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**MINUTES OF TARPORLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD IN THE CRAVEN ROOM, TARPORLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE  
ON MONDAY 13<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2017**

**Parish Council**

Chairman – Cllr Gordon Pearson

Cllr Elaine Chapman

Cllr Gill Clough

Cllr Julie Hall

Cllr Bill Mathers

Cllr John Millington

Cllr Jeremy Mills

Cllr Peter Tavernor

Cllr Andrew Wallace

Clerk – Delia Cox (minute taker)

Clerk – Abigail Webb

**Other**

CWAC Ward Councillor – Eveleigh Moore Dutton

Public - 0

Press - 1

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Nigel Taylor (Work Commitments)

Cllr Richard Statham (absent due to Personal Reasons)

**2. Declaration of Interests**

None.

**3. Public Participation**

None.

**4. Minutes of previous meetings**

**Resolved 17/341** – That the Chairman signs the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 9<sup>th</sup> October 2017 as a true and proper record, subject to the following correction:

P384 – “White House” should read “Wright House”.

The Chairman reviewed several recent action items which were not on the agenda for this meeting:

- Parish Council rota document – the current version is now on Tarporley website. It will be subject to changes, e.g. after the trial of the village walkabout.
- Data Retention policy – research is underway by the Clerk (DC). Cllr Hall and the Ward Councillor offered to assist with material relating to the forthcoming General Data Protection Regulations.
- Letter to businesses re tidy up of frontages – another letter to businesses was felt to be appropriate. The Clerk (AW) also noted that Chester West and Chester Council (CWAC) has powers to investigate inappropriate use of public litter bins and that offences should be reported to them directly.
- Play area repairs – the outstanding requirement for a handyman to undertake ad hoc repairs was discussed. The Clerk (AW) has asked Northwich Town Council for a quote.
- Re-stain benches in Parish Council Cemetery – this work has been agreed with James Blackford but may need to wait until the New Year.

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- Footpath from Forest Road to Park Road – it was noted that this is now in reasonable condition (no further action required at present).
- Roof of bus stop by Chestnut Mound – the Clerk (AW) reported that CWAC advised they do not routinely clean bus stops roofs. She will chase again to see if an exception can be made.
- Bins for Community Centre and Parish Council Cemetery – further work is needed to establish if/how the contracts can be combined and any resulting impact on the TCC grant. The Clerks should give notice on the current contract for the cemetery bin to allow for this eventuality.
- Brook Road Outdoor Play planning application – the Clerk (DC) reported that CWAC advise a decision should be made within the next fortnight.

## **5. Minutes of Working Groups and other meetings**

**Resolved 17/342** – That the Council note the minutes of working groups and other informal meetings as circulated, pages 390 to 401 of the minute book.

Cllr Clough noted that the Lychgate Residents Group wished to postpone further discussion on Lychgate Lane until after the result of the High Street time-limited parking consultation is known.

## **6. Planning**

The Council noted the planning register page 036 as circulated and discussed two new applications that had been received since this document was finalised.

**Resolved 17/343** - That the Council submits the following observations:

17/04806/FUL - First floor rear extension, 32 Eaton Road – No objection

17/04674/OUT - Outline application for the development of a pair of semi-detached houses on the land, Glenshee, The Avenue – Objection, on the grounds listed below:

1. Car parking is non-compliant with the Neighbourhood Plan
2. NEP TEH4 “Away from the High Street, dwellings should have front gardens” – these proposed properties don’t really
3. Over-development of an existing site
4. Now over 300 houses in the Neighbourhood Plan period

## **7. Accounts**

**Resolved 17/344** - That the Council approve the accounts and payments as listed on page 46 of the Cash Book, including the clerks’ extra hours to cover an IT issue in September, but with the following exceptions: Bell Ringers Grant – payment to be deferred until evidence can be provided of the bell-rope purchase (expected in January 2018)

Bowland Ecology – payment to be deferred until clarification can be provided on the mileage costs of £125.10 plus VAT within this invoice.

**Resolved 17/345** - That the Council approve the following additional payments:

Shires (Payroll, month 7) - £20

Talkabout Publishing (Tarporley Talk) - £144

The Council also noted the comments circulated by Cllr Tavernor in advance of the meeting (with the proviso that these are preliminary informal remarks as the Finance Working Group is due to meet later this month):

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Summary of the year to date:

- Precept income at 72k is up but reflects the special charge for Xmas lights coming directly to us. Cemetery income is also up and provides some balance to the Grant income that now declines.
- Overall income to date at 84k is above what we projected/budgeted, even allowing for the special charge now coming to us
- The last month has seen heavier and 'lumpy' expenditure (Grants, Brook Road, SP, half of Xmas lights).
- Despite this, outgoings ytd of total 48k mean our average monthly expenditure is 6k pm over the 8months of this financial year. Importantly this also includes all our grants, and much of the seasonal work. So, if in the remaining 4mths we spend at roughly the same rate (6k pm) we would spend around 24k of the remaining 36k balance for the year, meaning a surplus of up to 12k to go to reserves.
- We do have some one-off payments to come in of course: other half of Xmas lights, other Xmas costs etc. However, 6k pm already has some allowance for any larger invoices.
- Therefore, I think there is a reasonable prospect that we could have around 10k from our income left to help cover project costs on benches/noticeboards/Lychgate.
- If, so this would mean our Balance Bought Forward (Reserves) would remain around 111k (which itself was a little higher than the previous year). Planning to date has been on a simple BBF/Reserves of around 100k, so another 11k+ c.10k does start to become another pot of c.20k for projects when you can perhaps get something achieved.

Finally, Cllr Clough presented the recommendations of the Staffing Committee regarding clerks' mileage allowances. The NJC rates cited in the clerks' contracts are more generous than the standard HMRC rate of 0.45 per mile but would mean that these payments are subject to tax. A simpler system is therefore proposed. A member of the Staffing Committee will check mileage reimbursements before they are presented in the cashbook, based on the following criteria:

- Miles based on AA Routefinder [www.theaa.co.uk](http://www.theaa.co.uk)
- Mileage rate of 45p per mile used (based on current HMRC rate)
- Mileage and parking costs claimed for meetings, training etc at venues outside of Tarporley Parish from home post code
- No claims made for mileage to venues within Tarporley Parish
- Parking costs to have receipts/ tickets attached
- Car-sharing undertaken whenever possible.

**Resolved 17/346** - That the Council approve the clerks' mileage allowance rate based on the HMRC rate (currently 0.45p per hour), subject to claims being submitted in accordance with the adopted criteria.

## **8. Additional Grant Application**

The Council discussed the application from the Allotments for a grant of £300 for a new mower. The application was declined for the following reasons: 1) Current uncertainty over the use and allocation of s106 funding relating to the former Royal British Legion site 2) Uncertainty over whether a mower was the best use of funds given the time of year and other requirements on the site and 3) Concerns re site security for such an expensive piece of equipment.

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**Resolved 17/347** - That the Council decline the grant application from Allotments for a mower and that the Council would await clarification regarding the deployment of the s106 money in regard to the site before making any further decision. The Council also resolved to seek assurances over site security before any future monies for equipment are awarded.

## **9. Former RBL land**

The Chairman provided an update on the former RBL land based on the meeting with Storrar Cowdry solicitors (P399 -401 of the minute book as circulated) and the meeting with Williams Tarr Developments on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017 (notes to be circulated in the minute book for the December 2017 meeting).

Green Vale Construction Ltd have been appointed by Williams Tarr to undertake the work and there are no plans to deviate from any of the conditions in the agreement or in the planning permission. There was some discussion over the timings of the various works and Cllr Millington offered to draft a series of questions on this topic.

Cllr Clough noted that the Allotments and Bowling Club are undertaking work to clarify their legal structures and both are expected to tidy up their sites in advance of the transaction.

The Council then discussed Parish Council signatories for the legal documents (two are required).

**Resolved 17/348** - That the Council designate Cllr Pearson and Cllr Clough as the signatories for the legal documents relating to the former RBL site, with Abigail Webb (Clerk) as a third signatory if they are not available, with the proviso that decisions relating to the site are brought to a full Council meeting.

Finally, the Council discussed Storrar Cowdry's disbursements.

**Resolved 17/349** – That the Council pay £500 on account to Storrar Cowdry for disbursements relating to the legal work concerning the former RBL site.

## **10. Parking**

The Clerk (AW) noted that no information had yet been received from Vanessa Griffiths of CWAC regarding the Parking Strategy Timeline document mentioned in the meeting with her on 10<sup>th</sup> October. The Clerk will continue to follow up on this.

The Chairman noted that the result of the CWAC time limited parking consultation was not yet known. He then gave an update on the Business Parking survey. 78 letters were distributed by the Clerk and 20 responses have been received to date. It was noted that a much higher response rate is required in order to provide useful information. Additional steps will be taken to increase the response rate.

Finally, the Chairman updated the Council on the drop-in session on parking held at the Tarpoley Country Market on 4<sup>th</sup> November. Councillors who attended found this a very difficult session and noted that there should be ground rules for future events of this nature and that they should only go ahead if three councillors are present at any one time. Although done with the best of intentions, the drop-in session provided nothing new of substance since councillors were already aware of the level of frustration and the public perception of car parking issues within the village.

## **11. Christmas Lights**

The Council noted the risk assessment as circulated and a full discussion took place, focused on ways to prevent children and other vulnerable people slipping or falling from the mound. A barrier was discussed at

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length, but the Council concluded that it could become a trip hazard and create more risks than it alleviated. Signage and publicity was seen as the best solution, including a piece in Tarporley News to advise parents not to let their children onto the mound, as well as a ribbon tape and a “no unauthorised access” sign on the steps leading to the mound. Additionally, the Clerk (AW) was also asked to repeat a request for police presence at the event.

The Lighting Up schedule was also discussed. It was noted that the Christmas Lights Working Party would meet to discuss the final arrangements but that there should be at least four marshalls guarding access to the mound plus others for areas such as the grotto and traffic control. It was also noted that Tarporley News has offered to design the carol sheets.

**Resolved 17/350** – That the Council should alleviate risks relating to the Christmas Lights event by prioritising increased use of marshalls and by using publicity and signage to warn users and parents of the dangers of accessing the mound, with the final details to be agreed by the Christmas Lights Working Party. Other participants (Primary School, Decibellas, and the Silver Band) should be advised to do their own risk assessments.

**Resolved 17/351** – That the Council accept the Christmas Lights risk assessment as circulated, with a proviso that clarification should be sought regarding low voltage lights.

Separately, Cllr Wallace noted that volunteers were needed to help put in three Christmas trees on 25<sup>th</sup> November. Cllrs Pearson and Tavernor will assist with this and Cllr Tavernor also volunteered to tidy up the mound the same weekend.

**Resolved 17/352** - That the Council move into Part 2 and ask all members of the press and public to leave the meeting.

## **PART TWO**

### **12. Lengthsman Contract**

The Council noted the contract proposal as circulated and acknowledged the work done by the Village Improvement Group to examine the scope of the work undertaken. There was a general acceptance that the hours in the current contract are not sufficient to provide the level of service required in the village and should therefore be increased. It was also noted that litter picking activities should run along Eaton Road (both sides) from the Spar to Bowmere Road.

The Council discussed the employment status of this contract and felt that further advice should be sought before the contract could be formally renewed.

**Resolved 17/353** – That the Council should seek legal advice on the status of the Lengthsman contract and put the role out to tender if necessary.

### **13. Gritting Contract**

The Council noted the contract as circulated and felt that more work should be undertaken re the scope, organisation and payment schedule before the contract could be formally renewed. It was also felt that the Lengths man and Gritting contracts should be combined if possible.

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It was noted that the same stretch of Eaton Road (Spar to Bowmere Road as noted above) should be part of the gritting programme.

**Resolved 17/354** – That the Council should work on the terms of the gritting contract and also seek legal advice on its status, putting the role out to tender if necessary.

#### **14. Village Noticeboard**

The Council noted a briefing document of costs for village benches and the public noticeboard outside St Helen's Church.

**Resolved 17/355** – That the Council prefers five wooden memorial benches in place of the previously agreed Royal Benches but would accept the views of Cllr Clough and the Clerk (DC) regarding the final order after another site inspection. It was resolved that either five Royal Benches or five wooden benches should be chosen for consistency, rather than a mix of designs.

Various noticeboard designs were considered but those with doors were considered too expensive. Quotes should be sought from joinery companies for an open-fronted wooden noticeboard to replace the existing public noticeboard. It should be of a similar size and design. At the same time, quotes should be sought for replacements for the Parish Council noticeboard and the noticeboard currently used by the school. These should have a similar look and feel but require doors and locks. It was suggested that the existing noticeboard used by the school could be moved to the Parish Council cemetery.

**Meeting closed: 9.32pm**

**Next Parish Council Meeting: Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017, 7pm, Tarpurley Community Centre Craven Room**

**Signed:**

**Dated:**