

THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF RUSHBURY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 15 JANUARY 2024 AT 7:30PM IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, RUSHBURY VILLAGE HALL, RUSHBURY

3154. WELCOME

Councillor Dr C Stevenson welcomed everyone to the meeting of Council.

3155 PRESENT

Councillors Dr C Stevenson - Chairman, P Bodimeade, A Dixon, T Flashman, M Lowndes, R Madeley, A Richards, E Riley and Shropshire Councillor Mrs C Motley.

Clerk C Maclean

Members of Public: 0

3156. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies received but absence of Councillor Ms A Henderson noted.

3157. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

3158. PUBLIC SESSION

No issues or questions raised.

3159. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

3159a. Minutes of Council Meeting held on 20 November 2023

Councillor A Dixon proposed, Councillor R Madeley seconded that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20 November 2023 be adopted and it was resolved that the Chairman sign these as a true record.

3159b. Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting of Council held on 19 December 2023

Councillor A Richards proposed, Councillor A Dixon seconded that the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Council held on 19 December 2023 be adopted and it was resolved that the Chairman sign these as a true record.

3160. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Councillor Dr C Stevenson advised Councillors of the following:

3160a. Clerk Resignation: Councillors noted the resignation of the Clerk. Appreciation was expressed for his service. Councillor Dr C Stevenson advised that the recruitment process should commence and a sub-group of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman proceed with the process.

Councillor P Bodimeade proposed, Councillor A Dixon seconded and it was resolved that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman proceed as a sub-group with the recruitment of a replacement Clerk.

Councillor A Richards enquired on the expiry of the notice period. The Clerk advised 7 April 2024. Councillors noted that inability to secure a replacement within the period may require the services of a locum.

Councillors noted that advice would be obtained from SALC on the process to compile the advertisement and job description in anticipation of it being advertised on their website..

3160b. **Chairs Meeting:** Dr C Stevenson advised Councillors of the recent Chairs meeting where Helen Ball, Clerk to Shrewsbury Town Council gave a presentation on Martyn's law. This required Councils to consider risk assessments and safety matters where gatherings or public events took place with excess of 100 people present.

Councillor Dr C Stevenson advised that he awaited copies of the presentation and slides and these would also be shared with the Village Hall Committee.

3160c. **Affordable Housing Planning Matters:** Councillor Dr C Stevenson advised Councillors that he raised the question over the planning process and controls over permitted development maintained by Shropshire Council in relation to affordable housing with fellow Chairs. He advised that this topic would be considered at the next meeting of the South Shropshire Area Committee.

3160d. **Closing of Council Accounts by Barclays Bank:** Councillor Dr C Stevenson shared with Councillors the experience of Cardington Parish Council where their bank account was being closed by Barclays without the consent of the Parish Council. It was understood that SALC were stepping in to ensure payments on behalf of the Council were being made.

3161. PLANNING

3161a. **Planning Applications Received:**

Councillors noted no applications had been received since the previous meeting.

3161b. **Planning Decisions Advised**

Councillors noted no advice on decisions by Shropshire Council had been received since the previous meeting.

3162. FINANCIAL REPORT

3162a. **Current Finances:** Councillors noted the funds currently being held in the bank accounts.

3162b. **Invoices for Payment:** Councillors noted the invoice requiring payment to Jason Gough Computing Services Ltd for December 2023 at £7.20.

Councillor P Bodimeade proposed, Councillor M Lowndes seconded and it was resolved the payment be made.

3163. BUDGETARY AND PRECEPT REQUIREMENTS FOR 2024/25

The Clerk presented to Councillors the projected expenditure for 2024/25 together with a number of scenarios in relation to the Precept requirement dependent upon the items of expenditure agreed for the year.

Councillors noted the advice from Shropshire Council that if the current Precept of £8,100 was maintained this would result in a lower contribution per household. Councillors also noted the advice from Shropshire Council that to maintain a 0% increase the level of Precept could be increased to £8,271.

Councillors considered the requirements for 2024/25 and projected expenditure and after due consideration the level of Precept of £8,500 be considered along with the potential impact on cash reserves.

Councillor P Bodimeade proposed, Councillor A Dixon seconded and it was unanimously resolved that the Parish Council request from Shropshire Council the sum of £8,500 for the Precept for 2024/25.

3164. KEY COUNCIL DOCUMENTATION: STANDING ORDERS

Councillors considered the contents of the updated Standing Orders presented to Council.
Councillor A Richards proposed, Councillor A Dixon seconded and it was unanimously resolved that the updated Standing Orders be adopted.

3165. ROAD SAFETY WITHIN PARISH

Councillors noted the paper prepared by Councillor M Lowndes on behalf of a sub-group of Councillors and the proposal for battery operated speed indicator devices.

Councillor Dr C Stevenson expressed concern that the Council may not have followed Standing Orders as his view was Council should have formally approved the formation of the sub-group and terms of reference. Councillor M Lowndes noted he had contacted the Chairman and Clerk to clarify the process that required to be followed but that no concerns had been forthcoming prior to the meeting. Following discussion, Councillors agreed to proceed with the discussion item.

Councillor T Flashman advised that he was endeavouring to pull together an image map document detailing the potential locations for the devices.

Councillors noted the conditions set out in the OPCC application form which required documented approval from Shropshire Council to the placing of the devices within the parish.

Shropshire Councillor Mrs C Motley joined the meeting at 8:28pm.

The Clerk reminded Councillors of the Legal Note issued by the National Association of Local Councils which stated that town and parish councils did not have the authority to purchase and site such devices.

Councillors considered the implications of Shropshire Council subsequently disagreeing with the siting of the devices. Shropshire Councillor Mrs C Motley advised Councillors they should ignore the advice from the National Association of Local Councils and advised her understanding that Shropshire Council would not seek to take action in terms of the devices being installed.

Councillor T Flashman proposed, Councillor E Riley seconded and it was resolved with seven in favour and one abstention that the application form be completed on behalf of the Parish Council by Councillor M Lowndes and submitted to the OPCC.

3166. SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Shropshire Councillor Mrs C Motley advised Councillors of the following:

- 3166a. Shropshire Council Portfolio Responsibilities:** Shropshire Councillor Mrs C Motley advised that she had given up her Communities responsibilities within her portfolio. Responsibility for that role had been reallocated to Shropshire Councillor G Butler.

3166b. **Apedale Initiatives:** Shropshire Councillor Mrs C Motley advised Councillors that Councillors of Eaton Under Heywood and Hope Bowdler Parish Council agreed with the proposal to hold a joint meeting with Councillors of Rushbury Parish Council and Cardington Parish Council to exchange ideas on joint working initiatives across the three parishes. Councillors considered whether the initiative should include Francis Acton but Shropshire Councillor Mrs C Motley advised that he was currently focused on initiatives relating to Acton Scott and it was best to leave his involvement aside for the time being. Councillors noted the merit of involving all three Parish Councils in reviews of the Place Plan. It was agreed that Councillor Dr C Stevenson discuss with Councillor G Watts of Eaton Under Heywood and Hope Bowdler Parish Council on arrangements for a meeting.

3166c. **Shropshire Council Finances:** Shropshire Councillor Mrs C Motley advised that pressures remain on finances and the picture appeared to be the same for the next year. Efforts are being made to consider reduction of costs in the care sector. Shropshire Councillor Mrs C Motley advised Councillors that consideration was also being given to providing more local health services across the south of the county.

Councillors expressed appreciation to Shropshire Councillor Mrs C Motley who gave her apologies and left the meeting at 8:56pm.

3167. **CORRESPONDENCE**

None, other than the communications received from SALC, NALC and Rural Services Network.

3168. **COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**

3168a. **Village Hall:** Councillor T Flashman advised that efforts were ongoing to address the heating and electric conditions within the Hall. This would include a review of the location of the thermostats.

Councillors noted that consideration was being given by the Village Hall Committee to taking over responsibility for the tennis/ballcourt. This may require funding assistance.

Councillors also noted that consideration was being given by the Village Hall Committee to including the Millennium Green and Play Area within their scope of responsibility.

3168b. **Millennium Green and Playground:** The Clerk advised that he would pull together a document covering the maintenance requirements for the Millennium Green and Ballcourt along with other areas across the parish. This would be shared to enable tenders to be submitted.

3168c. **The Plough Inn:** Councillors noted there was no update on the current situation.

3169. **PARISH MATTERS**

3169a. **Parish Survey:** Councillor M Lowndes suggested to Councillors discussion be held at the next meeting of Council to agree a statement on the parish survey priorities which could be placed in the parish magazine.

3169b. **Parish Assembly:** Councillor Dr C Stevenson noted the challenge in securing the main hall in the Village Hall for the annual assembly. The Clerk advised he would contact the Village Hall chair to identify suitable dates.

3169c. **Rushbury Speed Limit:** Councillors agreed to consider initiatives to enable the introduction of a 20mph limit at Rushbury.

3169d. **Apedale Signs:** Councillor A Richards advised Councillors that a resident had offered to contribute to the cost of replacing the Apedale sign at Longville. Councillors agreed that the insurance policy be checked to identify whether it covered these items of street furniture. Councillors noted that the bee roundels previously obtained and distributed appeared to have disappeared.

3169e. **Longville Hedging:** Councillors noted the removal of a stretch of hedging on the straight stretch of the B4371 at Longville. It was noted that this appeared to meet the requirement to improve the splay in relation to the entrance to the field. Councillors noted the concern that following the removal of the hedge it was more difficult to identify the edge of the road and start of the verge. Councillors noted the understanding that the hedge would be replanted next to the fence line. Councillors considered whether planning permission should have been secured for this work. The Clerk was requested to consider the requirements for planning permission for the works and have the owner contacted for clarification.

3170. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA

- a Parish Survey Priorities
- b Clerk Recruitment
- c To advise Clerk of items to be considered for inclusion on the agenda.

3171. NEXT MEETING DATE

Monday 19 February 2024

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:24pm.

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Chairman

Date: 19 February 2024