

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of Comberbach Parish Council held on Tuesday 9th March 2021

Present

Councillors:

John Ryder (Chairman in the Chair)

Richard Chandler

Val McDermott

Steven Hornby

Jill Johnston

Denise French (Clerk)

Stephen Penwill (RFO)

Cheshire West and Chester Councillors

Lynne Gibbon, Phil Marshall, Norman Wright

The Meeting started at 7.15pm.

1. Public Open Forum

No Members of the Public were present.

2. Apologies for absence – Councillors Jim Bradley (illness), Rena Bradley (illness) and Bob Holt (technical issues)

3. Casual Vacancy

(21/10) RESOLVED: That Richard Chandler be co-opted onto the Parish Council and the Declaration of Acceptance of Office was duly signed in the presence of the Proper Officer.

4. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest – none

5. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 19th January 2021

(21/11) RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2021 be approved as a correct record.

6. Progress Reports and Updates

6.1 Comberbach Writing Project

The Writing Project had involved the production of a book 'Lockdowns and Light-ups' and a copy had now been delivered to every household; copies had also been given to the Ward Councillors, Cheshire Association of Local Councils, the school and library. A number of residents had purchased additional copies at a cost of £2.00 and made an additional voluntary donation.

The Parish Council had paid for the print run.

(21/12) RESOLVED: that the organiser of the project can donate any proceeds from the sale of the extra copies to charity.

7.0 Cheshire West and Chester Councillors' (CWAC) reports

CWAC Councillors updated as follows:

- They had held a meeting with representatives of the Parish Councils in Marbury Ward regarding the recent floods. Following this meeting, a list of proposals had been produced to submit to the Flooding Task Group. The proposals included providing each Parish Council with a supply of sand, sandbags, signage and cones to keep in store in their local area in case of future need.
- The consultation on the waste service was ongoing.
- The proposals for Winnington Bridge were awaited; the current bridge had a remaining lifespan of 5 – 10 years. It was expected that the main proposal would involve a double width bridge crossing.
- Councillors Gibbon and Wright were to undertake a tour of the Ward to identify all highway repairs to report to CWAC. Councillors were advised that part of the Highways Service operated by Ringway was to be brought in-house.

8. Planning

8.1 Planning decisions were listed in Appendix 3. The CWAC Councillors advised that an approval decision was likely on 5 Mather Drive which had now had amended plans submitted. The application relating to 15 Senna Lane had also seen amended plans which the Parish Council should be consulted upon; the Clerk agreed to contact CWAC about the new plans.

8.2 There were no enforcement matters.

8.3 The Clerk reminded Members of various planning courses on offer and a virtual meeting with CWAC Planning Officers on 20 April.

(21/13) RESOLVED: That:

(a) the planning update be noted; and

(b) the Clerk contact the Head of Planning seeking clarification around the process for determining planning applications.

9. Recreation Area

9.1. The Chairman updated there were no issues arising from the visual inspection of the play area. Grass cutting had now commenced and the leaves have been blown

off the grassed area. The footpath surrounding the playground had dried up. The Recreation Area continued to be well used with around 50 children and adults using the facility on 9th March, all adhering to social distancing.

9.2 The quarterly inspection from Northwich Town Council was considered. The issue of the gate closure was mentioned but this would be discussed with the annual Rospa Inspector the following month.

9.3 The Rospa inspection would take place in April and Members agreed to authorise payment of £42 to enable a Councillor to attend with the Inspector.

(21/14) RESOLVED That the update on the Recreation Area be received.

10. Highways

10.1 Councillor Johnston raised the issue of cars parked on the footpaths making it difficult for pedestrians, wheelchair users and prams to negotiate.

10.2 The Council considered correspondence from residents arising from the floods in January. The issue had also been raised with CWAC Councillor Gibbon who had responded to the residents. The Chairman explained that leaves had caused blockages in one drain. The Parish Council had also purchased a stock of bags and sand to keep in the storage unit for any future issues.

10.3 Email correspondence had been received from a resident regarding horse droppings on residential streets and footpaths.

(21/15) RESOLVED: That

(a) the issue of vehicles parking on footpaths be raised with the PCSO and included in the report for the next edition of the Newsletter;

(b) the Clerk contact CWAC Highways seeking information on the highways maintenance schedules and respond to the resident accordingly; and

(c) the Clerk respond to the resident who has raised the issue of horse droppings to advise that the Council is aware that this does not cause a health issue and that the Council thinks the matter will be resolved when lockdown is over and traffic levels return to normal as horse riders will then return to the country lanes rather than residential streets.

11. Accounts and Financial Matters

11.1 The Parish Council Accounts at 28th February 2021 were submitted at Appendix 1.

11.2 The list of payments was in Appendix 2.

11.3 The Reserves List for 2021/22 was attached for consideration.

11.4 The Council considered making an ex-gratia payment to the Clerk and to the RFO for additional work undertaken in setting up and populating the new website.

11.5 The Council considered a proposal to vire a number of budgets in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

11.6 The Council considered a proposed policy to enable online banking to take place.

11.7 The Council considered an amended version of the Financial Regulations to take account of any decision to approve online banking consequent on a decision in 11.6 above.

(21/16) RESOLVED That

- (a) the accounts in Appendix 1 with a balance of £9,290.44 and £36,739.67 in reserves be noted;
- (b) the payments in Appendix 2 be approved;
- (c) the Reserves List for 2021/22 be approved;
- (d) the Clerk and the RFO each be awarded an ex-gratia one-off payment of 10% of their annual salary for additional work on the new website;
- (e) the following virements be approved:
 - transfer of £750 from the Noticeboard budget to the Writing Project budget
 - transfer of £650 from the Car Park Surface Improvement budget to IT costs – hardware budget
 - transfer of £550 from the Noticeboard budget to the Salaries budget
 - transfer £350 from the car park surface improvements budget to the Tax budget.

(e) the proposal to introduce online banking arrangements with the Council's bank Santander as set out in the Internet banking policy be approved and implemented and the Council confirms that Stephen Penwill as RFO is authorised to perform the online banking transactions and that the following continue as existing signatories to the bank accounts:

1. Stephen Penwill, Responsible Financial Officer (operator)
2. John Ryder, Chairman (signatory)
3. Steven Hornby, Vice Chairman and Chair of Finance Committee (signatory)
4. James Bradley, Councillor (signatory)

(f) the Financial Regulations be amended as submitted to take account of the new arrangements for online banking.

12. Fixed Asset Register

The Chairman and RFO had undertaken the annual review of the Asset Register as submitted.

(21/17) RESOLVED: that the Asset Register be approved.

13. Correspondence

The list of correspondence was received.

The Clerk reported on a number of additional items of correspondence:

- CWAC Councillor Gibbon had sent an email with the list of proposals for the Flooding Task Group
- CWAC had informed the Clerk of the removal of an Ash Tree on land adjacent to 2 Freshfields
- Anderton with Marbury Parish Councillor Helen Brewin had updated that the joint application to the Police and Crime Commissioner for funding towards a Speed Indicator Device was still being reviewed but a decision was expected in a few weeks
- Chalch had organised an online discussion group about speeding on 16th March, details had been circulated.

(21/18) RESOLVED: That the correspondence be noted.

14. Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting would take place on Tuesday 4th May at 6.30pm. Members agreed to invite Nicola Bartley who had organised the Comberbach Writing Project.

15. Exclusion of Public and Press – Part 2

That in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business due to the confidential nature of the matter to be discussed relating to contract prices.

Part 2

16. Provision of a Pump Track on land at the Recreation Area

The Council considered a report on the proposal for a Pump Track on land at the Recreation Area along with a schedule comparing prices and details of each quote.

(21/19) RESOLVED:

That:

- (a) Supplier 3 be appointed as the preferred supplier for the Pump Track and a budget of up to £20,000 be approved for the project;
- (b) grant funding opportunities be sought; and
- (c) the project be promoted through the Newsletter, noticeboards and website as soon as details are agreed.

The Meeting closed at 8.55pm

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 4th May 2021.

Signed
Chairman

Appendix 1 Accounts for 28th February 2021 were approved

Current account: £9,290.44	Reserves: £36,739.67
Cash book: £8,785.44	Unpresented cheques: £505.00 (2 cheques)

Appendix 2 Payments

Item	Amount	Cheque	Power
Synchroprint – Jan CVN	£170.00	22688	LGA 1972 s 111
Synchroprint – Writing Project	£740.00	22689	LGA 1972 s 111
Comberbach Memorial Hall – room hire 2021/22	£100.00	22690	LGA 1972 s 111
CHALC – Code of Conduct training	£25.00	22691	LGA 1972 s 111
Starboard Systems (Scribe) – subscription 2021/22	£345.60	22692	LGA 1972 s 111
S Penwill – Zoom costs, printer paper	£89.92	22693	LGA 1972 s 111

Appendix 2b Pre-Authorised Payments

Item	Amount	Cheque	Power
RFO – reimburse laptop purchase	£749.99	22686	LGA 1972 s 111
J Ryder – reimburse emergency flood costs	£307.00	22687	LGA 1972 s 111

Appendix 3 Recent planning decisions by CW&C

20/03702/OUT - demolition of the existing garage and passageway of Senna House and erection of two four bedroom detached houses 15 Senna Lane	Pending
20/03809/FUL - <u>Removal of existing garage, two storey side and single storey rear extension and new dormer to roof</u> , 5 Mather Drive	Pending
20/04329/FUL - Loft conversion with new flat roof dormer to rear elevation, 27 Cogshall Lane	Approved
20/04071/S73 - Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) on 17/04952/FUL, land at Senna Lane	Approved
20/04056/FUL - Alteration to front window, single storey side extension, alteration to change existing side extension roof from flat to pitched. 2 Freshfields	Approved
21/00584/TPO - Oak on boundary line in hedge - Fell to low stump due to poor previous Pruning, 17 Goosebrook Close	Pending