MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD AT 19:30 ON TUESDAY 16TH MAY 2023

**Present:** Councillor Campbell (Chair)

Cllrs Bland MBE, Partington & Sharpe

Helen Buckley (Clerk)

Cllr Benson

Seventeen members of the public

**Apologies:** Cllrs Allen MBE & Farnsworth

Cllr Campbell opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

**2024/20 Code of Conduct – Declarations of Interest**

None declared.

**2024/21 Appointment of Chair for 2023-24**

Cllr Sharpe was nominated as Chair for 2023-24

Cllr Sharpe accepted the nomination

**Resolved**

That Cllr Sharpe be Chair for 2023-24

Cllr Sharpe chaired the meeting from this point

Cllr Sharpe expressed his thanks to Cllr Campbell for his chairmanship during 2022-23

**2024/22 Appointment of Deputy Chair for 2023-24**

Cllr Allen was nominated as Deputy Chair for 2023-24

As Cllr Allen was absent, the clerk will contact her to see if she accepts the nomination

**Resolved**

The clerk will contact Cllr Allen to see if she will be Deputy Chair for 2023-24

**2024/23** **Appointment of Representative to the Village Hall Committee**

**Resolved**

That Cllr Sharpe continues to represent the Parish Council on the Village Hall Committee

**2024/24 Appointment of Representatives to the Culcheth Education Foundation Trust**

**Resolved**

That Cllr Bland continues to represent the Parish Council on the Culcheth Education Foundation Trust

**2024/25 Minutes of the Meeting held 18th April 2023**

**Resolved**

Minutes approved.

**2024/26 Matters arising from the minutes**

Cllr Partington asked if we had applied for funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner’s Community Action Fund. The clerk said that she hadn’t yet and that the closing date is 30th June.

**2024/27 Cheshire Police April Report**

As there was nobody present from Cheshire Police, Cllr Sharpe read this out. The report was noted.

**2024/28 Gosling Park, Lady Lane**

Unfortunately, the lady who was going to present on this was not at the meeting. This item will be deferred until next month.

**2024/29 Clerk’s Report: General Data Protection Awareness Checklist for Councillors & Councillor Privacy Notice**

The documents were read and signed by Councillors.

**2024/30 Code of Conduct for Members & Openness and Transparency on Personal Interests**

**Resolved**

Approved.

**2024/31 Register of Members’ Interests**

The documents were completed and signed by Councillors.

**2024/32 Standing Orders**

**Resolved**

Approved.

**2024/33 Financial Regulations**

**Resolved**

Approved.

**2024/34 Safeguarding Public Money & Investment Strategy**

**Resolved**

Approved.

**2024/35 Financial & Management Risk Assessment**

**Resolved**

Approved.

**2024/36 Litter Picking Risk Assessment**

**Resolved**

Approved.

**2024/37 Complaints Policy & Financial Support Policy**

**Resolved**

Approved.

**2024/38 Asset Register**

**Resolved**

Approved.

**2023/39 Financial Matters: 2023/24 Annual Budget**

Noted.

**2024/40 Insurance**

Members noted the Parish Council’s insurance cover for 2023/24.

**2024/41 Financial Reports**

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

Members were presented with the creditors’ cheque payment list for May totalling £6,767.82.

**Resolved**

That the creditors’ cheque payment list for May totalling £6, 767.82 be approved.

**2024/42 Clerk's Report: Correspondence**

1. To: Michelle Waugh, Andy Burnham’s PA, to request further information regarding the meeting on Monday 19th June to discuss the proposed extension to Atherleigh Way. The clerk will chase this up.
2. From: Ian McLaughlin at WBC re: estimate for speed sign and post relocation. Wait until after meeting with Mark Tune.
3. From: Liverpool John Lennon Airport re: Airspace Change Proposal Stage 2 Engagement Review Sessions. The deadline for responses to this is Thursday 1st June.
4. The clerk had received a message via Facebook from a lady to ask about the hedge that overhangs the edge of the pavement and forces people into single file, between Croft Primary School and the cut through to Abbey/Deacons Close, along the part with the bus stop and dropped kerb. The lady said it's always a problem but she thinks it gets forgotten over winter, but Monday 15th was awful with cars needing to use the wrong side of the road as there were multiple people walking both ways for the school run.

Cllr Benson confirmed that she had an update on this which she will mention in the Borough Councillor’s update later on in the meeting.

**2024/43 Clerk's Report: Seven Trees for the Jubilee**

The three Mersey Forest trees were planted on Friday 28th April and look fantastic. Mike Platt at David J Platt Landscaping Ltd has costed the remaining four trees to be planted on the Playing Field. Including VAT and installation, this would come to £942 as the trees are root-balled due to it being past tree planting season. If we were to wait until November for tree planting season to be here again, this price would be approx. a third off as the trees will be dry root. What would Cllrs prefer?

**Resolved**

Councillors agreed to wait until November when it’s tree planting season again and it would be cheaper.

**2024/44 Clerk's Report: King Charles III’s Coronation Picnic in the Park**

The picnic in the park on Sunday 7th May was a success and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. There have been some positive comments on Facebook. Croft Parish Council would like to say a big thank you to those who came along and everyone involved who made it the success it was.

**2024/45 Clerk's Report: Play Area Inspection and Repairs**

Following on from the recent repairs that were carried out by HAGS, the annual RoSPA inspection took place on 4th May.

**2024/46 Planning Applications**

Planning Applications for consideration at this meeting.

**2024/47 Application 2023/00333/VARC – Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington**

Proposal: Application to Vary Condition 5 (Approved Plans) and Condition 26 (Great Crested Newts) Attached to Outline Planning Permission 2019/35726.

**Resolved**

To make comment endorsing CPRE’s views.

**2024/48** **Application 2023/00435/FULH – 9 New Lane, Croft, WA3 7JJ**

Proposal: Proposed First floor side extension with rear covered balcony, front entrance projection and 1.5 storey side extension and minor alterations to the driveway.

**Resolved**

To oppose on the grounds that the development would completely destroy the character of the cottage currently occupying this location, built in 1825. This sort of character is fundamental to the character of Croft. Cllrs are not able to determine the increase in volume of the property, but would have thought it exceeded the normal allowance in the green belt.

**2024/49 Borough Councillor's Update**

Cllr Benson informed that Jim Turton gave a presentation which is to be shared regarding roads and footpaths. The council will try to produce a map of each ward. There will be reports on different levels of damage on the map. There will be a ‘red, amber, green’ system. Borough councillors can have an input on this going forward. Cllr Benson’s idea is to bring it to parishes for their input.

Cllr Sharpe asked if someone tripped up on a footpath would it be a priority? Cllr Benson said it’d be dependent on how they tripped up, shoelaces, potholes, etc. Cllr Benson hopes we’d get a fair share of input going forward.

**2024/50 Recess**

1. A resident commented on very large coaches going along Mill House Lane and can’t get around corners – one had to go down Dam Lane to turn around – it had to do a three-point turn as it couldn’t go down Mill House Lane. One coach had Carmel College on the front. They’re going through the village at school pick-up time, approx. 07:15.

There’s one coming up Heath Lane too.

If it’s providing a service that’s fine but they shouldn’t be trying to go down Mill House Lane.

1. A resident commented on a hedge by the General Elliot pub that’s overgrown. She’ll mention it to the General Elliot the next time she passes and the parish council will also write to the General Elliot to ask for it to be cut back.
2. A resident asked about the Lowton bypass. Cllr Benson has requested from the locum group to be asked to go.

It’s really important that we have representation at the meeting on 19th June.

We need to alleviate congestion at Lane Head but not at our expense.

Cllr Bland said Charlotte Nichols should be there.

Cllr Benson hasn’t seen any plans yet.

If there’s a weight restriction put in place it would ease problems at Lane Head.

We need to oppose this in connection with Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council.

Cllr Partington suggested a meeting with Mark Tune in advance of the June meeting, just with the parish council.

As far as we know there are no concrete proposals at present.

One resident commented that Andy Burnham said he has the funding available.

The Lane Head South group said its preferred route is that it goes through Warrington.

Cllr Bland suggested a drop-in session with Mark Tune in advance of Monday 19th June.

We need to write to Mark Tune to emphasise the issues. Do the officers who are invited know how much this would affect us and how strongly we feel.

Winwick Lane will bring about change when done.

There was speculation as to how much money would be spent.

Members discussed a vote on whether to have a separate meeting with Mark Tune.

The meeting on 19th June is preliminary.

It was felt that our MP should be there. The clerk will write to her.

1. A resident was there on behalf of Croft Riding Centre – there are ongoing problems with speeding on Spring Lane -> they made report to WBC about it. The problem is people with horses and then cars going in excess of 40+mph. To take it any further you need the car registration plate and an independent witness which is difficult to do. It can be more dangerous with electric cars as you can’t hear them coming.

There was a suggestion to get the police involved with a radar gun. They could let the parish council know what times.

If a horse hits a car that’s half a ton hitting the windscreen.

This could be raised with Mark Tune at the next meeting in June.

They have asked police to do speed traps.

Cllr Benson agreed with the lady’s point above.

The clerk is to send Mark Tune the report from the Heath Lane speed signs.

1. Cllr Benson brought up the issue of Trident. The clerk at Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council was sent a letter from someone who had been looking for a job in the prospective new warehouses. They were approached by St Modwen to suggest they approve of the plans on the website and they might be considered for a role.
2. Cllr Sharpe updated that Smithy Brow will be closed on 11th June for a day to allow for work on a water pipe.

**2024/51 Members' Referrals**

1. Cllr Partington enquired as to the parish council having an environment policy. The clerk updated that she is due to spend the day with the Lymm clerk on Monday 22nd and will discuss this then.
2. Cllr Partington informed that the Birchwood Town Council chair is hoping to create a heritage trail and is wanting to put a plaque in Cross Lane South and suggested that Croft Parish Council also puts one in the Unitarian Chapel graveyard.

A local resident has put together a proof for a plaque. The cost will be £78 + installation.

**Resolved**

The councillors agreed that the plaque is a good idea and they agreed to this cost. However, it was suggested that the plaque should have the Croft Parish Council logo and ought to be installed in an anti-vandalism way.

**2024/52 Date of next Parish Council meeting – 20th June 2023 at 19:30**