

Whixall Parish Council

Chairman: Ian Mercer

Minutes of the Parish Council's Monthly Meeting held on 13 January 2021 on the Zoom Platform starting at 7:30pm

Present:

Councillors: I Mercer (Chair); J Spenser; A Hague; B Harris; J Broadhead; D Edgerton;
A Rawlinson; A Hague

County Councillors: C Mellings

Clerk: A Roberts

Members of the community: 2

Representatives of other bodies/ organisations: 0

1/21 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Dee (Shropshire Council)

2/21 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

Members were reminded of their obligation to declare any interests/ gifts/ hospitality. The following interests were declared:

Cllr B Harris: Non-pecuniary interest in relation to item 7a (minute ref 6/21a). Members agreed that Councillor Harris was allowed to take part in discussions but was not allowed to vote on this item.

Cllr D Edgerton: Non-pecuniary interest in relation to item 7c (minute ref 6/21c). Members agreed that Councillor Edgerton was allowed to take part in discussions but was not allowed to vote on this item.

3/21 Public Participation

Miss J Edgerton and Mr T Edgerton explained to the Council how they met the criteria for strong local connections.

4/21 West Mercia Police Report (Circulated by email prior to the meeting)

The report gave details of road traffic incidents, local mobile patrols and investigations of suspicious activity. No Covid breaches have been reported in the Parish.

PC Wheeler explained in the report that the West Mercia website can be used to report incidents and West Mercia Police prioritise online reports in exactly the same way as calls to 101. They can be reported on www.westmercia.police.uk/ro/report.

Operation Snap is currently running. Members of the public are encouraged to report and submit digital footage showing potential traffic offences using the secure online form. (www.westmercia.police.uk/operationsnap). Offences can range from driving dangerously or carelessly, to overtaking on solid white lines, using a mobile phone while driving or dangerous behaviour around other road users such as horse riders or cyclists.

5/21 Minutes of Previous Meetings

Meeting of Whixall Parish Council held on 9 September 2020:

It was proposed by Cllr Hague that the draft minutes, of the meeting detailed above, were an accurate record. This was seconded by Cllr Harris and agreed by all present.

Planning Meeting held on 14 October 2020:

It was proposed by Cllr Rawlinson that the draft minutes, of the meeting detailed above, were an accurate record. This was seconded by Cllr Harris and agreed by all present.

(As the meeting was online, the Clerk signed both sets of minutes on behalf of the Chairman).

6/21 **Planning**

a. Planning Applications Received

Reference	Detail	Stance
20/05300/FUL	Erection of standalone single-storey building accommodating 2no. classrooms, entrance/lobby, WCs, plant room, kitchen, store and canopies, following demolition of existing dilapidated buildings. Whixall CE School, SY13 2SB	Support

b. No planning decisions were received

- c. **Resolved:** Whixall Parish Council can confirm Miss Jessica Edgerton's strong local connection
Resolved: Whixall Parish Council can confirm Mr Tom Edgerton's strong local connection

7/21 **Clerk's Report** (Circulated by email prior to the meeting)

Correspondence

Shropshire Climate Action Partnership

Alan Wilson, SALC Vice Chairman and Chair of the SCAP Steering Group has written to the PC outlining the Zero Carbon Shropshire Plan. zerocarbonschropshire.org.

School Flashing Lights

The lights at the school failed again earlier this week. Shropshire Council's lighting engineer has arranged for the fault to be investigated.

Actions

Grants and Gifts

A suggested process for grants and gifts was completed and circulated to members in December 2020. This will require discussion/amendment/agreement at a future meeting.

Old Burial Ground

Further work is required as the Diocese have not been able to provide any additional boundary information.

Elections

Parish Council elections are due to take place in May this year and, at present, it is not envisaged that this date will change. The clerk will be undertaking election training in March. Election costs will be invoiced in April 2022.

Information Commissioner

The Clerk is seeking clarification in relation to payments to the Information Commissioner. If the Council is required to pay, the fee will be no more than £35.

2021 Census

This year's census will be predominantly online (similar to the process for completing the annual Electoral Register return for Shropshire Council), but Census workers will give assistance if required and there will be a paper option. This might be the last annual Census.

2021 Meeting Dates (to be confirmed)

10 February	10 March	14 April
12 May	9 June	14 July
8 September	13 October	10 November

Annual Parish Meeting: 19 May

8/21 Financial Matters**a) To receive monthly bank balance record.**

The Clerk advised the council of the council's bank balances.

DATE	ACCOUNT NAME	AMOUNT
31 Dec. 2020	Current Account	3330.71
	Savings Account	5701.25
	Barclays Account	0.13
TOTAL		£9,032.09

b) To resolve to approve outstanding accounts.

Orders for the payment of outstanding invoices (under "Power to Spend" LGA1972 s.112(2) and 124(1)). As per the financial report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)/ Clerk proposed by Cllr Hague, seconded by Cllr Harris and agreed by all present.

Resolved: The outstanding accounts should be paid and the payment transactions authorised by two authorised councillors. In addition, payments authorised by email are approved.

(As this was an online meeting, the Clerk signed the paperwork on behalf of Cllr Hague).

c) To resolve budget setting and precept for the 2021/22 Financial Year

The Clerk tabled the budget proposal shown below, and explained that the proposed budgets for the next year incorporated a 3% inflationary increase, except in the case of staffing costs (6% to allow for an incremental increase and a possible pay award) and Marlot running costs (set at 5% for 10 years in 2019).

Budget Item	2020/21	Next Year (2021/22)
	Actual Budget (£)	Proposed Budget (£)
Staff costs	4,600	4,870
Administration	897	911
Office Costs	52	55
Hall Hire	309	318
Communications	88	90
Audit	120	120
Insurance	256	256
Banking Costs	72	72
Subscriptions (SALC)	350	382
Grounds Maintenance	1,650	1658
Grass Cutting	1,500	1,500
Marlot	150	158
Training	200	200
Events	350	350
Chairman's Fund	300	309
Neighbourhood Fund (one-off funding)	110.89	110.89
Reserves	793	818
Earmarked	793	818
TOTAL	9250.89	9608.89
(Total excluding Neighbourhood Fund)	9,140	9498

These increases resulted in a precept requirement of £9,498 which equates to an annual increase of £2.35 per household.

Cllr Mellings explained that the way in which Shropshire Council had calculated the tax base for precepts this year was based on an anticipated lower collection rate due to the impact of Covid-19.

Cllr Harris commented that the process for declaring a Local Nature Reserve would have some advertising costs. As these will be one-off costs the clerk suggested that they could be met from underspends rather than being added to the precept. This will be discussed further when detailed costs are known.

Resolved: The budget proposal is accepted and the precept for 2021/22 will be £9,498.

The Clerk will submit the precept request paperwork to Shropshire Council.

9/20 Delegations

- a) The Clerk explained that the current protocol for planning applications required the Council to convene a meeting should members wish to applications. A scheme of delegation was proposed whereby, when a meeting could not be convened, the response could be delegated to the Clerk in consultation with members. This would help to ensure that planning applications could be addressed regardless of their timing.

Members stated that their preferred approach would always be to hold a meeting, but they understood the need for this approach.

Resolved: The scheme of delegation on planning matters was adopted by the Council.

- b) The clerk outlined the current approach to any consultations that fall between meeting dates. Members were advised that, in order to allow the Clerk to continue the approach of collating their consultation comments and responding on behalf of the Council a scheme of delegation was required.

Resolved: The scheme of delegation on consultation responses was adopted by the Council.

10/20 Parish Councillor Vacancy

A vacancy has arisen following the resignation of Cllr Turnbull. Members were advised that, because the vacancy had arisen within 6-months of a scheduled election, they should decide whether or not to fill it. Potential difficulties include the possibility that the Council would not hold a physical meeting which would make it difficult to interviewing candidates would not be easy. In addition, a new councillor would only be in position until the May election.

Resolved: The councillor vacancy will not be filled until the May 2021 election.

11/20 Parish Matters

Marlot LNR

Graham Turnbull has been chairing the Task & Finish Group and he provided a written update which was circulated by email prior to the meeting.

Members agreed that his work on this project was very much appreciated.

In his resignation letter he had stated he would be happy to remain active in any capacity the Council deemed appropriate for the work being carried out on the LNR application. Members asked the Clerk to ensure there is no reason why he cannot continue to chair the group before writing to thank him for all the work he has carried out as a Councillor and to confirm that he is willing to continue in his role as chairman of this group.

12/20 Councillor Reports

Cllr Broadhead stated that Cllr Pauline Dee had been in hospital and was very unwell with Covid-19. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to her on behalf of members and send their best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Cllr Mercer had received information that RAF Shawbury is to be carrying out night training imminently.

Scheduled date of next meeting: **10 February 2021 (to be confirmed)**

The meeting closed at 8.12pm