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Minutes of the meeting of Church Aston Parish Council held on-line via Microsoft Teams at 7.30 pm on Monday 7th December 2020.

Present: Councillors: S Stacey (Chairman), P Evans (Vice Chairman), B Richards, F McKeown, P Sansom, and J Pay

In attendance: Borough Cllr Andrew Eade (part) and M. Atherton (Clerk)

(07/12/20)

Item 1 - Apologies: received from Cllr A Stokes (ill-health) and Cllr Knight (ill-health)

Members extended their collective thoughts to Cllr Stokes and his family during his current healthcare issues and related treatment.

Item 2 – Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

Item 3 – Public Session:

No members of the public in attendance.

The Chairman asked the Clerk to consider ways in which Parish Council on-line meetings could be better promoted including placing a notice in the noticeboard.

Item 4 – Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd November 2020

Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November were proposed as a true and accurate record of proceedings by Cllr Richards and seconded by Cllr Pat Sansom with all members present voting in favour.

Resolved: minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November 2020 to be signed by the Chairman of the meeting as a true record as soon as possible on cessation of government restrictions relating to the Coronavirus (COVID 19).

Item 5 – Matters Arising:

(a) Wellington Road – Encroachment: borough Cllr Eade provided an update of progress of the enforcement notices including proposed actions by T&WC.

The Clerk confirmed details of a recent conversation with Adrian Corney who was aware of the situation and is awaiting instruction to proceed should the owners default. Cllr Richards enquired as to arrangements for re-charging cost of the works and it was explained that ordinarily works carried out in default are invoiced to the property owner(s) and if not paid may be placed as a legal charge against the property.

(b) St. Andrew’s Church Community Orchard: the Clerk and borough Cllr Eade confirmed that arrangements have been made to plant 5 apple trees in the churchyard at 12.30 pm onwards on Thursday 10th December. A representative of St. Andrew’s Church would be present to oversee works and to direct planting in appropriate locations within the churchyard.

Cllr Eade enquired about provision of stakes, ties and tree guards. **Action:** the Clerk to instruct Needes Landscaping to provide these items and to invoice their costs with the cost planting the trees.

(c) Signage in the Children’s Play Area: following an earlier enquiry from Cllr Evans the Clerk confirmed that there is signage at the main entrance to the children’s play area relating to maximum age of user and restriction of access for dogs (other than guide dogs).

Members acknowledged the above and discussed whether current signage is adequate given its small scale. It was agreed that additional larger scale signage is needed at both the main gateway entrance and at the entrance directly from the playing fields in order to reinforce these two restrictions. **Action:** Clerk to contact T&WC to request additional signage relating to maximum age of users and prohibition of dogs (other than guide dogs).

(d) Lighting of the Church Hall Car Park: Members discussed a referral from Cllrs McKeown, Sansom and Knight concerning a lack of lighting on the Church Hall Car Park which made it difficult to walk across to cars and / or the footway due to an uneven surface. Various technical solutions were briefly discussed and the Clerk requested to pursue this matter with the Chairman of the Church Hall Committee.

PARISH PROJECTS & COMMUNITY MATTERS

Item 6 – Representative Reports

All relevant information circulated by email during the Coronavirus situation.

Item 7 – Communications:

- (a) **Correspondence:** all relevant correspondence circulated by email. Cllr Sansom conveyed two brief messages on behalf of Cllr Knight as follows (i) Cllr Andy Stokes had had to be re-admitted to hospital having only recently been allowed home between treatments; and (ii) computer classes in the village hall had been cancelled for the time being
- (b) **Face-book:** Cllr Evans confirmed that he is continuing to disseminate all T&WC public messages about Coronavirus via face-book;
- (c) **Web-site:** the web-site is currently up-to-date and will be further updated following this meeting.

POLICY & PLANNING MATTERS

Item 8 – Planning Matters

- (a) The **Planning Schedule** for December 2020 was noted;
- (b) It was noted that the site relating to **PE/2020/0543** had now been sold. It is understood, but not confirmed, that Bloor Homes have purchased this former Sainsbury site with an intention of building 120 homes. Cllr Pay confirmed that the Clerk has been designated as the Parish Council's contact / liaison point.

Borough Cllr Eade clarified queries relating to development proposals for land to the east of Station Road and the future of the former Audco factory site.

- (c) **Local Plan Review:** the Clerk confirmed that the consultation period for comments on an Issues & Options paper had been extended until 8th January 2021.
- (d) **Buildings of Local Interest:** the Clerk referred to previously circulated information from T&WC asking Parish Councils for their views of a schedule of 'Buildings of Local Interest'. Reference was made to a possibility that the sandstone wall bordering the Pinewoods development might be included in this schedule.

Following an inconclusive discussion Cllr Eade agreed to pursue an enquiry with Shropshire Archives Service to establish details of Aston House and its grounds. It was suggested, but not verified, that sandstone excavated from a watercourse tunnel feeding the ponds at Longford Hall may have been used to build the sandstone boundary wall.

FINANCE & GOVERNANCE

Item 9(a) – Accounts & Payments

(i) Cllr Pay proposed, and Cllr Sansom seconded, with all Members present at the meeting in favour of approving the following payment made since the last meeting on 2nd November:

Payment	Cheque No.	Statute	Amount
Tom Adams (fruit trees)	On-line transfer	LGA 1972 s135	£90.00
WME (street lighting energy)	On-line transfer	LGA 1972 sch 14	£147.08

Resolved: that the above payment made between the meeting held on 2nd November and this meeting on 7th December 2020 be approved

(ii) The Clerk confirmed the statement of account as at close of business on 30th November 2020 as £19,258.71

(iii) Cllr Stacey proposed en-bloc, and Cllr Richards seconded, with all Members present at the meeting in favour of approving the following payments:

Payment	Cheque No.	Statute	Amount
HMRC (PAYE) – Nov 2020	On-line transfer	LGA 1972 s112	£82.20
Clerk's Salary (back-pay)	On-line transfer	LGA 1972 s227	£69.45
EoN – (street lighting maint)	On-line transfer	LGA 1972 sch 14	£560.12

Resolved: that the above accounts be authorised for payment at this meeting held on 7th December 2020.

Item 9(b) – Setting a Budget & Precept 2021/22

Cllrs considered a paper setting out a range of information relating to setting a budget and precept for 2021/22. The paper included two appendices – the first showing out-turn spend against the main votes for a period of 6 consecutive years with projections for current year and next year (based on an initial draft budget for 2021/22). The second appendix provided Members with details of the incremental impact of various percentage changes (increases or decreases) for band D households and the corresponding funding value for the Parish Council.

Whilst no decision was made in the absence of Cllr Knight and Cllr Evans (due to internet failure) there was a general consensus towards maintaining the current precept level. The balance of discussion / debate centred on the current impact of coronavirus for many households, the prospect of job losses in the new-year, and indications that completion of the PWLB loan would free up funds for the Parish Council to carry out projects within existing funds.

Action: the Clerk to carry this item forward to the next meeting in January 2021 in order that a decision can be made within a timeframe set by T&WC as collection authority.

Item 10 – Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee (comprising Cllrs Stacey, McKeown and Richards) had considered a report relating to the NJC Annual Pay Review and Award 2020. The report covered national pay negotiations affecting the Clerk as an employee of the Parish Council.

Having considered all relevant information the Personnel Committee was minded to approve the pay award for 2020 which took effect on 1st April 2020.

The recommendations of the Personnel Committee were presented to the Parish Council for consideration, and were subsequently endorsed.

Item 11 – Future Meeting Dates

The following future meeting dates were noted: 4th January, 1st February and 1st March 2021.

Roads, Hedges & Ditches

- (a) Cllr Stacey referred to a short service of remembrance at the Brocton Memorial on 11th November remarking on how well the event had gone and thanking all those present including Zoe Heming Priest in Charge at t. Andrew's Church.
- (b) Cllr Stacey informed colleagues of a series of Community Leaders meetings that had been held or are planned to improve communications and coordination between local groups. Colleagues welcomed the initiative as a positive step for the local community. The next meeting of the leaders group is scheduled for 21st January 2021.
- (c) Cllr McKeown enquired as to whether the Parish Council should actively encourage residents to have the coronavirus vaccine as a national programme of vaccination is rolled out. The consensus view was that Parish Councillors should refer people to government guidance.

Meeting closed at 8.35 pm

Signed Chairman:

Date