

# **Whixall Parish Council**

**Chairman: Ian Mercer**

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at  
Whixall Social Centre starting at 7:30pm**

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## **Present:**

**Chairman:** I Mercer

**Councillors:** J Spenser, D Edgerton, C Platon, S Marlow, J Hardiman, B Harris, J Fitton, M Howard

**Shropshire Councillors:**

**Clerk:** K Hatton

**Public:** R and C Cadman, R Stoodley, M and B Docherty, M Clewlow, M and E Broomer.  
M Peake (Social Centre Committee), S Grogan (Social Centre Committee).

## **01/16 Introduction**

Cllr Mercer declared the meeting open. He welcomed members of the public to the meeting and invited council members to introduce themselves.

## **02/16 Public Participation**

Members of the public addressed the Parish Council in relation to the serious flooding in the fields adjacent to Moss Lane. Two properties at Morris' Bridge are severely affected: one resident has been forced to vacate her property and another family expect to have to vacate in the near future due to the flood waters compromising their septic tank/ biodisc facilities.

Residents reported and described the extent of leaks from the canal including measurements of the volume of water that is leaking.

The leaks have been reported to the Canal and River Trust (C&RT). Their response to the residents' concern is that the leaks are minor and that repairs are scheduled for 2016/17.

Residents also have serious concerns about the stability of the canal embankment.

RS has lodged a formal complaint with C&RT and has been in touch with The Rt. Hon. Owen Paterson MP who has promised to take up the issue on the residents behalf.

Residents are considering forming an action group and requested the full support of the Parish Council.

**Cllr Mercer proposed to support the residents in whatever way they can; the motion was seconded by Cllr Hardiman and agreed by all.**

Cllr Platon made reference to a report commissioned by Whixall Parish Council in 2001 with regard to similar flooding issues- this report appears to identify reduced flow through the Lord Hill and Allmans' culverts as a significant contributory factor to the flooding problem.

Another resident raised his concern about the proposed purchase, by Shropshire Wildlife Trust (SWT), of the flooded land with regard to the classification of the land in light of SWT's wish to maintain an amount of water on the land to attract birds. The point was made that this land is currently classed as agricultural land and maintaining it as 'wetland' or 'flood plain' would impact on surrounding properties. Another question raised was; why was this land not available on the open market and why did SWT have first opportunity to purchase it?

Residents were advised that Luke Neal of SWT and Meres and Mosses Landscape Partnership scheme was expected to be available for direct consultation during the next Parish Council Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> February.

**03/16 Apologies for absence**

P Dee, C Mellings.

**04/16 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests**

None

**05/16 Minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

It was proposed by Cllr Spenser that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. Seconded by Cllr Hardiman and agreed by all present.

**It was resolved** that the minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015 be signed by the Chair as an accurate record of the meeting.

**06/16 Parish Matters**

**a) Social Centre- Burial ground management**

Cllr Mercer invited S Grogan and M Peake from the Social Centre Committee to address the council.

They gave the council an overview of their financial situation and the efforts of the committee to make the Social Centre a more viable service for the community. The recent purchase of a new boiler (when the old boiler broke down just before Christmas) was a large expense at over £3,000. SG urged the council to kindly consider their request for a donation later in the meeting.

Cllr Mercer congratulated them on the success of the New Years Eve party.

Burial Ground Management-

All parties acknowledged their understanding of the documents associated with the responsibility of the ground.

**Summary of main points for the purpose of the minutes:**

*The Old Burial Ground (land to the rear of Whixall Social Centre) is owned by the Church, responsibility for the control and maintenance of The Old Burial Ground was transferred to the Parish Council in 1974 by the grant of a Faculty from the Diocese of Lichfield (see WPC minutes from 9<sup>th</sup> June 1999, point 7).*

*Following an application made by WPC in December for the "occasional extension of permitted uses" which are as follows:*

- 1. Village fetes, including stalls, dog shows and five-a-side junior football competitions;*
- 2. Refreshments, including barbecues;*
- 3. Use by Toddler Group;*
- 4. Childrens' parties, including organised games and races for children;*
- 5. Restricted games, for example by the youth club at the discretion of the committee;*
- 6. Access for maintenance.*

*Receipt of The Chancellor, John Shand's judgement was received and acknowledged in April 2000. The Faculty was granted as sought on the assurance that the Parish Council retained ultimate responsibility.*

The point that the Burial Ground can never be hired out separately; it must only be hired in conjunction with the Social Centre.

The Parish Council asked that the Social Centre Committee (SCC) amend their terms and conditions of use to include a statement to make users aware of the land's status as an old graveyard/ burial ground and as such that they treat it with respect.

Cllr Mercer requested that if ever the SCC had any concerns over the appropriate use of the land then the Parish Council be informed and a view is sought. If time is not available to wait until a full

meeting of the council then the Chair/ Vice Chair and the Clerk to the council should meet to administer a decision.

Cllr Fitton raised the question of insurance which was duly discussed- the outcome of this discussion was that it was agreed insurance cover from all involved parties is sufficient but that both parties should be mindful that the cover is reviewed and scrutinized as necessary.

**b) Community Led Parish Plan- Actions review**

Cllr Spenser suggested that it was the responsibility of Cllrs to be aware of the Community-Led Parish Plan document and to raise issues as and when they see fit.

The Clerk is responsible for updating the action plan as necessary.

Cllr Harris proposed that the action plan is reviewed every year, in January. Seconded by Cllr Spenser and agreed by all.

The document is considered to have been subject to review at this meeting.

**c) Senior Citizens' Xmas party- forward planning**

Cllr Mercer proposed that Eve Whitmore was invited to sing at 2016 Xmas party, seconded by Cllr Marlow and agreed by all.

It was suggested that a system of gauging the number of attendees would be devised for this year's party.

**d) Marlot- site management**

Cllr Spenser reported that there had been a reported use of a quad bike on the Marlot. As the Marlot is a wildlife site it was felt that the use of vehicles is inappropriate. It was also cited that the use of vehicles is not permitted on common land.

It was resolved that the large gates be locked and signage erected.

With regard to the grazing of the Marlot it was resolved that the grazier will be requested to install and be responsible for electric fencing within the boundary of the site.

**e) Meres and Mosses LPS- Land purchase and consultation plans**

The Clerk informed the council of the suggestion of 10<sup>th</sup> February for Luke to host a drop-in consultation in bar area of Social Centre between 7pm and 9pm

The land that Shropshire Wildlife Trust are proposing to buy (Furber's former scrap yard and surrounding flooded fields) has not yet been purchased.

Delivery of leaflet: The Clerk stated that she had volunteered to deliver leaflets to Whixall residents on Luke's behalf and that any assistance would be gratefully received.

**07/16 Planning**

**-All planning applications and decisions can be tracked on line at [www.shropshire.gov.uk](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk)**

Applications received- to consider response

- Ref: 14/00834/FUL: Erection of two agricultural sheds; siting of temporary agricultural workers dwelling; extension to access track at Little Acorn Farm, Dobsons Bridge, Whixall, Shropshire- Re-consultation

**Resolution:** To submit the following statement on line:

Whixall Parish Council feel that the waste disposal system for the animals seems acceptable. However, the council does not wish to comment on drainage proposals for the caravan because it does not believe that the caravan should be on site. Furthermore, Whixall Parish Council is concerned that the caravan has been on site for 3 years without permission and in breach of an enforcement order.

**For INFORMATION ONLY**

-Ref: 15/05568/CPL- Application for Lawful Development Certificate for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension and insertion of roof lights to existing rear roof slope at Holly Cottage, Hollinwood, Whixall, SY13 2NL- **Noted**

Decisions- to note

- None.

**08/16 Clerk's Report****a) Correspondence- To note**

- Letter from Miss Brayford/ Whixall School: Thank you for inviting the children to sing at the Senior Citizens' party.
- By-election cost summary
- New Audit Regime- Cllr Mercer proposed that the PC does not opt out of the proposed system, seconded by Cllr Spenser and agreed by all.
- Faster fibre broadband available in Whixall
- Police and Crime Commissioner- precept consultation
- Email from resident re: road safety at Stanley Green
- **Noted** that payment of £35 to The Poppy Appeal for the Remembrance Day Poppy Wreath was sent during the period between meetings- not noted at November meeting.

**b) Grass cutting tender- advertised**

Two enquiries to date.

**09/16 Financial matters****a) Monthly Balance sheet- To note**

November and December's balance sheet was presented and confirmed as accurate with the current bank statements by Cllr Mercer.

Balances at end of December 2015...

DATE	ACCOUNT NAME	AMOUNT
29.12.2015	Community Account	£4,602.97
	Business Saver Account	£3,921.98
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£8,524.95</b>

**b) Outstanding accounts- To approve**

**The Clerk reported that a cheque was signed following last meeting for the wreath for Remembrance Day (see also Clerk's report).**

Orders for the payment of money (listed below) as per the financial report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) were proposed by Cllr Mercer, seconded by Cllr Spenser and agreed by all present.

DATE	CHEQUE NO.	DETAILS	AMOUNT
13.01.2016	101067	Post Office Ltd. (Shropshire Council Print Services)- Autumn Newsletter	£134.40
	101068	NWN Media (Whitchurch Herald)- grass cutting advert	£93.49
	101069	K Hatton- Clerk's wages for November 2015	£300.30
	101070	K Hatton- Clerk's wages for December 2015	£300.30
	101071	Whixall Social Centre - hire	£250.00
	101072	S Marlow- Xmas Party Cake	£40.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,118.49</b>

**It was resolved** that the outstanding accounts should be paid and cheques were signed by two authorised councillors.

c) 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarterly Expenditure report- To note  
Noted

d) Draft 2016/17 budget forecast- To note  
Noted

e) Donations- To consider

Two formal requests for donations have been submitted:

- i. Request for donation towards boiler replacement at Whixall Social Centre (suggested amount £500)
- ii. Request for donation towards running costs of North Salop Wheelers (Guide amount £400)

**It was resolved that all donations will be agreed at next meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016**

f) Precept- To agree

After a short discussion and acknowledgement of receipt of documents relating to this decision: draft 2016/17 budget, historic budgets and expenditure, predicted expenditure for 2015/16 and percentage difference in previous years precept request.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all that the precept request be £7,000.  
The paperwork was completed and signed by Cllr Mercer (Chairman)

## **10/16 Highways**

a) Referrals to Shropshire Council

The following issues were asked to be reported to Shropshire Council

- Pot holes/ poor road surface condition on Fenn's Bank road (Whixall side of the parish boundary) near to Holly House.
- Pot holes/ poor road surface condition on Church Lane.
- Damage to the verge (no verge) on Abbey Green Lane.
- Flooding on Slack's corner.

A Parishioner's concern about road safety in Stanley Green (previously raised in February 2015 (Minute ref: 21/15) was acknowledged- The Parishioner has been informed about the new Whixall nameplates with symbols and 'please drive carefully' message that have been requested and granted. Roundabout markings were re-painted before Christmas. Parishioner has acknowledged that he is pleased with these measures but appears to wish to see physical traffic calming measures.

Shropshire Council has previously indicated that any physical traffic calming measures would not be considered a priority.

The Parish Council viewed video footage of tractor sent by parishioner in February. The Parish Council did not resolve further action on this matter.

b) Scheduled works by Shropshire Council

Nameplate signage work – no update.

## **11/16 Councillors' Reports**

Cllr PLaton reported that Shropnet (Shrophsire Councils parish council website provider) is discontinuing. Whixall Parish Council made the right decision to develop own website.

Cllr Edgerton commented that he had attended the Social Centre Committee's trial pub night.

**12/16 Consider Future Agenda Items**

Donations, Policy review.

The meeting closed at 10:20pm

<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at 7.30 pm</b>
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