

Whixall Parish Council



Chairman: Ian Mercer

Minutes of the Parish Council's Monthly Meeting held on 11 May 2022 at Whixall Social Centre starting at 7:30pm

Present:

Councillors: I Mercer (Chair); B Harris; A Rawlinson; P Rodenhurst; M Evans; and J Spenser

Shropshire Councillors : E Towers; P Broomhall

Clerk: A Roberts

Other Organisations 0

Members of the Public 0

38/22 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Howard; Cllr Weedall

39/22 Minutes of Previous Meeting

It was proposed by Cllr Rawlinson that the draft minutes, of the Ordinary meeting of the Council held on 13 April 2022 were an accurate record. This was seconded by Cllr Harris and agreed by all present.

Resolved: The minutes of the Council meetings held on 13 April are an accurate record
The Chair signed the minutes.

40/22 Reports

- Councillors Broomhall and Towers had circulated their report in advance of the meeting (Appendix A).
- The Clerk gave a verbal report (Appendix B).

41/22 Parish Matters

- The Marlot

Graham Turnbull provided an activity report (Appendix C). The Clerk provided a verbal summary of the outcome of the meeting with the Marlot Conservation Group (MCG) on 18 April 2022: At that meeting it was agreed that a group comprising 2 representatives of each organisation would meet informally on 16 May to discuss matters further with the aim of producing a high-level strategic document to steer the LNR. The Clerk will explore the structure and standing required in order to give such a group the autonomy it requires whilst ensuring it complies with legal requirements. This will be reported at the next PC meeting.

42/22 Planning

- To Consider Applications

Two applications received on the day of the meeting were circulated prior to the meeting.

22/02007/FUL	Variation of condition no.2 (approved plans) pursuant of 20/03691/VAR to allow for amendments to the orientation of the approved dwelling. 6 Hollinwood	Support with comment*
22/02006/VAR	Application under Section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the retention of timber shed and change of use of part of paddock to domestic garden. 6 Hollinwood	Support No comment

*The Council supports this application subject to there being no loss of privacy to neighbouring properties. Please refer to previous comments.

- To Receive Planning Application Decisions

22/01078/FUL	Erection of extension and improvements to existing detached garage.	Refuse
--------------	---	--------

43.22 Financial Mattersa. To receive monthly bank balance record.

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

DATE	ACCOUNT NAME	AMOUNT
30 April 2022	Current Account (Working Budget)	£10,670.23
	Savings Account (Reserves)	£10,557.62
TOTAL		£21,227.85

b. To agree Clerk's Contract and Salary

Proposed Cllr Mercer seconded Cllr Rawlinson. Agreed all.

Resolved: The Clerk's contract will be revised to set the maximum upper level at point 23 on the National Salary Scales.

The Clerk will revise the contract and present it for approval at the next meeting.

c. To resolve to approve outstanding accounts

Orders for the payment of outstanding invoices and all payments approved remotely (under "Power to Spend" LGA1972 s.112(2) and 124(1)). Proposed by Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Spenser and agreed by all.

Resolved: The outstanding accounts should be paid and the payment transactions authorised by two authorised councillors.

Recipient	Reason for Payment	Amount	Power of Expenditure
Employee	Salary (for February)	£211.54	LGA 1972 s112
Employee	Reimbursement	£48.35	LGA 1972 s112
HMRC	PAYE	£140.80	LGA 1972 s112
NEST	Pension Contributions	£36.49	LGA 1972 s112
Marlot Cons. Group	Reimbursement	£25.72	PHA 1875 s164
SALC	Affiliation Fees	£398.29	LGA 1972 s112
M Spenser	Reimbursement (Hollinwood Green)	£18.01	PHA 1875 s164
	Total	£879.20	

d. AGAR: Certificate of Exemption

Proposed Cllr Harris seconded Cllr Rawlinson. Agreed all.

Resolved: The Certificate of Exemption was signed by the Chair.

e. AGAR: Effectiveness of Internal Control and Annual Governance Statement

Proposed Cllr Harris, seconded Cllr Rawlinson. Agreed all.

Resolved: The Annual Governance Statement was approved, and signed by the Chair.

f. AGAR Accounting Statements 2021-22

Proposed Cllr Harris, seconded Cllr Rawlinson. Agreed all.

Resolved: The Accounting Statements were approved, and signed by the Chair.

Scheduled date of next meeting:

11 July 2022 (7.30pm)

The meeting closed at 9.13pm

Report 7 to Whixall Parish Council by Shropshire Councillors Peter Broomhall and Edward Towers – May 2022

Dear All – Please find below our seventh written report as your Shropshire County Councillors.

We have received the following Covid-19 updates from Lezley Picton – Leader of Shropshire Council, just prior to Easter that will give you the latest position of Shropshire Council in this matter:

Living safely with COVID-19 in Shropshire

It is now a month since the Government announced the removal of coronavirus legal restrictions and the county began transitioning to the 'Living with COVID-19' plan. Last week we received further guidance specifically on testing and how we live safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19.

As part of the Government's plan, they will no longer provide free universal testing for the public in England. This will no doubt raise several questions of what this means for us in our daily lives. We have looked to answer these in the form of [frequently asked questions](#) which will be reviewed regularly. Some main points are below.

Who is still eligible for free COVID-19 tests?

Free tests will still be available for people at risk of serious illness from COVID-19 (the over-75s, and over-12s with weakened immune systems), and eligible for treatments, along with NHS staff and social care workers.

The Government has said that free testing will be provided for:

- Patients in hospital, where a PCR test is required for their care
- People who are eligible for COVID-19 treatments because they are at higher risk of getting seriously ill if they become infected. (The Government says it will be in touch with these eligible groups)
- Individuals who live or work in high-risk settings, including care homes, home care organisations and places of detention. Those working in these settings will be able to test regularly, without symptoms at this time.

The council will no longer receive testing kits directly. Frontline colleagues in teams identified in Government guidance who are eligible for tests will receive these through the home channel and be allocated a Unique Organisation Number.

What do I do if I have COVID-19 symptoms?

Government guidance advises people with symptoms of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19, and a high temperature or who feel unwell, to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people. Individuals are advised to do so until they feel well enough to resume normal activities and no longer have a high temperature.

It is not a legal requirement for the public to test. Some frontline teams such as care workers will adhere to specific testing requirements.

Minimising the spread

By working together, we can manage these next steps safely.

Following safe behaviours is one of the key tools to help reduce the spread of the virus and keep everyone safe. These actions can also help to reduce the spread of other respiratory infections, such as flu.

From now on we strongly urge everyone to continue to:

- Wear a face covering in busy and enclosed spaces

- Keep indoor areas well ventilated. Let fresh air in if meetings are indoors.
- Sanitise your hands on entering and leaving all buildings and sites, and after using communal areas/touch points
- Cover your coughs and sneezes: Catch it, Bin it, Kill it
- Although social distancing is no longer a legal requirement, we ask at this time of increasing cases, you continue to use social distancing in your interaction with others in our buildings and meetings
- Coloured lanyards will be made available at council buildings to reflect how people are feeling regarding social distancing and to support colleagues
- COVID-19 vaccine remains the best defence against the virus. You are less likely to fall seriously ill with COVID-19 if you are fully vaccinated. You can find your nearest walk-in clinic [here](#) or book [online](#).

It is important to remember that coronavirus has not gone away. Everything we do, all the small things we have learned to keep ourselves and others as safe as possible have become even more important. If we continue to work together, we can keep each other safe and well.

We will keep all measures under review in line with government announcements, new variants and as we monitor local case rates.

We have not had another full Shropshire Council meeting since Thursday 24th February 2022, so nothing to report this month. The next one is later this week on Thursday 12th May 2022.

Regarding Whixall Parish, as last month this continues to be largely about:

- a few planning applications coming forward and their being accepted or refused.
- Monitoring highway and infrastructure repairs and improvements taking place in Whixall and the Wem area and especially with regard to their impact upon traffic and safety.
- We have also been informed that there is to be a temporary road closure in Rack Lane, Whixall for one day on 30th May 2022 for drainage works.

Shropshire Council Briefing/Training Sessions:

Between us we have attended briefing sessions on:

1. We have attended a further briefing session on Shropshire Council re-Branding – 14/4/22
You will hopefully see this taking effect going forward, and it's more than just about a logo! It's more to do with the experience that anyone has in coming into contact with the organisation, how they are made to feel and their impressions of how effective they feel SC is in practice.
2. Economic Growth Strategy review update 2022-2027 – 28/4/22
3. Evening Planning Training Session – 4/5/22

If you'd like to know details of any/all of these discussions then do ask. There are usually powerpoints to help explain them.

Shropshire Council Committees:

Between us we have sat on the following committees on:

- I. Northern Area Planning Committee - 26/4/22 (ET)
- II. Licensing Act Sub Committee – 7-4-22 (PB)

Again, if you'd like to know details of any/all of these discussions then do ask.

The Wemian – We still need your help in searching for and suggesting a new Editor and team members to help ensure this long running and valued local publication is able to continue to flourish, adapt and serve our community. Cllr Geoff Soul (Wem Town Council) is its Treasurer and can be a point of contact for any who may want further details.

Discussion about the future of Wem Economic Forum – We had a meeting last week (3rd May) between ourselves, Wem Town Council (Clerk), Wem Rural Parish Council (Clerk and Chairman) and Shropshire Council Officers. This shared ideas with our Clerks that Peter and myself have been discussing with Officers at Shropshire Council for a business plan for Wem and its hinterland. It is hoped this will refine/reformulate current WEF Terms of Reference and enable our local businesses to become more involved in developing

strategies/plans with our community to make successful bids for funding to come into our area. This in turn will provide the needed stimulus to enhance our local economy, grow our businesses, attract new ones and provide employment, housing and an improving infrastructure for us all. Further meetings are being planned to hear more of what SC can offer in the way of initiatives and programmes that support businesses (SBLTV Knowledge, Growth Hub etc).

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations – Thur 2nd- Sun 5th June 2022 –

The latest meeting for this Planning Group took place on 10th May at the Wem Conservative Club at 7.15pm. The date for these is now very near and publicity is now being circulated using posters, social media outlets and the like. Final plans are being made, funding and helpers are still being sought and decorations are about to start being put up. A copy of the latest meeting notes will be issued shortly by Mandy Roberts (Clerking the QDJ Meetings). Do ask for a copy if you'd like to know the latest details.

Also please do refer to the additional guidance now being offered by 'the Palace' on their website <https://www.royal.uk/platinum-jubilee-central-weekend> and <https://www.local.gov.uk/queens-platinum-jubilee-central-weekend-2022> .

A further meeting for the Planning Group for these Celebrations is likely in the next two weeks at the Wem Conservative Club at 7.15pm. The date will be decided at the 10th May meeting. Please ask Mandy if you need to know this and/or want to attend.

We hope that this brings you up to date with Shropshire Council issues that affect Whixall. Let us know if there are details that you would like to raise that have not been covered.

Kindest regards,

Peter Broomhall and Edward Towers

1. Annual Parish Meeting

The agenda has now been finalised. Refreshments are arranged and the meeting has been advertised on the Parish website and public noticeboards.

2. New Financial Management Arrangements

The Parish Council accounts will be managed using a revised spreadsheet, the advantage of which is that the end of year reporting figures will be produced automatically.

In addition, VAT will be recorded separately from this financial year.

3. The Marlot

In a previous monthly report, the MCG had asked for funding for handtools. This will be put onto the next agenda for a formal decision.

Marlot Conservation Group (MCG)
Work report to Whixall Parish Council meeting 11 May 2022

Period 7 April -3 May 2022

During this period the MCG has concentrated on the front and back meadows. Whilst the cow grazing had kept some areas of grass down there was a need to carry out a further grass and hay cut using brush-cutters. Much of the front meadow, and part of the back meadow, was also covered in early growth willow and whilst the MCG has managed to dig out several patches of willow by hand it was decided to cut the remaining patches down to the ground. These areas will re-grow and the intention will be to dig as much out by hand again later in the year or early next year. The cutting and subsequent raking of the grass, willow and hay was carried out over a 5 week period (working each Tuesday – with one work day cancelled due to rain). This work produced a considerable amount of arisings and due to a period of dry and sunny weather it was decided too dangerous to burn on site. With Councillor Alan Rawlinson's permission, we were able to deposit the grass and willow arisings (several trailer loads) in an area of his property where we had previously deposited pond debris. This was a great help and we thank him; it has enabled us to clear the meadows of all debris. Additional work during this period also included repairing the main meadow entrance pathway and levelling of the connecting path between the two meadows from the damage caused by the cow grazing.

From a referral from Councillor Ian Mercer based on discussions he had with Natural England regarding nature trail proposals, the MCG met with Mr Stephen Barlow (NE Volunteer and Naturalist Photographer) at the Marlot to discuss his involvement in assisting with content and photographs for possible future interpretation boards and a Marlot guide. He is already working with Shropshire Wildlife Trust to develop additional trails and information for them in the area and he was keen to incorporate the Marlot in his work. The Marlot, and its paths, will be added to any maps and website content that are produced. He agreed to help in any way he can regarding information leaflets and board content (which will be discussed at the Steering Group meeting)

Shropshire Wildlife Trust (Anna Martin SWT Events Officer), with Natural England assistance, took the opportunity to arrange and conduct a newt survey public event at the Marlot. The event was led by Mr Phil Playforth (SWT and registered newt handler) and was attended by 7 members of the public (3 adults and 4 children). MCG members assisted Mr Playforth in setting the newt traps the day before the event and also attended on the day to observe how the event was conducted and to assist as required. A small, but enjoyable event showing the future possibilities for other organisations to utilise the Marlot for their own arranged events on site, which we need to encourage. Mr Playforth and the MCG also laid several roofing felt sheets around the pond areas as refugia for newts and other amphibians/wildlife. These will be periodically checked by the MCG and results reported back to Mr Playforth at SWT.

MCG members also attended a meeting with members of Whixall Parish Council to discuss future plans and arrangements for the Marlot's administrative and physical management. A lively meeting which highlighted many different issues and requirements. From this meeting came the establishment of a steering group made up of 2 WPC members and 2 MCG members who are tasked to look at priorities and requirements needed to take the Marlot to the next level of Local Nature Reserve development. The first meeting will be on Monday 16th May (at the Bull and Dog pub!).

Graham Turnbull
Marlot Conservation Group
4 May 2022