



# Appleton Parish Council

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

Telephone 01925 268153 Email clerk@appletonpc.org.uk

## **Minutes of the monthly Parish meeting of Appleton Parish Council held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 7.30pm**

**Present:** - Councillor J Wheeler (Chair)

Councillor K Arnett, Councillor B Axcell, Councillor I Axcell, Councillor M Browne, Councillor S Benger, Councillor J Price, Councillor P Lewenz, Councillor R Johnson, Councillor T Stansfield, Councillor J Walker and Councillor P Walker.

Mrs. J Monks (Clerk) and four members of the public.

### **1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

Councillor J Wheeler welcomed everyone to the meeting. Councillor J Wheeler informed the Parish Council that Mr Keith Brown, who had been instrumental in the production of the Neighbourhood Plan for Appleton Thorn had sadly passed away. Councillor J Wheeler had sent a card to the family on behalf of the Parish Council. The clerk confirmed that the meeting was being recorded.

### **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.

Councillor P Walker declared that he was a substitute member of the Development Control Management Committee at Warrington Borough Council. As such he did not take part in any discussion or decision regarding planning applications.

### **3. Public Participation**

No member of the public wished to speak at this point.

### **4. Inland Border Facility**

A representative of the Stretton and Appleton Thorn Inland Border Facility Liaison (SATIL) Group addressed the Parish Council with regards to the Inland Border Facility at Appleton Thorn. The representative had circulated a report for the attention of all the Parish Councillors. The representative confirmed that traffic levels remained very

low and that the Inland Border Facility was only operating at 5% capacity due to the reduction in freight traffic at Holyhead. They had several meetings with both the Inland Border Facility and Warrington Borough Council and most requests had been granted. They also confirmed that they have been no reports from Appleton Thorn residents regarding lorries going through the village. There are plans to increase the number of cameras and all these will be connected to the Warrington Borough Council Traffic Monitoring System also they were looking to install Air Quality monitors. It was understood that the traffic cameras and Air Quality monitors would remain even if the Inland Border Facility vacated the site.

## **5. Replacement Tree planting with funds from Inland Border Facility**

The group had been liaising with Warrington Borough Council with regards to the tree planting and the Education Department of Warrington Borough Council will be contacting all the schools directly. Councillor J Price asked the clerk to send his map of the proposed planting sites to the Head of Bridgewater High School for their consideration.

Councillor J Wheeler reported that she had attended a meeting with Warrington Borough Council regarding the replacement tree planting with funds from the Inland Border Facility and that a further meeting had been arranged to discuss further.

## **6. War Memorial anniversary**

Two members of the public addressed the Parish Council with regards to the war memorial research and plans for an event to celebrate 100 years of the war memorial. They were experiencing delays with the research due to Covid however it has hoped that they would be granted access soon as and when places were allowed to reopen.

**RESOLVED** that;

A working group with Parish Councillors and residents will be set up to look a War Memorial Centenary commemoration event.

## **7. The Dingle**

Both the Clerk and Chairman of the Parish Council have contacted the Public Rights of Way Officer and the Woodland Trust regarding the condition of The Dingle. The Woodland Trust Site Manager has provided a map of The Dingle and is happy to meet representatives of the Parish Council on site.

**RESOLVED** that;

A working party will be set up to look at the possibility of establishing a Friends Group for The Dingle.

Councillor J Price requested that clear signage was erected as part of this project. Councillor J Wheeler confirmed that the Environment Services Manager of Warrington Borough Council will be invited to attend the next Parish Council meeting in April and this project will be discussed with Warrington Borough Council then.

## **8. Press Release regarding Precept**

**RESOLVED** that;

The letter draft by the clerk was approved, to be sent if complaints were received regarding the precept for 2021/2022.

## **9. PCSO / Police report**

The clerk had circulated the PCSO report for the attention of all the Parish Councillors.

## **10. Minutes of last Parish Council meeting and matters arising**

**RESOLVED** that;

The Minutes of the Parish Council's monthly meeting held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (copies of which had been circulated to each Member) were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **11. 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 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021 (copies of which had been circulated to each Member) were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Following the decision of the Finance and General Purposes Committee on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021, the clerk has confirmed the planter contract has been awarded to All Seasons by phone, letter and email and the clerk has requested that the work commences as soon as possible. Following a request from Councillor J Walker the Parish Ranger has removed the three bushes and has relocated them to the Parish Hall.

The clerk has been liaising with Warrington Borough Council regarding the replacement litter bins. Warrington Borough Council have now confirmed that the litter bin outside the Parish Hall is not owned by them nor do they empty it. The clerk was asked to go ahead with the purchase of the two litter bins for one at Appleton reservoir by the fishing club car park and the other one at Hillcliffe/Foxcovert. Councillor J Wheeler asked if the bins at Bridge Lane shops could be located next to each other. The clerk will liaise with Street Scene at Warrington Borough Council regarding this request.

Councillor P Lewenz asked if the Parish Council had received a response regarding the canal path along the Bridgewater canal. The clerk confirmed that Appleton Parish Council had received no response, however as this was in Stockton Heath. It was

understood that this was the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting for Stockton Heath Parish Council and as the issues was in their Parish, they would be dealing with this.

## **12. Parish Hall and Covid-19**

Due to the lockdown restrictions re-opening of the Parish Hall cannot be considered. A meeting regarding re-opening will be arranged when restrictions are lifted and the new rules on re-opening are known.

The clerk reported that the income for the Parish Hall for 2019/2020 was £18,896.00. The amount of Covid-19 grant received from Central Government is £19,669.21. Plus, the Parish Council has to date received furlough money of £2,771.48. Furlough funds will also be paid for February and March 2021.

## **13. New Parish Councillors**

**RESOLVED** that;

Following the May elections, all Parish Councillors would be issued with and would be required to use official @appletonpc.org.uk email addresses at the cost of £5 per email address per year.

## **14. Banking**

**RESOLVED** that;

Councillor M Browne, Councillor P Lewenz and Tim Stansfield were added to the Parish Council bank accounts for the NatWest bank and internet banking as authorised signatures to authorise payments for the Parish Council.

For the NatWest current account and internet banking it was;

**RESOLVED** that;

The Authorised Signatories in the current mandate, for the accounts detailed in section 1.3, be changed in accordance with section Authorised Signatories.

And the current mandate will continue as amended.

## **15. Appointment of an Internal Auditor**

**RESOLVED** that;

JDH Ltd, who had effectively undertaken the internal audit previously, be appointed to undertake the Annual Internal Audit for Appleton Parish Council for 2020/2021 at the cost of £378.00 plus VAT.

## **16. Annual Subscriptions**

**RESOLVED** that;

To renew the membership for CPRE, Campaign to protect Rural England at the annual subscriptions cost of £36.00.

## **17. Warrington Borough Council's Climate Emergency and Ecology Bill**

This agenda item was deferred.

## **18. PCSO Agreement for 2021/2022**

The clerk received an email dated 27<sup>th</sup> February 2021 from the Temporary Chief Inspector of Cheshire Constabulary regarding the PCSO funding arrangements for 2021/2022. They have provided a draft service level agreement which required signing once the Parish Council has agreed funding. The cost per Parish will be £16,640 which is a 50% charge to fund one PCSO shared with Stockton Heath Parish Council. PCSO Phil Hilton will remain in the post as the funded PCSO for Stockton Heath and Appleton and PCSO Dave Mahon will continue as the ward PCSO for Appleton.

The Parish Council funded 50% of PCSO for 2020/2021 and the cost of this was £16,640. There is no change in the amount payable for 2021/2022.

**RESOLVED** that;

The Parish Council funds 50% of a PCSO at the cost of £16,640 for 2021/2022.

The clerk will ask the Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor J Wheeler to sign the contract and then this will be passed to Stockton Heath Parish Council for the Chairman to sign the joint agreement.

## **19. Contract for corner plot on Bridge Lane**

The assistant clerk has obtained one quote for the work at the corner plot, which is £325.00.

The clerk suggested that the Ranger undertook the work required as he also cut the grass onsite.

**RESOLVED** that;

The quote for £325.00 was approved from Gardens by Heather with the expenditure to be taken from the Environmental Improvement budget.

## **20. Replacement tree planting**

Councillor J Wheeler asked for this Agenda tem to be deferred until the Parish Council meeting in April pending information and a presentation from the Environment Services Manager of Warrington Borough Council.

## **21. Planning**

**RESOLVED** that;

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021 (copies of which had been circulated to each Member) were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **22. Clerk's Report and approve of accounts and payments**

The February 2021 statement of Receipts and Payments for the Financial Year 2020/2021 was noted and the Members noted the Bank Statement as at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

**RESOLVED** that;

Payments were to be made in accordance with the payment schedule for March 2021.

The clerk confirmed that the Parish Council had received a response dated 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021 from Development Control Department regarding the complaint submitted regarding planning issues.

The clerk confirmed that Central Government have now extended the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme has been extended until the end of September 2021. Central Government will continue to pay 80% of the usual wages for the hours not worked up to end of June 2021. For July this will be 70% and this will then reduce to 60% for August and September 2021.

The clerk received an email from Warrington Borough Council regarding the re-introduction of a Public Space Protection Order for Warrington. This, if made, would allow the Council to continue a range of measures to address anti-social behaviour issues (which can be linked to the use of alcohol) and help maintain public spaces in this area. The consultation has commenced and runs for 4 weeks, closing 5pm on Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021. Further information can be obtained by contacting the community safety team via [communitysafetywbc@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:communitysafetywbc@warrington.gov.uk) .

The clerk had circulated the notice of election that had been issued from Warrington Borough Council. All Parish Councillors that wished to stay on the Parish Council will need to complete and return nomination papers to Warrington Borough Council by 4pm on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> April. The nomination forms can be downloaded from the Electoral Commission's website.

The clerk received an email from the Tuesday Team, Clean Up My Community Warrington requesting litter picking equipment. The clerk has offered the remaining

fifteen sets of litter pickers, gloves and Hi-Viz jackets to the group who undertake litter picking in Appleton Thorn. The clerk was requested to only provide ten sets of equipment rather than the fifteen as other members of the public may request additional litter pickers.

### **23. Staff mileage**

The clerk reported that it has come to her attention that the 2020 edition of the Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England (the 'Practitioners' Guide' has defined 'staff costs'. Previous guides issued did not define staff costs. As such working from home allowance and staff mileage cannot be included in staff costs.

For the financial year 2020/2021 working from home allowance has been taken from Office supplies and any mileage was taken from the staff costs budget. Due to the amendment the clerk has had to removed mileage from the staff costs budget and has now readjusted the accounts so that any mileage claimed for 2020/2021 had been taken from the office supplies budget.

### **24. Training**

Councillor J Wheeler and the clerk would like to attend a staff appraisal workshop on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 from Cheshire Association of Local Councils.

**RESOLVED** that;

Both Councillor J Wheeler and the clerk could attend a staff appraisal workshop from Cheshire Association of Local Councils at the cost of £65.00 per person.

Councillor J Wheeler stated that the next item to be discussed would be item 27 and then 28.

### **27. Parish and Borough Councillors Reports**

Councillor P Walker reported that a new Chief Constable of Cheshire Police had been appointed.

Councillor J Price reported that he had been contacted by a resident regarding the Lyons monument and he was concerned that it was falling into disrepair. Councillor J Wheeler will contact Warrington Museum regarding ownership.

Councillor P Lewenz reported that he was concerned regarding the state of the footpaths due to the huge increase in the footfall of people walking. The issue will be discussed with the Environment Services Manager of Warrington Borough Council at the next Parish Council meeting.

## **28. Date and time of next meeting**

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021, Annual Parish Meeting 7.00pm followed by the monthly Parish Council meeting.

Councillor B Axcell, Councillor I Axcell, Councillor S Bengler, Councillor K Arnett, Councillor J Price, Councillor R Johnson and Councillor J Walker left the meeting for agenda items 25 and 26 as this was regarding Freedom of the Parish and gifts for the retiring Parish Councillors.

Councillor J Wheeler, Councillor M Browne, Councillor P Lewenz, Councillor T Stansfield and Councillor P Walker were only present for agenda items 25 and 26.

## **25. Freedom of the Parish**

**RESOLVED** that;

Freedom of the Parish was awarded to the following Parish Councillors upon retirement in May following the completion of eight years and above service to the Parish Council.

Councillor B Axcell, Councillor I Axcell, Councillor S Bengler, Councillor K Arnett and Councillor J Price.

Councillor J Wheeler confirmed that Councillor J Walker had already received Freedom of the Parish.

## **26. Gifts for Retiring Parish Councillors**

**RESOLVED** that;

Certificates showing the length of service for each retiring Parish Councillor will awarded for the voluntary service for their continued and outstanding work on behalf of the community of Appleton.

The clerk was requested to purchase frames for the certificates and Freedom of the Parish awards with the cost to be taken from the Chairman's allowance for 2020/2021.

Meeting ended at 21.14pm.