

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF MINSHULL VERNON & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD AT ST PETER'S COMMUNITY HALL, MINSHULL VERNON, CREWE  
ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2015**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillor Les Horne	Chairman
	Councillor M McGlone	Vice-Chairman
	Councillor W T Beard	Councillor Linda Horne
	Councillor D Kay	Councillor D Ridings
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	James Cunningham	Candidate for co-option
	Clive Stringer	Candidate for co-option
	Kathryn Stringer	Candidate for co-option
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	Councillor B Palin	
	Councillor R Lee	
	Councillor P Wright	

**72 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Members were invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest which they had in any item of business on the agenda, the nature of that interest, and in respect of disclosable interests, to leave the meeting prior to the discussion of that item.

Councillors Les Horne, Linda Horne and M McGlone each declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in planning application No 15/4066N (Coach and Horses Inn, Middlewich Road) on the basis that they lived in close proximity to the development site.

**73 MINUTES – 24 AUGUST 2015**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 August 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**74 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions from members of the public.

**75 FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME – BRADFIELD GREEN**

Paul Reeves (Flood Alleviation Manager) was not able to attend the meeting; however, he met the Chairman on site earlier in the day to discuss progress. Mr Reeves' team of six had reduced to one and the staffing situation was causing difficulties. Mr Reeves would be in attendance at the next meeting to update Members on the scheme.

**76 CO-OPTION**

James Cunningham, Clive Stringer and Kathryn Stringer had each expressed interest in being co-opted onto the Parish Council and were in attendance.

Each candidate was invited to outline briefly their reasons for wishing to enter public life following which Members were able to ask questions.

**RESOLVED:** That James Cunningham, Clive Stringer and Kathryn Stringer be co-opted onto the Parish Council.

(Notes: (1) Each candidate signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office;  
(2) Each candidate would represent Leighton Urban ward.)

**77 POLICE MATTERS**

PCSO Lawrence Price was not in attendance.

**78 WAR MEMORIAL DEDICATION CEREMONY – 4 JUNE 2016**

The Working Group had not had the opportunity to meet and there were no matters to report at this time.

**79 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – PUBLIC MEETINGS (LEIGHTON ACADEMY and MABLINS LANE SCHOOL)**

Although Members had expressed a preference for the second week in September for the two public meetings, a response from Leighton Academy had not been received until the first week in September (owing to school summer holidays) and this was insufficient notice to arrange the meeting and give publicity to it.

Leighton Academy has indicated that any Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday would be acceptable. Mablins Lane School had not yet responded.

A draft special edition newsletter was submitted. This gave details of the Neighbourhood Plan process and could be issued to each household in the parish to maximise publicity for the meetings.

Members agreed that the public meetings should be held on 10, 11 or 12 November. The Clerk would make arrangements with the two schools and the printers.

**80 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**80.1 Authorisation of Payments**

**RESOLVED:** That the following payments be authorised:

£88.80	HM Revenue & Customs – tax on Clerk's salary
£240.00	BDO LLP – External audit (2014-2015) (£200 net and £40 vat)
£11.80	Mr Les Horne. Reimbursement for purchase of battery for vehicle-speed display unit

**80.2 Signs – Lay-by opposite to Leighton Academy (Minshull New Road)**

The Council was asked to consider the purchase of two signs for the lay-bys on Minshull New Road. The signs would indicate that the purpose of the lay-bys was for 'drop-off' and 'pick-up' of pupils and would display the message '*This is a drop-off and pick-up point only. Waiting time is limited to 15 minutes*'. The school had agreed that the signs could be affixed to its railings.

Sign Studios had quoted £225.00 (plus VAT) for the provision of two aluminium signs. Artwork would be provided to the Council in advance of the work being commenced.

Members were of the view that the price was expensive and suggested that a less-expensive material be used. This item would be added to the agenda for the October meeting.

**80.3 Tree Survey**

The Tree Survey report carried out by Buckland Arboriculture Ltd. was submitted. It was noted that a number of the trees were at danger-level and action should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

The Clerk was asked to contact Mercia Tree Care, which had previously carried out tree pruning/felling for the Parish Council. It was noted that traffic-management might need to be used during work on some of the trees.

Councillor Les Horne agreed to meet Mr Darren Evans (Proprietor of Mercia Tree Care) on site to discuss the work required.

**RESOLVED:** That, in view of the potential danger posed by some of the trees, Mercia Tree Care be asked to take action at the earliest opportunity, pruning/felling as appropriate in accordance with the danger levels indicated in the tree survey report provided by Buckland Arboriculture Ltd.

#### **80.4 External Audit – Accounts 2014-2015**

BDO LLP, the external auditor had now concluded its audit. There were no matters which required a separate issues report.

#### **80.5 Grant Application**

The Parish Council considered a grant application from the South Cheshire Concert Band for £600.00 to cover the cost of the purchase of sheet music.

The application did not make it clear how the parish area could be benefited, in particular, how many band members lived within the parish? Arising out of discussion, the Chairman reported that he was aware of a local group which had received a large quantity of sheet music and this could be sold to the South Cheshire Concert Band if the music was of a style played by the band.

It was **AGREED** to defer this pending further information being made available.

### **81 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Parish Council was invited to comment on the following planning applications.

**81.1** (Note: Councillors Les Horne, Linda Horne and M McGlone, each having declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in planning application No 15/4066N, withdrew from the meeting at this point in the proceedings and re-joined the meeting after the vote had been taken on planning application No. 15/4066N.)

**81.2** 15/4066N Coach and Horses Inn, Middlewich Road, Minshull Vernon.  
Construction of Four x 4-bedroom dormer bungalows and three x 2-bedroom terraces, along with appropriate landscaping and drainage.

**RESOLVED:** That, as both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman were not present, Councillor W T Beard be elected Chairman during discussion of this planning application.

Following discussion of the planning application, it was –

**RESOLVED:** That the Parish Council object to planning application No. 15/4066N on the following grounds:

- The drainage system in the parish is currently inadequate and this development will exacerbate the situation.
- There is a piece of land opposite the proposed site, which has a permission, and the Parish Council is concerned that in the longer term the development proposed (under 15/4066N) will contribute to access/egress problems.

**81.3** 15/4190N Land at Minshull Hill Farm, Middlewich Road, Minshull Vernon  
Erection of 4.57m wide metal gate to form a new road crossing point for cattle

**RESOLVED:** That the following observations be made in respect of planning application No. 15/4190N:

- The road is too busy for a cattle-crossing and will represent a danger to both cattle and motorists
- If the Borough Council is minded to approve the application, it is suggested that the following condition be included:

- Movement restrictions 9.30 am – 3.00 pm
- Signalling device to be placed in the vicinity of the speed limit sign, 200 metres either side of the gate, to take into account the possibility of straying cattle.

**81.4** It was noted that the following planning application was received on 2 September with a deadline date of 23 September 2015 for observations. This was forwarded to Members on the date of receipt with a request that if any comments were to be made, it would be necessary to hold an additional meeting. There was no request for a meeting.

15/3302N Land at Flowers Lane, Leighton  
Variation of Condition 1 on approval 14/5232N seeking approval on all reserved matters on application 12/3727N

## **82 CLERK'S REPORT**

There was no Clerk's report on this occasion.

## **83 REPORTS/SHARED INFORMATION**

Members were invited to share information (which was not available at the time of publication of the agenda for inclusion in the Clerk's Report) or to report on attendance at recent meetings of outside bodies.

This was also an opportunity for any Borough Councillors in attendance to inform Members about any Cheshire East Council matters of interest.

Councillors reported on the following matters:

- o Meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)

The PCC had referenced the role of PCSOs and stated that PCSOs should be deployed within their own parishes.

The PCC had also reported on the recruitment of new Police Constables.

- o Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC)

The Chairman reported on the Area meeting of ChALC on 23 September 2015, following which John Cornell, Chairman of the Area Meeting, had produced a draft letter to Stephen Pratt, the Inspector appointed to the CEC Local Plan examination.

The letter was to be sent on behalf of the Area Meeting and specifically referred to '*those communities bordering the eastern and southern belt around Crewe and Nantwich*', but made no reference to Crewe North and Crewe West, both of which fell within the Crewe and Nantwich area.

The Clerk was asked to write to Mr Cornell about this matter and to remind him that at a previous Area Meeting, when this omission had been brought to his attention, he had undertaken to ensure that this reference to this part of the borough would be included in any future letters.

## **84 SPEED WATCH**

Councillor Les Horne reported on recent speed watch activities. He had accompanied PCSO Sharon Jones, PC Nicky Berry and Lawrence Price on site to monitor traffic on the A530.

## **85 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**26 October 2015**

## 86 STAFFING MATTERS

### 86.1 Terms of Reference

Members were invited to review the Terms of Reference for the Committee

**RESOLVED:** That the Terms of Reference, as adopted, be noted.

### 86.2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 June 2013

The Staffing Committee had only met on one occasion (3 June 2013). The minutes of that meeting were submitted for information. They could not be approved or otherwise as there was only one current Member who was a Member of the Staffing Committee in June 2013.

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 3 June 2013 be noted.

### 86.3 Policy Documents

The following documents were submitted for adoption. These were the model documents from the National Association of Local Councils.

- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedure

**RESOLVED:** That the Grievance Procedure and Disciplinary Procedure be adopted with immediate effect.

### 86.4 Generic Contract of Employment for a Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (S.151 of the Local Government Act 1972)

The Staffing Committee agreed that a general contract of employment for a Clerk/RFO be developed. The model contract of employment was submitted for adoption and/or amendment.

**RESOLVED:** That the model contract of employment for a Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer be adopted in the event of there being a vacancy in this post.

### 86.5 Bullying and Harassment Policy

The Parish Council was invited to consider the adoption of a Bullying and Harassment Policy. A draft model policy was submitted; this was based on guidance in Governance and Toolkit for Parish and Town Councils.

**RESOLVED:** That the Bullying and Harassment Policy be adopted with immediate effect.

### 86.6 Exclusion of Press and Public

**RESOLVED:** That, in accordance with Paragraph 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items, for the reasons given, and the public interest would not be served by disclosing the information.

Reason for exclusion: The following matters relate to the Clerk's employment terms and are not appropriate for public discussion.

### 86.7 Clerk's Contract of Employment

The Parish Council was asked to review any aspects of the Clerk's contract of employment which have not yet been addressed. There were no outstanding matters.

**86.8 Appraisal Process**

The Parish Council was asked to consider what might be included as objectives/targets for the Clerk as part of a system of appraisal. These should be based around the job description, a copy of which was submitted.

A copy of an appraisal rationale and appraisal assessment form was also submitted. This was a model document provided by the Society of Local Council Clerks and the Cheshire Association of Local Councils.

**RESOLVED:** That consideration of the appraisals process be deferred to a future meeting.

**86.9 Risk Assessment – Clerk’s Home-Working**

Members had previously decided that the Council’s risk assessment/management arrangements should include an assessment of the Clerk’s home working.

A copy of the current risk schedule was submitted. The Clerk was not classed as a ‘user’ of display screen equipment (DSE), but her other duties and undertakings might make her a ‘user’. The Clerk was asked to record the total number of hours spent working on a computer (across all employers) to enable the risk assessment to be reviewed.

Approved

.....Chairman

The meeting commenced at 7.15 pm and concluded at 9.00 pm