



High Offley Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting Held at 19:30 hours on Thursday 12th August 2021, at Woodseaves Village Hall.

Councillors Present.

E. Halls(Chair); D. Turpin (Vice-Chair); S. Celecia; R. Hockenhull; P. Mason; M. Smith; and Staffordshire County Councillor Mark Winnington (from 19:41), together with the Clerk, S. Ridgewell and one Member of the Public.

Public Open Forum.

A Member of the Public spoke in support of any proposed traffic calming measures and the alleviation of parking issues close to the school and Dicky's Lane.

21/086: To Receive any Apologies and Record any Absences.

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor M. Turvey and Stafford Borough Councillor P. Farrington.

21/087: To Receive and Consider the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting Held on Thursday 8th July 2021.

The minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 8th July 2021, were approved as a true and accurate record.

21/088: To Note any Declarations of Interest.

Councillor Halls declared an interest, as a Parent Governor at Woodseaves C of E Academy, in Agenda item 21/093.

21/089: To Receive an Update on the Post Box at Grub Street.

The Clerk reported that he had been in contact with Diane Firkins at Staffordshire County Council, Highways Department. Diane had stated that she had checked and no contact had been received from the Royal Mail in relation to the post box, contrary to their claim. The Clerk advised council that he had sent yet another email to Royal Mail Customer Services on 6th August, but had not yet received a reply. The Clerk also informed council that he had received a phone call from a Member of the Public asking for information on progress with this matter, which had been duly provided.

Council were unanimously in favour of requesting Councillor Farrington's help again in sending a letter on behalf of the Borough Council to the Royal Mail, seeking a resolution.

Action: The Clerk was asked to make a formal request to Councillor Farrington for such a letter to be sent.

21/090: To Receive an Update on the Speed Signs and Speed Limit on Stafford Road.

The Clerk advised that he had not received any update or notification that the public consultation process had commenced. The Member of Public present, having been given leave to speak by the Chair, stated that, as a local resident, they had received correspondence from the County Council as part of consultation on this subject.

*19:41: Councillor Winnington joined the meeting.

21/091: To Receive an Update Regarding the now Dissolved Woodseaves Pre-School.

Councillor Halls reported that the Pre-School intended to donate a significant amount to High Offley Parish Council. The Clerk stated that he had not, as yet, received any communication from any representative of the Pre-School, regarding what any conditions may be regarding what any conditions may be. As discussion followed concerning what such a donation may be spent on, dependant on anticipated conditions.

Action: Councillor Halls agreed to make contact with a representative of the Pre-School to determine an update.

Action: The Clerk agreed to contact Staffordshire County Council's Highways Department regarding the feasibility of further signage around the school as an option for expenditure.

21/092: To Further Discuss the Grant to the Woodseaves Parent & Toddler Group.

The Clerk advised that he had reviewed the Safeguarding Policy provided by the group and that it warranted amendment before any grant was made.

Action: Councillor Halls agreed to seek contact details for the group for the Clerk to make contact.

21/093: To Receive an Update on the Concept of a Further School Car Park.

An update was not available, regarding the offer of land for sale to High Offley Parish Council, for the provision of additional parking at Woodseaves C of E Academy.

Council discussed the matter at length, during which it was agreed that, should the school want further car parking, then they should speak with the parishioner concerned and that the matter be left between the two parties to negotiate.

Action: Councillor Halls agreed to speak with the school about the matter. If required, the Clerk agreed that he would write a letter, accordingly, to the parishioner concerned to facilitate direct contact with the school.

21/094: To Consider Adoption of Financial Regulations.

Councillors had been sent the draft document in June to allow sufficient time for thorough consideration of the contents. The Regulations had been considered previously at the previous meeting (21/076). Albeit that council voted unanimously to accept the Financial Regulations, requested amendments were not shared, in error. Consequently, the Financial Regulations warranted further consideration.

Resolution: Council voted unanimously to accept the Financial Regulations.

21/095: To Discuss Public Rights of Way Issues, the PRow Group and Consider the PRow Group Terms of Reference.

Councillor Halls stated that meetings were continuing and that there were now around twenty people in the group of volunteers, with some willing to conduct research and minor maintenance. The proposed Terms of Reference had been shared with the group, Councillor Halls said, and no amendments had been suggested.

Resolution: Council voted unanimously to approve the Terms of reference for the PRow Group.

21/096: To Discuss Highway Issues.

a) Possibility of Double White Lines on Stafford Road, at the Junction with Dicky's Lane.

The Clerk reported that he had liaised with Diane Firkins at Staffordshire County Council's Highways Department, who had replied: *"...the nature of the reason for requesting them does not appear to meet with requirements, speed surveys and visibility needs to be a factoring part of providing the marking they also need to be supplied with cats eyes which are expensive to install as they require a specialist contractor to do this work. So, it is most doubtful even if the Parish proposed to fund that this would be agreed due to these reasons."*

b) Correspondence with Knighton Foods Concerning the Low Bridge at Shebdon.

The Clerk reported that he had sent a letter to Knighton Foods and their encouraging reply had previously been shared with councillors. It was clear from subsequent reports, though, that this issue was persisting.

Action: Any Councillors with information regarding vehicles continuing to use the route to the low bridge, to forward the information to the Clerk for follow up.

Action: Council requested that the Clerk liaise with Diane Firkins at Staffordshire County Council's Highways Department and request that the current signage in the area be reviewed before a catastrophic accident occurred.

c) Correspondence with Melanie Langdown at Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership.

The Clerk informed council that he had corresponded with Melanie Langdown and awaited a further reply concerning solutions to the traffic issues (alleged speeding in Woodseaves and contravention of the Weight Restriction on Dickys Lane) that had not, as yet, been forthcoming.

d) The Hedgerow Causing an Apparent Obstruction to the Highway at The Deed, High Offley Road, Woodseaves.

The Clerk informed council that he had made a report to Staffordshire County Council's Highways Department (4251520) and that he had received notification that an Inspector had called at the address to request that the hedge be cut back. Councillors reported that work had indeed taken place at the premises to trim back the hedgerow.

e) Making Reports to Staffordshire County Council Highways.

The Clerk requested that highways issues should be reported by the councillor aware, or made aware of the issue, at the time, to Staffordshire County Council's Highways Department. The Clerk asked that he be updated with the report reference number, so that the matter could be monitored. Information regarding highway issues should not, the Clerk said, be retained solely for report at council meetings. The reason for this is that if matters warrant addressing as they pose a danger of injury to other road users, they need to be reported immediately. It should not be a matter for the Clerk to report highway issues 'second hand' as this presents unwarranted evidential issues, should any such issues subsequently involve any legal action.

21/097: To Consider Finance Matters.

a) Preceding Expenditure.

The Clerk reported that the payments authorised previously had been made in respect of a gift for the auditor; stamps; PRow Maps; Information Commissioner's Office Data Protection fee; BHIB Insurance; Web Domain Name Renewal and training.

21/098: Declarations of Pecuniary Interest.

The Clerk made a further request that any outstanding Declarations of Pecuniary Interest be reviewed forthwith and that both the Borough Council and himself be updated with any necessary changes, or otherwise.

21/099: To Receive and Update on Correspondence Regarding Online Parish Council Meetings.

The Clerk reported that he had sent a letter to both Sir Bill Cash and the Local Government Authority. Whilst he had received a reply from Sir Bill Cash to say the matter was being passed to the minister concerned, he had received no reply from the Local Government Authority.

Councillor Smith reported that he had also sent a letter to Sir Bill Cash and had received a reply from a minister, advising that the question of permitting remote meetings again in the future, was still under consideration.

21/100: To Consider High Offley Parish Council's Involvement in Next Year's Celebration of Her Majesty, The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Options were discussed regarding what form celebrations should take in the parish, including a street party; tree planting, commemorative gift for children and young people in the parish and the construction of a beacon.

Action: Councillor Halls said she would make contact with Woodseaves C of E Academy to determine if they had any suggestions.

21/101: Councillor Email Addresses.

The Clerk advised councillors of the need for dedicated High Offley Parish Council email accounts and outlined the options available for email addresses.

Resolution: The majority of councillors voted in favour of having their email addresses to include their first and last names. There was one abstention.

21/102: To Request Items for the Next Council Meeting Agenda.

In additions to regular items of the Agenda, items were requested concerning the new Parish Vicar; a Public Rights of Way book and Website Accessibility.

21/103: To Confirm the Time and Date of the Next Council Meeting.

Thursday 9th September 2021.

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 21:00 hours.

S. Ridgewell, Clerk to Council. Sunday 29th August 2021.