

## **WROCKWARDINE PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 9th January 2002 at Wrockwardine Parish Hall, Wrockwardine at 7.30. p.m.**

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**Present:**

Cllr. - Mrs. R. Hargrave - Chairman.  
Cllrs. K. J. S. Ballantyne, B. C. Brown, Mrs. M. Carver, E. A. Cowling, Mrs. E.S. Jones, A. Orrell, D. Powell and Mrs. J. Savage.  
Mr. M. Goldstraw - Clerk

**Also in attendance:** Two members of the public.

PC P. Palmer  
Reporter Shropshire Star

**02/01 Chairman's Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed everyone in attendance and bid all a very happy new year.

**02/01a Police Session**

PC Palmer reported that there was now a part time officer updating the neighbourhood watch database which, it was anticipated, would be completed by April. It would then be possible to call a meeting of co-ordinators. He then reported to members recent work in his area with "disaffected" youth and asked the meetings views on a proposed initiative which could attract funding and involve the youth of the parish in parish matters. He gave a report on the initiative which, it was hoped, would also include Admaston House. The Chairman stated that such an initiative would be most welcome in the parish provided it had all the appropriate safeguards.

PC Palmer gave further details of possible funding which could be available and the youth services which would be involved.

Cllr. Brown asked what proportion of girls to boys were "disaffected" in the area. PC Palmer replied that at present, the proportion was boys 10:3. Cllr. Brown asked for the proposed facilities to be made available for both sexes. Cllr. Orrell referred to a straw poll taken at an earlier date which showed a demand from youths for such facilities as a pool room.

Members discussed the lack of facilities for the young of the area and it was generally agreed that the initiative from PC Palmer was welcome. PC Palmer stated that he would keep the parish informed, as a committee would need to be formed at an early stage.

**7.51 p.m. Cllr. Rawlings joined the meeting.**

Cllr. Powell reported that residents were concerned that large quantities of empty disposable lighters were being found in the area of Admaston House and asked if it could be an indication of some form of abuse. PC Palmer stated that he would look into the matter.

PC Palmer was thanked by the Chairman and left the meeting at 7.53 p.m.

**02/02 Apologies for Absence**

Courtesy apologies were received from Cllr. Miss. J. Seymour and D. Blackwell (Unitary Councillors).

**02/03 Declaration of Interest**

There were no new declarations.

**02/04 Minutes**

**The Minutes of the meeting held on 12th December 2001 were confirmed and signed, by the Chairman, as a true record.**

**02/05 Matters Arising**

a) Wrockwardine Parish Hall

The Clerk gave the legal guidelines as to Trusteeship and stated that the Council could act as custodian trustee provided that the charity was not of an ecclesiastical or eleemosynary nature. The solicitor acting for the committee had been contacted and assured the Clerk that the proposed charity would have no link with the church save that of the church being its landlord by way of the granting of a lease to the committee.

The Clerk asked Members to consider three points:

i) Is it lawful ? He confirmed there was indication that it is.

ii) Do you want to do it ? That is a matter for the meeting to decide.

iii) What are the risks involved and do you want to take on such risks ?

The Parish hall Committee have stated (as advised by their solicitor) that provided the Parish Council acts only in accordance with lawful directions of the executive committee of the newly formed charity, it (the parish council) will not be held liable for any acts or defaults of the charity or its members. The council was not being asked to be a member of the executive, only a custodian trustee.

**8.15 p.m. Cllr. Blackwell arrived as an observer.**

Members discussed the matter. Cllr. Mrs. Carver proposed that the council accept the responsibility of Custodian Trustee, seconded by Cllr. Cowling - **Resolved.**

b) Traffic Matters

The Clerk reminded members that there was to be a special meeting of the council on 16th January to deal with current traffic matters.

Cllr. Orrell requested that the Traffic Working Party be allowed to collate the letters from the public prior to the meeting. This was approved.

The meeting was informed that traffic counters had been placed in Station Road two days ago.

c) Other Matters.

Cllr. Ballantyne drew the attention of the Meeting to item 01/192 (top of page

3) and asked the Chairman to explain and clarify her enquiry as to the right of the named Councillors to vote on the matter in question and for her concerns to be noted within the minutes.

The Chairman responded by stating that she had been concerned that there may have been some liability to declare an interest and wished to save those Members concerned from any embarrassment at a later date. She added that she was saddened by Cllr. Ballantyne's having brought this issue into Matters Arising without any direct approach to herself prior to the Meeting or even warning her that it would be brought up.

Cllr. Ballantyne stated that Members had a right to raise any matter from the previous minutes which it was felt warranted clarification or explanation. He asked why the Chairman had persisted with her objection despite the matter being clarified by the Clerk and indeed herself having sought the opinion of Cllr. Blackwell who had stated that "in the end, it was a matter for the individual Member to decide".

The Chairman agreed that it was Cllr. Ballantyne's right but felt that raising the matter again lacked common courtesy and was unprofessional. She said that, bearing in mind the need for public accountability for those in public life and the Nolan Report, it was important always to ensure that the council as a whole, should be seen to be totally unbiased in its decisions. Her enquiry into the eligibility to vote had been because she wanted to protect the Council, as a whole, from any criticism at a later date, particularly bearing in mind the Model Code of Conduct Order 2001, which needed to be considered, and the possibility of remuneration of Councillors from April 2002.

Cllr. Ballantyne stated that he was not satisfied with the Chairman's response. He stated that the underlying flavour of the matter was, in his view, that if the votes of the two Members in question had been discounted, it would have quite obviously created an equality of views which would have meant that the Chairman would have had the casting vote. He suggested that the Chairman had quite deliberately attempted to tip the balance in this way in order to use her casting vote to prevent the insertion of a clause within the lease whereby Admaston House Community Trust might at some future date be assigned the lease.

Cllr. Brown stated that, in his view, the basis of any declaration had not been clear and that he did not entirely believe that the matters of the House and the land had now been separated.

The Clerk gave further clarification, explaining that since the House had now been satisfactorily handed to the Trust, the negotiation of a lease on the land by the Council was a separate matter and there would be no gain to the relevant Councillors whether the land was acquired or not but those Members would have a view on the matter from a community perspective. An example was given whereby a member with (say) an interest in a charity which regularly receives a grant from the council could still vote for the general budget of the council which sets a grant fund, but would withdraw and declare when the actual grant was discussed. So, the relevant Members could vote for the

generic lease of the land since at that stage the possible transfer of lease to the Trust had been built in as nothing more than a future safeguard and was remote. The members would obviously declare and remove themselves from any possible debate in the future should the transfer of the lease be deemed to be needed in reality (rather than a hypothetical future event).

The Chairman strongly refuted Cllr. Ballantyne's opinion of her motives, stating that he had been merely speculating. Cllr. Ballantyne was invited by the Chairman to propose a Vote of No Confidence if he felt that she had acted improperly.

Cllr. Ballantyne declined to propose such a vote stating that he had requested an explanation for a sequence of events which, in his view, had clear implications. He stated that he was unhappy with the explanation which did not stand scrutiny.

Cllr. Mrs. Jones stated that she had found this exchange most embarrassing and difficult and all Members, including the Chairman, have the right to express an opinion without being taken to task.

Cllr. Orrell respectfully suggested that the Meeting moved on.

Cllr. Orrell referred to 01/198 (Budget), clarifying to members that the set budget would of course mean that the council will be eating into its reserves by about £5'000.

#### **02/06 Land at Admaston House - Lease**

The Clerk gave Members a report of the outcome of his meeting with the Council's solicitor and went through each point which the solicitor felt needed to be raised with T&WC in order to progress the lease.

The Chairman felt that the solicitor had raised valid points and that the matter was progressing satisfactorily. Cllr. Brown proposed that the Council support the matters to be raised by the solicitor - seconded by Cllr. Rawlings, it was **resolved**.

The Chairman thanked all Members of the Council who had worked very hard to bring this matter to this stage from our initial concerns, in particular Cllr. Brown for all his work done over many years and the Clerk in recent times. Everyone was thanked for their contributions.

Cllr. Brown thanked the Chairman for her kind words, stating that all the work he had done had been strongly supported by all.

#### **02/07 Model Code of Conduct Order 2001**

Cllr. Orrell felt that some, if not all, Members may be in some difficulty with the requirement to make declarations in a Public Register. He asked for the Council to seek guidance. Other Members expressed a perceived difficulty with

the requirement to declare matters. Cllr. Cowling stated that he would simply

resign rather than do so.

The Chairman referred to the possibility that in the future Members may be remunerated for their efforts.

Cllr. Brown stated that the requirements were a price which would have to be paid.

Cllr. Orrell asked that prior to “signing up” to the Code, the Council write to NALC for guidance re: paragraph 12. This was agreed.

## **02/08 The Golden Jubilee of Her Majesty The Queen**

The Chairman thanked members of the working group who had met and provided the Council with a detail report along with recommendations. The report was read by Members and the recommendations/suggestions were explored.

### Land Station Road

Cllr. Brown referred to the previously offered land at Station Road and asked why it was no longer on the table. The working group had suggested that this land could be acquired for a project. The Clerk was asked to contact E.P. to enquire about the status of the land.

### Play Equipment Admaston

Following discussion, this was found not to be an option at this time.

### Window in St Peter’s Church

It was agreed that this be further investigated.

### Finger Posts

cast Cllr. Ballantyne clarified that the required posts would be the old fashioned iron ones. It was agreed that these be further investigated.

### Jubilee Oak

It was agreed that these be further investigated.

### Community Benches

It was agreed that these be further investigated.

The working group agreed to investigate costs prior to the next meeting.

## **02/09 Footway Lighting**

of The Clerk explained that the ownership of some of the lights within the Admaston area of the parish was not at all clear. Whilst the Council was sure the ownership of many of the lamps on the older estates, there had been many new build housing estates and the residents were of the opinion that the Parish was responsible for maintenance. The Parish, however had no documentation to prove ownership and in the recent estates, had never been asked to take responsibility.

Cllr. Orrell proposed that we write to T&WC stating that the only lights the Parish has proof of ownership (Admaston) are those on the Pickering estate, could T&WC prove that we should be maintaining the others.

This proposition was seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Savage. It was **resolved**.

## **02/10 Admaston House**

Cllrs. Ballantyne, Powell and Cowling left the meeting for the duration of the debate.

The Chairman read out the formal request from Admaston House Trust for assisted funding. Cllr. Orrell gave a report. Following debate, Cllr. Orrell proposed that the Council assist the Trust and release £2000 of grant funding - seconded by Cllr. Mrs Savage. It was **resolved that £2000 be granted to Admaston House Trust.**

The Clerk suggested that one way in which the Council could assist the Trust in its cash flow would be to pay for the rent of the room, which now must be paid as the House is no longer owned by T&WC, in advance. This was agreed.

Cllr. Orrell as the Council's representative on the Trust and a resident, thanked Members, on behalf of the Trust, for the grant.

Cllrs. Ballantyne, Powell and Cowling rejoined the meeting.

#### **02/11 Wrockwardine Playing Fields**

Members discussed a request from residents of Wrockwardine to mark out an area of the field as a junior football pitch. Cllr. Orrell reported upon the condition of the ground. The Chairman suspended Standing Orders briefly to allow a representative of the residents to answer questions. It was stated that the request was for the PC to mark out the grounds and if that happened, the residents would fund the purchase of nets.

Cllr. Orrell requested permission to explore the possibility of local voluntary labour to carry out the work whilst the Clerk explore professional quotes for the work. This was approved. The Clerk was requested to ask the contractors to aerate the field to improve the condition of the ground.

#### **02/12 Correspondence**

##### 1. Telford & Wrekin Council

- (a) Draft proposals to introduce a permit scheme to enforce against illegal trade use of civic amenity sites. Noted.

##### 2. OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

SCC	Public Transport News - circulated.
NTPPP	Meeting 17th January 2002 - Cllr. Orrell
SAPTC	Special General Meeting 2nd February 2002 - noted
Salop Health Auth	A partnership for the future - circulated.
CPRE	Planning update - noted.

#### **02/13 Planning Matters**

##### **Applications**

W01/1098	Erection of a single storey side extension to existing double garage to form changing rooms, 39
Shawbirch	Road, Admaston.
	There were no objections.

Members noted the following permissions:

W01/0908	Proposed first floor extension to rear 7 Charlton.
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W01/0882                      Erection of single storey storage building Agropharm,  
Overley.

W01/0961                      Erection of canopies to production building,  
Agropharm,  
Overley.

**02/14 Accounts for Payment**

Cllrs. Ballantyne, Powell and Cowling took no part in this matter.

**Receipts & Payments - It was RESOLVED - that these be approved and paid as tabled.**

**Statement 100** was tabled along with the reconciliation and was approved.

**02/15 Budget and Precept**

a) The Chairman and two Members signed the warrant authorising T&WC to collect the Precept for 2002/3.

b) Members were appraised of the proposal to allow remuneration to Parish Councillors.

c) Cllr. Orrell reported that the North Telford Parish Paths Partnership had originally accepted a negotiated figure of £1000 reduced from £2000 for this year. A budget of £1200 had been allowed for the forthcoming year on the basis of work done on FP6 and the signs at Cheshire Coppice. Members thanked Cllr. Orrell.

**02/16 Reports**

Cllr. Mrs. Carver -                      Reported that a burnt out car had been removed from the lane between Wrockwardine and Allscott but a lot of the debris had been left despite two attempts to clear up. The same road has a number of very bad pot holes. Requested that the provision of grit bins be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

Cllr. Mrs. Savage -                      Reported disappointment in the way in which T&WC had responded to the icy roads in the area. Stated that the Snow Liaison Officer had received no contact from anyone at T&WC.

Cllr. Orrell -                              Reported an overgrown hedge at a private property in Wrockwardine which was making it difficult to pass.

Cllr. Powell -                              Gave credit to PC Palmer for his successes with

problems at Admaston House. Supported Cllr. Mrs. Carver's request for grit bins siting an incident in Admaston.

**02/17 Press Statement**

Reporter from the Shropshire Star in attendance.

The meeting closed at 10.14 p.m.

*Signed* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Chairman*

*Date* \_\_\_\_\_