

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BILLINGSLEY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4TH JANUARY 2023 AT CHETTON VILLAGE HALL AT 7:30PM

Present: Cllr S Bates (Chairman), Cllr S Crawford-Thomas, Cllr A Johnson, Cllr A Jones, Cllr S Yates

In Attendance: C Maclean (Locum Clerk)

Members of the Public: 2

01.01 WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

01.02 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

From: Cllr N Gennard and Shropshire Cllr R Tindall. Apologies noted.

01.03 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None

01.04 PUBLIC SESSION

Mr H Pitt advised those present that he was behind the application to convert the former colliery buildings on land at Bynd Lane, Billingsley into residential units and outbuildings. He had acquired the land and was aware of the previous applications and reaction from members of the community to those applications.

Mr Pitt advised of his experience in converting buildings of this nature. An extra unit was being included in the application in an attempt to preserve the all buildings on the site. Mr Pitt also advised that he had no desire to retain the land that came with the site and was looking to offer parts of this to prospective purchasers. He was also discussing with the owners of the properties that adjoined the site on transferring parcels of land to protect the rear of their properties and extend the size of their gardens.

Councillors noted that a public right of way passed across the edge of the land and Mr Pitt advised that he had no intention of interfering with this.

The fellow member of the public advised that he was a resident of the parish in one of the adjoining properties. He advised that his concerns with previous applications had been mitigated by Mr Pitt's proposals and approach, which included dialogue with local residents. In light of this, the resident advised that he had no objection to the latest application.

Councillors noted that, to date, no objections had been seen on the planning portal.

Councillors enquired of Mr Pitt his plans with regard to access and its surface. Mr Pitt advised that after due consideration the front splay surface would be tarmac as this reduced noise. Discussions were ongoing with the Ecology team at Shropshire Council on the surface for the remainder.

Councillors expressed their appreciation to Mr Pitt and the parish resident for their views and feedback who expressed their own thanks and left the meeting at 7:58pm.

01.05 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14TH DECEMBER 2022

Proposed by Cllr S Bates, seconded by Cllr A Jones and it was resolved the Minutes of the meeting held on 7th September 2022 be adopted and that the Chairman sign these as a true record.

01.06 MATTERS ARISING FROM 14TH DECEMBER 2022 MINUTES

None raised.

01.07 SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Councillors noted that due to the absence of Cllr R Tindall through illness, no report had been provided.

01.08 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- (i) Cllr S Bates advised Councillors of efforts to clear the tree that had fallen blocking the B4363. Calls to Shropshire Council Highways were not responded to but the situation had been resolved thanks to the efforts of Mr N Oliver, the parish lengthsman. This resulted in the road being cleared within 30 minutes.
Councillors considered that Mr Oliver had gone out of his way to support the parish and agreed that a fee of £80.00 be paid for the call out on receipt of the appropriate invoice.
- (ii) Councillors noted the potential for residents interested in joining the Council and that they may attend future meetings.

01.09 CLERK'S REPORT

- (i) The Locum Clerk noted details provided by the Police in relation to their Community Charter and future update on priorities impacting the parish. Councillors noted the lack of speed checks in the Billingsley area.
- (ii) The Locum Clerk noted that the advertisement for a permanent Clerk had been removed from the SALC website.
- (iii) Councillors noted the ongoing electoral review but no views were expressed.

01.10 CORRESPONDENCE

The Locum Clerk advised that there was no other correspondence to be considered that had not already been covered in the Agenda items and in distribution of bulletins through SALC and NALC.

01.11 ENVIRONMENTAL MAINTENANCE

- (i) **Lengthsman's Duties:** Cllr S Bates advised Councillors that conversations had been held with Mr Oliver resulting in a better understanding of the work undertaken on behalf of the parish. Mr Oliver had advised Cllr Bates of his schedule of works throughout the year, visiting sites and the work to address the maintenance requirements.
Councillors noted the requirement for a second person to attend with Mr Oliver was in recognition of safety matters.
Councillors acknowledged that with no lengthsman and environmental maintenance grant, the parish would be at a loss in terms of maintenance.

Cllr S Bates advised Councillors that Mr Oliver indicated that he had previously raised issues that required the efforts of Shropshire Council to address, but that these had appeared not to have been dealt with.

Councillors noted the lack of a formal contract between the Parish Council and the Lengthsman and that invoices were now being produced in relation to the amounts due. Councillors considered the amounts being paid against the effort shown on the Lengthsman's report.

Cllr S Bates advised Councillors that an offer had been made by Mr Oliver to accompany him on one of his days to experience his workload and environment. Cllr A Jones expressed his interest in joining Cllr Bates.

- (ii) **Environmental Maintenance Grant:** Councillors noted that the grant was available from Shropshire Council for a further year. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council apply for the grant at the full available amount of £1,500.00, match funded by the Parish Council. Councillors also agreed that the current arrangement with Mr Oliver be continued for a further year.

Councillors discussed establishing a more formal arrangement in terms of a potential contract and schedule of works to support the duties undertaken on behalf of the parish.

Proposed by Cllr S Yates, seconded by Cllr S Crawford-Thomas and it was resolved that the Parish Council submit an application to Shropshire Council for the environmental maintenance grant for the amount of £1,500.00.

- (iii) **War Memorial:** Councillors considered the levels of maintenance in relation to the war memorial. It was agreed that greater understanding and agreement in required on the level of support from the Lengthsman compared to volunteers who had recently maintained the grounds. Discussions on this point would be held with the Lengthsman.

Councillors noted that maintenance of the war memorial may not fall within scope of the environmental maintenance grant.

Proposed by Cllr S Bates, seconded by Cllr A Jones and it was resolved that maintenance of the war memorial be continued.

01.12 TRAINING

Councillors noted that SALC continued to provide schedules of the training on offer. Details to be shared to ensure Councillors have opportunity to attend relevant sessions.

Cllr S Bates noted that Chairmanship training be considered as it was appropriate for the Council to appoint a Vice-Chair.

01.13 BUDGET AND PRECEPT REQUIREMENTS FOR 2023/2024

- (i) **Budgetary Requirement for 2023/2024:** The Locum Clerk reviewed with Councillors a revised schedule that he had prepared to assist in the deliberation of the funding requirement for the next year and the amount of Precept that would be required from Shropshire Council.

Cllr A Johnson advised that the Village Hall fee per session would be £20.00 so the annual cost required to be doubled to factor that in.

- (ii) **Precept Requirement for 2023/2024:** On considering the costs provided and the potential for grant and VAT amount recoveries to supplement the Precept, Councillors considered the amount required to provide for the next financial year.

Councillors recognised the challenges being faced and reluctantly accepted that an increase was required, but which should be kept to a minimum. The Precept scenarios presented were each reviewed. Councillors considered amounts between £7,000.00 (current amount) and £8,000.00.

Proposed by Cllr A Jones, seconded by Cllr A Johnson and it was resolved that the Parish Council submit a Precept Request to Shropshire Council for the amount of £7,500.00.

01.14 FINANCIALS

- (i) **Report on Current Finances:** the Locum Clerk advised Councillors on level of funding currently maintained within the bank accounts.
- (ii) **Authorisation of Payment of Costs in Delivering Council Services:** Councillors noted that payments required to be made to the following parties:
- a. B Williams for £65.00
 - b. N Oliver for £575.00
 - c. Shropshire Council (Streetlights) for £220.19
 - d. RTS for £126.00
 - e. RTS for 94.50
 - f. C Maclean for £803.48

Proposed by Cllr S Bates, seconded by Cllr S Crawford-Thomas and it was resolved that the payments be made.

- (iii) **Locum Contract:** Councillors noted that the current arrangement had been made based on verbal agreement. It was agreed that a temporary contract be pulled together between the Parish Council and Locum.

01.15 PLANNING MATTERS

- (i) Councillors considered application 22/05155/FUL and proposal for the conversion of 5 former colliery buildings to provide 3 residential units and 2 ancillary domestic outbuildings: formation of private drive and associated drainage and landscaping works on land at Bynd Lane, Billingsley.

Councillors recalled discussions earlier in the meeting and that no objections had been raised within Shropshire Council's planning portal. No objections had been raised by the parish resident at the meeting.

Councillors recognised the changes in the current application compared to those submitted previously and the ongoing discussions that the applicant was having with members of Shropshire Council. The concerns were considered to have been addressed and no objections were raised.

01.16 PARISH MATTERS

None raised.

01.17 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA

- (i) IT
- (ii) Councillors noted to advise the Locum Clerk of any items required for the next meeting.

01.18 NEXT MEETING DATES

Councillors noted the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 1st March 2023.

The Chairman thanked everybody and thereafter declared the meeting closed at 9:40pm.

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Chairman

1st March 2023

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