

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BILLINGSLEY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022 AT CHETTON VILLAGE HALL AT 7:30PM**

**Present:** Cllr S Bates (Chairman), Cllr N Gennard, Cllr A Johnson, Cllr S Yates

**In Attendance:** C Maclean (Locum Clerk)

Members of the Public: 1

### **09.01 WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed Councillors and member of the public to the meeting.

### **09.02 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES**

From: Shropshire Cllr R Tindall. Apology noted.

### **09.03 APPOINTMENT OF LOCUM CLERK**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Maclean to the meeting and advised Councillors that he was able to support the Council on a locum basis.

**Proposed by Cllr S Bates, seconded by Cllr S Yates and it was resolved that C Maclean assume the role of Locum Clerk to the Parish Council at an hourly rate of £15.16 with hours to be agreed with the Chairman.**

### **09.04 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

None

### **09.05 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022**

**Proposed by Cllr S Bates, seconded by Cllr A Johnson and it was resolved the Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022 be adopted and that the Chairman sign these as a true record.**

### **09.06 MATTERS ARISING FROM 6<sup>TH</sup> JULY MINUTES**

- (i) Councillors noted a letter of thanks on behalf of the Council was due to be sent to Mr G Morley to express thanks for the work he undertook to tidy up the area surrounding the war memorial. It was understood that the letter had been sent.
- (ii) Councillors noted the planned change of banking arrangements was not currently taking place as the new bank required the Council to have a permanent Clerk in post prior to opening the account.

Councillors considered the possibility of a change in signatories once the transfer proceeds.

### **09.07 REPORTS**

- (i) **County Councillor:** in the absence of Cllr R Tindall Councillors noted that no report had been provided. Councillors agreed that a report in place of his absence would be welcome. The Locum Clerk would contact him to seek these for future meetings where he could not attend.

- (ii) **Chairman:** The Chairman read from a report prepared for the meeting and full details set out in Appendix A.

Councillors noted the retirement of Mrs Reynolds, the previous Clerk and the resignation of Cllr I Smith from the Council. Appreciation was expressed for their respective service to the Council and letters of thanks would be sent on behalf of the Council.

Councillors noted that there is now a dedicated login for the Parish Council to respond to planning applications advised by Shropshire Council.

Councillors noted that amendments had been made in relation to access and use of the Clerk mailbox to facilitate future change. A chair mailbox had also been created and Councillors were requested to advise if they wished a similar setup in relation to their Council related business.

Councillors noted the improvements to the condition of the area surrounding the war memorial. The efforts of Mr A Jones and Mr G Morley were appreciated.

A return had been provided to the Police in relation to the parish priorities under the Community Charter.

Work is underway to register the parish defibrillators with the "Circuit" and for guardians to monitor them to ensure they remained active and available for use when required.

#### **09.08 COUNCILLOR CO-OPTIONS**

- (i) The Chairman welcomed Mrs S Crawford-Thomas to the meeting and invited her to detail her interest in joining the Council. Mrs Crawford-Thomas explained her reasons of interest.  
**Proposed by Cllr S Bates, seconded by A Johnson and it was unanimously resolved to invite Mrs Crawford -Thomas as a Councillor.**

Mrs Crawford-Thomas signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took her place at Council.

- (ii) The Chairman advised that expressions of interest had been provided by Mr A Jones, a resident of the parish, in assuming the vacant role on the Council. Councillors discussed this interest and reasons for joining. Mr Jones had expressed his apologies for absence due to business commitments.

**Proposed by Cllr S Crawford-Thomas, seconded by Cllr N Gennard and it was unanimously resolved to invite Mr A Jones as a Councillor.**

- (iii) Councillors reviewed ward representation and noted the current setup of (i) Cllr S Bates (Billingsley); (ii) Cllr S Crawford-Thomas (Middleton Scriven) (iii) Cllr N Gennard (Glazeley); (iv) Cllr A Johnson (Middleton Scriven (v) Cllr (elect) A Jones (Billingsley); and (vi) Cllr S Yates (Deuxhill).

#### **09.09 FINANCE**

- (i) **Approval of AGAR:** the Locum Clerk advised Councillors that having just received the documentation from the previous Clerk he needed some time to review the detail to enable him to validate the information to Councillors for their consideration.

It was agreed that this item be deferred to the next meeting.

- (ii) **Banking Arrangements:** Councillors noted from the Chairman's report that the proposed transfer would proceed once a permanent Clerk had been put in place. It was planned to open a Treasurer's Account at Lloyds Bank which is currently free of bank charges.

It was agreed that on transfer the new signatories would be any two of Cllr S Bates, Cllr N Gennard or Cllr S Yates.

- (iii) **Payments:** Councillors noted advice from previous Clerk that payments were due in relation to (i) previous Clerk for two salary payments each of £347.00; (ii) previous Clerk administration expenses of £200.00; (iii) N Oliver (lengthsman) of £575.00; and (iv) B Williams (internal auditor) of £65.00. Advice had also been received that the sum of £220.19 was due to Shropshire Council in relation to street lighting.

Councillors agreed that the Locum Clerk seek details from the previous Clerk of the amounts making up the claim for administration expenses. Councillors also agreed that the payment to the lengthsman be deferred until receipt of the latest timesheets. Councillors considered the scope of work being undertaken by the lengthsman and agreed that requirements be better defined in the future.

Councillors noted that in the absence of payment details of the internal auditor, this payment could not currently be made.

Councillors noted that the Council's insurance cover would shortly be due for renewal and it was agreed that the Locum Clerk approach BHIB to identify the premium and saving if the Council entered into a three-year Long-Term Undertaking with the insurers.

Councillors considered the Council's assets which should be considered within the insurance cover. Councillors noted (i) war memorial; (ii) bus shelter; (iii) three defibrillators; (iv) streetlights; (v) litter bin; (vi) four parish noticeboards; and (vii) telephone kiosks.

#### **09.10 PLANNING APPLICATION**

- (i) Councillors considered application 22/03595/FUL and proposal to erect a single storey rear extension at Minehead Bynd Lane Billingsley. No objections were raised.
- (ii) Councillors discussed an application relating to an affordable home in Middleton Scriven. Details awaited from Shropshire Council.
- (iii) Councillors noted the condition of the former Cape of Good Hope pub in Billingsley was creating a risk to the environment. It was further noted that the previous planning consent to the development had expired.
- (iv) Councillors noted that a mobile home had been placed on land adjoining Church Farm House, Deuxhill. Discussion was held on question of planning consents and sanitation and it was agreed the situation be monitored.

#### **09.11 RECRUITMENT OF PARISH CLERK**

Councillors noted that an expression of interest had been received in relation to the role of permanent Clerk.

**Councillors agreed that the arrangement with the Locum Clerk continue in the interim until outstanding matters had been resolved.**

#### **09.12 PRIORITIES FOR NEXT MEETING**

- (i) Key Council documents
- (ii) Appointment of permanent Clerk
- (iii) Bank Account
- (iv) Lengthsman Evaluation
- (v) Budget/Control

- (vi) Training
- (vii) Finance

### **09.13 PARISH MATTERS**

- (i) Cllr S Bates advised Councillors that the litter bin in Billingsley was currently lying on the ground, although it is being emptied. It was agreed that this be referred to Shropshire Council via the FixMyStreet portal.
- (ii) The Locum Clerk advised Councillors that 17 Smartwater kits with an expiry date of July 2022 had been handed over by the previous Clerk. Cllr S Bates advised that she would take possession of these and distribute as appropriate.
- (iii) Cllr A Johnson advised Councillors that the Village Hall Committee had been considering costs of maintaining the hall. Decision had been made that from next year a charge of £10.00 for each booking would be made. Councillors noted this and the cost would be factored into the budget for the next year.
- (iv) Cllr N Gennard expressed his concerns over the dangers in crossing the bridge over the Mor Brook and the B4363 and the conditions faced by drivers especially coming from the direction of Bridgnorth.

### **09.14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Councillors noted the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022.  
Councillors noted Cllr S Bates apologies for absence at that meeting.

The Chairman thanked Councillors for their support over recent months and thereafter declared the meeting closed at 9:15pm.

## **APPENDIX TO THE MINUTES OF BILLINGSLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 7<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022**

### **Chairman's Report for Billingsley Parish Council meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

The past few weeks have seen huge changes for the Parish Council.

In August, Eileen Reynolds retired from the position of clerk to the council. Eileen has been in post for many years and will have seen great changes. I wish to express my own personal thanks for her dedication and work and I am quite sure this is shared by councillors past and present. We all wish her a happy retirement.

August saw another departure, that of Councillor Ivor Smith who has represented the ward of Middleton Scriven for many years. Ivor's views and shrewd advice together with his dedication has been much appreciated by all those who have worked alongside him together with residents of the parish. We thank him and wish him well and trust he will have more time to devote to his hobbies, interests and family.

These departures, together with the existing vacancy in Billingsley mean that the profile of the Parish Council will inevitably change over the coming months. Whilst change can be challenging, it can also be an opportunity and I am confident that once some issues have been resolved the Parish Council will be well prepared for the future.

Lloyds Bank were unable to open an online treasurer’s account until a permanent clerk is in post, therefore this action will have to be deferred for the time being.

A dedicated login has been created for Billingsley Parish Council on the county planning portal. This will allow planning comments to be logged and attributed to the Parish Council; this has not always been the case.

The ‘clerk’ email account has been amended so that it is linked to a mailbox which will make it easier for mail to be redirected when a change in post holder occurs. A similar email account has been created for ‘chair’ for the same purpose. If any councillor wishes to have a Billingsley-pc.gov.uk email account this can now be accommodated.

Further work has been completed on the land surrounding the war memorial; hedges have been cut, unruly shrubs pruned and the grass and path are much neater. A huge thanks goes to Andrew Jones and George Morley for their time and hard work which they have willingly volunteered.

A completed return has been returned to West Mercia Police which identifies the priorities in the parish to be, in order of priority speeding, farm theft and other theft. The information provided on the return was in line with the views of councillors when this matter was discussed in 2021.

An account has been created on the ‘Circuit’ website for the 3 defibrillators in the parish. I am still awaiting a response to ‘populate’ the account with details of the three machines we own and maintain. Dave Lewis continues to monitor the Billingsley machine and submits the required feedback via an app. He has kindly offered to do the same for the Glazeley machine. It is still unclear who is caring for the Middleton Scriven device. Hopefully this is an issue that can be resolved soon as the potential problems of having machines that are not ready for use is an obvious concern.

Sue Bates

September 2022

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Chairman

XX<sup>th</sup> XXXX 2022