

## **PONTESBURY PARISH COUNCIL**



### **Full Council Meeting held at The Pavilion on Monday 14th October 2024 at 6.30pm**

#### **PRESENT**

Councillors: D Fletcher, N Hignett, R Evans, N Lewis, M Trow, C Sandells, P Heywood, T Mackenzie-Slight, J Pritchard and A Windows

**Clerk of the Meeting:** Debbie Marais

**Public present:** None

**In Attendance:** PC Rich Walters (Local Safer Neighbourhood Team) and Sophie Davies (National Flood Forum)

#### **85.24 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Gregory, A Hodges, D Jones and Cllr S Davies

#### **86.24 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations – None**

#### **87.24 Public Questions and Comments - None**

#### **88.24 Minutes of Council**

After a proposal from Cllr Heywood, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

**89.24 Police Matters –** PC Rich Walters gave a verbal report which was **NOTED**, including:

Anti-Social Behaviour

- Increase in patrols July to October, of the ASB hotspots – School Green/public toilets, play area, cricket fields and Hall Bank bus shelter
- PCSOs have been into school and spoken to the Safeguarding Officer, parents of any children identified have been contacted. General assemblies for year 10 and 11 encouraging pupils to desist are planned
- A S34 is being considered for Halloween/half term when the police can ask people to move on and have greater powers if they return to the area
- Trying to identify people from any CCTV in the areas
- Local residents are continually encouraged to report any incidents using 101/online
- There have been a couple of other isolated incidents not involving young people that have been dealt with

Speeding:

- The speeding bike team have been utilised in Minsterley, Pontesbury and Hanwood but generally found that traffic speed was within limits

- Some of the team have had training in using the new camera – the data from which goes to the team that can process fines. There is only 1 camera available for Oswestry, Shrewsbury and South Shropshire.
- The team will look at ANPR data to see if there are specific times when speeding occurs to prioritise use of the camera and bike

PC Simon Lewis is back on duty. Cllr Fletcher welcomed him back.

Cllr Windows asked what is happening with the criminal damage to the public toilets. Clerk had reported and received incident numbers and then a letter saying no further investigation as not CCTV or perpetrators identified. Cllr Windows also asked if there had been any reports of ASB in the Pontesbury Hill area. PC Walters said that there hadn't been.

Cllr Fletcher urged all councillors to sign up to Neighbourhood Matters which would give councillors updates on action taken by the SNT. Cllr Fletcher also wished to thank PC Walters and the team for all their hard work and support and for working closely with the parish council.

**90.24 National Flood Forum.** Sophie Davies explained that the NFF is an independent charity set up to support and represent communities experiencing flooding. Staff can give support on practical matters such as getting insurance once a home has been flooded and can approach central government about accessing funding to protect at risk communities. One of the aims is to set up Flood Action Groups in areas at risk. There are several across Shropshire including in Minsterley. If residents in Pontesbury would like to set up a Flood Action Group Sophie's team could support them.

Another aspect of their work is to engage people with local flood prevention projects such as the one in the Rea Valley catchment area to slow the flow to ensure that local communities are properly consulted. The Rea Valley project involves working with local landowners on woody dams, scrapes and tree planting to slow the flow and reduce the peak flow downstream and potential flooding of local homes.

Sophie would write something to put in the parish newsletter about ways the NFF can help the local community and organise a community meeting with Clerk/Deputy Clerk for parish residents experiencing flooding.

Cllr Sandells asked what could be done about woody debris blocking culverts and drains. Although the NFF cannot practically help to clear areas, it can work through Flood Action Groups to raise concerns about flooding hotspots and work with landowners to find solutions.

**91.24 Shropshire Council Member Report** Shropshire Councillor Nick Hignett gave a verbal report including:

**FINANCES-** Whilst the Council continues to remain in a solvent position, the outlook continues to be challenging. The latest report, presented to Cabinet, shows a forecast outturn position at 31<sup>st</sup> march 2025 of £37.262M. A general Fund balance of £38.821M indicates that the projected variance can be accommodated, albeit leaving the Council with unacceptable reserves for unanticipated expenses. A reduction in planned spending to the end of the year of 10% would see an improvement in the overall forecast of around £20M, thus indicating why the Council continues to look for spending cuts in all areas.

GARDEN WASTE- The new garden waste subscription service will now begin on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November, one month later than initially planned. This is because the first batch of stickers for bins were found to be not fit for purpose, and an alternative supplier had to be found. Residents should continue to put any green bins out for emptying, on the appointed day, until 4th November. The 1<sup>st</sup> year of paid service will now run until the end of October 2025.

HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRES- Also from 4<sup>th</sup> November, residents intending to use one of the Recycling Centres will need to book a slot. All 5 Household Recycling centres will remain open for 7 days a week. This will be reviewed in April 2025.

SHIREHALL TO GUILDHALL- At the Full Council meeting held in September, the decision was made to make the Guildhall the new administrative centre for Shropshire Council. The Council will move its operations into other premises, including the Guildhall, which it already owns. Staff will begin moving in November, with Committee and Council meetings being held at the new venue when arrangements are complete. The future of the Shirehall Site has not been decided.

SHREWSBURY SPORTS VILLAGE- Shropshire Councils' plans to transform the Sports Village in Sundorne were agreed by Full Council on 26<sup>th</sup> September. This follows a Public consultation earlier in the year. Detailed designs and a planning application will now be submitted, at a cost of £2.248M, to include a 25-metre 8-lane pool, suitable for County competitions, seating for 250 spectators, and space for 250 competitors. No decision has been made on the future of the Quarry swimming and Fitness Centre.

CAR PARKS FUNDING- Shropshire councillors have approved plans that could help access extra funding from Car Parks. The Council will look to sell 10 of its car parks, for 125 years, using a financial agreement called an "Income Strip". Similar to a mortgage, this might secure an upfront capital payment of up to £30M. The Council would then lease back the car parks for a fee each year, with the chance to purchase the land back after 50 years. The Council would still keep operational control of the car parks, and still collect car parking income.

Cllr Windows asked why residents would need to book slots and this was to reduce queues and make sure vehicles were not trade vehicles or from out of area

Cllr Sandells asked if the rumours about SC and bankruptcy were true. Cllr Hignett replied that the situation was precarious

## **92.24 Planning**

92.24.1 After a proposal from Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr Hignett, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024.

92.24.2 Cllr Hignett gave a verbal report which was **Noted**.

## **93.24 Finance & General purposes Committee**

93.24.1 After a proposal by Cllr Windows and seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024

93.24.2 After a proposal by Cllr Pritchard and seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the following recommendations from the FGP meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2024:

93.24.2.1 Readopt the Community Grants Policy (as adopted 11 October 2021) without change.  
93.24.2.2 Readopt the Electronic Banking Policy, (as adopted 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023) without change.  
93.24.2.3 Readopt the Pensions Discretions Policy, (as adopted in 2019) without change and keep under regular review  
93.24.2.4 Adopt the draft Gifts and Prizes Policy and add it to the Staff Employment Handbook  
93.24.2.5 Readopt the General Reserves Policy (as adopted on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2023) without change  
93.24.2.6 Renew the payroll service provided by DM Payroll Services for 2025/26 at £230 & VAT.  
93.24.2.7 To reduce the balance of the Nationwide Account to £100  
93.24.2.8 That the refurbishment of the public toilets be specified and costed for implementation in 2025/26, to include the cost of security measures and project management and to seek funding from CIL Local

#### **94.24 Statutory Business and Finance**

94.24.1 Income of £13,859.43. This was **NOTED**.  
94.24.2 After a proposal from Cllr Pritchard, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve October payments of £18,993.31 as attached.  
94.24.3 After a proposal from Cllr Mackenzie-Slight, seconded by Cllr Heywood, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve transfer of £15,000 from CCLA to Unity for October payments  
92.24.4 The External Audit report of successful completion with no outstanding matters was **NOTED**. Cllr Fletcher wished to thank the RFO Caroline Higgins for all her hard work on submitting the audit documents.  
94.24.5 After a proposal from Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Windows, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve a payment of £150 + 14% for the asbestos inspection of the Sports Pavilion roof void  
94.24.6 After a proposal from Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr Pritchard, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve Clerk support from locum Clerk to help Clerk catch up with Health & Safety work

#### **95.24 Health & Safety Matters – None raised**

**96.24 Parish Council Strategic Plan 23-26.** After a proposal from Cllr Windows, seconded by Cllr Mackenzie-Slight, all in favour it was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Strategic Plan as updated by Clerk

**97.24 Community Infrastructure Levy -** After a proposal from Cllr Windows, seconded by Cllr Mackenzie-Slight, all in favour it was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE and authorise the completion of the Neighbourhood Fund Annual Report Form in accordance with National CIL Regulations and to return it to Shropshire Council.**

**98.24 Resident's survey of Cruckton/Cruckmeole and Pound Lane.** After a proposal from Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Trow, Cllr Sandells abstained, it was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE Clerk write to Shropshire Council asking them to consider the following recommendations:**

1. Pound Lane, Shorthill and Arscott areas should be designated as a Quiet Lane – as agreed by 95% of respondents.
2. HGV's should be discouraged from using the Cruckton/Cruckmeole through route (apart from access) due to the road being narrow and therefore being unsuitable. The new signage stating "No access for HGV apart from access." should be moved to more highly visible positions along the A488 and B4386 prior to the turning and made clearer to reflect the change. There was a clear majority of support from residents for this.
3. There was a clear majority for a 30mph limit should be imposed from Cruckmeole to the junction of the B4386.

We would also like to have a 20mph zone within this route on the approaches to and from Cruckton Hall School. This is due to the need for pupils with Learning Difficulties, staff and residents to use this area safely as pedestrians.

4. There was also a clear majority for a 40mph speed limit should be imposed on the approaches from the crossroads to the site of the former Hare and Hounds Pub along the B4386. There is a new development which has led to more traffic turning on/off the road which is currently a 60mph zone.
5. To recommend that signs saying "Cruckton welcomes careful drivers" should be placed at the disused railway buttress and by the turning into the main part of the village along the B4386 in order to warn drivers that it is a residential area and for navigational purposes.
6. Immediate action and improvement to the signs in Lea Cross directing HGV traffic

#### **99.24 Parish Council Insurance**

After a proposal from Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Mackenzie-Slight, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to retrospectively approve the payment of £1964.84 for 2025-26 insurance and entering into a 3 year Long Term Undertaking with Clear Councils Insurance

**100.24 Pontesbury Youth Project** – a written update was received and **NOTED**.

**101.24 Request for funding from Pontesbury Sports Association** - After a proposal from Cllr Pritchard, seconded by Cllr Hignett, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED** to approve a donation payment of £5000 to Pontesbury Sports Association towards the health & safety work required for the building and works to alleviate flooding. Clerk to request a site meeting with Cllrs Hignett, Fletcher, Lewis and PSA representatives to look at any further works needed to alleviate flooding and before a meeting with John Bellis from Shropshire Council

**102.24 Environmental Maintenance Grant 2025-26** - After a proposal from Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Pritchard, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the following:

102.24.1 £520 match funding for 2025-26 from the parish council

102.24.2 the works to be done would be deferred for discussion at the November Full Council meeting

**103.24 Verges Project.** After a proposal from Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Pritchard, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the following:

103.24.1 a grant of £100 to purchase more wildflower seed for the verge

103.24.2 a payment of £75 to Cllr Manning for clearing the risings

**104.24 Request for funding from Pontesbury Festival.** After a proposal from Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Windows it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE a grant of £258 for the festival insurance**

**105.24 Clerk's Report** - A report from the Parish Clerk was received and noted.

**106.24 Parish Business** the following parish business was reported:

Cllr Pritchard reported potholes of concern on the Habberley to Minsterley Road. Cllrs Fletcher/Pritchard would report on FixmyStreet

Cllr Lewis damage to the bus shelter at the bottom of Hall Bank and the state of the bus shelter at the top of Hall Bank – it was not fair to expect the person who cleans this bus shelter to deal with it. This would be discussed by the Facilities Working Group at the next meeting

Cllr Evans raised concerns about the fact that the road repairs in and out of Plealey being cancelled. Clerk was asked to write to SC as some of the potholes were very deep and wide and dangerous for cyclists

Clerk                    The flooding in Woodhall Drive had been sorted  
Resident of Hall Bank had asked for salt bins, waste bins and solar footway lighting  
for the estate. Clerk would advise resident to request salt bins and waste bins on  
Shropshire Council portal. Solar lighting would be added to the November agenda

**107.24 Date and Time of Next Meeting. The next meeting of Pontesbury Parish  
Council will be held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at The Pavilion, starting at  
6.30pm.**

**The meeting closed at 20.10pm**

Signed: .....  
Chairman Pontesbury Parish Council

Date: .....