

NEWSLETTER

(SUMMER 2014)

Minshull Vernon & District Parish Council

Message from our Chairman, Les Horne

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Please note:
This newsletter is also on the Parish Council's website.

Dear Resident,

It is several years since we published a newsletter. We are re-introducing it, and aim to publish it at least once a year. This will also be published on the Parish Council's website.

Firstly, may I thank my fellow parish councillors for electing me as Chairman in May 2014. I was first elected in June 2012, following the resignation of former councillor Doug Forrest, and it is a role which I thoroughly enjoy.

A full complement for the Parish Council is 22 councillors, but we are down to 12. The elections are in May 2015 and we hope that more residents might put themselves forward as candidates at that time. In the meantime, if this is something which you are interested in, please contact the Clerk who will be able to give you information about how to be co-opted onto the Parish Council.

See also the end of this newsletter for the role of the parish council and its members.

Centenary of WWI

Although we are not marking the centenary of the start of WWI, we are taking the opportunity to add new names to the war memorial at Bradfield Green to honour 22 air crew who lost their lives during WWII when two Wellington Bombers and one light aircraft crashed in the parish. Two Police Officers who assisted in the rescue are also to be honoured.

The omission of these names on the war memorial was brought to our attention late in 2012 by the Remembrance Society.

Following that, a local resident has been helping with the research to identify the names of all 22. We propose adding these names in 2016 to mark the 75th anniversary of the crash.

The Parish Council has already placed an order for the green slate to match the existing plaques. And....Cheshire East Council has made a grant of £2,500 towards the cost of the project.

In conclusion, I hope you enjoy the newsletter. Please let us have your feedback on content, style or anything else.

Les Horne

Parish Councillor Contact details:

Les Horne (Chairman)	522386
Mike McGlone (Vice-Chairman)	522762
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Derek Bebbington	522902
Neil Bradley	07868 939 590
Michelle Bromhead	07721 200 248
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Richard Lee	07951 435 123
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Parish Council Precept – 2014-2015

What is a precept?

A parish council receives the majority of its funding from an annual charge called the **precept**. This is requested from the Borough Council and then re-charged to local electors through their Council Tax bill. The precept requested for 2014-2015 (£29,700) is divided by the number of Band D properties to arrive at a figure of £16.16 which represents the additional Council Tax per Band D property (used as the benchmark figure). This is identified separately on Council Tax bills.

When setting its budget for this year, the Parish Council agreed a figure of £35,000 but as there was a surplus in the account on 1 April 2014, only £29,700 was required as the precept. The first half was paid in April and the second half will be paid in September. The effect on your Council Tax bill is as follows:

Precept 2014-2015	<u>£29,700</u>	Budget Headlines
Band D property will pay (this is the benchmark)	16.16	Contact the Clerk for a copy of the full budget or visit the website
Band A is $\frac{6}{9}$ of the Band D figure	10.78	Playground Equipment: Thorntree and Perryfields £10,000
Band B is $\frac{7}{9}$	12.57	The equipment at these two playgrounds was in poor condition and the Parish Council agreed to replace some items with new. Although the council has made the purchase, Cheshire East Council has agreed to take over ownership and responsibility for continued maintenance. We are also hoping that we will receive a donation from an anonymous benefactor.
Band C is $\frac{8}{9}$	14.37	
Band E is $\frac{11}{9}$	19.76	
Band F is $\frac{13}{9}$	23.35	Automated External Defibrillator: £2,200
Band G is $\frac{15}{9}$	26.94	The Parish Council has agreed that an automated external defibrillator (or two, if there are sufficient funds) should be purchased for the parish. The location has yet to be agreed, and quotations have not yet been sought.
Band H is $\frac{18}{9}$	32.33	

COUNCIL TAX PROBLEMS

The Parish Council was recently informed of the overpayment of Council Tax by the residents who live in an area which was added to the parish in April 2013. Unfortunately, when Cheshire East Council (CEC) collected the precept in both 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, it collected from these properties (187 in total) on the assumption that they were part of Crewe Town Council and not Minshull Vernon and District Parish Council. This resulted in an overpayment by those 187 properties. CEC has now acknowledged the overpayment and made refunds. The error was compounded by the fact that the Council Tax base for the whole area was incorrectly calculated and this resulted in minor over-collection of Council Tax for other households in the parish.

CEC is re-calculating the tax base, and when the Parish Council sets its precept for 2015-2016, CEC will collect a value which is reduced by £3,700 (spread across the various household bands from A to H). This will compensate the individual households in proportion to the overpayment they have made in the previous two years.

Council Tax is a complicated subject; if you would like a more detailed explanation of the calculations and the impact, please contact the Clerk.

Parish Council Diary – 2014-2015

Meetings are held monthly, usually on Mondays in St Peter's Community Hall, Minshull Vernon at 7.15 pm

27 October (Meeting at Leighton Academy)	22 December	23 March	Tuesday, 26 May Annual Meetings
24 November	26 January 2015	27 April	
Note: The Parish Meeting and the Annual Council meeting are both held on the same evening (26 May 2015).			

Purchase of Automated External Defibrillators AEDs)



Following a presentation by NW Ambulance Officers last year, the Parish Council has allocated funding to purchase an automated external defibrillator (AED) for the parish.

AEDs save valuable time between the onset of a cardiac arrest and the arrival of an ambulance. The response standard for ambulance arrival is within 8 minutes. There is a 74% chance of survival with an AED and only 2% chance of survival without.

The location of the equipment is crucial and should be in a place which allows 24 hour access. We have not yet decided the location, but consider this equipment will be of great benefit to the community.

Quotations will be sought in the near future, and when the AED has been purchased, North-West Ambulance Trust will provide training/awareness sessions (to be held in St Peter's Community Hall).

One of the concerns of lay people is that they might cause injury by accidental delivery of an electric charge. It is important to note that it is impossible to deliver an electric charge accidentally. Training on the equipment will help to dispel common fears about its use.

We hope that this initiative will be welcomed by the community.

James Atkinson Way (JAW) Group

We are pleased to announce that a new community group has been established – the James Atkinson Way Group, known as 'JAW and associated Closes'.

This Group was set up by local residents with a 'Mission Statement' of *creating opportunities to bring together the residents of James Atkinson Way so that they can enjoy the benefits of a happy and safe neighbourhood.*

In 2013, the Parish Council made a grant of £317 to enable the group to purchase such items as a gazebo, folding tables and an arts and crafts box.

The Group is very active, has brought cohesion to its area, and regularly produces newsletters for its residents.

Honour for Glyn Turner BA MED Principal of Leighton Academy

At a special meeting held on 19 May 2014, the Parish Council conferred Honorary Freeman status on Glyn Turner, in recognition of his significant contribution to the community as a whole, and in particular, to the education of the children in the area.

Glyn had already made great improvements at his previous school (Tarvin Primary) and during his period at Leighton Academy (formerly Leighton Primary) the Ofsted reports have been consistently positive over the years.

Glyn joins other luminaries, namely John Whittingham and Doug Forrest, together with the late Marshall Wilson and Bill Barnes, all of whom were parish councillors who were admitted to the Roll of Honorary Freeman of the Parish.

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SPEED WATCH!

Community Speed Watch has been operating throughout the parish for several years. It is designed to make drivers more aware of the dangers of speeding and we are pleased to say that it has had a significant effect.

If a child is hit by a vehicle travelling at 30 mph, there is a 1 in 10 chance that it will be killed; if hit at 40 mph this increases the chance of fatality to a 9 in 10 chance. This type of statistic induced the Parish Council to invest in interactive speed signs at local 'hot spots' of concern, two of which were in the vicinity of the primary schools (Mablins Lane and Leighton Academy). We installed fixed signs to slow down drivers and to make them aware of the proximity of the schools. These have brought about great success. Prior to their installation, approximately 47-50% of drivers were travelling at 30 mph, and subsequent to the installation, 76% of drivers are now travelling at, or below, 30 mph.

We also installed "super bright" high-powered LED beacon lights at the pedestrian crossing on Parkers Road in response to concerns raised by both the school and the school-crossing warden. These new signs give greater illumination, even on sunny days.

The A530, Middlewich Road is one of our main targeted areas in view of its accident history over many years.

All information collected by the volunteers who operate the scheme is passed on to the Police for processing and action is taken if necessary. We still need volunteers. If you are interested, please contact the Clerk or any parish councillor for more information.

Policing in the Parish - PCSO Lawrence Price



Policing of the area of Leighton continues with high visibility patrols on foot and in police vehicles. Crime in the area is relatively low, but we rely on members of the public to pass on information regarding suspicious vehicles/people and any criminal acts that may be taking place.

Anti-Social Behaviour remains a focus of local policing and we strive to tackle this where possible. Earlier in the year a problem was identified of nuisance motor-bikers; with the help of the public, this problem was addressed and the number of reports received subsequently has significantly reduced. However, if you are experiencing what you perceive to be anti-social behaviour then please report this to enable us to assist you.

A specific trend of thefts has emerged in recent weeks, with a number of hanging baskets being stolen overnight from residences across the parish. We advise simple crime reduction steps of using zip-ties or similar, or securing baskets to hangers. Lines of enquiry are being followed up with suspects caught on CCTV in one instance.

Unfortunately, a number of car owners have reported damage to their cars while they were parked on the road overnight. We ask residents to be vigilant and to continue to report any similar incidents to the Police to enable us to follow up and investigate.

Social media is a great way to keep in touch with the local Policing team. Sign up to our Twitter account 'Crewe NPU' and consider joining 'Cheshire Police Alert', a new system where you can register online.

Your local Officers are PC Andy Hamilton and PCSO Lawrence Price. We can be contacted in the following ways:

Email: crewe.npu@cheshire.pnn.police.uk

Crewe Police Station voicemail: 0845 458 6370

For non-emergencies: Phone 101

Would you like to be a parish councillor? This is what is involved!

Parish councillors are no different from you or me, except that they have made a decision to 'get involved' and are fortunate enough to have been elected or co-opted onto the Parish Council.

The Council comprises 22 parish councillors (the full complement) and they come to the Council mainly at election time (every four years), but also through a by-election or co-option in between the main elections.

Councillors are all ages (but over the age of 18 years) and have a diverse range of life experiences. The one thing they all have in common is that they are committed to ensuring that the parish is a pleasant place to live and that residents receive value for (public) money.

So...how do you become a parish councillor other than at election time?

Occasionally, a councillor resigns owing to personal circumstances, and a casual vacancy is advertised. If the Borough Council receives 10 or more requests for an election, one may be held, but if there are no such requests, the Parish Council can co-opt to the vacancy. The usual procedure is advertising as widely as possible to ensure the largest pool of potential candidates.

At the first available meeting, all candidates are invited to attend and are given an opportunity to make a brief presentation to Members. The nominations are then moved and seconded and a vote taken. If there are more candidates than vacancies, a secret ballot is held. The successful candidate then signs a declaration of acceptance of office which requires him/her to be bound by the Code of

Conduct. Once a councillor, you will be required to attend the monthly meetings. Please note that this is not an 'invitation' to attend, it is a 'summons' and is a legal requirement. Failure to attend meetings for six consecutive months can result in the councillor becoming disqualified.

Members of the public are also encouraged to attend these meetings so that they can see the Parish Council at work.

Being a Parish Councillor can be a very rewarding and interesting role. If you wish to put yourself forward, the next elections are in May 2015.

As noted in the Chairman's message, there are ten vacancies at present. If you are interested in co-option, please contact the Clerk for details.

Your Borough Councillors are:

		<u>Ward</u>	<u>Tel No.</u>
Derek Bebbington	derek.bebbington@cheshireeast.gov.uk	Leighton	522902
Michael E Jones (Leader of CEC)	michael.e.jones@cheshireeast.gov.uk	Bunbury	01829 720771
Margaret Simon	margaret.simon@cheshireeast.gov.uk	Wisaston	663110
Jacque Weatherill	jacque.weatherill@cheshireeast.gov.uk	Wistaston	569551