

# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MORVILLE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2022 AT MORVILLE VILLAGE HALL AT 7:30PM**

**Present:** Councillors: Cllr G Brown, Cllr R-L Brown, Cllr J Cantrill, Cllr D Gibson, Cllr L Moxon-Jones, Cllr S McDermott (Chairman), Cllr A Pitchers, Cllr G Wilkes, Cllr P Yuille

**In Attendance:** Officer: C Maclean (Locum Clerk)  
Members of the Public: 5

## **03.01 WELCOME**

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

## **03.02 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES**

From: Shropshire Cllr R Tindall (unwell). Apologies accepted.

## **03.03 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

None

## **03.04 PUBLIC SESSION**

Rev Sarah Cawdell advised Councillors of interest in holding a celebration to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee. Current thoughts revolved around a tea-party on the lawn of Morville Hall. It was felt that further interest would be stimulated by participation and leadership of the Parish Council. Councillors discussed the level of support that could be provided. Cllr P Yuille advised that she was happy to provide support to those organising the event. Councillors agreed that a joint committee of interested groups and parties organising the event would be most effective and Cllr D Gibson offered and agreed to represent the Parish Council at that committee.

The question of contingency accommodation was discussed in the event the day was subject to inclement weather and it was agreed that the Village Hall would be provided to hold the event if required.

A resident enquired whether there had been an update on the situation regarding the Acton Arms. Cllr P Yuille advised her understanding that the property had gone back up for sale as the developers who had previously considered options for the site came to the conclusion that development was not viable.

A resident noted the recent substantial increase in the council tax contribution. Cllr S McDermott explained that this had been the result of the increased costs to the Parish Council of the election costs together with continued costs in attempting to fill the remaining vacancies as well as lack of understanding of the previous drop in the Precept amount which appeared to be insufficient to cover Council expenditure. Cllr S McDermott further explained the need to maintain adequate levels of reserves.

A resident enquired whether any consideration should be given to accommodating Ukrainian refugees. Following discussion it was agreed that any requirements would expect to be focused on urban conurbations rather than countryside. Councillors noted that a

reception point had been established at a church in Bridgnorth to receive contributions towards the relief effort.

### **03.05 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2022**

**Proposed by Cllr P Yuille, seconded by Cllr L Moxon-Jones and it was resolved the Minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022 be adopted and that the Chairman sign these as a true record.**

### **03.06 COUNCILLOR VACANCIES**

Cllr S McDermott advised Councillors that a candidate for co-option for the vacancy at Upton Cressett had been expected to attend the meeting but due to personal circumstances was unable to be present. Filling of the position would be deferred to the next meeting.

### **03.07 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

- (i) The Chairman noted the deferral of the filling of the Upton Cressett position and that it would be carried forward to the Council meeting in May.
- (ii) Councillors noted that two vacancies remain on the Council. The position at Morville was expected to be filled through co-option and the position at Aston Eyre would be subject to a further election.
- (iii) Councillors noted the remaining documents held by the previous Clerk had been handed over to the Locum Clerk.
- (iv) The Chairman advised Councillors that archive material had been received which provided some insight into the ownership of the land across from the school. A meeting between representatives of the Parish Council, school and the Diocese was being scheduled for the end of March.
- (v) Councillors noted the training sessions being coordinated by SALC.
- (vi) The Chairman advised Councillors that following circulation of the proposed meeting dates for the remainder of the year the Village Hall had been booked for the meetings to be held on 9<sup>th</sup> May, 16<sup>th</sup> May for the Annual Parish Assembly, 11<sup>th</sup> July, 12<sup>th</sup> September and 14<sup>th</sup> November.
- (vii) The Chairman advised Councillors that further details on the Lengthsman's tasks had been forthcoming. These included litter picking and clearance of drains. Councillors expressed concerns over the lack of knowledge of tasks being undertaken, observation of success levels on completion of the tasks and the contractual arrangements. It was agreed that specific terms and conditions and a formal contract be visible and in place going forward. The Locum Clerk advised Councillors that he would seek details from the team in Shropshire Council.

### **03.08 PARISH CLERK'S REPORT**

- (i) The Locum Clerk advised Councillors of an upcoming virtual briefing session being organised by Shropshire Council on the issue of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This is to be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March at 6pm. This was open to all interested.

- (ii) Following the noting by the Chairman of the handover of further Council documents, the Locum Clerk advised Councillors that he would attempt to fill in the gaps in terms of knowledge and documentation.
- (iii) The Locum Clerk advised Councillors that he had identified the type of defibrillator and pads at Monkhopton and would progress with the order of the replacement pads.
- (iv) The Locum Clerk advised Councillors of the Rural Services Network and that he was forwarding bulletins as he received them via another Parish Council. He would seek to enrol the Parish Council into the Network to enable the bulletins to be received direct.
- (v) The Locum Clerk advised Councillors that he had received an email from the Police promoting the “We Don’t Buy Crime” initiative. It appeared that the Police records were not up to date as the Parish Council and parish had previously been signed up. Smartwater kits had been distributed and public signs erected.
- (vi) Noting the previous comments from the Chairman of the election costs being uncertain at the time of the budget exercise, the Locum Clerk advised Councillors that confirmation had been provided by Shropshire Council that costs totalled £1,515.41. The invoice relating to these costs would be sent in April. Further costs were expected in relation to the ongoing rounds of elections in Aston Eyre.
- (vii) The Locum Clerk advised Councillors that he was checking that there were no further contractual obligations involving the Parish Council.
- (viii) The Locum Clerk advised Councillors that future Agendas and Minutes would be adjusted to better reflect items of discussions and resolution and enhance record keeping.
- (ix) Councillors noted these updates and that there no matters arising from these and the previous minutes.

### **03.09 SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR’S REPORT**

- (i) In the absence of Shropshire Cllr R Tindall from the meeting, Cllr S McDermott advised Councillors that no report had been provided. It was understood that Shropshire Cllr R Tindall was unwell at the current time.

### **03.10 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

- (i) The Locum Clerk advised Councillors that no new applications had been received but that he had reviewed Shropshire Council’s planning portal to identify applications that were still pending consideration by the respective planning officers.
- (ii) A check of the Morville ward identified that application 22/00062/LBC to install an additional conservation rooflight at 1 Morville Barn, Ludlow Road, Morville was shown as awaiting decision. However, advice had been given by Shropshire Council on 8<sup>th</sup> March that this has been granted. Councillors also noted application 21/05318/FUL to change the use of land to camp site with 56 plots, new shower/toilet block, refuse area and septic tank at proposed camp site west of Hurst Farm, Morville was pending consideration.
- (iii) A check of the Aston Eyre ward noted that application 21/02426/LBC to erect a lean-to log store on the north rear elevation affecting a Grade II listed building at The Hayloft, Aston Eyre was awaiting a decision.
- (iv) A check of the Monkhopton ward noted there were two applications under assessment. Application 22/00301/FUL to create vehicular access to include visibility splay and removal

of hedgerow on the proposed development land northeast of 2 Beacon Hill, Monkthopton was pending consideration. Application 21/05789/FUL and the erection of 1no affordable dwelling, detached double garage and formation of new access at land north of Chapel Farm, Lower Netchwood, Monkthopton was awaiting a decision.

- (v) The Locum Clerk also noted that application 21/03967/FUL and the replacement of existing side and rear extensions at The Barn with new oak framed accommodation and enhancement of glazed openings on eastern elevation at The Barn, Underton was awaiting a decision. A check of the portal identified that further drawings had been submitted but these did not appear to be subject to fresh consultation. The Locum Clerk would endeavour to make enquiries with the Planning Officer.

### **03.11 COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT**

- (i) The Locum Clerk noted that whilst he had added this item to the Agenda, he subsequently identified that the latest version of the Code of Conduct was being displayed on the Parish Council website. However, the minutes and resolution to adopt these could not be traced. The Locum Clerk advised Councillors that the document would be submitted to a future Council meeting for formal adoption and resolution.

### **03.12 STANDING ORDERS**

- (i) The Locum Clerk noted the current version of the Standing Orders for the Parish Council was adopted at the Council meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022. Recent advice had been provided through NALC that new procurement thresholds had been established which would require amendments to Clauses 18 f and g. As these are mandatory clauses, formal advice of the revised wording and amounts is awaited.
- (ii) **Councillors noted the review of the Standing Orders as of March 2022 and that updated Orders will be presented to Council on receipt of the revised guidance from NALC.**

### **03.13 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

- (i) The Locum Clerk noted that as the updated Financial Regulations had been sent to Councillors only shortly before the meeting, there had been insufficient time to scrutinise the Clauses. It was agreed that these would be subject to debate at a future meeting.
- (ii) **Councillors noted the review of the Financial Regulations as of March 2022 and that these would be represented to Council for formal review and adoption.**

### **03.14 PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT**

- (i) The Locum Clerk noted that presentation of the Parish Council Risk Assessment to Councillors had not allowed sufficient time to scrutinise the risk factors and mitigation. It was agreed that these would be subject to debate at a future meeting.
- (ii) Councillors noted the need to consider inclusion of terms to address support from volunteers to the Council and mitigation of health and safety factors.
- (iii) **Councillors noted the production of a Parish Council Risk Assessment as of March 2022 and that these would be represented to Council for formal review and adoption.**

### **03.15 LOCAL POLICING COMMUNITY CHARTER**

- (i) The Locum Clerk noted with Councillors the communication from the Police regarding the review of the local policing priorities. These were currently set as (i) thefts from farms; (ii) thefts from outbuildings; and (iii) wildlife crime.
- (ii) Following a review of these priorities Councillors agreed that these remain unchanged.

### **03.16 PARISH COUNCIL LAPTOP**

- (i) The Locum Clerk advised Councillors that following discussions with an IT supplier, a laptop had been identified that would satisfy the requirements of the Parish Council. The Locum Clerk advised Councillors that increased levels of security were required to protect the Council's data and records.
- (ii) Councillors noted that purchase of a laptop together with warranty, security and Office 365 licences, data backup and laptop setup costs would amount to approximately £850 plus VAT.
- (iii) **Proposed by Cllr A Pitchers, seconded by Cllr G Brown and it was resolved unanimously that the Locum Clerk purchase the laptop on behalf of the Parish Council.**

### **03.17 COUNCILLOR EMAILS**

- (i) Councillors noted the paper setting out the risks associated with personal email addresses being used for Parish Council business. The Locum Clerk advised Councillors that to address this risk, separate Councillor emails could be established to create a more secure environment.
- (ii) Councillors noted the cost of these being estimated at £3.00 per Councillor per month. Total estimated annual cost of £432.00 based on full Council representation.
- (iii) **Proposed by Cllr G Wilkes, seconded by Cllr Lesley Moxon-Jones and it was resolved unanimously that separate email addresses be established for Councillors.**

### **03.18 FINANCIAL REPORT**

- (i) The Locum Clerk advised Councillors that he awaited a further statement but there had been no further movement on the account since 3<sup>rd</sup> February. The current balance of £9,449.55 on the Current Account was noted.
- (ii) The Locum Clerk advised Councillors that an invoice for £30.00 had been received from SALC in relation to Councillor training and that advice had been received from the Information Commissioner's Office that the ICO fee of £40.00 was due for payment on 16 April. It was agreed that these be settled as soon as activity could be restarted on the account.
- (iii) Councillors noted that a further payment would be due to the lengthsman and the Locum Clerk would meet with the Chairman to agree the remuneration level of the Locum Clerk.
- (iv) The Locum Clerk advised Councillors that he had planned to establish separate reserves to allow for both general and earmarked expenditure. However, in light of the election expenses being expected in April, the necessity was not seen as a priority. The policy would be reviewed in coming months.

### **03.19 ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY**

- (i) Councillors noted the date set for the Annual Assembly at 16<sup>th</sup> May in the Village Hall. Details would be advertised on the Parish Council website, parish magazine and on Facebook.
- (ii) Councillors agreed that it would be helpful if a representative from the Police attended.
- (iii) Councillors noted that further discussion would be held to agree the format and how to encourage attendance of the parishioners.

### **03.20 INFORMATION ITEMS**

- (i) The Locum Clerk reminded Councillors of the West Midlands Community Flood Resilience Launch Event scheduled for 6<sup>th</sup> April. This would be held via Zoom.
- (ii) Councillors noted the communication from the Green Lane Association making their case for access to byways and unsurfaced roads. Questions were raised over the relevance of their case to the parish.

### **03.21 PARISH MATTERS**

- (i) Cllr J Cantrill noted the restriction of access to the playing fields. Councillors noted the situation should become clearer following the review of the records provided.
- (ii) The upcoming bicycle event was noted and discussions were held on the most suitable arrangements for safe parking. Signs would be put up to assist parking arrangements.
- (iii) Councillors noted that some play equipment would be removed from the playing fields.
- (iv) Councillors noted the promotion by the Clerk at Cressage seeking support towards addressing safety concerns on the A458. Councillors agreed that this was outside scope of the parish.

### **03.22 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

- (i) Locum Clerk to be advised of any items to be added.

### **03.23 NEXT MEETING**

- (i) 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022. Annual General Meeting to be followed by a meeting of Council.

Public meeting closed at 9:40pm.

## **APPENDICES TO THE MINUTES OF MORVILLE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 14<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2022**

### **Appendix A: Chairman's Report for Morville Parish Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

A parishioner has indicated that they would be willing to be co-opted to fill one of our remaining vacancies, for a councillor to represent Upton Cressett – unfortunately they cannot be here tonight but will be invited to the next meeting, in May.

Now that Glyn Wilkes has been elected as a councillor for Acton Round, we have two remaining vacancies, in Morville and in Aston Eyre. The Morville vacancy has been properly advertised, and an election has not been called. We will advertise the vacancy, and seek to co-opt a new member, in the near future.

Unfortunately, once again, no candidate came forward for the election that was called by ten parishioners in November, for Aston Eyre. This means that Shropshire Council are obliged to call yet another election, at a cost to Morville Parish Council of £100. This is a very regrettable situation, over which we have no control. A significant percentage of our increased precept has been budgeted to pay for unnecessary elections, called by the previous Parish Council during the last year.

We have now, after a three-month delay, received essential documents and information from the previous parish clerk. This will prove helpful in our efforts to operate the council effectively, and lawfully.

We have also received some interesting and useful archive material from a previous chairman – this includes records of the historic ownership and transfer of land around Morville school. I will be meeting with representatives of the school and the Diocese of Hereford at the end of March, in an attempt to finally clarify these long-running issues.

The next online training session for councillors is on June 16<sup>th</sup>, and I would encourage any councillors who have not yet done this to take part.

I have booked the Village Hall for our meetings for the remainder of 2022. These dates are all on Monday evenings – May 9<sup>th</sup> (AGM), May 16<sup>th</sup> (Annual Parish Meeting), July 11<sup>th</sup>, September 12<sup>th</sup>, and November 14<sup>th</sup>.

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Chairman

9<sup>th</sup> May 2022