MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD AT 19:30 ON TUESDAY 17TH OCTOBER 2023

**Present:** Councillor Sharpe (Chair)

Cllrs Bland MBE, Campbell, Farnsworth & Partington

Helen Buckley (Clerk)

Veronica Hudson (Energy Efficiency Advisor – Warrington Disability Partnership)

Thirteen members of the public

**Apologies:** Cheshire Police

Cllr Allen MBE

Cllr Sharpe opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

**2024/136 Code of Conduct – Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Sharpe declared an interest in the planning application of Barrow Farm, Kenyon Lane, Croft, WA3 4AY (ref: 2023/01172/LBC), so did not participate in this discussion.

**2024/137 Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th September 2023**

Cllr Partington commented that Mark Tune’s agenda item (2024/104) was not resolved.

**Resolved**

Minutes approved.

**2024/138 Matters arising from the minutes**

2024/104n (Previously 2024/62) Atherleigh Way Bypass: Cllr Partington has received an invitation from Andy Burnham to attend a Teams meeting on 8th November. He presumes that Cllr Allen has also had this. A resident enquired as to whether this date was instead of the October date that had previously been mentioned. Cllr Partington thought that the October date was only for council officers, but is pleased that representatives are now being invited.

2024/108 Croft Community Centre Garages: Cllr Partington enquired as to what was happening with this. The clerk will find out.

**2024/139 Cheshire Constabulary – September Report**

As there was nobody present from Cheshire Police, Cllr Sharpe read this out. It was commented on that RTCs were not included even though the Police said they would start to do this. If the Police don’t report these to WBC, then WBC doesn’t know that there are any RTCs and thinks the roads are safe. The clerk will request that these are included going forward.

**2024/140 Energy Saving Support for Warrington Residents**

Veronica Hudson introduced herself and gave some background on Warrington Disability Partnership and Disability Awareness Day. It is not just for disabled people.

The charity is completely self-funded and receives no financial input from the council.

They make money by running several events throughout the year. There will be a scuba dive on Sunday at Woolston Hub.

There is currently a raffle, at £2 per ticket, to win the opportunity to press the red button at the demolition of four of the cooling towers at Fiddlers Ferry on Sunday 3rd December. The deadline for the raffle is Monday 23rd October. You can either enter online or at the shop in Birchwood.

They have various other events such as the Santa Dash.

The charity formed thirty years ago when its founder had an accident and became paralysed. Thirty years on, he still heads up the charity.

They offer personalised 1:1 advice for energy usage. They are not affiliated to any particular energy company.

United Utilities is the main sponsor for aiding the reduction of water usage. There is a four-minute egg timer to use while showering.

You can find out if you have a leaky toilet by putting a strip inside the bowl which turns blue if your toilet leaks.

If you have frozen pipes, there is a blue sign you can put on your stop tap and you can put your plumber’s phone number on the back.

There is a warning sign you can put in your porch to prevent unwanted callers at your house.

There is a scanning device for visually impaired people where the scanner can tell you what food is in a can, for example.

You can hire a wheelchair or mobility scooter for the day. This is £5.

They don’t do solar panels but there is a gentleman named Dave Cowley who is the mentor for this. They also do not do ground source pumps or air pumps. They just deal with the householder.

They have a price list of what appliances cost to run per hour.

The Wizard is a narrowboat that you can go on a trip on. It seats up to ten people. They also have a caravan in North Wales you can book.

Their IT colleague will show people in sessions of six how to use technology, for example, if you were to buy a new tablet but didn’t know how to use it.

Cllr Bland asked if they could have a stand at or arrange a visit to Culcheth Library. Veronica did say that they have visited other Livewire sites also.

Veronica Hudson was thanked for her time and left the meeting at this point.

**2024/141 Gosling Park, Lady Lane**

There was nobody present to discuss this.

**2024/142 Verbal update from the meeting with Cheshire Police and WBC**

WBC has no funds for chicanes etc. They’re spending money in other areas of Warrington with worse accident records.

Where WBC has put speed humps and LTNs people have complained so they’re removing them.

They’ve said they’ll reduce from 60 to 40 on Glaziers Lane, Cross Lane and Mill House Lane.

Trucam to be used ideally once per week in the ward.

Flooding and road markings were also discussed.

Police said they’d report RTCs to WBC and to us.

Speed calming measures are unpopular due to the noise given off from them.

A resident commented the temporary traffic lights on Heath Lane had made people slow down. The work has been done but the lights are still there. The lights are disruptive when they’re there for no reason.

The meeting was disappointing but we have some minor gains.

They’re not doing any more 20 zones.

Cllr Farnsworth queried the funded PCSO. The clerk read out a reply she’d had from the Stockton Heath clerk.

You can’t guarantee that the PCSO is there all the time – they can be deployed elsewhere. Cllr Bland said that this has also been discussed in Culcheth and has been decided against.

The clerk updated that she had written on Facebook about the possibility of a Community Speedwatch group. She read out the replies she has had. Referring to the replies, Cllrs Bland and Campbell agreed and said that that’s how it used to be run. You can issue warning letters to people but they’re not prosecuted until the second or third offence.

The police can offer training.

**2024/143 Clerk's Report: Correspondence**

1. To/From: Barbara Parratt at WBC re: Croft Community Centre Garages. Covered above in 2024/138.
2. From: Royal Mail re: Post-box on Stone Pit Lane.
3. From: Salford City Council re: Houses in Multiple Occupation Proposed Supplementary Planning Document. All comments to be received by 16:30 on Friday 3rd November. No comment.
4. From: Resident re: Mobile Phone Signal. For info, the lady is with Talkmobile, her husband is on O2 but many others are with Vodafone. There have been comments about this on Croft Chit Chat on Facebook. The clerk was asked to put this lady in touch with our MP.
5. From: Greater Manchester Combined Authority re: Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan – Modifications Consultation 2023. The deadline for the submission of representations is 23:59 on 6th December. No comment.

**2024/144 Clerk's Report: Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2022/23 for Submission to External Auditor**

The clerk reported that the external auditor, PKF Littlejohn LLP, had completed its limited assurance review. Its report stated that “Except for the matters reported below, on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

The smaller authority has disclosed that it made proper provision during the year 2022/23 for the exercise of public rights, by answering ‘Yes’ to Section 1, Assertion 4. However, as was reported last year, we are aware that it failed to do this and therefore should have answered ‘No’ to this Assertion. It has also disclosed that it took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit, by answering ‘Yes’ to Section 1, Assertion 7, which, on the basis of the above, is not correct.

The smaller authority failed to approve the AGAR in time to publish it before 1 July 2023, the date required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and did not disclose this by answering ‘No’ to Section 1, Box 1.

Information has come to our attention from the internal auditor highlighting the fact that the Notice of conclusion of audit and external auditor report and certificate were not published on the authority’s website by the dates specified in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.”

“Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

We note that the smaller authority did not comply with Regulation 15 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as it failed to make proper provision during the year 2023/24 for the exercise of public rights, since the period for the exercise of public rights did not include the first 10 working days of July and the correct information was not published on a website as well as a noticeboard. As a result, the smaller authority must answer ‘No’ to Assertion 4 of the Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24 and ensure that it makes proper provision for the exercise of public rights during 2024/25.

In the completion of the Annual Internal Audit Report, and their detailed report, the internal auditor has drawn attention to significant weaknesses in relation to the fixed asset register (Internal Control Objective H), overtime authorisation and bank reconciliations. The smaller authority must ensure that action is taken to address these areas of weakness in a timely manner.”

The ‘Notice of Conclusion of the Audit,’ along with Sections 1,2 and 3 of the 2022/23 AGAR, was posted on the noticeboards and on the website on 21st September. They shall remain on the noticeboards until the middle of November.

In the cover letter from PKF, it states the following under the sub header ‘Timetable for 2023/24’:

“We would like to draw your attention to a change within the Practitioners’ Guide 2023 which is mandatory for the 2023/24 period. Paragraph 1.26 relates to the requirements in relation to Assertion 3 and states *‘Email management - every authority should have an email account that belongs to the council and to which the council has access – this ideally would be a .gov.uk or .org.uk address or could be an address linked to the council website.’* In order to answer yes to Assertion 3 in the 2023/24 Annual Governance Statement the local authority should ensure that it has an email address that complies with this requirement and if it does not already it should do so urgently.”

The clerk asked if the council would be happy for her to approach NetWise to ask for email addresses that match the website which is already a .org.uk address. The councillors agreed to this.

**2024/145 Financial Reports**

The financial reports were up to the end of September.

The bank reconciliations were in balance.

The September creditor list amounts to £7,412.11. There are no issues regarding the budget.

A list of October’s payments was distributed to the councillors. This list amounted to £3,437.50.

**Resolved**

That the payments list for October totalling £3,437.50 be approved.

**2024/146 Planning Applications**

Planning Applications for consideration at this meeting:

**2024/147 Application 2023/01196/ADJA – Land at Parkside East, St Helens, WA12 8DB**

Proposal: EIA Scoping Opinion for a series of manufacturing / logistics units (Use Class B2 / B8 with ancillary E(g) office) with associated access roads, gatehouses, car parking, hardstanding / service yards and landscaping.

**Resolved**

No objection

**2024/148** **Application 2023/01172/LBC – Barrow Farm, Kenyon Lane, WA3 4AY**

Proposal: Conversion and extension of agricultural building to create one residential dwelling, car port and associated works.

Cllr Sharpe left the room at this point so did not partake in this planning application.

**Resolved**

No objection

The following were for information only.

**2024/149 Application 2023/01133/DISCON – Kenyon Lane Nurseries, WA3 4AX**

Proposal: Proposed Discharge of Condition 10 (Vehicular access improvements) On application 2020/36397 (2 dwellings).

**2024/150 Application** **2023/00925/DISCON – Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington**

Proposal: Discharge of Condition 43 (HS2 Ecology safeguarded area) on previously approved application 2023/00333 (Motorway service area).

**2024/151 Application** **2023/00926/DISCON – Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington**

Proposal: Discharge of Condition 42 (HS2 Utilities safeguarded area) on previously approved application 2023/00333 (Motorway service area).

**2024/152 Application** **2023/****00927/DISCON – Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington**

Proposal: Discharge of Condition 41 (Design and Method statement) on previously approved application 2023/00333 (Motorway service area).

**2024/153 Application** **2023/00947/DISCON – Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington**

Proposal: Discharge Condition no. 21 (Details of the installation and maintenance of the underground storage tanks), Pursuant to LPA reference number 2023/00333/VARC. Attached to Outline Planning Permission Reference no. 2019/35726.

**2024/154 Application** **2023/00948/DISCON – Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington**

Proposal: Discharge Conditions 23 and 24 (Water Framework Assessment and a detailed design for the diversion of Silver Lane Brook). Pursuant to LPA reference number 2023/00333/VARC. Attached to Outline Planning Permission Reference no. 2019/35726.

**2024/155 Application** **2023/01009/DISCON – Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington**

Proposal: Discharge Condition nos. 36 (Land Contamination) and 37 (Remediation and Verification) pursuant to LPA reference number 2023/00333/VARC. Attached to Outline Planning Permission Reference no. 2019/35726.

**2024/156 Application** **2023/01183/** **DISCON – 20 Smithy Brow, WA3 7BZ**

Proposal: Discharge of Condition No's 3 (Materials), 4 (Landscaping Scheme) and 6 (EV Charging) attached to planning permission 2022/42073.

**2024/157 Application** **2023/01242/DISCON – Land Between A49 Winwick Road to A573 Parkside Road, Including A Proportion of The Former Parkside Colliery with Land, From A573 Parkside Road to A579 Winwick Lane Connecting to M6 Junction 22, WA2 8ST**

Proposal: Discharge of Condition 9 (Highway Improvement Works) attached to planning permission 2018/32514.

**2024/158 Application** **2023/01209/HPA – 95 Heath Lane, WA3 7DT**

Proposal: Demolition of existing conservatory. Construction of new single storey rear extension comprising new kitchen/dining/sitting area.

**2024/159 Application** **2023/01267/NMA – Land Between A49 Winwick Road to A573 Parkside Road, Including a Proportion of the Former Parkside Colliery Site. Then Land Also from the A573 Parkside Road to A579 Winwick Lane Connecting to M6 Junction 22, Warrington**

Proposal: Proposed extension to drainage swale on previously approved application 2018/32514 (Link Road).

**2024/160 Application** **2023/00969/CLDE – 610 Warrington Road, WA3 6BG**

Proposal: Existing works undertaken to form stables and residential quarters.

**2024/161 Borough Councillor's Update**

There was no update as there was no borough councillor present.

**2024/162 Recess**

1. A resident enquired about the Community Centre car park. The clerk will follow this up with WBC. It’s been brought up multiple times. It’s a health and safety issue as it’s a trip hazard and a danger to cars. The resident also pointed out the weeds growing under the Queen’s bench. The clerk will chase Kevin McCready again.
2. One resident commented that more Red Routes signs had gone up but they’re supposed to be coming down.
3. Another resident commented on the overgrown hedges on the corner of Oak Street. The clerk will call in again and also contact Nik Iddon for advice.
4. A resident said he has an oak tree in his garden that has a TPO. He has been trying to get hold of Simon Twigg and has also previously gone through Cllr Allen. He quoted the Local Plan which states to let people speak as a legal duty but he feels that he and Cllr Allen are being ignored. He wants to prune the tree by lopping a bit of the height and taking some width off. He wants someone to come to see him to assess the tree. He’s been told he needs to fill out a planning application. The Cllrs agreed that the clerk should pass on the details of Platt’s to him.

**2024/163 Members' Referrals**

1. Road closures – more traffic notices were advertised today.
2. Cllrs agreed that a bin is required at the junction of Dam Lane and Southworth Lane. The clerk will contact Ian Brackenbury to action.
3. Cllrs also agreed that the bus shelter on Lord Street needs replacing. The clerk asked if she could look at a living bus stop in line with being more environmentally friendly. The Cllrs agreed to this.

**Resolved**

The clerk to look at procuring a living bus stop for Lord Street.

**2024/164 Date of next Parish Council meeting – 21st November 2023 at 19:30**