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Minutes of the meeting of Church Aston Parish Council held on-line via Zoom professional at 7.30 pm on Monday 1st March 2021.

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

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

(01/03/21)

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

Members noted the extended period of absence from meetings of Cllr Stokes due to continuing ill-health. It was reported that Cllr Stokes is responding well to treatment and is in good spirits.

Cllr Stacey proposed and Cllr Sansom seconded a motion to extend the period of absence for up to a further six months for Cllr Stokes to facilitate his full recovery. Members noted that Cllr Stokes may return to public duties at an earlier date should he feel well enough to do so.

Resolved: the period of absence for Cllr Stokes is to be extended for up to a further six months to facilitate his full recovery from ill-health.

Members individually and collectively extended their best wishes to Cllr Stokes during his treatment and recovery. **Action:** Clerk to pass on the above sentiments.

Item 2 – Declarations of Interest: Cllr Bennett declared an interest in all matters relating to the Village Hall. Otherwise, there were no declarations of interest.

Item 3 – Public Session: No Members of the public present.

Item 4 – Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st February 2021

Minutes of the meeting held on 1st February were proposed as a true and accurate record of proceedings by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Pay with all members present voting in favour.

Resolved: minutes of the meeting held on 1st February 2021 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) Signage in the Children’s Play Area: nothing further to report – awaiting the end of lockdown to proceed.

b) Lighting of the Church Hall Car Park: nothing further to report – awaiting feedback from the next Church Hall Committee meeting.

(c) NTC Request for a Boundary Review: agreed to consider this item alongside agenda item 9(c) – see later notes.

(d) Dog Waste – new bin request: the Clerk confirmed T&WC agreement to provide an additional bin. **Agreed:** to review at the next meeting.

(e) Active Travel Fund 2021: the Chairman informed colleagues that he had attended a virtual meeting involving borough Cllr David Wright, Matt Powell (T&WC), and representatives of CA&WPC and Lilleshall PC. At this meeting it was confirmed that approved funding is scheme specific and cannot be used to fund alternative routes / schemes. Public consultation had shown 22 of 29 respondents supported the scheme. Cllr Wright confirmed that T&WC are receptive to representations for the next stages of the scheme through NiPark / Aldi area to link with the former railway line (national cycle route N55), and possible enhancements to the current scheme.

(f) Flooding along the former railway line: prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated copy email correspondence with T&WC regarding the potential causes of flooding along the former railway line. The T&WC officer had agreed to carry out further investigations jointly with Severn Trent Water (STW) Ltd. Borough Cllr Eade confirmed that he would be attending the joint meeting and also that he had visited the occupier of No. 7 The Close to view the effects of field run-off.

Cllr Richards enquired as to whether these issues should be included in future ‘representations’ on new planning applications to T&WC planners. He also suggested that STW should be questioned about the likelihood of a breakage in a former railway line drain and potential effects. **Action:** Clerk to notify Lucinda Lycett (T&WC)

(g) Road repairs & drainage issues (Unnamed road / Manor Lane): Cllr Bennett confirmed that the flooding issues had been attended to prior to the meeting but that the road surface still needs attention.

PARISH PROJECTS & COMMUNITY MATTERS

Item 6 – Community Grants

The Clerk reported that the application forms for Community Grant Awards 2021 had been circulated to local groups with information about proposals to bring forward awards to help kick-start local groups after COVID 19. At the date of the meeting 5 completed applications had been received with more expected soon.

Item 7 – Representative Reports

Cllr Knight provided a report on matters relating to the Village Hall.

Borough Cllr Eade referred to the Community Leaders Meeting and his continuing support for development of an area of reflection in the churchyard.

Item 8 – Communications Updates:

(a) **Census 2021:** the Clerk briefly informed Members of the forthcoming national Census and specifically a request from the national census team for town & parish councils to actively promote the event in order to encourage a high uptake / response level. Members noted this item and authorised the Clerk to post related information as appropriate.

(b) **Community Leaders Meetings:** the Clerk provided a brief overview of items discussed at a recent Community Leaders meeting including matters of specific interest to the Parish Council. Next meeting: 8.00 pm Thursday 25th March 2021

(b) Correspondence / Facebook / website:

Correspondence: all relevant correspondence circulated prior to the meeting;

Facebook: Cllr Evans reported that Facebook postings had primarily been about COVID 19 information / updates.

Website: the website is currently up-to-date, and will be further updated after this meeting. Some 'backroom' adjustments are required to the PC website however these cannot be made until T&WC have resources available.

POLICY & PLANNING MATTERS

Item 9 – Planning Matters

(a) **The Planning Schedule:** Cllr Pay reported that he had drafted a response to TWC/2021/0109 for approval by Members. The draft response focussed on drainage, ecology, sustainability and play provision. Following brief discussion and individual comments it was agreed that the draft response covered all relevant matters. Cllr Pay was thanked for his efforts and the Clerk authorised to submit the consultation response by the deadline of 3rd March 2021.

Following a discussion on approval process it was agreed with Cllr Eade for him to call-in the decision so that 'representations' could be presented to the Planning Committee (rather than delegated to an officer). **Action:** Cllr Eade to seek a call-in.

(b) DMMO Consultation: the Clerk confirmed that contact had been made with the PRow officer but in the absence of a response a consultation response had been submitted by the consultation deadline.

(c) Electoral Review: a copy of a Members briefing paper issued by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England had previously been circulated to all Parish Cllrs. In addition, following discussions with the Chairman and Vice Chairman, the Clerk had prepared and circulated a briefing note for Members about the electoral review and its potential for creating opportunities for interested parties to request a parish boundary review.

It was unanimously agreed to constitute a Steering Group with specific responsibility for overseeing the electoral review and related process. It was agreed that the role of the steering group would evolve over time to reflect changing circumstances and specifically to counter potential for a boundary review.

The above arrangements for a Steering Group were proposed by Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Richards, and unanimously agreed by all Members present

<p>Resolved: a Steering Group is to be formed to oversee the current electoral review of T&WC and to monitor and respond, as appropriate, to any matters that might give rise to a request for a review of parish boundaries.</p>
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Cllr Evans was appointed to Chair the Steering Group, Cllr Pay to provide a public policy lead, borough Cllr Eade to provide a link with T&WC and CA&WPC, and the Clerk to support the group. It was agreed the Steering Group could co-opt additional 'expert' resources as necessary.

In terms of accountability, the Steering Group is to report to the full Parish Council each month. Decision making remains with the full Parish Council with a delegation to the Chairman (Cllr Stacey) and Vice Chairman (Cllr Evans) for matters requiring urgent attention.

FINANCE & GOVERNANCE

Item 10 – Accounts & Payments

(a)(i) Statement of Account: £16,687.66 at close of business on 28/02/2021

(a)(ii) Cllr Stacey proposed en-bloc, and Cllr Pay seconded, with a unanimous vote in favour from all Members present at the meeting for the following payments to be authorised:

Payment	Cheque No.	Statute	Amount
HMRC (PAYE) – Feb 2021	On-line transfer	LGA 1972 s112	£84.40
West Mercia Energy	On-line transfer	LGA 1972 sch 14	£209.96
Eon Energy Solutions Ltd	On-line transfer	LGA 1972 sch 14	£438.00
Information Commissioner fees	On-line transfer	DP Regs 2018	£40.00
Clerk's out-of-pocket expenses	On-line transfer	LGA 1972 s267	£54.98

Resolved: the above accounts be authorised for payment at this meeting held on 1st March 2021.

Item 10(b) Date for Repayment of the PWLB Loan

The Clerk presented a short report to Members highlighting cash-flow implications arising from early repayment of the PWLB loan.

In summary, the Parish Council's cash balances could fall below pre-agreed minimum levels if care is not taken to manage project expenditure through the summer months.

Members agreed that project expenditure should be held back to a maximum of £1,700 until the second precept payment is made by T&WC in September 2021. Thereafter, all projects can be completed in line with the approved budget for 2021/22.

Cllr Richards proposed and Cllr Pay seconded a motion to repay the outstanding balance of the PWLB loan during July 2021.

Resolved: the outstanding balance of the PWLB loan is to be repaid during July 2021.

Action: the Clerk is to make all necessary arrangements with government's Treasury Office to facilitate early repayment of the loan in line with the above.

Item 11 – Future Meeting Dates

The following future meeting dates were noted: Tuesday 6th April, Tuesday 4th May and Monday 7th June 2021.

Roads, Hedges & Ditches

- (a) Cllr Richards commented on positive comments that had been made to him about the village planters - this was noted;
- (b) Cllr Evans referred to representations that he had received about encroachment of the embankment border to Pinewoods estate along Wellington Road. This matter had been reported to T&WC by the Clerk and it was agreed to add it to Matters Arising for future meetings;

- (c) Cllr Pay referred to a litter issue along Liddle's Bank. This observation was supported by Cllr Evans who had personally removed littering along this section of road.
Actions: borough Cllr Eade to contact the Volunteer Coordinator at T&WC to enquire about establishing a (post-COVID) volunteer litter picking team, and the Clerk to file a T&WC on-line report;
- (d) Cllr Richards referred to issues of encroachment along Liddle's Bank following hedge trimming – the extent of encroachment was now far more evident. **Action:** Clerk to report to T&WC with a request for action;
- (e) Cllr McKeown enquired about what had happened in respect of a road closure and tree felling at 'Ladywood' No. 5 The Close. Cllr Richards explained that the planners had not yet confirmed agreement to the tree felling and that the road closure related to tree works in The Folly (rather than The Close);

Meeting closed at 9.05 pm

Signed Chairman:

Date