



Prestbury Parish Council

Minutes of the 9th ordinary meeting of Prestbury Parish Council 2020/21, held remotely at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 13th January 2021,

This meeting was held remotely using teleconferencing facility 'Zoom' because of Covid-19 restrictions and held in accordance with Amendment Regulations to the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (the 2020 Regulations)

Attendance

Members of Prestbury Parish Council

Cllr Keith Podmore
Cllr Lillian Burns
Cllr Danny Franks
Cllr Jon Hallowell
Cllr Valerie Herbert
Cllr Peter Holes
Cllr Marilyn Leather
Cllr Peter Brough
Cllr Denzil Murphy
Cllr Arthur Dicken

Clerk – Mark Wheelton

Members of Cheshire East Council

Cllr Paul Findlow

Members of the public

One member of the public attended to address members in respect of the item on highway issues and left the meeting at 8.05pm.

PPC 20-21 / 266 - Apologies for absence

Cllr Thelma Jackson

PPC 20-21 / 267 - Declarations of interest

None

Signed

Date

PPC 20-21 / 268 - Public Participation

One member of the public attended the meeting to address members in respect of the item on highway issues being experienced by properties in the centre of the village due to both the condition of the carriageway where there are a number of instances of disrepair to the cobbles and also with speeding traffic. These comments were noted by members and actions agreed as minuted at PPC 20-21 / 276

PPC 20-21 / 269 - Council Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of 9th December 2020 were approved Proposed Cllr Leather. Seconded Cllr Dicken. All present at this meeting in favour.

The Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of 30th December 2020 were also approved.

Proposed Cllr Brough. Seconded Cllr Burns. All present at the meeting in favour.

PPC 20-21 / 270 – Councillor Appointment to the Planning Committee

Cllr Peter Brough was appointed as a member of the Planning Committee until the AGM of the Parish Council in May.

Proposed Cllr Leather. Seconded Cllr Podmore. All in favour.

PPC 20-21 / 271 – To discuss the appointment of a Vice Chairman (Finance) for the Parish Council

Cllr Peter Holes was approved in the position of Vice Chairman (Finance) to assist in supporting the new RFO / Assistant Clerk when appointed and to retain an overview of all finances for the Parish Council.

Proposed Cllr Podmore. Seconded Cllr Burns. All in favour.

PPC 20-21 / 272 - Finance

A report from the RFO was tabled and the following points noted:

- Car Park Damage Insurance claim
Two quotes have now been received and a third one is expected. Once received the RFO will progress with the Council's insurers
- December Accounts – all accounts circulated were in order having been reconciled and no further comments were made, the accounts having been checked by Cllrs Podmore & Leather.

Signed

Date

- Payments for authorization – It was noted that during the month there were no requests being sought for credit card payments. As set out in the RFO report the following payments were approved for payment:
 - Neil Townley – 2 x 18ft Christmas trees. £360.00
 - Kings Chambers – QC advice on SADPD. £500.00 plus VAT. £600.00
 - Mark Wheelton – November pay. £716.56
 - HMRC – Tax / NI November. £222.56
 Proposed Cllr Podmore. Seconded Cllr Hallowell. All in favour

PPC 20-21 / 273 – Staffing Issues

- Appointment of an RFO/Assistant Clerk – Cllrs Herbert, Holes and Murphy updated members on progress in appointing a new RFO / Assistant Clerk, referring to their previously circulated recommendation for the role following interviews on 11th January.

Cllr Herbert proposed, following two minor amendments to the role descriptor – “The appointment from the 1st February 2021 of the recommended candidate to the post of RFO / Assistant Clerk at SCP 22 (£14.05 per hour), working an average of 30 hours per month. There will be an entitlement to 30.5hrs annual leave (pro rata based on 22 days full time). This appointment being subject to the receipt of two positive references”
Proposed Cllr Herbert. Seconded Cllr Holes. All in favour.

Cllr Herbert also referred to the previously circulated draft contract of employment, based on that for the clerk and it was agreed that additional legal support was not necessary on this occasion.

Subject to a successful appointment of the approved candidate Cllr Holes requested approval for funding of the necessary office equipment for the new RFO / Clerk as follows:

Proposal 1 – “That approval be given for funding up to £1600.00 for equipment and contracts for use by the new RFO / Assistant Clerk in undertaking their role”
Proposed Cllr Holes. Seconded Cllr Franks. All in favour

Proposal 2 – “If required by the new RFO / Assistant Clerk, that a laptop be purchased by Cllr Holes via bank transfer following checks by two members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee that the transfer is correct”
Proposed Cllr Holes. Seconded Cllr Burns. All in favour.

Signed

Date

Proposal 3 – “That approval be given to Cllr Holes to book the newly appointed staff member on any relevant ChALC finance courses up to the value of £150.00

Proposed Cllr Holes. Seconded Cllr Franks. All in favour.

- Clerk’s probationary period – Cllr Podmore confirmed that he and Cllr Herbert had interviewed the clerk as part of the probationary period required by the contract and having reviewed performance the Parish Council have confirmed his appointment to the post.

PPC 20-21 / 274 - Committees

The minutes of the following meetings were noted. Planning Committee of the 18th November 2020 and 9th December 2020,

PPC 20-21 / 275 –The Bridge Hotel

Cllr Brough updated Members of the issues still being experienced in respect of the operation of the premises. The clerk confirmed that a letter had been sent to Cheshire East Council following the December meeting of the Parish Council to request action be taken. The clerk will circulate the contacts to all members for the officers at Cheshire East for Environmental Health & Licensing Enforcement so that they can be passed on to any residents who wish to contact Cheshire East themselves.

PPC 20-21 / 276 – Current Issues in Prestbury

- Facebook Exercise - Cllr Franks provided members of the results of a recent Facebook exercise he had undertaken asking for key issues in the village. He confirmed that this was not a survey or a consultation, but it had proved useful in that it indicated speeding, the state of footpaths and litter as issues of concern. Members agreed that consideration could now be given to undertaking a more formal consultation with residents as had previously taken place as part of the “Plan for Prestbury”. Members requested this be brought back as an item for the February meeting
- Discussion on speeding of vehicles in the village - Cllr Brough updated members on his previously circulated email on anecdotal comments in respect of speeding on The Village highway and it being a possible future accident spot. This added to the comments from the member of the public who had previously addressed the meeting on the effects of deterioration of the cobbles and other highway issues affecting this section of road.
Cllr Leather confirmed that she has been in discussions with Cheshire East Council in respect of monitoring this issue using “Speed Indicating Devices” but it was emphasized by several members that there are considerable challenges in bringing this forward. The issue of volunteers to undertake this work was also discussed along with the need for a regular agenda item on “Road & Pavements Safety in the Public Realm”

Signed

Date

It was agreed that this item would also be brought back to the February meeting for further consideration.

- Discussions with Cheshire East Council Strategic Highways Service – Members discussed the offer by Cheshire East to discuss options for improving highways and transport in the Prestbury area. Members welcomed the offer but wished to undertake some more formal consultation with residents on the key issues before any meeting takes place. The clerk was requested to draft a response for the Chairman to approve.
- ChALC Speeding Questionnaire – Members agreed that speeding constituted one of the Parish Council’s top three issues and a response be made to ChALC accordingly utilizing the supporting wording previously circulated to members by Cllr Dicken.

PPC 20-21 / 277 – Prestbury Railway Station

Cllr Murphy updated members following a meeting with officers from Network Rail on 17th December 2020. He confirmed there had been some limited progress as a result, including the line marking around the station to be undertaken in March 2021, future consideration around signage on the station and the purchase of bike lockers which will await permission from Northern Rail before they are installed. He confirmed there will be no progress on the waiting rooms as they are not considered essential by Northern Rail apart from if urgent maintenance is required.

A further meeting this time including Rebecca Styles of Northern Rail has been arranged for 28th January 2021 to progress the adoption of the railway station for a future Friends Group formation.

PPC 20-21 / 278 – Bridge Green Car Park

- Repairs following recent car damage - Cllr Holes confirmed that two quotes had been received for repairs to the damage at the car park and a further one was currently expected. He will then progress this with the insurance company
- Making good of original construction defects - Cllr Podmore provided an update from the architects in respect of making good of the original car park construction defects. He confirmed that these would not be detrimental in the short term but due to the cost of making good, that the liquidators would be informed that the retention monies would be withheld and used in the future for ongoing maintenance on the site.

Signed

Date

- Complaints about the car park operation -Members discussed a recent complaint from a resident about receiving a car park fine, along with a range of social media comments concerning its operation. Cllr Franks agreed to draft an item for the Parish Council website which can be referred to in future. Members were requested to supply him with all the details including history, reason for agreed operation and the benefits that it has provided for short term parking in the village. The possibility of additional signage explaining where long stay parking can be found may also be considered.

PPC 20-21 / 279 – Grounds Maintenance / Streetscene

Members confirmed that there had been a considerable improvement recently following works by ANSA to sweep leaves on the highway. Cllr Herbert confirmed that there are still several areas in the village need addressing and she was requested to provide Cllr leather with the details so she can raise with ANSA.

PPC 20-21 / 280 – Police Report

Reports had been received by members for both November & December 2020. It was noticed that the number of burglaries had increased.

PPC 20-21 / 281 – Community Police Fund

Cllr Franks provided members with an update on the opportunities from this fund with grants of up to £1000.00 being available from the main police force for safety improvements. It was suggested that the Parish Council should apply for the money for use at the station. Cllr Burns pointed out that railway stations are the province of the British Transport Police and advised that before time is spent writing a grant application, a check should be made with Cheshire Constabulary whether or not their fund can be used for a railway station.

PPC 20-21 / 282 – Clerk’s Report

Members reviewed a report previously circulated by the clerk and comments were made as follows:

- Correspondence:
SADPD consultation – Cllr Burns reminded members that the MP’s assistant had sent the Parish Council a copy of his response to this consultation. It was agreed by all that it was an excellent submission which made all the key points that needed to be made.
- PPC Policy Review – Cllr Holes confirmed that he will be reviewing the Financial Regulations in respect of updates including on reserves, gifts and authorisations. Cllr Franks confirmed that he is currently in the process of transferring existing policies to the new Parish Council website.

Signed

Date

The meeting finished at 9.50pm

Chairman

Date