



Appleton Parish Council

Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road, Appleton, WA4 5EQ

Telephone 01925 268153 Email clerk@appletonpc.org.uk

Minutes of the monthly Parish meeting of Appleton Parish Council held on Tuesday 15th December 2020 at 7.30pm

Present: - Councillor J Wheeler (Chairman)

Councillor K Arnett, Councillor B Axcell, Councillor I Axcell, Councillor R Johnson, , Councillor G Skentlebery (left at 20.35pm) , Councillor T Stansfield, Councillor J Price. and newly co-opted as per item 6, Councillor P Lewenz, (who was co-opted as per item 5). Councillor J Walker and Councillor P Walker both joined the meeting at 19.44pm

Mrs. J Monks (Clerk) and Mrs I Derbyshire (Assistant Clerk)

Part One – This part of the meeting was open to the press and members of the public

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Councillor J Wheeler welcomed everyone to the meeting. Councillor M Browne and Councillor S Benger sent their apologies for the meeting.

2. Members Code of Conduct

Councillor J Wheeler declared that she was a member of Development Control Management Committee at Warrington Borough Council. As such she did not take part in any discussion or decision regarding planning applications.

3. Public Participation

No members of the public wished to address the Parish Council.

4. Co-option Procedure

An application for the vacant post of Parish Councillor had been received. The clerk had circulated a copy of the co-option policy with the agenda for the Parish Council meeting. The procedure however will have to be modified as the meeting was virtual due to Covid-19.

RESOLVED that;

As the Parish Council was holding virtual meetings the voting procedure was amended slightly to allow for virtual voting for this co-option only.

5. Co-option of Parish Councillor

Councillor B Axcell asked the interview questions as previously used at the last Parish Council co-option in October 2020.

The applicant was then asked to wait in the virtual waiting room whilst the Parish Council considered the application from Mr P Lewenz.

RESOLVED that;

Mr P Lewenz was co-opted as a Parish Council for Cobbs and Hillcliffe Ward.

The clerk will notify Warrington Borough Council and set up a Parish Council email address and send the new Parish Councillor an induction pack and email a training schedule from Cheshire Association of Local Councils.

The clerk will also request that Councillor P Lewenz completes and returns a declaration of interest form so this can be sent to Warrington Borough Council and displayed on the Parish Council's website.

Councillor J Walker and Councillor P Walker both joined the meeting at 19.44pm and apologised for being late to the meeting.

6. PCSO / Police report

The clerk had circulated the PCSO report for the attention of all the Parish Councillors. Councillor J Wheeler reported that the anti-social behaviour on Bridge Lane has been dealt with by Cheshire Police and asked residents to report any issues to Cheshire Police via 101. Councillor J Wheeler stated that the Police have been very active and are stepping up patrols in targeted areas.

Councillor G Skentlebery stated that the Appleton Police were proactive in highlighting incidents which made the Parish look like it had more crime than other areas.

7. Minutes of last Parish Council meeting and matters arising

RESOLVED that;

The Minutes of the Parish Council's monthly meeting held on Tuesday 17th November 2020 (copies of which had been circulated to each Member) were approved and signed by the Chairman.

8. Minutes of Finance and General Purposes committee meeting and matters arising.

RESOLVED that;

The Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Thursday 3rd December 2020 (copies of which had been circulated to each Member) were approved and signed by the Chairman.

The clerk confirmed that the book swap in the bus shelter at Wrights Green/Lumb Brook Road had now been installed.

9. Parish Hall and Covid-19

The clerk informed the Parish Council that the NHS were looking for buildings to become vaccination centres. Councillor P Walker informed the Parish Council that a location for a vaccination centre for South Warrington had already been established.

Following the end of lockdown, the clerk was awaiting guidance from ACRE regarding Tier two restrictions. The current Central Government guidance was circulated to all prior to the Parish Council meeting.

The Parish Council reviewed re-opening the Parish Hall.

RESOLVED that;

Appleton Parish Hall would not re-open at this time and a decision would be reviewed at the Parish Council meeting in January.

The clerk was asked to provide an update to all Parish Hall users regarding this decision.

The assistant clerk asked for a separate meeting to discuss the Parish Hall in January.

10. Training

Following the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on Thursday 3rd December 2020 it was;

RESOLVED that;

The clerk, assistant clerk and booking secretary should go on a legionnaire's awareness training at the cost of £12 per person plus VAT from HSQE.

11. Cybersecurity Policy

RESOLVED that;

The Parish Council adopt a cybersecurity policy.

12. PCSO Funding arrangements

RESOLVED that;

The Parish Council continues to fund 50% of a PCSO for the financial year 2021/2022 and up to the amount of £18,000.

Councillor P Walker reported that Stockton Heath Parish Council have agreed to continue to fund the other 50% of a PCSO for the financial year 2021/2022.

13. Budget and Precept 2021/2022

RESOLVED that;

The precept for 2021/2022 is £166,500 and this would result in a 10.2% increase and mean that the Band D payable would be £35.09.

The reasons for the increase are the following;

- 1) Increased costs, including salary increases for staff.
- 2) Local Plan Expenditure
- 3) Loss of income due to Covid-19 and Parish Hall closure.

The Precept in similar parishes for example Lymm Parish Council, Stockton Heath and Grappenhall & Thelwall Parish Council are all higher charges per Band D property.

RESOLVED that;

The budget for 2021/2022 was set accordingly and the breakdown of Parish expenditure would be sent to Warrington Borough Council as requested as the precept is over £140,000.

14. Three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments

Councillor P Walker reported that this had been discussed at the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting in December and that this was a recommendation of the internal auditor. The three-year forecast was for an approximate estimate of 3% per year increase however this was an estimate only and would be reviewed on a regular basis dependant upon income and expenditure.

RESOLVED that;

The Parish Council accepts the three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments.

15. Financial Regulations

RESOLVED that;

The amended Financial Regulations were adopted by the Parish Council.

16. Investment Strategy, Authorised Persons for Banking and Bank Transfer for future payments

RESOLVED that;

Transfer of funds was approved as agreed at the Finance and General Purposes Committee on Thursday 3rd December 2020.

17. Risk Assessments

The clerk and assistant clerk had both completed a home working Risk Assessment and following this the assistant clerk had ordered a new wireless mouse and desk light.

In addition to the general Risk Assessment and the Fire Risk Assessment it would be necessary to have an additional Covid-19 Risk Assessment.

The clerk had drafted a proposed Covid-19 Risk Assessment however certain details would have to be confirmed when the Parish Hall was re-opened. The risk assessment also needed verification from a suitable qualified person. Several companies do offer services to ensure that the hall and that any risk assessment is Covid-19 secure.

RESOLVED that;

The clerk circulates the general risk assessment and proposed Covid-19 Risk Assessment for all staff for comments and feedback.

The Parish Council adopts the proposed Covid-19 Risk Assessment at this present time however this will need revision and to be verified by a suitably qualified person before re-opening the Parish Hall.

18. Planning

RESOLVED that;

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 30th November 2020 and Monday 14th December 2020 (copies of which had been circulated to each Member) were approved and signed by the Chairman.

19. Clerk's Report and approve of accounts and payments

The November 2020 statement of Receipts and Payments for the Financial Year 2020/2021 was noted and the Members noted the Bank Statement as at 30th November 2020.

RESOLVED that;

Payments were to be made in accordance with the payment schedule for December 2020.

The clerk reported that the Elections Department of Warrington Borough Council had provisionally booked the Parish Hall as a polling station for 6th May 2021. The clerk had informed the Elections Department that they would have to sign a tenancy

agreement to hire the Hall and they would have to complete their own Covid-19 Risk Assessment.

The clerk also had an email dated 25th June 2020 from the Elections Department of Warrington Borough Council that for the May elections Bridgewater Upper school will no longer be used for a polling station and they will use St Mary Magdalene's church instead.

A representative from the Broomfield's Youth Project sent a thank you to the Parish Council for the grant towards the cost of a youth worker.

The clerk confirmed that she had booked Councillor M Browne on the Roles and Responsibilities Training course from Cheshire Association of Local Councils on 10th February 2021.

The clerk confirmed that the contractor was attending the Parish Hall on Wednesday 16th December to undertake the legionnaires report and the locks to the Hall were also being changed on the same day. As the Hall is currently closed, only staff will be issued with new keys.

The assistant clerk has arranged for an Environmental Working Party meeting for Wednesday 6th January 2021 at 10.30am to discuss the planters and any other items.

The clerk received an email dated 9th December 2020 from the Principal of Bridgewater High School regarding a consultation to increase the number of secondary places following the significant new build proposed in the area. Warrington Borough Council have requested that Bridgewater High School expands its pupil admission from 300 to 360 starting in September 2023. Details of the consultation can be found at; <https://sway.office.com/K78zU286WsDZavP7?ref=Link> and the closing date of the consultation is Wednesday 3rd February 2021. The clerk has put this as an agenda item for the next Parish Council meeting. The clerk also noted that a planning application had been submitted to the Development Control Department of Warrington Borough Council and this would be discussed at the next Planning Committee meeting in January.

20. Virtual meeting protocol

RESOLVED that;

The virtual meeting protocol for the Parish Council was adopted.

21. Proposed Inland Border Facility and tree planting

The clerk received an email dated 8th December 2020 from the HMRC Inland Border Facility Sites Stakeholder Engagement Team stating that this application has been approved by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government as such the Shearing's site will be used as an inland border facility from 1st January 2021 for 24 months.

A third meeting has been planned for Thursday 17th December 2020 at 7pm.

Councillor J Wheeler reported that Inland Border Facility had given Warrington Borough Council funds for planting trees in the South of Warrington however where the exact planting was to be undertaken has not yet been determined as different groups have different opinions on where the trees should be planted. Councillor J Wheeler also said that there were several conditions regarding where these could be planted.

Several Parish Councillors suggested different areas for planning including Bridgewater High School, Grappenhall Lane and in Appleton Thorn. Further discussions regarding this will be undertaken with Warrington Borough Council on this matter.

Councillor J Wheeler informed the Parish Council that there was a local resident's group which had been set up in Appleton Thorn known as Stretton and Appleton Thorn IBF liaison (SATIL) Group and a report from this group will be circulated after the Parish Council meeting by the clerk.

22. Litter pickers

The clerk had received requests from members of the public for the Parish Council to purchase litter pickers which then could be used by members of the public for litter picking around the Parish.

RESOLVED that;

The clerk was requested to purchase twenty litter picker kits (litter picker /gloves and Hi-Viz) for community volunteer use.

The clerk could then allocate these to any volunteers who wish to use them in the Parish.

23. Christmas Donation

RESOLVED that;

The amount of £1,000 was donated to Warrington Foodbank as a Christmas donation from the Parish Council.

Councillor G Skentlebery gave his apologies and left the meeting at 20.35pm.

24. Community Policing Funds

The PCSO could apply for a grant via a Community Police Fund. Councillor J Wheeler had been in contact with the local PCSO and was investigating the possibility of a community garden with the Broomfield's Youth Project. Councillor P Walker confirmed that there would be no financial cost to the Parish Council.

RESOLVED that;

Councillor J Wheeler will meet with the PCSO and representative from the Broomfields Youth Project to look at the possibility of a community garden.

25. Activities and Events

Councillor J Wheeler asked the Parish Council to consider activities and events for 2021, however it was noted that any activity or event would have to be in accordance with the current Covid-19 guidance.

26. Christmas lights at Appleton Parish Hall

The clerk had reported the vandalism of the Christmas lights at Appleton Parish Hall to the Cheshire Police and had notified the PCSOs of this.

The clerk, following written authorisation from Councillor J Wheeler, Councillor B Axcell and Councillor P Walker had arranged for the repair of the Christmas lights.

RESOLVED that;

The cost of the repair for the Christmas lights, £215 plus VAT was taken out of the Events Committee budget.

27. Parish and Borough Councillors Reports

Councillor K Arnett asked for the direct mobile phone number for the PCSOs. The clerk has been advised that this must not be given out and that any contact or incidents must be reported to Cheshire Police via 101.

Councillor B Axcell reported that the appeal for planning permission for the Barns on Firs Lane has been refused.

Councillor T Stansfield thanked the Parish Council for the new book swap in the bus shelter on Wrights Green/Lumb Brook road as this has been welcomed by residents. The clerk will pass on the thanks to the Parish Ranger.

Councillor J Walker reported that the Environmental Working Group was open to new Parish Councillors to join and a meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 6th January to discuss environmental issues. Councillor P Lewenz expressed an interest to join this working party.

28. Date and time of next meeting

Tuesday 19th January 2021 at 7.30pm.

Part Two – This contains confidential information and only Councillors and reporting officers were present

The assistant clerk left the meeting for the next agenda item.

29. Assistant Clerk and other employment

These items were confidential and as such it has been removed.

Meeting ended at 20.49pm.