

Wrockwardine Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 14th April 2021 via Zoom at 7.30p.m

Present:
Cllr Mrs E Anderson (Chairwoman)
Cllr Mr P Cooper (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Mrs E Ballantyne
Cllr Mr K Ballantyne
Cllr Mr P Bevis
Cllr Mrs J Savage
Cllr Mr G Thomas
Cllr Miss K Tonks

In Attendance:
Borough Cllr Miss J Seymour
Borough Cllr Kelly Middleton
Helen Royall – Project Manager, National Trust
1 member of the public
Ms J Hancox (Clerk)

21/36 Welcome by the Chairwoman

The Chairwoman welcomed everyone to the Zoom meeting and led everyone present in a minute's silence in memory of HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh.

21/37 Apologies for absence

Cllr Mr G Baxter – 6 months leave of absence agreed (Resolved Nov 2020)

21/38 Declaration of Interests & Dispensations

- a) Pecuniary – None declared
- b) Personal – None declared

21/39 Public Session

Member of the public raised issues with roads around Wrockwardine. Cllr's Thomas, Cooper and Borough Cllr Miss Seymour had already reported many of the issues to the Borough Council and confirmed they would follow these up. The issue of the hedge at the solar farm was raised again and the member of the public was able to confirm the name of the landowner and Cllr Miss Seymour advised she would pass this on to the Borough Council to pursue. It was confirmed again that the proper procedure for reporting should be followed as only the Borough Council can enforce legal action.

21/40 National Trust Presentation

Helen Royall shared a power point presentation from the National Trust including plans for future developments that cross into land within the Parish. Member's thanked Helen for attending and requested that she be asked back to a future face-to-face meeting with a fuller visual display and more time for discussion allocated.

(Helen Royall left the meeting at 8.03p.m)

21/41 Mental Health Presentation

Cllr Kelly Middleton gave a verbal presentation as the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board and Champion for Mental Health. Having written strategies and training programmes designed to offer practical advice to support people from all social groups to improve their mental health, she asked the

Parish Council to appoint a representative to champion improvements to mental health provision within the Parish. Members **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Miss Tonks and Cllr Mr Cooper to the role.

[Proposer: Cllr Mrs Savage; Seconder: Cllr Mr Bevis; Vote: Unanimous]

Cllr Kelly Middleton left the meeting at 8.09p.m

21/42 To confirm and agree the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm and sign the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 10th March 2021.

[Proposer: Cllr Mrs Savage; Seconder: Cllr Miss Tonks; Vote: Unanimous]

21/43 Borough Councillor’s Report

Cllr Miss Seymour advised Member’s that plans for the formal procedure for the school at Allscott Meads were commencing with a view to the school opening in 2023. There was also an update on the Mound at Haygate Fields and the issue of the traffic calming around the Wrekin which is still ongoing. Cllr Miss Seymour also commented on the closure of Walcot Bridge which is now going to be closed for longer and was also closed to walkers and cyclists and that she would be chasing up for further information.

21/44 Planning

1. Permissions & Refusals

Members noted the following permissions and refusals:

TWC/2020/0908	9 Aldermead Close, Admaston	Erection of 2 storey extension, remove existing conservatory & erection of a replacement single storey extension	Full Granted
TWC/2021/0169	The Gables, 28 Bratton Road, Bratton	Conversion of existing storage area above detached garage to ancillary living accommodation	Full Granted
TWC/2021/0099	6 Woodhall Close, Shawbirch	Erection of 2 storey front, side & rear single storey extension	Full Granted
TWC/2021/0110	Land North of Haygate Rd, Wellington	Raising of ground levels within south-western corner of residential development	Full Refused

2. New Applications

Members made the following comments:

TWC/2021/0257	Dovecote Grange, Bratton Road, Bratton	Replacement of existing extension pitched roof with flat roof & installation of 3 no. replacement windows	No comment
TWC/2021/0263	Former British Sugar Site, Allscott	Reserved matters application pursuant to TWC/2014/0113 for the development of a new Sports & Social Club Pavilion, sports pitches, greens, car parking, landscaping and associated	Support

		works including details for appearance, landscaping layout & scale	
TWC/2021/0267	Oak House, 14 Aldermead Close, Admaston	Crown reduce 1no. Oak tree by up to 2m	No Comment
TWC/2020/0854	Land Adjacent 20 Charlton, Telford	Appeal for refusal for conversion of former pigsty into 1no. dwelling	No further comments

3. Applications received after the agenda was circulated

TWC/2021/0318	8 Aldermead Close, Admaston	Erection of a front porch, installation of timber cladding to existing dwelling and erection of 2.2m high boundary wall	No Comment
TWC/2021/0329	6 Walcot, Telford	Erection of a 2-storey rear extension (amendment to previously approved TWC/2017/0107)	No Comment
TWC/2021/0334	58 Broomfield Road, Admaston	Installation of a dropped kerb	No comment

21/45 Finance

a) Accounts for payment list

It was **RESOLVED** that these be approved and paid as tabled.

[Proposer: Cllr Miss Tonks; Seconder: Cllr Mr Cooper; Vote: Unanimous]

b) Bank Reconciliations

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the accounts for March 2021.

[Proposer: Cllr Mr Cooper; Seconder: Cllr Mrs Savage; Vote: Unanimous]

c) Insurance – Deferred until May meeting in order to obtain a further quote

21/46 Chairwoman's Update

The report was circulated prior to the meeting (Appendix 1). Following discussion and debate, Cllr Mr Cooper withdrew from becoming a Mental Health representative and it was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Mr Cooper as the "Internal Controller".

[Proposer: Cllr Mrs Anderson; Seconder: Cllr Mr Ballantyne; Vote: Unanimous]

Member of the public left at 8.47p.m

Following further discussion, the following points were agreed by Members:

- To re-instate the Finance & General Purposes Committee (F&GP) at the meeting in May
- To encourage Cllr's to undertake training as appropriate and when possible - It was noted that some of the courses from NALC and SALC are in the daytime and therefore not accessible to those who work in the day.
- That "Ward Walks" should be undertaken and would be beneficial.
- That the Annual Meeting of the Parish be postponed until 2022.

The Chairwoman gave a verbal update on matters relating to Long Yard Meadow and Pemberton Road carpark.

21/47 Car Park, Wrockwardine Playing Fields

A proposal was made by Cllr Mr Bevis, Cllr Mr Thomas and Cllr Mrs Savage to extend the existing carpark at Wrockwardine Playing Fields to try to alleviate some of the traffic issues caused by the number of visitors the site was having. Following a lengthy debate Member's decided that a written proposal be drawn up by Cllr Mr Bevis and Cllr Mr Thomas, including plans and detailed costings, so that Members could properly consider the details and determine whether a pre-planning application should be submitted to the Borough Council to seek permission to install.

21/48 SID Statistics

Noted

21/49 Meetings Update

The Chairwoman advised that the Parish Improvements Working Group had met and a decision was needed on whether the Council wished to purchase wooden or recycled plastic benches. Following discussion, it was agreed that Cllr Mr Cooper and Cllr Mr Bevis would seek costs of wooden units and, the Clerk would provide details regarding plastic before a decision be made.

Cllr Mr Ballantyne stated that a report regarding Admaston Green would be presented at the next meeting.

21/50 Climate Change

The Chairwoman proposed that Wrockwardine Parish Council declare a climate emergency. Following discussion, Member's agreed they would like more information on the matter and the implications of making the declaration. The Chairwoman agreed to prepare a report for Members and for it to be considered again at the next meeting.

21/51 Grant Applications

None received.

21/52 Correspondence

- **PODS (Parents Opening Doors)** - Member's gave permission for Admaston Green to be used for the event on the 2nd August 2021 on the provision that all necessary insurances were in place and, that they leave no damage from the go-carts on the grass.
- **RoSPA Inspection** – Member's noted that the annual RoSPA inspection for the play areas was booked for June/July

21/53 Date of the next meeting

It was confirmed that the next meeting would be held on **Wednesday 12th May 2021 at 7.30p.m at Admaston House, Admaston.**

The meeting closed at 10.06p.m

Signed: _____ **E Anderson** _____ (Chairman)

Date _____ **12th May 2021** _____

Wrockwardine Parish Council

Item 10a) & b)

Finance

10a) Accounts for Payment 14th April 2021

Payee	Description	Net Cost	VAT	Cost
	Staffing costs	2,310.79	1.00	2,311.79
Tesco Mobile	Telephone	7.50	00.00	7.50
BC	SID Maintenance	200.00	00.00	200.00
SALC	Training	135.00	00.00	135.00
	Total	2,653.29	1.00	2,654.29

10b) Bank Reconciliation March 2021

Accounts paid March 2021

Payee	Description	Net Cost	VAT	Cost
	Staff Costs	1,084.85	00.90	1,085.75
IdVerde	Grass Cutting Contract	702.66	140.53	843.19
Tesco Mobile	Telephone	7.50	00.00	7.50
B Cartwright	SID Maintenance	200.00	00.00	200.00
Barclaycard	Barrier Tape – Pemberton Road	6.50	1.30	7.80
	Bamboo Stakes – Pemberton Road	7.88	1.58	9.46
E-On	Street Lighting Maintenance 1/5/20 – 30/4/21	2,296.71	459.34	2,756.05
WHT	Pemberton Road Refurbishment Balance	976.85	195.37	1,172.22
Cllr Anderson	Chairman’s Allowance	400.00	00.00	400.00
Unity Bank	Bank Charges	18.00	00.00	18.00
WHT	Safety strips on Pirate Ship, Pemberton Road	264.00	52.80	316.80
IdVerde	Bin Emptying 1/4/2020 – 31/3/2021	1,728.00	345.60	2,073.60
IdVerde	Hedge cut around allotments	215.00	43.00	258.00
	Total	7,907.95	1,240.42	9,148.37

Bank Reconciliation	
Current A/C balance	49,982.98
March Payments	9,148.37
Receipts	00.00
Total	40,834.61
Unity Statement 103	40,834.61

Available Spend 14/4/21	
Balance c/f	40,834.61
Minus Payments April	2,654.29
Add April receipts (Precept)	38,500.00
Current A/C Balance	76,680.32
Savings A/C	56,618.84
90 Day Access A/C	70,668.74
Total spend available	203,628.59

Signed: **J Hancox**

Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer

Signed: **E Anderson** (Chairman) Date: **12th May 2021**

Appendix 1

Wrockwardine Parish Council

Item 11

Chairwoman's Update

1. Training Report April 2021

Finance

Each Parish/Town Council requires money to operate resources in providing local services. In law each Parish/Town Council are required to operate good, transparent financial systems. By default, each councillor should be interested in how finances are collected, fiscal decisions made and then recorded in accordance with the agreed planned financial budget. In other words, it can only spend and use money it has a statutory power to do so. Of course, finances are only one part of the responsibilities Parish/Town Councils hold but is one area of responsibility which as Councillors I know we take extremely seriously – if only for the fact we are accountable.

In the Zoom training events I have recently attended, Wrockwardine Parish Council is in fact in an exceedingly small minority of councils which does not hold sub-committees in a formal manner.

Many parish councils, and previously Wrockwardine Parish Council, facilitate sub-committees one of which is a Finance and General-Purpose committee. (F&GP Committee). At one time a Parish Improvements Group was also formed. Other parish/town Councils also form a Planning Subcommittee.

In turning my attention to Finances, Wrockwardine Parish Council operates good financial systems however as always there is room for improvement.

A F&GP Committee deals with matters concerning finance, administration, assets and council employees. The sub-committee meetings are open to the general public, minutes are recorded and it acts in accordance with legal requirements (standing orders) passed by the Parish Council. Any working party evolving from the sub-committee can deal with employee matters in a closed, confidential way which does not infringe any data protection (GDPR). Working parties can be held without members of the general public present.

In my time as Chair, no Wrockwardine Parish Council employee working party has been formed to supervise and appraise the work of the clerk. This is not good practice, ideally, this should be remedied as soon as possible. It can ensure that the Parish Council uses resources well, the clerk can feel supported, and councillors know they are acting in good faith in discharging their duties as employers. I as Chair have supported the clerk through discussion, reflection and regular contact. However, I am aware this is not enough to ensure the Parish Council discharges its duties as an employer well.

Recommendation: That the F&GP Committee is restored at Mays Annual meeting of the Council and from this an Employee Working Party is formed to supervise and appraise the clerk to the council.

Wrockwardine Parish Council operates a robust financial system. However, we do not use the Three Pillars of Accountability as detailed in the training I received and I have raised this with the clerk.

Each Parish/Town Council should operate the Three pillars of accountability:

1. Internal controls
2. Internal Audit
3. External Audit

I am confident that 2 & 3 Internal and External Audits are robust. My concern is that we do not operate 1. Internal Controls to the best of our ability and which would serve as excellent practice.

Each Parish Council should elect a dedicated councillor who is responsible for operating internal controls. The councillor should alternate on a rolling basis every one or two years. **Preferably** not a councillor who holds a signature position however if need be, so be it.

The role of the internal control councillor is to check all accounting by the clerk. This is not a courtesy call but a full robust check, double check and then triple check. The Parish Council has a duty as part of its risk assessment to operate this internal control. It makes no difference in practice that we operate an online system of banking.

The internal control councillor should have an enquiring mind, should look carefully at a minimum **twenty transactions from start to finish**. There should be a report to the Parish Council each time an internal control audit is undertaken, and they should be operated at least three times per year. The councillor would be a critical friend and not make any assumptions on how finances have been recorded. They are a paper chaser, to show the detail of how transactions have occurred.

This was also an action from the Parish Council's Risk Assessment adopted by Full Council 11th March 2020 but which was not implemented due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions that followed.

Recommendation: that Wrockwardine Parish Council assigns an internal controller as soon as possible.

As an aside, most councillors do not have to be signatures for the bank account(s).

The Practitioner's Guide is due March 2021 (it is overdue). Each councillor should be sent a copy of the guide once it is published.

Chairperson's Training

An equally important point covered in the Chairperson training was training for councillors. Whilst I am sure Wrockwardine Parish Council does adhere to good practice, there is, as always room for improvement.

Recommendations given in the training suggested:

- All new Staff/ Councillors will receive an induction within their first six months on joining the council.
- A walk around the Parish with Clerk and Chairman
- A councillor welcome pack. (Discussion- what could a welcome pack include /which would be helpful?)

- On becoming a member of any committee that an appropriate briefing giving the terms of reference and roles and responsibilities of the sub-committee be given to ensure they become an effective member of sub-committee.
- An annual appraisal of all Councillors via each other, we were presented with one example of an appraisal (Cleobury Mortimer) (!)

Recommendation: A walk around the Parish for all Parish Members who have not undertaken this activity and a future agenda item discussion on how Wrockwardine Parish Council can induct, train and hold Continual Professional Development of its paid staff and Councillors (suggest June agenda for discussions, walk asap).

The Annual Parish Meeting must be held each year between March 1st and June 1st. It is a separate meeting however it is usually organised by the Parish Council. Because this is a meeting of a body separate from the Parish Council its date is not set upon the AGM of the Parish Council

Covid 19 has left every council with difficult decisions to make as regards how to manage the Annual Parish Meeting and indeed, Last year the decision was made to cancel Wrockwardine's meeting. Much discussion took place in the training about how different Parish Councils held the meetings. There is often confusion between an Annual Meeting of the Council and the Annual Parish Meeting. They are two separate entities. Discussion around how to bring constituents to the meeting was robust. One parish hires a hall and sits one councillor at a table dotted around the hall – each councillor has an area of expertise on which they can discuss with constituents. A cup of tea/coffee, cake or biscuit provided to make the event more convivial.

My thoughts are specialist speakers could be asked to make presentations. (Mental health would be an ideal subject which may raise interest).

As most Councillors are aware, but some maybe not, this meeting has its own minutes which is kept separately and can only be approved at the following meeting the next year.

The clerk and I have discussed holding Friday surgeries around the Parish- with clerk, Chair and any councillors who would want to be involved. This could be an excellent way of drawing people to the Council and would follow on from the Annual Parish Meeting event as one way to engage with the people who have elected Councillors to office.

At the time of writing the Government is adhering to its decision to allow face to face meetings to begin again.

Recommendation: That this year's Annual Meeting of the Parish is cancelled due to uncertainty on gatherings with certain restrictions still in place and a lack of time to organise effectively. In September, a small working group of 3 Cllrs, plus the Clerk, begin organising an event for 2022.

The way in which the agenda is set out was also a focus of discussion during the training. Some Parish Councils ask the clerk to the Council to provide a written report of their time spent on various projects throughout the month. The councillors are then kept up to date with their clerks' time management. There was also discussion around asking Borough Councillors to provide written reports before the Parish Council

meetings. Borough Councillors do not sit around the table, they are separate from the Parish Council however some of their work will impact on local issues and therefore those of the Parish Council. We do receive a comprehensive verbal report from one Borough councillor; however, I am aware that we have one Borough councillor who has not provided a written or verbal report for some time.

Recommendation: That Wrockwardine Parish Council ask each Borough Councillor to provide a short, written report to be circulated prior to each meeting before their presentation.

Cllr Mrs E Anderson

Chairwoman

12th April 2021

Appendix 2

SID Statistics April

Location/Direction	From	To	No. over speed limit	Days at location	Daily Average vehicles over	Notes
Wellington Road, Admaston, North Westbound	11/11/20	15/11/20	3,848	4	962	Road re-opened at Allscott
Wellington Road, Admaston, East Bound	16/11/20	29/11/20	3,040	13	234	
The Avenue, Wrockwardine, East Bound	30/11/20	7/12/20	222	7	31	
The Avenue, Wrockwardine, West Bound	8/12/20	21/12/20	143	13	11	
Station Road, Admaston, South West	22/12/20	5/1/21	4,749	15	315	Covers Christmas period
Station Road, Admaston, South West	6/1/21	18/1/21	5,252	13	404	
Station Road, Admaston, South West	19/1/21	3/2/21	3,441	15	229	B4394 closed for 10 days
Shawbirch Road, Admaston, South West	4/2/21	17/2/21	12,394	13	930	