

Minutes of the Meeting of Comberbach Parish Council held on Tuesday 10 January 2023

Present

Councillors:

John Ryder (Chairman in the Chair)

Richard Chandler

John Darwin

Bob Holt

Jill Johnston

Val McDermott

Denise French (Clerk)

Stephen Penwill (RFO)

CWAC Councillor Norman Wright

The Meeting started at 6.45pm.

Public Open Forum

There were 9 members of the public present. They referred to the planning application on land at Senna Lane:

22/04415/FUL - Siting of 4no. glamping units, reception hut, bike storage, recycling/waste facilities and a new permeable parking/turning area with electric vehicle charging points with associated footpaths and a water treatment plant for onsite drainage, land On The Northeast Side of Senna Lane.

They raised a number of concerns with the proposed development including development in the Green Belt, loss of open space, impact on highways, detriment to neighbouring amenity, due to overlooking and noise nuisance, loss of hedgerow and reduction in open space. They also reported that some activity had already taken place on the site. The residents were also concerned that approval could set a precedent for other similar developments at other sites in the village.

CWAC Councillor Wright reported that he had requested the application be referred to the Planning Committee for determination. He made no comment on the application.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Councillor Bradley for a further 3-month period due to illness and from Councillor Cameron for this meeting due to work commitments. Apologies were also noted from CWAC Councillors Gibbon and Marshall.

2. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 12 December 2022

(23/1) RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 12 December 2022 be approved as a correct record.

4. Progress Reports and Updates

4.1 The Repair Café would be deferred to a future meeting.

5.2 Resilience Plan – the Chairman had started drafting the plan and the Clerk would circulate it to Councillors. Members agreed to discuss the plan at an informal meeting.

(23/2) RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

5. Elections and the new Parish Council Term

5.1 The Clerk updated on an election briefing held by CWAC on 20 December. All candidates would need to complete a nomination form signed by a proposer and seconder and submitted by the deadline of 4.00pm on 4 April. CWAC had arranged a number of briefings for Clerks and candidates. After the close of nominations CWAC would advise whether or not the election was contested. All current councillors would retire on 9 May 2023. New councillors must complete a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form and Register of Interests form. A Declaration of Expenses form must also be completed, even if a nil return, and sent to CWAC.

5.2 The Council considered a date for training on cyber safety offered by the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. It was agreed to hold the training one afternoon and discuss the Resilience Plan afterwards.

5.3 The Council considered a proposed meeting schedule for 2023 -24.

(23/3) RESOLVED: that

- (a) The update on elections be noted.
- (b) The Clerk liaise with the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to arrange a training date on a Tuesday afternoon.
- (c) The proposed schedule of meetings be approved as below:
Tuesdays at 6.45pm
 - 16 May – Annual Meeting of the Council
 - 4 July
 - 5 September
 - 24 October
 - 5 December
 - 16 January 2024
 - 5 March

6. Cheshire West and Chester Councillors' (CWAC) reports

CWAC Councillor Wright updated:

- The 3 Marbury Ward Councillors had seen the draft letter from the Parish Council (item 9.1 below) to the Chief Executive regarding Soot Hill and were fully supportive. There was a programme of repairs on the CWAC website and current completion date was September 2023.
- Anderton with Marbury Parish Council currently did not have a full complement of councillors and was using a volunteer to act as Clerk and RFO. There had been some discussion about merging with Barnton PC but consideration could be given to merging with Comberbach. There had been no formal discussion on any options.

7. Parish Council Budget and Precept

The Council considered:

- (a) draft minutes of Finance Committee held on 4 January
- (b) virement of 2022/23 budgets to recognise actual costs incurred
- (c) the Parish Council budget 2023/24
- (d) the Parish Council Reserves List
- (e) the precept amount to be submitted to Cheshire West and Chester.

The RFO outlined the discussions at Finance Committee. The Committee had reviewed the Quarter 3 budget report and agreed the need to vire some budget headings. The Committee had given detailed consideration to the draft budget and reviewed the forward list of projects. The MUGA surface had been suggested as needing resurfacing and research now suggested a figure of around £4k. There were a number of ageing facilities at the Recreation Area which would need repair or replacement over the next few years. The Committee had also proposed a budget of £500 for any celebrations for the King's Coronation. The RFO had circulated a spreadsheet giving examples of precept amounts and Band D figures; Finance Committee had proposed a 10% increase in the precept to reflect the cost of the forward projects and due to increased inflation. This would correspond to an actual 8.7% increase due to the increase in the tax base.

(23/4) RESOLVED: that

- (a) the draft minutes of Finance Committee be noted.
- (b) The virement of 2022/23 budgets to recognise actual costs incurred be approved.
- (c) the Parish Council budget 2023/24 as submitted be approved.
- (d) the Parish Council Reserves List be approved.
- (e) the precept amount of £26,110.00 be submitted to Cheshire West and Chester Council.

8. Recreation Area and Pump Track

8.1 The Chairman updated:

The new swings had been fitted. Grant support had been received from the CWAC Ward Councillors towards the costs. The MUGA area had been brushed which had improved the surface. Northwich Town Council were to replace the Zip Wire matting.

8.2 The inspection report for December was considered. One board needed replacing. There was a pool of water in the middle of the Pump Track. Members discussed adding stones to raise the level but were concerned this could cause water to seep onto the track and cause deterioration of the surface. Some of the crayons were deteriorating but Rospa recommended that they were not replaced. Members agreed to ask for suggestions in the next newsletter for other ways for families to have names displayed at the park. Leaves on the park were making some areas slippery but the areas would be brushed at the next maintenance visit.

8.3 The Council had approved the model of the outdoor table tennis table and it would be ordered.

(23/5) RESOLVED: that the update on the Recreation Area and the inspection report be noted.

9. Highways and Streetscene

9.1 Members considered a draft letter to send to the Chief Executive of CWAC regarding concern over the ongoing issues with Soot Hill road closure. The Marbury Parish Council clerks had been sent a copy with a request that they consider also offering their support and Chairman's signature to the letter. The Clerk advised that 2 councils had so far confirmed support following their council meetings. Members thanked Councillor Johnston for drafting the letter.

9.2 Speed Indicator Device – the last data report had showed some vehicles travelling at excessive speeds which did not appear to be realistic for the road conditions. The RFO had reviewed the data and believed there had been a data glitch. Councillor Chandler had raised the issue with the PCSO but had not yet received any response.

9.3 Footpath repairs – the Council considered an issue raised by a resident as set out below:

“COMBERBACH PAVEMENTS. The state of repair of the pavements in most parts of the village, in my view, represents a serious Health & Safety risk. In many instances, problems exist where utility companies have affected shoddy repair work. I have taken a tumble on many occasions and now resort to walking on the roads where these trip hazards exist. Remedial work needs to be done at the earliest opportunity to negate any serious accidents just waiting to happen.”

Members had received the CWAC Highways Safety Inspection Code of Practice which outlined that footpaths would be inspected annually unless located by a school in which case a quarterly inspection would take place. Members agreed to ask CWAC for information on footpath inspections in the village. Members also noted issues around the school with vehicles parking on the footpaths when dropping off pupils and also leaving the car engine running when stationary. Councillor McDermott would raise these matters with the PCSO and the Governing Body.

(23/6) RESOLVED: that:

- (a) The draft letter to the CWAC Chief Executive on the ongoing issues at Soot Hill be approved and will be emailed to the Chief Executive once a response has been received from the other councils in the Marbury Ward but by 23 January at the latest.
- (b) The update on the SID data be noted.
- (c) The Clerk contact CWAC Highways to seek information on the inspection of footpaths as outlined at the meeting.

10. Accounts and financial matters

10.1 The accounts for 30 December 2022 were submitted in Appendix 1

10.2 The list of payments was in Appendix 2.

(23/7) RESOLVED: that

- (a) The accounts in Appendix 1 with a balance of £15,823.10 and £21,397.09 in reserves be noted.
- (b) The payments in Appendix 2 be approved.

11. Projects

11.1 Environmental projects

Councillor McDermott was to arrange a meeting about some environmental projects and would report to a future meeting.

11.2 Freedom Fibre

The Chairman updated on communication with Freedom Fibre (FF) on 9 January to ascertain progress with the possibility of utilising the Government's Gigabit Voucher Scheme. The Council understood that Freedom Fibre's Technical Dept were progressing how to manage the scheme and sign-up residents to ensure sufficient residents signed up for the FFTP scheme to ensure it was commercially viable.

On 22 December the Chairman had written to Freedom Fibre explaining that the Village Newsletter was being prepared for early January and enclosing a copy of the article for information and comment. FF had commented that the article was good.

The response from FF to the Chairman on 9 January had been very disappointing as it only confirmed previous confirmations that the existing underground network was not suitable. Comment was also made of the need to participate in the DCMS voucher scheme, and connections would be subject to survey. The Chairman had contacted the CWAC Digital Sector Specialist who was similarly disappointed in the response. Members agreed to seek an urgent meeting with Freedom Fibre.

(23/8) RESOLVED: that

- (a) The item on environmental projects be deferred to the next meeting.
- (b) The Clerk contact Freedom Fibre to request an urgent meeting.

12. Planning

12.1 Planning decisions were listed in Appendix 3.

12.2 The Council discussed application 22/04415/FUL - Siting of 4no. glamping units, reception hut, bike storage, recycling/waste facilities and a new permeable parking/turning area with electric vehicle charging points with associated footpaths and a water treatment plant for onsite drainage, land On The Northeast Side of Senna Lane.

Members had noted that some activity had already taken place on the site.

During the Open Forum there had been a number of residents in attendance who raised concerns about the proposals. It was noted that the application had been discussed on social media and there had also been some positive comments.

Members felt the application was not appropriate in the Green Belt nor in a residential area where it could be detrimental to existing residential amenity, the proposal would generate additional traffic movements on the highway and could set a precedent.

In view of the level of interest, it was agreed that a flyer would be issued with the Comberbach Village News to inform residents of how to make any comments to CWAC on the application and outlining the Parish Council's views.

12.3. There were no enforcement matters.

(23/9) RESOLVED: That:

- (a) the Clerk has delegated powers to respond to planning application 22/04415/FUL, land on the north east side of Senna Lane, after taking soundings from Members and will raise concerns about the proposals

including on the grounds above relating to the appropriateness of the development in the Green Belt and a residential area, impact on existing residential amenity, highways impact and precedent. The Clerk will also query the works that have already taken place on the site.

(b) The other planning matters be noted.

13. Correspondence

The list of correspondence had been circulated. It was noted that CWAC Councillor Gibbon was still waiting for an update on Gibb Hill resurfacing and a temporary road closure would be in place from 16 January on Senna Lane.

(23/10) RESOLVED: That the correspondence be noted.

14. Representative Reports

- Comberbach Memorial Hall Management Committee – no update.
- Fete Committee – no update.
- Bowling Club – the club was now closed for the season.
- Police Liaison – Councillor Chandler was to attend the liaison meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner later in the month.
- School Liaison – Councillor McDermott continued to liaise with the school.
- Litterpick – no update.

15. Exclusion of Public and Press – Part 2

None

The Meeting closed at 9.15pm.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 7 March 2023 commencing at 6.45pm

Signed Chairman

Appendix 1 Accounts for 31 December 2022 were approved

Current account	£15,823.10	Reserve	£21,397.09
Cash book	£37,220.19	Reconciliation:	0

Appendix 2 Payments

Item	Amount	Power
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Shane Ross – Maintenance contract invoice 22-03	£600.00	LGA 1972 s 111
J Ryder – maintenance materials etc	£107.95	LGA 1972 s 111

Appendix 2b Pre-Authorised Payments

Item	Amount	Power
Techquarters – Microsoft Office license (DD) Dec 22	£21.43	LGA 1972 s 111

Appendix 3 Recent planning decisions by CW&C

APPLICATION DETAILS	DATE OF VALIDATION	CURRENT POSITION
21/05070/OUT - Outline planning permission for a mixed use development of up to 1,550 units of residential dwellings including affordable housing (subject to viability); specialist accommodation for older people including residential care home; local centre and active ground floor uses comprising up to 600 sqm of flexible floorspace for retail (including small convenience food store); up to 275 sqm of health, nursery and community; up to 7,700 sqm of employment space; up to 950 sqm of cafe, restaurant, takeaway and public house floorspace; up to a 2,250sqm (up to 2FE) primary school with associated playing fields (Use Class F1(a)); and associated road infrastructure, landscaping (including Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems), public realm and amenity space (all matters reserved except for vehicular access), land at Winnington Works	Wed 22 Dec 2021	Awaiting decision
21/01937/S73, Single storey side and rear extension and creation of first floor (Variation of conditions 2 (approved plans) and 3 (materials) of planning permission 19/01832/FUL), 31 Senna Lane	Fri 30 Apr 2021	Awaiting decision

22/00953/FUL - Demolition of existing porch, single storey glazed link extension, single storey and two storey extension, first floor balcony, alterations to existing garage, Wayside Cottage, Hough Lane	Tuesday 26 April 2022	Awaiting decision
22/00792/FUL - Change of Use of Land from Horticulture to Landscaping Business including Use of Previously Existing PolyTunnels (x2), Tool Shed, Potting Shed and Reuse of Porta Cabin as Office, Erection of Tool Shed, Small Workshop Building and Office Building and Siting of 4x Mobile Containers, Land To South of Hough Lane Farm	3 May 2022	Awaiting decision
22/01566/FUL - Single storey front extension, single storey rear extension to include cladding to rear first floor West View	27 April 2022	Approved
22/01512/FUL - Erection of oak framed car port, Paddock View, 68 Senna Lane Amended application	14 April 2022 1 November 2022	Approved
22/03211/TPO – silver birch – reduce regrowth throughout by 1.5m – 2.5m to keep crown in check, 15 Freshfields	24 August 2022	Awaiting decision
22/03311/FUL - demolition of existing dwelling, erection of dwelling, and a single storey outbuilding to provide ancillary accommodation, 57 Senna Lane	2 September 2022	Awaiting decision
22/03678/FUL - First storey side extension above existing garage 18 Chapel Close	12 October 2022	Awaiting decision
22/03695/FUL - first floor front extension and single storey side extension, storm porch to front, replacement windows and full render of existing dwelling Cogshall House	17 October 2022	Awaiting decision
22/04415/FUL - Siting of 4no. glamping units, reception hut, bike storage, recycling/waste	28 November 2022	Awaiting decision

facilities and a new permeable parking/turning area with electric vehicle charging points with associated footpaths and a water treatment plant for onsite drainage, land On The Northeast Side of Senna Lane		
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