



Appleton Parish Council

Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road, Appleton, WA4 5EQ

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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Appleton Parish Council held on Tuesday 20th February 2024 at 7pm at Appleton Parish Hall

Present: - Councillor L Booth, Councillor G Chapman, Councillor L Chapman, Councillor P Lewenz, Councillor M Marshall, Councillor P Walker and Councillor J Wheeler.

Mrs J Monks (Clerk) and Mrs I Derbyshire (Assistant Clerk), ten members of the public and one representative from the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Part One – This part of the meeting was open to the press and members of the public

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair of the Parish Council, Councillor L Chapman welcomed everyone to the Parish Council meeting. Councillor K Critchley, Councillor C Critchley, Councillor M Browne, Councillor M Delaney, Councillor M Jervis and Councillor H Speed sent their apologies for the meeting.

2. Members Code of Conduct

Councillor J Wheeler declared that she was a member of the Development Management Committee of Warrington Borough Council. Councillor P Walker declared that he was a substitute member of the Development Management Committee of Warrington Borough Council.

3. Public Participation

Two members of Stockton Heath Flower Club addressed the Parish Council with regards to the Parish Hall car park as they thought that it was very dark at nights and this was a Health and Safety issue.

A member of the public addressed the Parish Council with regards to the phase two of the Appleton Cross development as they were disappointed that both Warrington Borough Council and Homes England were not present and requested that the Parish Council take action to push for this development.

Councillor J Wheeler confirmed that the Appleton Thorn Ward Councillors had met with representatives from Homes England regarding phase two. However, both Ward Councillors were not present at the Parish Council meeting.

4. Presentation from Homes England regarding phase two of the Appleton Cross development.

The clerk confirmed that she had invited a representative from Warrington Borough Council to attend the Parish Council meeting with regards to phase two of Appleton Cross. There was no update on the facilities from Warrington Borough Council as they were awaiting a planning application from Homes England.

Homes England were unable to attend the Parish Council meeting and they have sent an update via email which has been circulated to all the Parish Councillors for their attention. Homes England have stated that will be shortly sharing a briefing on the proposals and they will be looking to engage with key stakeholders, but no timescales are yet known. They are looking to submit a planning application for the Appleton Cross Local Centre towards the end of 2024/early 2025.

Councillor P Lewenz asked the clerk to contact both Warrington Borough Council and Homes England to ask what the plans were for the Southeast Warrington urban extension.

5. Speed cameras

(a) Presentation from the representative from Police and Crime Commissioner.

A representative from the Police and Crime Commissioner provided background information on the CCTV average speed camera project. The Police and Crime Commissioner was looking at doing three pilot schemes. This is a new concept and is a trial only.

Councillor J Wheeler reported that the proposed location is due to have a pedestrian crossing installed and as such it may not be the best location for an average speed check. Councillor J Wheeler reported that there would be a need for a public consultation due to the amount of funding required, approximately £60,000.

Councillor L Chapman had researched incidents on the proposed location and advised that accidents were at junctions as opposed to speeding.

(b) Speed cameras from Section 106 money

Councillor J Wheeler confirmed that Warrington Borough Council has received Section 106 money for Speed cameras and that she will chase up Warrington Borough Council with regards to these funds. The clerk reported that Warrington Borough Council has received considerable funds via Section 106 money but none of the infrastructure has been done.

(c) Average speed cameras

The clerk had asked for further details in writing from the Police and Crime Commissioner so that the Parish Council could consider the proposal for average speed cameras.

6. Minutes of last Parish Council meeting and matters arising

RESOLVED that;

The minutes of the Parish Council's monthly meeting on Tuesday 16th January 2024. (Copies of which had been circulated to each Member) were approved and signed by the Chair.

Under matters arising the clerk confirmed that she had contacted Lymm Parish Council requesting an invoice for the South Warrington Local Plan group as the Parish Council has not been billed for any costs since September 2023. The clerk of Lymm Parish Council has now confirmed that there are no additional invoices for recharging for 2023/2024 for the South Warrington Parishes group.

The clerk, as requested at the January Parish Council meeting has contacted Lymm Parish Council with regards to any financial commitment from the Parish Council from April 2024 onwards as no expenditure or budget for any expenditure for 2024/2025 has been agreed by the Parish Council. The clerk has requested that the South Warrington Local Plan provide a budget of expenditure for 2024/2025 and estimate of what the expenditure will be for Appleton Parish Council based on the precept amounts for 2024/2025 and details of what the terms of reference are for the group as the Local Plan has now been agreed. However, to date no information has been provided and as such the Parish Council cannot make any financial commitment or decision for funding at this present time.

The clerk reported that the Lumb Brook Millennium Green Ltd AGM is on Tuesday 12th March 2024 at 7.30pm in the small hall at St Mary Magdelene's Church in Appleton. Councillor P Lewenz and Councillor J Wheeler will attend.

Councillor J Wheeler asked for an update regarding Councillor K Critchley querying the Council Tax base figures with Warrington Borough Council. There was no update as Councillor K Critchley was not present at the meeting.

7. Minutes of Finance and General Purposes committee meeting and to consider approving the recommendations

RESOLVED that;

The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on Thursday 1st February 2024. (Copies of which had been circulated to each Member) were approved and signed by the Chair).

RESOLVED that;

The following were approved further to the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on Thursday 1st February 2024.

- (a) A grant of £2283 was approved for a 50% contribution towards the footpath improvement works in The Dingle. Warrington Borough Council would have to manage the project and be responsible for employing the contractor to undertake the works. The amount of £2283 will be paid on completion via an invoice from Warrington Borough Council.
- (b) A grant of £1,100 was approved for a contribution towards running the Stockton Heath Festival for 2024. The payment would have to be made in April 2024, with the funds to be taken out of the grant budget for 2024/2025. The clerk noted that Councillor L Booth abstained from the vote on this matter as she was a member of a group which takes part in the Stockton Heath Festival.
- (c) The Parish Hall income and expenditure report and Hallmaster reports were accepted by the Parish Council.
- (d) The review of income and expenditure for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st December 2023 was approved by the Parish Council.
- (e) The earmarked reserves were approved.
- (f) The five-year review of income and expenditure was approved by the Parish Council with a 3% increase every year.

8. Planning

RESOLVED that;

The minutes of the Planning Committee on Tuesday 16th January 2024 and Thursday 1st February 2024 (Copies of which had been circulated to each Member) were approved and signed by the Chair.

9. Accounts for 2023/2024 and Payments Schedules

The January 2024 statement of Receipts and Payments for the Financial Year 2023/2024 was noted, and the Members noted the bank reconciliation of 31st January 2024.

RESOLVED that;

Payments were to be made in accordance with the payment schedule for February 2024.

10. Payment schedules for March 2024

RESOLVED that;

there will be two bank payment schedules in March 2024 due to the Parish Council now having to submit income/expenditure accounts rather than receipts/payments. The banking schedules will be undertaken as normal on the Thursday after the Parish Council meeting, Thursday 21st March with an additional banking schedule on Thursday 28th March to ensure payments are in the correct financial year. Copies of the payment schedule for Thursday 21st March 2024 will be circulated in the agenda pack (in the usual way). The payment schedule for Thursday 28th March will be

circulated by email. All payments will then be approved at the next Parish Council meeting.

11. Internal auditor for end of year accounts for 2023/2024

RESOLVED that;

JDH Business Services were appointed as internal auditors for the end of year accounts for 2023/2024 at the cost of £319.00 plus VAT.

An additional amount of up to £250.00 plus VAT is approved for any additional accountancy work to convert the accounts into income/expenditure.

12. Purchase of additional chairs for Parish Hall

RESOLVED that;

Eight additional chairs for the Parish Hall were approved with the cost of up to £600 plus VAT.

13. Parish Hall car park

RESOLVED that;

The expenditure for replacements for the two broken lights in the Parish Hall at the cost of £234.72 plus VAT was approved.

RESOLVED that;

An additional amount of up to £500 plus VAT was approved to additional lighting in the car park to ensure that the car park is well lit.

The clerk reported that the Parish Council had previously obtained quotes for CCTV in July 2019, five years ago. The quotes were for £2,283.59 plus £114.60 annual maintenance for six cameras and £1349.13 plus £245.78 annual maintenance for four cameras.

The clerk was asked to contact the Beat Manager of Cheshire Police to obtain facts and figures with regards to incidents on the Parish Hall car park and ask her if she thought that it was required.

14. Electrical work at the Parish Hall

RESOLVED that;

The amount of £80.00 plus VAT was approved for emergency electrical work at the Parish Hall.

15. Electric charging point on Parish Council Car Park

The clerk reported that the Finance and General Purposes Committee had previously investigated electric charging points for the Parish Hall car park and a quote had been obtained. The matter was not taken any further as there were issues with costs and the current size of the car park.

RESOLVED that;

No further action would be taken on this matter.

16. Environmental Working Party meeting

RESOLVED that;

The minutes of the Environmental Working Party meeting on Thursday 25th January 2024 were approved.

RESOLVED that;

The following recommendations were approved;

- (a) The expenditure of up to £100 plus VAT for wildflower planting on the corner of Green Lane. The clerk was asked to send a letter to the neighbouring properties to advise them of this wildflower planting.
- (b) Primrose Hill Nurseries will be awarded the contract for the summer and winter bedding for 2024 at the cost of £1,426 plus VAT. The clerk will confirm the contract and the dates by which the planting will be completed by.
- (c) The draft biodiversity policy was adopted by the Parish Council.

17. Events Working Party meeting

RESOLVED that;

The minutes of the Events Working Party meeting on Thursday 18th January 2024 were approved.

RESOLVED that;

The following recommendations were approved;

- (a) Councillor G Chapman approaches a group who hires the Parish Hall to consider having a D-Day service on the evening of Thursday 6th June 2024. The clerk reported that the Parish Hall was however booked every Thursday for Pilates until 7.30pm, so the Parish Hall would not be available until then.
- (b) Expenditure of up to £300 plus VAT was approved for the purchase of outdoor lanterns with battery candles and refreshments for an event on Thursday 6th June. Only the clerk and assistant clerk can purchase goods/services on behalf of the Parish Council. It is not possible for individual Parish Councillors to purchase items and then claim the money back from the Parish Council.
- (c) The Parish Council will allow Warrington Rotary club to borrow the beacon if they want to organise their own event at Hillcliffe.

18. May 2024 Election costs and election arrangements

RESOLVED that;

The estimated election costs for the Parish Council election in May 2024 were noted and are as follows;

The estimated cost to Appleton Parish Council for a contested Parish Council election would be £10,499.09. The estimated cost to Appleton Parish Council for an uncontested Parish Council election would be £873.18.

It was noted that the costs are based on the combined election with Borough Ward Councillors and Police and Crime Commissioner elections.

RESOLVED that;

The email from Warrington Borough Council regarding the election's arrangements were noted. Nomination papers are available from Tuesday 12th March 2024 and must be submitted by hand no later than 4pm on Friday 5th April 2024. The notice of election will be published by Warrington Borough Council on Monday 11th March 2024. The purdah/pre-election period commences from Monday 11th March 2024.

19. Membership of Cheshire Association of Local Councils for 2024/2025.

RESOLVED that;

The Parish Council would not become a member of Cheshire Association of Local Councils for 2024/2025 at the cost of £1551.66 for the year.

20. Training

RESOLVED that;

The clerk and assistant clerk could undertake a Principles of Internal Auditing Local Councils qualification from the Society of Local Council Clerks at the cost of £120 plus VAT per person.

21. PCSO / Police report

The clerk had circulated the PCSO reports to all the Parish Councillors for their attention. There were no PCSOs in attendance.

22. Parish Councillor reports and feedback from other meetings

Councillor P Lewenz reported that he had attended a Public Rights of Way meeting, and that Warrington Borough Council were looking at reviewing the Public Rights of Way.

23. Dates and time of next meetings

Thursday 29th February at 9.30am, Environmental Working Party meeting at Appleton Parish Hall and via Teams.

Friday 1st March 2024, 2pm The Dingle and Fords Rough working party meeting via Teams.

Thursday 7th March 2024, 9.15am Planning Committee meeting at Appleton Parish Hall.

Thursday 7th March 2024, 9.45am Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting.

Tuesday 19th March 2024, 6.30pm Planning Committee meeting at Appleton Parish Hall.

Tuesday 19th March 2024, 7pm Parish Council meeting at Appleton Parish Hall.

Part Two – This contains confidential information and only Parish Councillors and the clerk and assistant clerk were present

24. Staffing

This item was confidential and as such the contents have been removed.