MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD AT 19:30 ON TUESDAY 15th NOVEMBER 2022

**Present:** Councillor Campbell (Chair)

Cllrs Allen MBE, Farnsworth, Partington & Sharpe

Cllr Benson

Helen Buckley (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Cllr Bland MBE

Cheshire Police

Cllr Campbell opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He explained the process of the meeting to the new faces present and it was decided to have the speeding on Heath Lane agenda item first so that people could leave afterwards should they wish. The rest of the agenda went after this item.

**2023/118 Code of Conduct – Declarations of Interest**

None.

**2023/119 Speeding on Heath Lane**

1. One resident, Robert Parker, represented everyone from Heath Lane who was present. He gave a brief background into his life in Croft. His grievance about the speeding wasn’t directed at anyone in particular but it’s something that has become a really big issue. Since moving to Heath Lane two years ago, he has tried to ingratiate himself into the community and the one issue that always arises when speaking to people is speeding.

In the last eight weeks he has seen a cyclist get knocked off his bike, and has seen a bus getting stuck for twenty minutes. There was a near miss a few weeks ago and people are all too often being clipped by passing vehicles. There is a five-mile loop around the village to Culcheth and back. He often hears the same car engine over and over again as it loops around. There are 30 signs but it’s not enough. It doesn’t deter people from speeding. The residents don’t want anyone to become a statistic in order to make a change.

1. Another resident enquired as to the new road markings that are supposed to be repainted at the junction of Kenyon Lane and Heath Lane. Cllr Allen read out a message from Mark Tune at WBC who apologised that this hasn’t been done yet but it should be completed in the coming weeks.
2. A third resident commented that it’s the same regarding Smithy Lane and Mill House Lane.
3. Other residents said that their son’s sat nav still has Heath Lane as a 60mph road. They moved to Heath Lane four years ago and have had two near misses. Another resident commented that they get the same response from WBC, that there’s no evidence of any accident.
4. Cllr Campbell explained that the council is working on getting new speed signs and that this will be approved at tonight’s meeting. The police have attended meetings a few times – they say it’s a highways issue, not just the police. To put in a pole the parish council needs to jump through hoops with WBC. The one on the bend by the Plough needs to be moved to opposite the one on the straight stretch of the road.

The cut-out police officers will hopefully help reduce speeding. The parish council had contacted the police regarding tonight’s meeting but no-one was available to attend.

One resident asked if the Police and Crime Commissioner could be involved. Cllr Campbell confirmed that he had contacted his office previously to discuss speed cameras but they’re £50,000. It’s possible the councils (on the pilot scheme) could recoup some of this through fines. Cllr Campbell will keep in touch with the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding these trials.

Another resident commented that it’s average speed cameras that are needed: one by the Plough and one by the General Elliot.

1. Cllr Campbell had previously raised the issue of funding with Mark Tune at WBC.
2. A resident asked if nearby businesses could make their employees aware of the roads in the area and to use them with respect.
3. Once people know they’re not being fined when they have sped past speed signs and cameras, they’ll keep speeding. Speed bumps and chicanes were discussed.
4. Cllr Partington commented that Mark Tune from WBC had previously said at the July meeting that the borough council would plan to do a traffic calming check probably in mid-October. Croft PC isn’t aware that any such measurements have taken place yet so this will be chased up. Mr Tune had also previously said that he has a limited budget and there are eighteen areas of Warrington ahead of Croft. He really needs to do these measurements. In July there were wires out, we need to find out if there’s any outcome to this.
5. Cllr Campbell confirmed that the speed signs will be approved tonight. He gave everyone some of the technical information.
6. Croft Parish Council will write to Cheshire Police and Warrington Borough Council in support of Croft residents.
7. A resident suggested that Sandy Lane be turned into one way. Cllr Allen said that it would have to go to consultation. Cllr Partington suggested it have double yellows, but again this would have to go to consultation.
8. Cllr Campbell told those present that we need volunteers to put out and take in the cut-out police officers.
9. One resident suggested the head of Highways stand with him as he cuts his hedge.
10. Another resident suggested having rumble strips like in Winwick.
11. A further resident suggested that the community could take down the registration plates of speeders.
12. Cllr Partington said that the police doesn’t like the public using speed guns as it’s too confrontational.
13. Cllr Campbell suggested writing to Highways England, Warrington Borough Council and Cheshire Police.
14. One resident enquired as to the use and cost of sleeping policemen. Cllr Campbell said a consultation would be needed with the residents to find out what everyone wants.

A resident said a consultation was done 23 years ago for WBC. Money was provided by Beech Farm. Things were placed outside people’s bedroom windows. The money was given back to the developer.

1. Cllr Campbell to speak to the Highways Dept at WBC.

**2023/120 Minutes of the Meeting held 18th October 2022**

**Resolved**

Minutes approved.

**2023/121 Matters arising from the minutes**

2023/98b Blocked Gullies: A resident confirmed that, after four years of chasing, the drain has finally been cleared. This will now go on a six-monthly cycle.

2023/87 Remembrance Sunday/Poppy Appeal: Cllr Campbell laid four wreaths at the Unitarian Chapel graveyard, Christ Church, the Memorial Hall and Risley.

2023/114d Borough Councillor's Update: Action to invite David Boyer and David Vasey to the parish council meeting. The clerk is to invite them. Cllr Sharpe commented that the sign for HGVs is facing the wrong way at the junction of Sandy Brow, Kenyon Lane and Heath Lane. Also, there’s a narrow footpath due to overgrown hedges.

2023/105b Clerk's Report: A resident complimented the parish council on the Queen’s bench, saying it’s well used and the best used bench in Croft.

No further matters arising.

**2023/122 Cheshire Police October Report**

As there was nobody present from Cheshire Police, Cllr Campbell read this out. The report was noted. A resident commented on the sign by the bowling club that was uprooted. Another resident suggested we write to Charlotte Nichols MP to express dissatisfaction with WBC and wondered if she could do a surgery in Croft.

**2023/123 Clerk's Report: Correspondence**

1. Speed signs: Cllr Benson recommended that it’s better to use the same company for all work, otherwise it can prove difficult if things were to go wrong. The council agreed with this suggestion and approved TWM for the works.

**Resolved**

To order the new speed signs from TWM.

1. Overhead barrier at CYAC and the Queen’s bench: these have both been installed.
2. Seven Trees for the Jubilee: the clerk is waiting to hear back from Dave Cotterill at WBC to look at the possibility of planting four of the trees on the land next to CYAC.
3. David J Platt Landscapes Ltd will undertake the flagging works on the Playing Field week commencing 12th December. This is predicted to take a few days.
4. There was a request from a resident to have the CYAC car park resurfaced.

**2023/124 Clerk's Report: 2021/22 Annual Governance & Accountability Return**

PKF Littlejohn requested further information regarding VAT returns from 2020/21 and 2021/22 which was emailed to them on Friday 11th November.

**2023/125 Clerk's Report: Toilet Block**

Other than the delivery of an additional sanitary bin, the work here is complete. Unfortunately, the toilet block has already been vandalised with damage caused to the doors.

**2023/126 Clerk’s Report: Christmas Events**

There will be a Christmas fair at the Memorial Hall on Saturday 19th November from 13:00 to 16:00. That day the car park to the Playing Field will be closed to allow for the safe installation of the Christmas tree and lights. The switch on ceremony for this will be on Friday 25th November at 18:00, although the public can gather from 17:00.

**2023/127 Clerk's Report: Financial Reports**

Members were advised that the bank statements to the end of September had still not been received.

Members were presented with the creditors’ cheque payment list for November totalling £4,435.43.

**Resolved**

That the creditors' cheque payment list for November totalling £4,435.43 be approved.

**2023/128 Clerk’s Report: Planning Applications**

Planning Applications for consideration at this meeting.

**2023/129 Application 2022/42498 – Biffa Waste Services, Risley Landfill Site, Silver Lane, WA3 6BY**

Proposal: Provision of Four Electrical Storage Batteries, Ring Main Unit and Retrospective Approval for a Modular Building (Replacing Previous Modular Office Buildings).

**Resolved**

No objection.

**2023/130 Application 2022/42415 – Former Risley Landfill, Silver Lane, Risley, WA3 6BY**

Proposal: Solar farm on land at the former Risley Landfill Site in Warrington.

**Resolved**

No objection.

**2023/131 Application 2022/42603 – Former Parkside Colliery, Winwick Road, Newton Le Willows, St Helens**

Proposal: Adjacent Authority EIA/2022/0008/SCOPE EIA scoping request from St Helens.

Cllr Sharpe commented that the document relating to this application is 600 pages long.

**Resolved**

No objection.

**2023/132 Application 2022/42352 – 104 Heath Lane, Croft, WA3 7DS**

Proposal: Rendering of External Elevations.

**Resolved**

No objection.

This application needed a response before this meeting:

**2023/133 Application 2022/41595 – Kenyon Farm, Heath Lane, Croft, WA3 7DR**

Proposal: Conversion of existing detached garage into one dwelling.

Members were asked to confirm that no objections were raised to the application as submitted.

**Resolved**

No objection.

The following application was for information only:

**2023/134 Application 2022/42319 – Blakeley Farm, Wigshaw Lane, WA3 4AG**

Proposal: To prove that the building has been used for storage (B8) for more than 10 years.

**2023/135 Borough Councillor's Update**

1. Cllr Allen informed everyone that there are travellers on Silver Lane.
2. At the last full council meeting there was a motion around the possibility of broadcasting/livestreaming the meetings. This would help document proceedings and monitor insults or hateful comments as part of the ‘Debate not Hate’ campaign. However, this motion was rejected.
3. There was a motion from the Lib Dems, the ‘First Past the Post’ motion.
4. The borough council has voted unanimously to oppose fracking.
5. A motion for the minister to retrofit older housing was passed unanimously. There was insufficient information as to whether it could be forced upon private home owners who don’t want it.
6. Cllrs Allen and Benson gave an update on the Local Plan.

**2023/136 Recess**

1. A resident asked about where the water was coming from on Lady Lane. The council has been to put rings around the potholes. It needs a new surface.

Cllr Benson informed the resident that the council has a new machine that’s semi-automatic. She can contact them to ask them to fill the holes.

1. Another resident asked if a police officer could come to Croft (and Culcheth) regarding speeding. The only way around the issue is enforcement.

Cllr Campbell informed the resident that once the new speed signs are in place, the data can be downloaded and sent to the police.

A resident asked why ANPR cameras can’t be used for speeders. Culcheth and Croft used to half fund a PCSO but in their contract they could be deployed elsewhere.

**2023/137 Members' Referrals**

Cllr Partington brought up some issues raised at a local group called LENDF. This is Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum. This was around the 7.5 tonne weight limit. There is concern over it in Glazebury.

There is also Lowton and Golborne Traffic Action Group (LaGTAG) whose minutes Cllr Partington had. There are currently no restrictions from the WBC side; however, WBC will reconsider this once Parkside is completed in approximately 24 months. Would we support WBC in this? HGVs would come through J22 of the M6. We would have to try to stop them coming to Lane Head.

Wigan Council has got a consultation called Moving Traffic at the moment that ends on Sunday. There would be cameras on Winwick Lane enforcing it if it were to go ahead.

Some HGV drivers come off at J8 of the M62 and sleep in their lorry overnight in residential areas.

Cllr Partington has already prepared a response for Wigan Council for Croft Parish Councillors to oppose this ‘Moving Traffic’ enforcement.

The last point from this was that there was some discussion around the possibility of extending the Atherleigh Way bypass. Andy Burnham is to consult with WBC.

**2023/138 Date of next Parish Council meeting – 20th December 2022 at 19:30**