LGA 1972 s112
HMRC	PAYE	£164.40	LGA 1972 s112
NEST	Pension Contributions	£42.63	LGA 1972 s112
Marlot Cons. Group	Reimbursement	£50.28	LGA 1972 s112
	Total	£548.39	

Scheduled date of next meeting:

11 May 2022 (Annual PC Meeting 7pm. Main meeting 7.30pm)

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

Report 6 to Whixall Parish Council by Shropshire Councillors Peter Broomhall and Edward Towers – April 2022

Dear All – Please find below our sixth written report as your Shropshire Councillors.

Rachel Robinson, Shropshire Council's director of public health commenting on the last weekly Covid update from Shropshire Council said on 18th March....(so about two years since the 1st Lockdown was introduced at the start of the pandemic!):-

"It has been nearly a month since legal restrictions were removed and we moved towards the Government's 'Living with COVID-19' plan. Since then, cases have been rising in Shropshire, and we currently have the highest rates in the West Midlands. The number of cases nearly doubled last week, with 2,147 new cases reported between 4-10 March. This increase is being felt in the health and care system, on both staff and in the numbers of patients being treated for the virus.

"It is inevitable that the virus will spread without any measures. To live safely with the virus, and to protect our most vulnerable residents, as well as reducing the pressure on the NHS, we can all choose to do things which will help to reduce the rapid spread. While vaccination remains the best defence against COVID-19, at times when there is widespread community transmission following hands-face-space-fresh air is still really important.

"If you are mixing with people in large groups or visiting someone potentially more vulnerable, please check for COVID-19 first by using a Lateral Flow Test. These are available in pharmacies, Shirehall in Shrewsbury and other community buildings such as libraries."

We have not had another full Shropshire Council meeting since Thursday 24th February 2022, so nothing to report this month.

Regarding Whixall Parish, our activity this last month has been largely about:

- a few planning applications coming forward and their being accepted or refused.
- Monitoring highway improvements now taking place along B5476 (Wem Rural Parish) and their impact upon traffic and safety.
There have only been daytime road closures to do this.

Shropshire Council Briefing Sessions:

Between us we have attended briefing sessions on:

- I. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Identifying Strategic Infrastructure Priorities – 7-3-22 (mentioned in last month's report!)
- II. Healthwatch Shropshire – 10-3-22
- III. Local Government Boundary Commission – 22-3-22
- IV. The Shropshire Plan – 23-3-22
- V. Joint commissioning – 24-3-22

If you'd like to know details of any/all of these discussions then do ask. There is often a powerpoint to accompany them.

Shropshire Council Committees:

Between us we have sat on the following committees on:

- I. Helicopter Noise Liaison Group at Shawbury – 8-3-22 (PB + ET Members) + JG from WRPC
- II. Southern Area Planning Committee - 8-3-22 (ET acting as a substitute member)
- III. Health & Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting - 28/03/2022 (ET acting as a substitute member)

Main points discussed:

- **Ambulance waiting times** – in answer to a public question

- **SC's Adult Social Care Review of Winter Plans** for 2020-2021+2021-2022 with reference for Winter 2022-2023
- **Joint Commissioning within Adult Social Care** with Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire and T+W Clinical Commissioning Group
- IV. Northern Area Planning Committee - 29-3-22 (ET)
- V. People Overview Scrutiny Committee - 30-3-22 (PB Member and ET acting as a substitute member)
 - **A member asked how many children there are in Shropshire of : Pre school age, Primary school age, Secondary school age and how these records are obtained, reviewed and checked for accuracy**
 - **Stepping Stones Project** – This is a new project only launched in June 2021 that is endeavouring to take young people out of residential care and place with specially trained foster families. This is based on the facts that it is a far more successful model for helping vulnerable young people overcome their difficulties and is also cost-saving to Shropshire Council. Two key points:
 1. A powerpoint giving salient details is available and can be sent to you upon request.
 2. There was a BIG appeal made for any to come forward who would like to be considered as foster parents.
 - **Youth Services** – The recent changes to our Youth Services was scrutinised for its implementation and effectiveness. It seems that Youth Workers are now working much more in outreach/outdoor situations and allowing Youth Clubs to operate more with volunteer teams/organisations that Youth Services collaborate with.
- VI. Licensing Act Sub Committee – 7-4-22 (PB)

Again, if you'd like to know details of any/all of these discussions then do ask.

The Wemian – As reported last month please don't forget that The Wemian is still looking for a new Editor and a couple of new volunteers to help support the production of this important quarterly production. Cllr Geoff Soul (Wem Town Council) has agreed to help as its Treasurer and so can be a point of contact for any who may want further details. This is long running and valued local publication that is freely available locally as it is paid for entirely by its advertising. Do help in searching and suggesting new team members to help ensure it is able to continue to flourish, adapt and serve our community.

Discussion about the future of Wem Economic Forum – We are currently preparing for a meeting between ourselves, Wem Town Council (Clerk), Wem Rural Parish Council (Clerk and Chairman) and Shropshire Council Officers. This is to share ideas that Peter and myself have been discussing with Officers at Shropshire Council for a business plan for Wem and Wem area that it is hoped will refine/reformulate current WEF Terms of Reference and hear more of what SC can offer in the way of initiatives and programmes that support businesses (SBLTV Knowledge, Growth Hub etc). The date for this meeting will be shortly after Easter.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations – June 2022 – The latest meeting for this Planning Group took place on Tuesday 15th March at the Wem Conservative Club at 7.15pm. This was another positive and well represented meeting. Plans are being refined as the June Celebrations come ever closer. We have attached a copy to this emailed report for convenience of referral. You will see that the decoration of the town, competitions, memorabilia, publicity, donations and use of other spaces/the planting of trees, etc are still being discussed.

There is much needed in terms of fund-raising at this point...to be able to implement some of the exciting plans in prospect. If you can assist in any way then do 'step forward'. Exciting ideas continue to be shared, plans refined and forward progress made. The planning group continue to follow the guidance being offered by 'the Palace' on their website <https://www.royal.uk/platinum-jubilee-central-weekend> and <https://www.local.gov.uk/queens-platinum-jubilee-central-weekend-2022>.

In addition,

A further meeting for the Planning Group for these Celebrations is set for Tuesday 26th April at the Wem Conservative Club at 7.15pm.

Hopefully this brings you up to speed with issues that affect us here in Wem Rural Parish. If there are things not covered, or you would like to raise, then let us know.

Correspondence

1. A complaint about hedgecutting on the Hollinswood Green to Tilstock Road was received via the website. This will be passed to Shropshire Council for action.
2. Wem Jubilee meeting information – circulated
3. Wem Town Council – invitation to Annual Town Meeting - circulated
4. NALC, SALC etc. circulated

Other

The main work focus is currently on closing the old financial year and finalising the AGAR. In addition, the following actions have been taken.

1. Highways
Potholes have been reported at Abbey Green (these are now marked up for repair). The road condition on the road to Moss Cottages has been reported and added to the programme. Further flooding issues near Edstaston have also been reported.
2. Declaration of Other Interests
Forms have been sent out and Parish Councillors should complete and return them as soon as possible.
3. Marlot
The Clerk has been asked to clarify the insurance position for volunteers (which is the same as for councillors and staff when acting on behalf of the Council).
4. Lord Lieutenant's Garden Party nominations
Martin Spenser has declined but thanked the Council for their proposal. Julie Ankers has accepted and will be accompanied by her mother.

Marlot Conservation Group (MCG) Work report to Whixall Parish Council

Much of the work during this period has been repairing the damage to the footpaths around the Marlot caused by a combination of the grazing cows' footfall and bad weather. In the pond area the group decided to prepare and construct a base trellis of wood across the extremely muddy areas and cover these with wood chippings from brash and cut willow from the Marlot. In tandem with this work, the group also filled in the numerous deep cow footprints around the ponds – this was particularly important as there was concern that breeding newts from the ponds would be trapped in these holes and would be unable to get out. Whilst a lot of work has been done around the pond area in repairing the paths there is still work to be done and this will be determined by weather conditions and the drying out of the muddy areas when it can be raked and levelled to ensure safe paths.

Work has also continued in the front meadow area with respect to repairing the pathway. Much of this has been the laborious and time consuming task of filling in individual cow footprint holes and levelling the earth with hand tools. Around the creeping willow and picnic table area the ground is particularly wet and muddy and the group has cut dry grass from other areas of the meadow and laid it over the muddy areas in an attempt to bind with the mud. It is hoped that with good weather that these muddy areas will dry out enough for more levelling and repair to be done more effectively. We have also prepared the area where we have previously cleared willow and will be sowing the last of the wild meadow flower seeds that were purchased last year in an attempt to further encourage wild flower coverage in the front meadow area.

On Sunday 20th March we had the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Hedge planting event for the community of Whixall. The event was extensively advertised on both Whixall Community Facebook pages, as well as Wem and Whitchurch Facebook Groups. An email with associated poster was sent to Whixall Primary School Headteacher asking for the event to be publicised to the school children and their parents (this request was not even acknowledged by the Headteacher). Posters were also put up on all the village noticeboards. Unfortunately, and much to the Group's dismay and disappointment not one local Whixall villager turned up for the event. The only local Whixall people who took part were the James' family and a local friend who was visiting the farm adjacent to the Marlot – and even their participation was only after the MCG specifically asked them to come and help out. All other participants, 6 in total, were passers-by who were out for a walk on the Moss (these from Manchester and Nantwich) who were cajoled into planting a few saplings. The majority of the 60 saplings were planted by the 4 MCG members and Alice Turnbull, who came to help out on the day. Whixall is extremely lucky to have its own Local Nature Reserve on its doorstep, however it would be good if it was recognised and supported by local people who are always saying how close and caring a community they are!

The first newt survey of the season was conducted, under the auspices of Nicky Hunter, on 25/26 March. In total 63 traps were laid on the Friday evening in all the 6 ponds and these were then inspected on the Saturday morning. More newts were caught than last March, however more traps were used and the weather has been milder and it is thought that this has encouraged the newts to breed earlier. In total there was 11 Male Great Crested Newts; 17 Female Great Crested Newts (many heavy with eggs); 3 Male Smooth Newts; 8 Female Smooth Newts and numerous other insects including Greater and Lesser diving beetles, water boatmen and stonefly larvae. A further survey will be conducted by Nicky Hunter in April with the MCG. Natural England, with Shropshire Wildlife Trust, are also considering a public amphibian event at the Marlot at the end of April. This will be dependent on their own Health and Safety risk assessment and availability of an EPS licensed person to run the event.

The MCG has spent to the limits of its annual working budget, however, should the Parish Council have an underspend on its budget it is requested that consideration be made to provide the MCG with some additional funding. At present we have only one of each of the hand tools that we use, such as rake, pruning saw, spade, fork, leaf rake etc and purchasing a second additional tool will

help the MCG to spread work equally and without using our own personal tools. We could also use more health and safety items such as gloves, goggles and hi-vis vests for the team.

Graham Turnbull
Marlot Conservation Group
7 April 2022