

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RUSHBURY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 18 MARCH 2024  
AT 7:30PM AT THE COMMITTEE ROOM, RUSHBURY VILLAGE HALL**

**3192. WELCOME**

Dr C Stevenson welcomed everyone to the meeting of Council.

**3193. PRESENT**

Cllrs Dr C Stevenson – Chairman, P Bodimeade, A Dixon, M Lowndes, R Madeley, A Richards, E Riley.

Clerk C Maclean,

Members of Public: 1

**3194. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Shropshire Councillor Mrs C Motley.

**3195. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS**

None declared.

**3196. PUBLIC SESSION**

Cllr Dr C Stevenson invited Mr N Green who was attending the meeting as a member of the public to address Cllrs. Mr Green had applied for the position of Clerk and RFO to the Council and explained his interest in the role.

Cllrs thanked Mr Green for his interest and detail behind his application.

**3197. MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 19 FEBRUARY 2024**

**Proposed by Cllr A Dixon, seconded by Cllr M Lowndes that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 19 February 2024 be adopted and it was resolved that the Chairman sign these as a true record.**

**3198. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Cllr Dr C Stevenson advised Cllrs of the following:

**3198a. South Shropshire Area Committee**

The draft Minutes of the latest meeting had been forwarded by the Clerk.

**3198b. Chairmans Meeting**

Cllrs noted that the recent meeting of Chairmen covered latest topics of key interest within the county which covered (i) Shropshire Council budget cuts; (ii) parking charges; (iii) review and possible reduction of recycling centres. Cllrs agreed that a letter be sent to the Division Cllr Mrs C Motley sharing these concerns. Cllr Dr C Stevenson agreed to draft a letter and share with Cllrs prior to issue.

**3198c. Place Plans**

Details were awaited of the replacement officer to Ms V Turner and the issue of the latest Plans.

### **3918d. Community Infrastructure Levy**

Parish Councils were seeking greater detail on the breakdown of these funds from Shropshire Council.

### **3198e. Rural Funding**

The National Association of Local Councils were seeking assurances from the Government that more funding should be allocated to rural communities.

### **3199. COUNCILLOR VACANCY**

**3199a.** Cllrs noted that Ms A Henderson had failed to attend meetings for a period of six months and no communication had been received from her. As a result of this and the requirement to follow Government regulations Cllrs noted Ms A Henderson was disqualified from the Council and the relevant notices were being published.

**3199b.** No applications had been received to fill the post left vacant by Mr T Flashman. The advertisement continued to be displayed. Consideration was given to advertising in the Honey-pot magazine.

### **3200. CLERK RECRUITMENT**

Cllrs noted the application from Mr N Green for the position of permanent Clerk and RFO.

**Proposed by Cllr P Bodimeade, seconded by Cllr E Riley and it was unanimously resolved to offer the post of Clerk and RFO to Mr N Green.**

Cllrs noted the proposed start date of 1 April 2024. Cllrs also noted the end date for the outgoing Clerk of 8 April 2024.

### **3201. PLANNING**

#### **3201a. Planning Applications Received:**

Cllrs noted receipt on 11 March 2024 of an application for the proposed demolition of conservatory, erection of extension, pitched roof and porch alteration at 10 Rushbury Road, Rushbury (24/00736/FUL). Following consideration, Councillors supported the application.

Cllrs noted receipt on 11 March 2024 of an application for the proposed change of use of land for equestrian purposes and erection of stables at Land at Heath Bridge, Longville In The Dale (24/00870/FUL). Following consideration, Cllrs supported the application.

Cllrs noted receipt on 11 March 2024 of the proposal to erect an agricultural storage building at Upper Stanway, Rushbury (24/00994/AGR). Cllrs noted that the advice from Shropshire Council was for information only and that no decision was required from the Parish Council. Cllrs also noted the declaration of interest from Cllr E Riley as this related to his property.

#### **3201b. Planning Decisions Advised:**

Cllrs noted any decisions received were being forwarded by the Clerk at time of receipt.

### **3201c. Planning Appeal:**

Cllrs noted the appeal lodged by the owners of the Plough Inn in relation to the proposed change of use of public house to additional residential accommodation. Whilst there had been a detailed response from the Parish Council to the application when it was received Cllrs considered the merits of a further submission being submitted to the Planning Inspector. Cllrs shared concerns over the apparent length of time the appeal process took prior to communication to the Parish Council.

### **3202. SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Cllrs noted the apologies received from Shropshire Cllr Mrs C Motley due to her absence from the county and Cllr Dr C Stevenson read out a report received for the meeting. Attached as Appendix A.

### **3203. FINANCIALS**

**3203a. Current Finances:** Cllrs noted the funds currently held in the Council's bank accounts.

**3203b. Invoices for Payment:** Cllrs noted the following invoices and payments that would require payment:

- a. Tivoli Group Ltd for Millennium Green maintenance for February for £168.19
- b. Tivoli Group Ltd for Millennium Green maintenance for March for £168.19
- c. Jason Gough Computing Services Ltd for February data backup for £7.20
- d. Jason Gough Computing Services Ltd for March data backup for £7.20
- e. Rushbury Village Hall for £16.50 for February meeting
- f. Rushbury Village Hall for £16.50 for March meeting
- g. Clerk salary for last quarter for £787.50

**Cllrs agreed that the Clerk salary be paid and that on receipt of invoices from suppliers payment be made.**

### **3204. PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT**

Cllrs noted the Risk Assessment was due for review. Cllrs agreed the review be conducted following further assets being acquired by the Parish Council.

### **3205. PARISH SURVEY PRIORITIES**

Cllrs considered the contents of the Parish Survey Key Concerns Action Plan and agreed some amendments to better reflect current status. A copy of the final Plan would be sent to the editor of the Honey-pot magazine for publication.

Cllrs agreed that it would be useful for representatives from the Police to attend future meetings.

### **3206. ROAD SAFETY WITHIN PARISH**

Cllrs noted the content of the Grant Acceptance Form for the two speed indicator signs to be maintained within the parish.

**Proposed by Cllr P Bodimeade, seconded by Cllr A Richards and it was resolved the Chairman sign the Acceptance Form on behalf of the Parish Council.**

Cllrs considered the operational aspects of erecting and maintaining the devices once they have been obtained.

### **3207. PLACE PLAN**

Cllrs considered projects within the Parish that could be added to the Place Plan maintained for Church Stretton and surrounding parishes. These included (i) extension of 30mph limit through Rushbury; (ii) consideration of 20mph limit at Rushbury School; (iii) safety measures for pedestrians walking on lane between Rushbury and Wall Under Heywood; (iv) installation of pavement opposite Rushbury Village Hall.

### **3208. CORRESPONDENCE**

Cllrs noted the communications received from SALC, NALC and Rural Services Network. The correspondence received from SaTH in relation to health matters and Shropshire Council on leisure facilities were also noted.

### **3209. BALLCOURT/TENNIS COURT LAND OWNERSHIP AND MAINTENANCE**

Cllr Dr C Stevenson advised Cllrs of the interest by the Village Hall Committee in purchasing the land which includes the ballcourt/tennis court if available at a nominal amount. Cllrs agreed there were merits in consolidating ownership compared to the current split arrangements.

Cllrs noted the next steps required a joint meeting between the Parish Council, Village Hall Committee and Trustees of the Millennium Green.

Cllrs agreed that the ballcourt/tennis court would benefit from monthly checks and cleanups.

### **3210. COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**

**3210a. Village Hall:** Cllrs noted no update other than what had been discussed during the meeting.

**3210b. Millennium Green and Playground:** Cllrs noted no update other than what had been discussed during the meeting.

### **3211. PARISH MATTERS**

Cllr A Richards advised of an offer by a resident to contribute towards the reinstatement of a bee roundel within the parish.

Cllr P Bodimeade commented on the increasing number of potholes within the parish.

Cllr Dr C Stevenson noted with Cllrs the proposal for a tripartite meeting comprising representatives from Cardington, Rushbury and Eaton Under Heywood and Hope Bowdler Parish Councils. The meeting is to consider topics and projects of common interest and concern to all these parishes. Cllr Dr C Stevenson would explore dates for the meeting which would include Shropshire Cllr Mrs C Motley.

### **3212. PARISH ASSEMBLY**

The Clerk advised Cllrs that checks would be made with the Chair of the Village Hall Committee on availability of the main hall and communicate the date of the Annual Assembly.

### **3213. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

To advise Clerk of items to be considered for inclusion on the agenda.

### **3214. NEXT MEETING DATE**

Cllrs noted the scheduling of the Annual General Meeting and subsequent meeting of Council on 20 May 2024.

Cllr Dr C Stevenson advised Cllrs that he would be stepping down as Chairman of the Council at the Annual General Meeting and suggested they consider whom they wish to chair for the next year.

Dr C Stevenson thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 9:22pm.

## **APPENDIX A: SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR'S REPORT FOR MEETING ON 18 MARCH 2024**

Many apologies for being absent: I am in London for a couple of days due to longstanding commitments. It's my very bad luck that there should be three parish council meetings on the same Monday evening, and one on Tuesday which is normally on a Thursday. I have been well and truly caught out!

You will have heard of Shropshire Council's budgetary difficulties, which have occupied a huge amount of Cabinet's time over the last month. It is galling, bearing in mind the Council worked so hard last year to produce £42m of savings only to be presented with a potential deficit budget for the next financial year of £62m. It's worth emphasising that this is a revenue deficit, not a capital one, so the schemes in Shrewsbury you will have heard about – the Smithfield Riverside rebuild and the North West Relief Road (to be funded in full by the Government) are not part of this as they are capital schemes.

The revenue deficit is mainly caused by increased pressure in 4 areas: adult and children's social care and SEND costs which have ballooned due to increased demand; school transport, particularly for children with Special Educational Needs – again, a number that has increased hugely since Covid – and temporary housing for homeless people. All these service areas are statutory responsibilities for us – we have to provide resource for them. This means that some of the 'discretionary' spend, which is basically all those facilities which make people's lives more pleasant such as libraries, leisure centres, museums, sports grounds, the Theatre and arts, will be badly squeezed.

The Council and the County Councils Network has been lobbying Central Government vigorously for a rural premium in recognition of the costs rural authorities have to bear for delivering services in rural areas. School transport and social care are probably the two most expensive examples as it's much more costly to deliver care to the rural elderly, and transport children from the rural areas to school. So far the Government appears not to be listening, but we will continue to lobby.

My area, adult social care and public health, is under the spotlight at present as we are due to have a full Care Quality Commission assessment of our services. The team has already had to deliver a report on the ASC work (some 250 pages!) and we're not expecting the full inspection for a couple of months.

Providing care for both adults and children is by far the most expensive service provided by the Council, absorbing 77% of the Council's overall budget. Shropshire is a very rural county, so travel times are longer and care delivery costs higher than in the towns. Costs are rising every year as our population grows and our customers develop increasingly complex needs. In order to mitigate costs, Shropshire Council has been developing technological solutions to help our elderly population stay supported in their own homes and we are working on a transformation plan with partner organisations to improve outcomes and services to our customers.

You may have heard that Shropshire is proposing to close its housing list for 12 months. There is a growing need for housing nationally and the number of people to whom the Council have a statutory duty is also increasing. People are confused about this, so below is an explanation from Laura Fisher, our Housing Officer:

"Currently in Shropshire we operate an open housing register which means we allow people who have the financial means to apply as well as those with no local connection. We need to make sure people the Council have a duty to are prioritised before those who do not.

Furthermore the number of people the Council has a duty to accommodate is growing and currently the number temporary accommodation is increasing. This is bad for clients as B&B accommodation is not suitable for their needs and is also costly to the Council. We have temporary accommodation schemes in the pipeline, some of which will come online over the next 12 months. Our aim is to not use B&B at all. However, to do this we must ensure that those to whom we have a statutory can access the scarce available accommodation.

By closing the register for a short period we can focus on those the Council has a duty to house. We can then put additional pressure on the social landlords to encourage them to accept our highest priority households. We will still allow those to whom we owe a statutory housing duty to join the register and there will be some other groups who can too, e.g. those fleeing domestic abuse but who do not want to make a homeless application, or those care leavers who have not yet reached 18 and so cannot make a homeless application. Those to whom we do not owe any duty will

not be able to join for a while. We will not remove anyone from the register who is already on it, so there will still be a significant number of people on the register (over 7000) to whom we do not owe a duty.

We are working on the application criteria right now, and we are aware this needs to be wider than simply those to whom a statutory duty is owed, but not so wide that we cannot reduce our temporary accommodation figures.”

Finally, if you hear rumblings that the health checks for farmers delivered by our Health/Wellbeing van at the livestock markets are being run down, this is untrue. This initiative has been so popular that it’s been extended and we are very pleased at the uptake.

Best wishes to everybody and please let me know if there’s anything you need me to pick up arising from your meeting.

Cecilia Motley  
Councillor, Corvedale Division  
Cabinet Member, Adult Social Care & Public Health  
Shropshire Council  
March 2024

20 May 2024

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Chairman

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Date