

PONTESBURY PARISH COUNCIL



Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held at Cruckton Village Hall on Monday 10th June 2024 at 7.30pm

PRESENT

Councillors: D Fletcher, N Hignett, M Trow, R Evans, N Lewis, D Jones, C Sandells, S Davies, J Pritchard, P Heywood and A Windows

Clerk of the Meeting: Debbie Marais

Public present: 14 members of the public present

23.24 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Gregory and Cllr A Hodges

24.24 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations – Cllr Sandells declared an interest in Agenda Item 10.5 in his role as Chair of the Cruckton Village Hall committee

25.24 Public Questions and Comments

Resident of Shorthill – concerned about the speed of large lorries, who take up the width of the small rural lanes. Local residents are fearful of walking on the roads in the area.

Resident of Shorthill – Concerns about the size and volume of farm traffic in the area.

Vehicles are forced to mount verges which are then destroyed and drains blocked. Walkers and cyclists are fearful of using the lanes due to the large vehicles

Resident of Shorthill – asked if residents of Shorthill are included in the survey.

Resident of Cruckmeole – Concerned about speed of traffic using A488. Resident has to walk with young children on a narrow footpath along the A488 to get from Cruckmeole to Hanwood School. There are also problems for local residents getting off the bus at Cruckmeole and crossing the road – Resident would like the speed of traffic between Cruckmeole to Hanwood to be reduced

Pound Lane residents (2) concerned about having to cross over the A488 at the bottom Pound Lane to get to Hanwood School with children and with a relation who is a wheelchair user – often have to wait some time to cross or get halfway and turn back due to speed of traffic. Why is there not a speed camera at this end of Hanwood as well as at the other end of the village.

Resident of Shorthill – Involved in an accident recently due to the excessive speed of a vehicle on a narrow rural lane. Could there be SLOW written on the road or signage indicating to drivers that they need to slow down as they are entering a residential area

26.24 Minutes of Council

After a proposal from Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr Jones, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 13th May 2024.

27.24 Police Matters – the following points were raised:

- Cllr Pritchard raised the question of why the local policing team were reluctant to join forces with local whatsapp groups set up to combat rural crime. Clerk was asked to contact the Rural Crime Officer to ask him to attend the July council meeting in Habberley.
- Cllr Davies had been asked by Pontesbury Primary School headteacher to arrange contact with the local policing team
- Cllr Jones asked if local policing team contact details could be put on the parish council noticeboards. Clerk was also asked to put the contact details in the parish newsletter

27.24.1 Hall Bank bus shelter – anti-social behaviour. Cllr Fletcher reported that PCSO Edwards had been patrolling the area when she can. Clerk gave an update that quotes had been sought but companies were not interested in quoting to remove the existing bus shelter as it is attached to a wall. After a proposal from Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr Lewis, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve delegated authority to Cllrs Fletcher, Hignett, Clerk and local resident Geoff Manley (who cleans the shelter) to do some research and bring options to the July council meeting.

28.24 Community Report – a verbal report from Cllr Davies was received and **NOTED**. Luncheon group dates have been arranged for the autumn and Cllr Davies thanked the public hall for their continued support. The first walking group was taking part in the week.

29.24 Shropshire Council Member Report Shropshire Councillor Roger Evans gave a verbal report including:

- The School Library Service consultation has finished. The SLS will be operational until at least December 2024 whilst decisions are made
- The Local Plan consultation has finished
- The Public Space Protection Order came into force on 1 June 2024 with restrictions relating to dogs and public spaces
- The green bin consultation results will go to a special SC Cabinet meeting in mid-July
- SC were over budget by 7.9m at the end of the financial year 2023-24. There are now only 8.2m in reserves
- Streetlight conversion to LED went to Scrutiny. 88% of the lights are now converted
- Freedom of Information requests – only 70% are being dealt with within the 20 day deadline
- 9.7m of the 62m savings target have been met. 38.4m are further indicated savings but there have been cost increases of 29m due to increases in social care costs
- SC may need to borrow money to cover the costs associated with transforming services
- There is a proposal to close the A488 from Edgebold to Hanwood for 2 days (25-27 July) 9.30am – 3.30pm. Cllr Evans had spoken to highways about changing this to works overnight as he was concerned about the impact of traffic diversions onto small rural lanes

30.24 Planning

30.24.1 After a proposal from Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr Lewis, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 7th May 2024.

30.24.2 Nothing of significance to report

30.24.3 PLANNING REFERENCE: 24/01779/LBC Proposal: Replacement of 7No. existing standard double glazed timber painted windows with triple glazed timber/aluminium clad painted windows to the dwelling and 1No. in the outbuilding, replacement of a set of french windows and Juliet balcony to the first floor bedroom, external Juliet balcony to be removed and replaced with internal safety rail
Location: The Old Mill, Arscott, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY5 0XP

Comment: Pontesbury Parish Council this application. The windows are rotten. As the size, style and colour will be identical to the existing there will be no impact on the character of the building or on the nearby listed building. It will improve the energy efficiency in line with policy GRE4 of the Pontesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

31.24 Finance & General Purposes Committee

31.24.1 After a proposal from Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr Windows, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the F&GP committee meeting held on 7th December 2023

31.24.2 After a proposal from Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Windows, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the following recommendations from the F&GP meeting held on 16th May 2024

1. Approval of Annual Statement of Accounts for 2024-24 as revised by RFO
2. Approval of Adjustments (boxes 7&8 AGAR) to convert accounts from Receipts and Payments to Income & Expenditure
3. Year-End 23-24 Working document to be NOTED
4. Year-End 23-24 Bank Reconciliation to be NOTED
5. Balance Sheet Year-End 23-24 to be NOTED
6. Asset Register to be NOTED and approval that the asset register policy be reviewed as there are currently a number of low value items
7. Internal Auditor's report to be NOTED including actions against the Internal Auditor's recommendations
8. Internal Controls Policy and Statement of Internal Financial Controls as updated by RFO/Clerk (*available on parish council website*) to be NOTED
9. Approval of Internet Banking Mandate – no changes to cheque signatories or internet payment authorisations. Approval that the RFO be added to the list of approved payment submitters for Unity/Lloyds Bank accounts, reflecting current practice
10. Approval of Direct Debits/Standing Orders as listed by RFO – Increased monthly instalments of £1609 Business Rates and the addition of the three-year fixed rate direct debit arrangements for electricity charges for the public toilets, School Green streetlights and Pavilion with British Gas Lite, replacing the expired contracts with SSE.

31.24.3.1 After a proposal from Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Pritchard, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the following year-end reserves (31 March 2024) transfers

Reserve Name	Amount	Comment
Training (new)	£1,000	Unspent budget, codes 32 (Admin) & 72 (Pavilion)
Bus Shelter (existing)	£500	Unspent budget, code 65
Community Grants (new)	£950	Unspent budget, code 68
Tree inspection (existing)	£125	Unspent budget, code 42
Tree work (existing)	£600	Unspent budget, code 43

Environmental Maintenance Grant (new)	£1,302	Balance of unspent grant – two-year project, code 105
Newsletter (new)	£1,120	Unspent budget, code 38
Health & Safety Management (new)	£745	Unspent budget, code 72 – will offset costs of Worknest support
Pavilion Website (existing)	£450	Unspent budget, code 77
Play Area Refurbishment (existing)	£2,270	Unspent play area repair budget, code 47, towards major refurbishment
Play Area Refurbishment (existing)	£1,000	Unspent BMX repair budget, code 48
Public Toilet Refurbishment (existing)	£800	Unspent toilet repair budget, code 51, towards major toilet refurbishment project.

31.24.3.2 After a proposal from Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr Hignett, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the following reserves transfers for 2024-25 (1 April 2024)

From (Reserve Name)	To (Reserve Name)	Amount	Comment
Unallocated CIL Reserve	General Reserve	£4,000	Sports Association Grant – Awarded April 2024
Hall Bank Grounds Maintenance	General Reserve	£2,000	Takes account of underspend in 2023-24 and extends life of reserve

Cllr Fletcher wished to minute the thanks of the parish council to the RFO and clerk for all their hard work with parish council finances.

32.24 Statutory Business and Finance

32.24.1 Income of £47,207.55 (including CIL monies). This was **NOTED**.

32.24.2 After a proposal from Cllr Pritchard, seconded by Cllr Hignett, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve payments of £57,169.71 (including payment for streetlight conversions) as attached list.

32.24.3 After a proposal from Cllr Pritchard, seconded by Cllr Hignett, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the transfer of £50,000 from the CCLA account to Unity current account for general June payments.

32.24.5 After a proposal from Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Jones, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Explanation of Variances as preferred by RFO for external audit purposes.

32.24.6 After a proposal from Cllr Pritchard, seconded by Cllr Hignett, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve payment of the remaining £11,884 (from the £16,184 previously agreed from CIL monies associated with the Shingler development in Hanwood. Min.Ref.207.21) to Cruckton Village Hall committee towards refurbishment works.

33.24 Audit

33.24.1 After a proposal from Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Jones, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign, and respond YES to all questions, excluding question 9, which is not applicable for AGAR Section 1 – the Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 for Pontesbury Parish Council.

33.24.2 After a proposal by Cllr Pritchard, seconded by Cllr Evans, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign, noting the restatement of box 9. – AGAR Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/2024 for Pontesbury Parish Council.

33.24.3 It was noted that the intention to publish the Notice of Elector's Rights beginning on 17th June and upload it and the AGAR pages to the Council website before this date.

34.24 Health & Safety Matters

34.24.1 After a proposal by Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Heywood, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve a budget of £1000 and delegated authority to Clerk/Chair to obtain quotes and arrange an asbestos survey of the Trading Post, Sports Pavilion and bus shelters.

35.24 Civility and respect pledge

After a proposal by Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr Pritchard, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve Clerk to sign the pledge on the behalf of the parish council.

36.24 Resident's survey of Cruckton/Cruckmeole and Pound Lane. Cllr Evans gave a verbal update explaining that the survey of residents of Cruckton/Cruckmeole/Pound Lane/Shorthill/Arcscott would take place in June in order to gather evidence of how local residents feel about traffic issues in these areas and to gather any comments and feedback. This information would then be used to approach Shropshire Council asking for a number of traffic calming measures to be put in place. Cllr Evans explained that Shropshire Council were currently drawing up Local Transport Plan 4 and wished to wait for that to be in place before making any changes. Cllr Evans felt that the concerns of residents meant that the parish council should approach SC to make changes before then. He explained that in the Pound Lane/Shorthill/Arcscott lane it would be difficult to get the local police to support the lowering of the speed limit but that Quiet Lane Status may be possible. The signage associated with this would encourage drivers to slow down and be aware that other road users such as cyclists and walkers are in the area.

Cllr Trow said that questionnaires had been delivered in Cruckton/Cruckmeole looking for evidence/comments/feedback about the speed of vehicles and HGV use on the road linking the two hamlets.

Cllr Hignett encouraged local residents to report near-misses on roads using 101 so that the police evidence of incidents grows.

Cllr Sandells asked about the progress of the SC initiative to put a speed limit of 20mph outside Shropshire schools. Cllr Evans responded that there is currently a pilot project involving 5 schools. SC officers had done some measurement of traffic speeds outside the Hanwood School near the bridge. Cllr Evans was asking for measurement to be done on the Cruckmeole side of the school. A crossing outside Hanwood School is included in the Minsterley and Pontesbury Place Plan list of desired neighbourhood infrastructure projects.

37.24 Clerk's Report

A report from the Parish Clerk was received and noted. Clerk reported that the streetlight conversion to LED was completed as was the solar lighting inspection and clean, on the cycleway. It was decided to add the request for a bus shelter on School Green to the July agenda. Clerk reported that the co-option of a councillor had not been included on the June agenda as at that point no one had come forward. A candidate has now come forward and the notices will be changed and the matter added to the July agenda.

38.24 Parish Business the following parish business was reported:

Cllr Heywood The wrong phone number had been used in the parish council annual report. Cllr Heywood's correct phone number is 07426 172907.

Cllr Evans asked for an update on the Environmental Maintenance Grant as the gutters and pavements in Plealey are becoming a hazard. Cllr Evans/Hignett would find out when decisions about the EMG for 2024-5 would be made.

Cllr Lewis wished to thank Cllr Hignett for mending the stake on the Platinum Oak tree on School Green

Cllr Jones asked for the bench on the cycleway to be re-varnished.

Cllr Hignett reported that he had spoken to the Highways Officer and been told that the two sections of road in Pontesbury would be worked on in the evenings rather than during the day. Cllr Hignett had been asked for better signage to deter vehicles for using unsuitable small rural lanes.

Cllr Fletcher reported that a resident had requested that local residents be reminded not to park on dropped kerbs. Cllr Fletcher also wished to send a letter of thanks to Geoff Manley for all his hard work helping with the D-day commemoration activities.

Cllr Davies wished to raise her concerns about large tractors using the lanes, who are on their phone and are speeding. Cllr Fletcher reminded councillors to report specific vehicles and incidences using 101. Clerk would bring the issue to the attention of the local policing team.

39.24 Exclusion of the Press & Public After a proposal by Cllr Pritchard, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** that exclusion of the Press & Public be made on the grounds that the consideration of the following items may involve the likely disclosure of confidential information (s1(2) Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960).

40.24 Personnel Committee –

40.24.1 After a proposal by Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr Hignett, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve :

1. Delegated authority to the Personnel Committee to advertise a zero hours contract for a caretaker to help when the Building Assistant is on leave
2. Delegated authority to the Personnel Committee to approach other Clerks to assist PPC Clerk in the instance of extended leave of Deputy Clerk and to submit an insurance claim to cover any associated costs.

40.24.2 Staff feedback on the proposed replacement staff contracts is to be reviewed by Cllrs Fletcher, Trow and Clerk and a report made to full council in July

40.24.3 After a proposal by Cllr Fletcher, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve:

1. A reduction in Clerk's hours from 37 to 36 to be compressed over 4 days per week.
2. Ringfencing of any monies saved to the staffing budget to cover any additional staff hours Required

40.24.4 After a proposal by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Hignett, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve an additional 25 hours be paid to RFO for additional hours worked on preparation of the 2024-24 audit during June 2024.

41.24 Date and Time of Next Meeting. The next meeting of Pontesbury Parish Council will be held on Monday 8th July 2024 at Habberley Village Hall, starting at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 21.00pm

Signed:
Chairman Pontesbury Parish Council

Date: