**CROFT PARISH COUNCIL**

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD AT 19:30 ON TUESDAY 21st JUNE 2022

**Present:** Councillor Campbell (Chair)

Councillors Allen MBE, Bland MBE, Farnsworth & Partington

Helen Buckley (Clerk)

Councillor Benson

**Apologies:** Councillor Sharpe

Cheshire Police

Cllr Campbell welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2023/52 Code of Conduct – Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Allen informed the council that she would not be taking part in any planning applications.

**2023/53 Minutes of the Meeting held 17th May 2022**

**Resolved**

Minutes approved albeit with one sentence to be removed from minute reference 2023/42b.

**2023/54 Matters arising from the minutes**

2023/27a Traffic Calming: Cllr Allen will chase Mark Tune regarding traffic survey work.

Cllr Sharpe emailed the parish council to say that WBC has found a four feet hole underneath the tarmac on Kenyon Lane.

There’s a sign up saying that HGVs are not to go down Kenyon Lane. There needs to be better measures in place regarding HGV routes.

The CAZ signs are all to be pulled down.

One resident commented that some road signs are twisted meaning people could be going the wrong way to get to their destination. Also, the weed killing is ongoing.

2023/28 Jubilee: Cllr Campbell said that the events went well considering the weather.

The beacon was well attended, by close to 500 people.

Medals have been given out to the schoolchildren and commemorative 50p coins given to residents turning seventy.

There were plenty of marshalls at the events so thank you to them, especially to the Cadets and the Police.

**2023/55 Cheshire Police May Report**

1. As there was no-one present from Cheshire Police, Cllr Campbell read this out. The report was noted.
2. It was suggested to have a mobile surgery every now and then, also to visit the schools to talk to the children. There’s a big drive at the moment regarding marking bicycles to deter theft.
3. Cllr Campbell attended a Town and Parish Councils meeting on 31st May, hosted by John Dwyer, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire. At the meeting, John Dwyer said that the 101 system is not fit for purpose. By March he plans to have more officers across Cheshire. He is looking at doing something on social media, such as live streams etc.

There were 19,000 responses to a recent police survey. He is looking at an engagement plan with young people on social media.

On the Cheshire Police website, you can sign up to Neighbourhood Watch alerts.

There was a suggestion of having an increase of Special Constables in the town centre on a Friday and Saturday night, therefore freeing up other officers for outlying areas like Croft.

PCSOs do not have powers to arrest.

There’s a Community Action Fund that’s available to local communities, voluntary or third sector organisations to apply for a maximum of £5,000 to fund community projects. The projects must be located in Cheshire, be match funded, prevent crime and/or antisocial behaviour and engage with the local policing team.

1. One resident said that Darren Samuel has been missed. Cllr Bland informed that PCSO Samuel is now back from long-term sick and he will pass the well wishes onto him.
2. Cllr Campbell referred to an email received from Inspector Ruth Atherton in which she asks for the council’s opinion on the monthly police reports that are sent in. What does the council like/dislike about them? Cllr Partington commented that it would be nice if the report was just about Croft, not Culcheth and Glazebury too. Cllr Benson said that it’s probably done by ward and they all come under the same. Another suggestion was to break the summary down. Another comment was to only include any incidents of crime. The council doesn’t need to know if something hasn’t happened. It should focus on Croft on its own.
3. Rural Crime Survey: this has been sent out recently. The clerk has shared it on the council website and on social media.

**2023/56** **Request for Funding for Ukrainian Hub**

Unfortunately, the lady who was going to present on this was not at the meeting.

There are 23 Ukrainian families in Culcheth and six in Croft.

There’s a hub at Culcheth Sports Club where the families can access clothes etc.

Cllr Benson said that WBC has been given £10,000 per family. The Government gives £350 per person. However, these families and individuals are finding it difficult to access these funds.

The Sports Club is wanting £10,000 per year to host the hub.

**2023/57 Clerk’s Report: Correspondence**

1. Speeding signs – quote has come in, do we keep existing until end of life as per suggestion, where to locate them. The council agreed in principle to have new signs. However, the clerk is to liaise with Cllr Allen regarding contacting Jamie Fisher at WBC to discuss the existing signs that were installed in approximately 2017/2018. In terms of where to situate them, it was agreed that on the long stretch of Heath Lane would be best. Currently, the position of the sign coming away from the Plough isn’t bad, but the one that’s going towards the Plough needs a new position along the straight section, further away from the Plough end. We need to find out if they’d need maintenance.
2. Kick rails around the land at CYAC. The council agreed in principle to this. However, it needs to be discussed with other CYAC users whether or not to look at the height restriction barrier.
3. Football coach re: using the pitch. There was some concern that the pitch could deteriorate with overuse. The council initially said that it needs to decide on a set of principles to stick to with regards to the use of the pitch. However, after initially suggesting an hourly rate to charge for the use of the pitch, it was decided to decline other football clubs as the pitch also needs to be available to residents for their own leisurely use.

**2023/58 Clerk’s Report: Model Publication Scheme**

The councillors agreed to adopt the Information Commissioner’s Office’s Model Publication Scheme, and the Information Guide used by Grappenhall and Thelwall Parish Council which has been adapted to suit Croft Parish Council.

**Resolved**.

That the council adopts the ICO’s Model Publication Scheme and Grappenhall and Thelwall Parish Council’s Information Guide. The clerk will upload these two documents onto the website.

**2023/59 Clerk’s Report: Audit**

The clerk confirmed that the information needed for the internal audit has been submitted.

**2023/60 Clerk’s Report: Financial Reports**

The financial reports were up to the end of April. The bank reconciliations were in balance.

The April creditor list amounts to £6,261.97. There are no issues regarding the budget.

A list of June’s cheque payments was distributed to the councillors. This list amounted to £8,546.96.

**Resolved**

That the creditors’ cheque payment list for June totalling £8,546.96 be approved.

**2023/61 Clerk’s Report: Planning Applications**

**2023/62 Planning Application 2022/41566 – Blakeley Farm, Wigshaw Lane, WA3 4AG**

Description of development: Proposed change of use of an agricultural building to residential use (Class C3).

**Resolved**

Cllr Allen did not partake in this.

No objection.

**2023/63 Borough Councillor’s Update – Cllrs Allen and Benson**

1. Cllr Allen reminded everyone that there’s a surgery this Saturday at CYAC at 11:00.
2. As Cllr Allen had not attended last night’s borough council meeting, she asked Cllr Benson to provide an update.

Cllr Benson said it was a long meeting.

Due to protestors outside they were forced to have an LTN.

The council is changing the direction of the traffic flow. It affects Orford and Westy.

The whole programme needs looking at. It’s meant to be healthier by reducing pollution. A motion was put forward. Labour whipped it. Labour voted against the Conservation motion.

You can drive one way but not the other.

Residents were consulted in the first place but not sufficiently.

1. A motion was put forward regarding a traveller site. Everything had ground to a halt as the last meeting was about six months ago.

Cllr Benson talked about the impact that travellers have on our community.

Sgt Gulam said that on his previous beat there had been somewhere for them to go so he supports a site being found for them.

The motion is for an urgent attempt to find a plot of land or to find a private plot to purchase via a compulsory purchase order. Ownership would be transferred to WBC.

1. Sprinklers are to be put in all community homes.
2. Sgt Gulam had reported more issues on Shaw Street. Another camera is required. The other one is not well located on a floodlight. It’s where to put another one as it’d need a power source.
3. The question was raised as to whether the ward of Croft, Culcheth and Glazebury could pay for its own PCSO.

PCSOs can only work eight hours a day.

Sgt Gulam now has a full squad.

The councillors keep pressing for a mobile police surgery. Maybe on a monthly or six weekly basis.

**2023/64 Recess**

1. One resident said that you shouldn’t put Special Constables in the town centre as they’d be out of their depth (referring to 2023/55b above). We could ask them to attend the carnival and other events. It’s not reliable to put Specials in that position.
2. Another resident said that there are raised manholes that protrude 1” above the pavement on the path from Smithy Lane to CYAC. Cllrs Allen and Benson will look into this.
3. One resident commented that the jubilee events were good but there’s nothing permanent to commemorate the occasion. He suggested a bench at CYAC. The council thought this was a good idea. Benches are approximately £800.
4. A resident wished to complain about the mess of the village, particularly around Lord Street and Deacons Close.

There’s a dip in the pavement that’s not needed any longer due to the zebra crossing. This is from the Old Post Office to Croft Primary School. The path isn’t wide enough. Cllr Allen confirmed that she has asked if someone from the borough council could meet her on site. The hedge encroaches onto the path. It belongs to the property behind it.

Cllr Partington commented that there’s an overgrown hedge by Cockshot Cottage.

Cllr Sharpe had also said that on Lady Lane opposite the entrance to Emerald Drive the hedge is overgrown. Cllr Allen stated that if a hedge is a danger then it can be cut back.

Cllr Bland suggested that we go for the ‘Look of the Village’. We could ask for volunteers to go around and tidy it up. We could go for a ‘best village’ competition.

Philip Isgar said that he puts a cone outside his house when he cuts his hedge.

1. One resident said that there are no markings or signs on Kenyon Lane, opposite the Plough. There’s no warning to say there’s a junction ahead. Cllr Allen will follow this up.

**2023/65 Members’ Referrals**

1. Cllr Partington asked if the toilets are locked at night. The clerk confirmed that the caretaker locks them each evening.
2. Cllr Partington said he has been approached by a friend of his who had the domain name of croft.org.uk and wished to know if the parish council would like to take it on as he no longer has any need for it. The councillors agreed to this.
3. Cllr Campbell commented that the noticeboard on the playing field is falling apart and that it would be good to have it replaced, especially if we’re going to go for the ‘look of the village’. The clerk will look at sourcing replacements for all three of the noticeboards.
4. One resident said that there’s a bench outside 77 Heath Lane that’s becoming consumed by overgrown hedges. Cllrs Campbell and Allen will look into this.
5. Cllr Campbell said that Cheyvonne Bower, a local resident who volunteers at the unitarian cemetery, has worked really hard to obtain a commonwealth war graves plaque for the cemetery. He wanted to give her some recognition for her efforts in bringing this to fruition.
6. Cllr Allen said that the Sharpes did a fabulous job at their farm hosting the jubilee beacon event and wondered if the council should get them a present in recognition of this. Alvin Morris, a local resident, said he’d speak to Dave at the Horse Shoe to see if he’d be willing to donate a meal for two for them.

**2023/66 Date of next Parish Council meeting – 19th July 2022 at 19:30**