MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD AT 19:30 ON TUESDAY 19TH MARCH 2024

**Present:** Councillor Sharpe (Chair)

Councillors Allen MBE (Vice Chair), Bland MBE, Farnsworth & Partington

Helen Buckley (Clerk)

Cllr Benson

David Gratton from the Croft Village Memorial Hall Committee

Henry Coakley from the General Elliot (towards the end of the meeting)

Eighteen members of the public

Cllr Sharpe opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

**2024/253 Code of Conduct – Declarations of Interest**

None recorded.

**2024/254 Apologies**

Cllr Campbell

Cheshire Police

**2024/255 Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th February** **2024**

**Resolved**

Minutes approved.

**2024/256 Matters arising from the minutes**

One resident brought up the proposed new mast on Mill House Lane. He said that people have been door knocking and asking people why they haven’t complained. You could still object online. As a parish council we didn’t have the option to comment.

**2024/257 Cheshire Constabulary – February** **Report**

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

One resident queried where the police were situated on Heath Lane when the Trucam was being used. Cllr Allen confirmed that it was near to the General Elliot.

**2024/258 Croft Village Memorial Hall**

David Gratton, the treasurer of Croft Village Memorial Hall Committee, introduced himself and said he was at the meeting to request help for funding for ten external doors, which have fallen into a state of disrepair. He has been quoted £3.5k to supply and fit new doors, but he suspects that this could in fact come to around £5k once you have factored in sanding, painting, putting handles and hinges on. He has asked WBC for 50%. He has sent off an application form to WBC.

WBC said to ask Croft Parish Council also. Cllr Benson enquired as to whether the recent flooding could have contributed to the state of the doors.

**Resolved**

Croft Parish Council agreed to pay 50% if WBC can also pay 50%.

Cllr Sharpe asked David to give an update on the flooring. David confirmed that it needs replacing as it has bubbled from the flooding. The total would be £50k to replace the entire flooring fully and properly. However, this is an estimate rather than a quote.

Cllr Sharpe asked if the insurance could cover it.

**2024/259 Levelling Up**

Cllr Sharpe gave an update from Alan Dickin at WBC. Unfortunately, nothing is available to Croft from this £9.4m.

The reply from Alan Dickin is as follows:

*I’ve been speaking to colleagues who put the Levelling Up Fund Bid together and having a look with them at the routes you mentioned in your email.*

*The outcome is that unfortunately we will not be able to look at the links between Croft and Birchwood under this current LUF project. When the bid was developed one of the criteria was (and still is) to be able to deliver the projects in a short timescale, in this case, less than 2 years. In order to meet these criteria, the bid was put together based on routes where the council as highway authority or landowner has the land available to make the improvements. Any schemes which would require purchase of private or 3rd party land would be very unlikely to be deliverable within the funding window, would be seen as a very high risk by the funders, DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities), ultimately unlikely to be supported and therefore were not included in the bid.*

*The routes chosen for the LUF bid in Burtonwood, to Winwick along the A49 and to Culcheth from Birchwood are using existing rights of way, such as footpaths and bridleways or highway land. By contrast, when colleagues scoped the bid, they looked at routes between Croft and Birchwood, and it was clear that providing a footway or footpath/cycleway along roads such as Spring Lane and other routes you mention would require purchase of private land from residents, farmland or other landowners. Unfortunately acquiring 3rd party land is a long process with, for example the minimum time required for a Compulsory Purchase Order process being 18 months and no guarantee of success.*

*Whilst I am sure this is disappointing, we agree there is a need to address this issue in our longer-term thinking, but unfortunately the current LUF Fund is not an option.*

Cllr Partington commented that none of the 71 ‘shovel ready’ projects are to be started.

**2024/260 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings (Thursday 6th June)**

The clerk read out the suggestions received.

David Gratton confirmed that there will be a dance at the Memorial Hall but he wasn’t sure if it was on Thursday 6th or Saturday 8th. He will check with Gill Coon.

Cllr Partington thought that a solemn event would be better.

Cllr Bland liked the hotpot idea.

Cadets are also a good idea – they could do a parade.

We should have something on Saturday 8th and combine it with Croft Village Memorial Hall. We should form a committee together with them. If there is any interest in joining then please let the clerk know.

When Henry Coakley arrived, he confirmed that the General Elliot will be doing a themed evening on Thursday 6th.

Croft PC will put on a hotpot and dance on Saturday 8th with Croft Village Memorial Hall.

**2024/261 Clerk's Report: Correspondence**

1. From: Salford City Council re: Statement of Community Involvement Consultation. This consultation runs until Friday 5 April 2024 if anyone wishes to comment on it. Cllrs did not wish to comment.
2. From: Salford City Council re: Houses in Multiple Occupation: Consultation on a Draft Supplementary Planning Document. This consultation also runs until Friday 5 April 2024 if anyone wishes to comment on it. Cllrs did not wish to comment.
3. From: Katie Halliwell at WBC on behalf of the programme officer for the Cheshire & Warrington Local Nature Recovery Strategy re: a consultation on the future for wildlife in Cheshire & Warrington that has just been made public. This consultation closes on 31st March should you wish to make any comments. Cllrs did not wish to comment.
4. To/from: Mark Tune at WBC re: Proposed change of derestricted zones to become 40mph zones in Croft. Jamie Fisher is to pick this up once he has returned from annual leave.
5. From: Croft Carnival Committee re: disabled parking on carnival day. There are two disabled spaces on the field. However, due to the road closures for the parade, the latest time vehicles can access the field is 11:30. The committee has agreed with Dave at The Horseshoe that there will be two disabled spaces available on The Horseshoe car park all day but these will be on a first come, first served basis.

**2024/262 Clerk's Report: Elections**

The clerk has had an email regarding election recharges and whether the council wishes to spread the cost over four years (Lymm PC does this, for info), or to pay it all in full. The clerk asked members to confirm what has been done in the past as this is her first election.

**Resolved**

Cllrs said to the clerk to spread the cost over four years but to find out what the cost is.

**2024/263 Clerk's Report: Insurance**

The clerk has had a quote from Zurich, our current provider, for £1,488.63.

She has also received a further quote from Clear Councils. This quote comes in at £1,028.89 inclusive of a 12% insurance premium tax and an arrangement fee of £45.00. A three-year long-term undertaking would reduce the annual premium to £988.53 including insurance premium tax.

**Resolved**

Cllrs asked the clerk to see if Zurich could match the quote from Clear, if not then go with Clear.

**2024/264 Clerk's Report: HAGS Inspection**

HAGS-SMP Ltd carried out its latest inspection on 7th March. A copy of the report was emailed to Cllrs on Monday 11th.

The clerk has had confirmation from RoSPA also that it would carry out its annual inspection sometime in April.

**2024/265 Financial Reports**

The financial reports were up to the end of February 2024.

The bank reconciliation was in balance and up-to-date to the end of February.

The February creditor list amounts to £5,665.49. There are no issues regarding the budget.

A list of March’s BACS payments was distributed to the councillors by email. This list amounted to £3,758.99.

**Resolved**

That the payments list for March totalling £3,758.99 be approved.

**2024/266 Planning Applications**

Since the last meeting, members have been circulated with the following. This application needed a response before this meeting:

**2024/267 Application** **2024/00153/FULH – 43 Heath Lane, WA3 7DL**

Proposal: Removal of single storey side extension and single storey rear extension and replacement with a part single storey and part two storey side extension and part single storey and part two storey rear extension.

Members were asked to confirm that no objection was raised to the application.

**Resolved**

No objection.

Planning applications for consideration at this meeting:

**2024/268 Application 2024/00224/FUL – Kenyon Hall Farm, Winwick Lane, WA3 7ED**

Proposal: Improvements to part of the existing seasonal car park (granted permission under planning application 2017/29799). Specifically re-enforcing the grass using permeable gravel grids, incorporating a sustainable drainage solution and adding two short gravel joining tracks.

**Resolved**

No objection.

**2024/269** **Application 2024/00148/FULH – 5 Dam Lane, WA3 7HE**

Proposal: Hipped pitched roof to replace existing flat roof to hobby workshop/potting shelter.

**Resolved**

No objection.

Amendments have been received for the following:

**2024/270 Application** **2022/42779 – 23 Gosling Road, WA3 7LN**

Proposal: Single storey, wrap around extension. Traditional build. Hipped Roof. Materials to match existing.

**Resolved**

No objection.

The following were for information only:

**2024/271 Application** **2024/00174/CLDP – The Bungalow, Warrington Road, WA3 6BS**

Proposal: Proposed garage.

**2024/272 Application** **2024/00308/DISCON – Hey Barn, Cross Lane, WA3 7AP**

Proposal: Discharge of Conditions 4 (Pedestrian and Vehicular visibility splays), Condition 5 (Noise sources), and Condition 8 (Parking spaces), on application 2019/36059 (Residential development).

**2024/273 Borough Councillor's Update**

Cllr Carol Benson provided an update.

1. There was a full council meeting at the end of February to agree the budget. The meeting was interrupted by protestors. The budget was voted through by a majority.
2. Pay policy statement – lots of councillors declared interests. Some councillors abstained but it was carried.
3. Cllr Benson requested the resurfacing of Warrington Road in Glazebury due to the breakdown of the present surface. This would be alongside United Utilities. The surface water is coming from somewhere. It’s WBC’s job to fix that.
4. The roadworks on Wigshaw Lane should be done by the end of March as they are ahead of schedule.
5. Cllr Benson is awaiting a report regarding the Glaziers Lane/Wigshaw Lane flood. It might be a coincidence that it has happened, rather than it was caused by the contractors.

**2024/274 Recess**

1. One resident said that there is a seat by 77/79 Heath Lane that is overgrown by hedges. Apparently, it’s smashed up and belongs to the council.
2. The same resident asked about the letterbox by the Plough. He was updated that Royal Mail said that this is not being replaced. He also said that, apparently, a letterbox was stolen from outside St Lewis’. Croft Parish Council will put pressure on Royal Mail to have the letterboxes reinstated.
3. Another resident re-raised the issue of Opus that was brought up last month. It was confirmed to him that Croft Parish Council wrote to Opus following February’s query but had received no reply or acknowledgement. The parish council will re-write to Opus.
4. A lady was there on behalf of Risley residents. She would like to have a cross parish council meeting regarding Silver Lane.

Trident is already a battle, but lately Silver Lane has become more pressing. Silver Lane falls under CPC.

Police now have new powers to remove illegal encampments. The last one in August was there six weeks.

Another camp arrived earlier this evening near Birchwood Golf Club (on Kelvin Close) but was moved on within an hour.

Cllr Allen is on the Transit Site Committee with WBC and has been calling for a meeting since before Christmas. She ended up emailing Steve Broomhead directly.

The Risley residents are trying to have the former landfill site renamed Risley Heights. There is no S106 money.

Culcheth & Glazebury PC has always been supportive but this is the first time but this is first time CPC has been approached.

Silver Lane used to be a public access road until the M62 was built. Biffa is not claiming any responsibility – there is nothing in the discharge conditions.

If they have angle grinders, they’d cut through anything that was put there.

Biffa uses Silver Lane regularly, as do tankers.

WBC and the police were challenged as to why the last encampment was there so long. The new powers should override that.

Cllr Allen made the suggestion to have representation from CPC and C&GPC.

Bollards that come out of the ground would cost about £64k.

According to one resident, Silver Lane is still a public road.

The lady who raised this will set a meeting up.

**2024/275 Members' Referrals**

None.

**2024/276 Date of next Parish Council meeting – 16th April 2024 at 19:30.**

**Cllr Sharpe declared the meeting closed at 20:33.**