

MINUTES

of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 15th July 2024
7.30pm at Hope Bowdler Village Hall

078/24 - Present

Cllr. P. Jenkins – acting Chairman for the meeting

Cllr. L Gray

Cllr .C Pugh

Cllr. T Madeley

Cllr. S Jones

Cllr. B Orme

Apologies received and accepted from

Cllr. G. Watts, Shropshire Councillor C Motley

In Attendance

The Clerk, one member of the public and Mr M White and Ms Janet Cobb from Restoring Shropshire's Verges Project

079/24 - Declarations of Interest relating to this meeting.

Members are requested to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary or Personal Interests they may have in matters to be considered at this meeting in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 s32 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

No declarations were made.

080/24 – Public question time

Mr White and Ms Cobb attended the meeting to introduce the councillors to their Restoring Shropshire's Verges Project and to outline the aims and objects of the Project. Using a volunteer work force, they aim to restore and manage roadside verges as wildflower meadows and wildlife habitats. The Project seeks to offer many opportunities to develop and demonstrate exemplary verge practices. They explained fully the nature of the work they do and showed before and after photographs exhibiting the results of their work. They work with the former AONB and the National Trust and in partnership with Shropshire Council Highways Department. They listed the variety of ways they deliver their services, including advising local groups, promoting volunteering activities and establishing a wild flower seed, plug and plant swap shop.

To further their work, they have set up a project to Restore Verges in Three Shropshire Parishes, the three parishes concerned are Church Stretton, Wistanstow and Hope Bowdler. They have launched a Crowd Funding Campaign and ask that this parish council makes a pledge towards the campaign. They are seeking a total of £4,000 and to date have pledges of £666.

Councillors questioned Mr White and Ms Cobb about the aims of RSVP at length. Cllr. Pugh was of the view that hedges and verges should be kept cut short to allow traffic and road users good visibility. He felt that verges and hedges bordering highways are the Highways

Department's area of responsibility and that wildflower meadows and wildlife habitats belong in fields and woods, not on verges bordering the highway.

Whilst admiring the work RSVP are doing and hoping they are able to recruit many local volunteers, the councillors did not feel that they could commit local ratepayers money to the scheme, and so regretfully declined to make a pledge.

081/24 – Approval of the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17th June 2024

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17th June 2024 had been circulated and considered by the councillors. No objections were raised to the Minutes.

Cllr. Jones **proposed** that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 17th June 2024 be approved by the councillors.

Proposal **seconded** by Cllr. Gray

Vote: Unanimous vote in favour of the proposal.

082/24 – Matters arising from the Minutes of 17th June 2024

071/24. The Chairman was unable to attend this meeting but had discussed the Clerk's concerns, as reported in 071/24, with Cllr. Jenkins, and asked Cllr. Jenkins to advise the meeting that the proposed merger with Rushbury Parish Council is not as yet agreed, and that if it is agreed, the Chairman will support the Clerk should she seek to become Clerk to the amalgamated parish council.

083/24 – Discussion about progress of and matters arising from the proposed amalgamation with Rushbury Parish Council

Cllr. Madeley could not understand why Cllr. Motley had reported to the June meeting that she was keen to see the amalgamation being carried through before May 2025. As far as he was aware, no agreement had been reached on the proposed amalgamation. The comments about May 2025 seemed to him to be premature.

084/24 – Reports

Cllr. Motley was unable to attend the meeting. No other reports were received.

085/24 – Planning matters.

It was noted, with regret that the Enforcement Team at Shropshire Council have still not replied to the parish council's concerns about the Oakland's site in Harton, despite it being a year since their detailed objections had been lodged. Cllr. Motley will be asked to update the council about this matter at the September meeting. It was also suggested the parish council should raise the issue with the new MP.

Councillors living even at some distance from the Oaklands site reported that loud music could be heard playing at the site late into the night which creates a nuisance to local households in this rural area.

086/24 - Correspondence/Communications - Councillors considered the following items:-

Highways notifications:

1. Road closure notification: A49 Church Stretton pavement scheme. Restrictions on B4371 and A49, including 7.5 tonne weight restriction, from 20th September to 28th October 2024.

2. Notification via SALC re the campaign “Restore Verges in Three Shropshire Parishes Project” – Hope Bowdler is one of the parishes.
 3. Notification from Shropshire Council about its Streetscene grass cutting team.
 - 4a. Parish Council’s notification to and Fix My Street’s response re overgrown verges.
 - 4b. Parish Council’s notification of pot holes and highways surface erosion in Ticklerton. No response as yet. Cllr. Pugh to raise this issue at the meeting 15.07.24
 5. Road closure notification: Watling Street south in Church Stretton, 8th – 26th July 2024.
- General correspondence
6. News letter from John Campion, Police & Crime Commissioner.
 7. Notification via SALC (9th July) that a series of papers are being released by SC at 5pm including reports on charges for garden waste removal and the future of the household re-cycling centres. It appears Craven Arms will be closed one day a week. To be confirmed.
 8. Parish Council’s response to the Best Kept Village & Community Competition that it will not be participating in the scheme but wishes it well.
 9. Email from Mr M White about Restoring Shropshire’s Verges project: he and some colleagues will be attending the parish council’s meeting on Monday 15th July 2024 to promote the project.
 10. Up-date from Shropshire Council about the Community Governance Review

087/24 – Highways and Environmental matters

Cllr. Pugh reported his son had seen a council worker marking up potholes, but was not marking areas of the highways which were badly eroded or even non-existent, and he stopped to ask why the eroded areas were not being marked up for re-surfacing. The worker explained his job was only to do pot-holes, another council worker would have to come and do erosion. The parish council deplores this waste of time, money and resources.

088/24 - Finance Report for July 2024

Balance carried forward from June 2024 **£7,134.62**

1. Payments to be made on 15th July 2024 from Precept Fund

- HSBC bank charges £ 7.40
- Clerk’s net salary for July 2024 £190.39
- HMRC - PAYE on Clerk’s July 2024 salary £ 47.60
- Admin expenses incurred in June/July 2024 paid by Clerk and reclaimed by her.
- Contribution towards telephone/internet provision for July 2024 @ £20 p.m. £20.00
- 1 note book for Minute taking, 1 pkt A4 copy paper £ 6.49
- Travelling expenses @ 45p per mile

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|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| 15.07.24 – to Hope Bowdler for PC meeting | | | |
| 32 miles | | £14.40 | |
| Total of July 2024 admin. expenses | | <u>£40.89</u> | £ 40.89 |
| | | | £286.28 |
| | | | <u>£ 286.28</u> |
| | Balance of Precept fund c/fwd to September 2024 | | <u>£6,848.34</u> |

Cllr. Jones **proposed** that cheques to the value of £286.28 be approved for payment.

Proposal **seconded** by Cllr. Orme

Vote: Unanimous support for the proposal.

Ring Fenced funds held by Parish Council

Environmental/Maintenance Fund bal. b/fwd from June 2024 **£1,261.78**

Neighbourhood Fund – balance b/fwd from June 2024 **£ 451.59**

Total funds held by Parish Council following authorisation & presentation of the above cheques.

Precept Fund **£6,848.34**

Environmental/Asset Maintenance Fund **£1,261.78**

Neighbourhood Fund grant **£ 451.59**

£8,561.71

2. Bank Statement/Cash Book reconciliation.

The Clerk's reconciliation between the Cash Book and HSBC Bank Statement 153 was checked and verified by Cllr. Jenkins.

089/24 – Any Other Business (for dissemination of information only)

No matters were raised. There being no further business to conduct, the acting Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.40pm

Date & Venue of the next Parish Council meeting.
Monday 16th September 2024, 7.30pm at Ticklerton Village Hall.

SIGNED Graham Watts

DATED 16th September 2024