

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held in the Parish Hall on Tuesday the 16th of May 2023.

1872 – Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The first item of business on the agenda needed to be the election of the new Chair and Vice Chair of the council. Carol Weedenburg was proposed as Chair by Julie Lyne and seconded by Mike Cohen. Steve Waltho was proposed as Vice Chair by Sue Cook and seconded by Irene Goodwin. Both happily accepted the posts.

COUNCIL MEETING

Present: Cllrs. Weedenburg, Waltho, Goodwin, Lyne, Cohen, Cook and Thorpe plus Dorothy Waite the clerk and RFO. Apologies received from Ward Cllr. Lesley Smetham

1873 – Completion of post election forms

All members were handed the Acceptance of Office forms, return of Election Expenses and Register of Interest forms to complete. These do not have to be completed electronically and were therefore being completed at the meeting for the clerk to deliver to Macclesfield and Sandbach. This procedure had been agreed with the Election Office.

1874. Minutes

The minutes of the March meeting had been signed at the Accounts meeting on 11th April.

1875 – Matters at Plough Inn

The Directors of the Plough Inn – Jose Lourenco and Nathan Jordan had requested to be present at the meeting to address various concerns which had arisen in the village in respect of noise, parking and occasional social behaviour after events. Jose outlined that they had been at the Plough for a number of years and all had been very welcoming and they are part of the village. With success, particularly wedding events, had come a few issues and these they have been made aware of and they wish to be good neighbours to the village. They were not aware of occasional rowdy behaviour and bad language outside the Plough after events which is unacceptable. Cllr. Lyne stated that it was easy for anyone to hear the noise and language. Cllr Cook stated that the noise often came from persons sitting on the wall outside the Plough and Cllr Cohen queried if those booking the event had to sign any conditions of behaviour. Jose suggested that they plant out the top of the wall to prevent it being sat on after events. Cllr. Cook stated that it was after drinking that the noise level rose. Jose stated that usually the presence of the Manager curtailed some of the problem. Cllr. Waltho wondered whether the manager could circle around and ask for the noise to be kept down and this might improve the matter. Cllr. Lyne indicated that the problem outlined usually happened around every two weeks. Cllr Cohen felt that the need to respect the residents should be in any agreement when bookings were taken. The wall planting will be done very quickly and the manager will walk around regularly.

The noise level is being further addressed by an additional internal door which would be glazed to keep the noise down and this would also address noise from the music. They will be getting a quote for air conditioning in the barn but this is a bit complex due to the layout of the room. They already have this in the sun lounge area and it is working very well. There is

a noise limiter in operation but this occasionally cuts out sound at the wrong time. They are installing some double glazed windows plus the extra door and would like to try this out. Cllr. Lyne asked for any time scale for this work and it will be addressed as urgently as possible. Cllr. Cook stated that occasionally the noise level increased around 11 pm and Cllr. Lyne queried if the noise limiter was in the right place – it needs to be where the band stands. Cllr. Cook advised that the worst noise was the base boom from the music which was continuous. Cllr. Lyne felt that the DJ should be responsible for keeping the noise level down and Nathan stated that on one occasion the DJ had been asked to play louder and said it was against the rules.

Most of the issues occur around weddings and they are limiting these to five per week although there is demand for more. Jose said they took the matter seriously but it would never be perfect. Last serving was 11.45 so around 12.00 it does go quiet. They have taken db readings which had not gone over the Cheshire East allowed levels. Working within the licence does not mean that problems are passed to the local neighbourhood. There will be a gap between the proposals and getting things in situ but Nathan felt that these and working with the DJ about getting the noise level down and they will be very pro-active in this area.

Parking – Any emergency vehicles getting around the village when there is on road parking could present issues. Parking around the green is a problem for both public transport and cars getting around this area. They are trying to rent a piece of land at the rear of the Plough to take up the excess need for parking. Cllr. Waltho stated that there should not be any floodlights in this area and no hard standing so that the land can drain. At the present time this is the only answer to the parking problem and it would be helpful to have the support of the council and residents in obtaining this land and the application for change of use and a letter of support prior to any application would be helpful.

Finally, the additional door and double glazing will be put in hand quickly and other measures would be continually followed up. Jose was advised that the date of our next meeting would be the 4th of July when they would be happy to attend again and assess any progress or otherwise.

1876 – Flooding update

Cllr. Waltho has been dealing with this and has had meetings with Cheshire East and United Utilities. We are disappointed that the major work needed on the culvert on the A536 is not scheduled to be included in the current year programme. He had asked Cllr. Smetham to forward our concerns to the various authorities and the matter will be taken further. UU had identified the need for a separate surface water and foul drains but it was felt that this should be left until work on the culvert and drainage is improved. We need to decide we pursue the UU advice and know whether the work would affect the culvert as it is at present. Cllr. Lyne felt we should insist on remedial work until the work on the culvert is addressed. Cheshire East had stated they would improve the footpath drainage outside No.7. Cllr. Lyne felt that the authority should be aware of the working of the remedial work done in the field between the Plough and the houses. Cllr. Cohen queried who had taken the decision not to go ahead with further drainage work and where any money is being spent. Most of the items included in the present year were not in Eaton. We assume some highway committee has come to this decision. The decision is usually based on the number of houses affected by the flooding and

there is a points system. If more properties had been flooded we would have been higher up the scale of work to be done. Cllr. Cook asked if there was any scope to go back to Cheshire East and ask for work to be done regularly to keep the drains clear and this would fit with Cllr. Waltho's question for more pro-active work and not wait for the flooding to happen. Ian Bonner had had a problem up at his property at the north of the village and following e mails from the clerk this had been resolved. Cllr. Lyne asked if we could ask Andy Simpson if the culvert was discharging clearly and it is understood that it does. David Rutley has been notified of the problem but has only given us contacts to use. Cllr. Waltho wondered if the committee had all the information in front of them and we need to know the criteria for the decision. Ask Cllr. Smetham to provide a link to ascertain why the decision has been made and why capital monies are not available for this work. We need the agenda and the minutes of the meeting when the decision was made.

1877 – Insurance Renewal

The council were made aware of the background to this and the recommendation from Gawsforth and Lower Withington to contact Zurich for a quote. Having looked at the quote of £378 as opposed to over £900 from our previous insurers, it was a unanimous decision of the council to accept the Zurich quote and for the clerk to go ahead and arrange this.

1878 – Chalc Subscription

Having noted the second raised subscription sum, the clerk queried this with Jackie Weaver and was advised that it was based on the number on the electoral role. Last year we had a big increase in the number when the development at Lower Heath was included giving a figure of over 500. This development was now in Congleton and our figure is 309 but this had not been noticed by Chalc. They have now checked the new role and submitted a much smaller invoice.

1879 – Rospa report and Millennium Park

The report again refers to the ground surface by the swings and the slides which needs reinforcement and is the major criticism on the report. Clerk to forward the report to Tarmac and ask for some professional surface to be put down for us please. Also note the point where the gate closes which is too tight. Again ask Tarmac for help on this.

Cllr. Waltho will remove the bench which is no longer needed by the Syson family and is a safety hazard. Some of the good timber will be used to repair another bench on the north side of the park.

There is a query on the plan for the grass cutting in the park and around the hall and Cllr. Goodwin will check with Andrew on this. Around the hall it needs a couple of cuts to be ready for the garden party.

1880 – Tarmac sand extraction

Stuart Cannon had kindly sent to the clerk the planning decision on sand extraction for the future, Cllr. Lyne has taken this and will endeavour to read through and draw some conclusions

1881 – Bus Shelter

Cllr. Goodwin will continue to liaise to complete repair work on the bus shelter opposite the Plough.

1882 – Boundary Signs

We have costings for the signs themselves but nothing firm on the total costs. On the boundary of North Rode and Marton we may be able to ‘piggy back’ on the reverse of their signs and need to check with Cllr. Smetham on this. Check again with North Rode the total costs they met for the supply and installation of each sign.

1883 – Audit report

The clerk had received a draft report which asked a number of questions which the clerk has sent answers to. This is somewhat delayed by the accident to the clerk but hopefully we will soon receive a final report from Adam Keppel Green on our yearly account. The clerk has advised him that she is up and running again as clerk.

1884 – Bi-monthly financial report

Being at the start of the financial year, only receipts and bank reconciliation needed to be supplied and each councillor had a copy. The chair checked the figures with the bank statement and these were approved.

1885 – Accounts for payment

Chalc – subscription - £114.33 – cheque No. 795

Playsafety (Rospa) – park inspection £106.80 – cheque No. 796

D.Waite – salary/allowance £501.66 – cheque No. 797

Note: The clerk will respond to Zurich on the insurance and when the account comes to hand will contact Cllrs. Goodwin and Waltho to raise the cheque. Also, now we have a new Chair, the clerk will call at Natwest for a mandate form to add Cllr. Weedenburg as a cheque signee. Also, when the account is received from the auditor, a cheque will be raised. Otherwise both will need to wait till July but these need payment before.

1886 – Magazine Report

Plough – report as follows “The Directors of the Plough approached the council meeting to share their proposed improvements with the council regarding parking, insulation of noise from weddings and guest management. The Council were particularly supportive on the extended parking proposals as these are thought to give no visibility issues and will improve on safety and public transport access to the village. Council thought that the other proposals around escape of noise etc. were very positive and should, we hope, serve to increase the comfort of both wedding guests and residents. We look forward to future feedback from the directors on the progression of their plans”

We are disappointed to hear that Cheshire East have no plans in the next financial year to improve works in the village but we are going to take this further. In the park we are following up maintenance work as indicated in the Rospa report.

Carol Weedenburg has been appointed Chair of the Council and Cllr. Waltho is appointed Vice Chair of the council. We welcome Sue Cook and Neil Thorpe as new members of the council. Retiring Chair Susy Evans is leaving the village and our thanks are sent from all on the Council for the very high standard she has given during her time of office. Hopefully the next few years will not be quite as challenging but we have an excellent new council to address whatever comes along on behalf of the residents.

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SIGNED.....

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ACTION LIST FROM MEETINGS 16TH MAY 2023

CLERK TO DELIVER POST ELECTION FORMS TO MACCLESFIELD AND SANDBACH

NOTE ATTENDANCE OF PLOUGH DIRECTORS AT JULY MEETING FOR UPDATE

CLERK TO CONTACT CLLR. SMETHAM TO PRESS FOR THE REQUIRED DRAINAGE WORK AND ALSO TO LET US HAVE COPY OF THE AGENDA AND MINUTES OF THE MEETING WHEN THE DECISION NOT TO INCLUDE THIS YEAR WAS MADE

CLERK TO CONTACT ZURICH AND ARRANGE NEW INSURANCE COVER

CLLR. WALTHO TO REMOVE BENCH AND USE SOME TIMBER FOR REPAIRS

CLERK TO SEND ROSPA REPORT TO TARMAC AND ASK FOR FURTHER WORK ON THE PROBLEM AREA BY THE SWINGS AND SLIDE. ALSO CHECK ON THE GATE WHERE THE CLOSURE IS TOO TIGHT.

CLLR. GOODWIN TO CHECK WITH ANDREW ON THE PLANS FOR GRASS CUTTING AND ALSO FOLLOW UP BUS SHELTER

CLLR. LYNE TO REPORT BACK IN DUE COURSE ON THE SAND EXTRACTION DECISION NOTICE

CLERK TO CONTACT CLLR. SMETHAM ON BOUNDARY SIGN ISSUES AND ASK AGAIN FROM NORTH RODE FOR TOTAL COSTS

CLERK TO CONTACT NAT WEST TO ADD CLLR. WEEDENBURG TO CHEQUE SIGNING

CLERK TO PREPARE MAGAZINE THIS WEEK AS INDICATED IN MINUTES