MINUTES OF A MEETING OF NORLEY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 15th JUNE 2020 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT AT THE MEETING BY VIDEO LINK: Councillors: Deryn O'Connor (Chair), Sally Cornelissen, Ann Crawford, Tony Duff, Ken Fayle, Terry Harvey and Jon Wild

Councillor Gillian Edwards – Ward Councillor – Cheshire West and Chester Council

Gaynor Hawthornthwaite (Clerk)

There was one member of the public in attendance.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
   Apologies were received from Ward Councillors Charles Fifield and Paul Williams and Ian Stockton, Norley Parish Council.
2. **DECLATIONS OF INTERESTS**
   Councillor Cornelissen declared a personal interest in application number 20/1726/273 on the grounds that she knows the developer.
   Councillor Duff declared an interest as a stakeholder in planning application 20/1726/273 as he lives opposite the development site.
3. **PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN FORUM**
   The member of the public was welcomed to the meeting.
   The member of the public mentioned that the road on Ashton Road has now been resurfaced; the white lines, and the 30 mph have all been painted on the road surface.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 20TH MAY 2020**
   These were agreed as a correct record and are to be signed by the Chair.
5. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF NORLEY ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 20TH MAY 2020**
   - 2020/21 Parish Council Meeting Dates are as follows, subject to room availability:
     - Wednesday 2nd September 2020
     - Tuesday 13th October 2020
     - Wednesday 18th November 2020
     - Wednesday 6th January 2021
     - Thursday 11th February 2021
     - Wednesday 17th March 2021
     - Monday 19th April 2021
     - Wednesday 19th May 2021
   - The amendments to the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders had been noted. The updated versions are to be circulated.
     Action – Clerk to circulate the updated versions
   - Councillor O'Connor is in the process of completing an application for grant funding for the Speed Indicator Devices from the Police and Crime Commissioner. The application for funding requires approval from the PCSO. The application process is currently closed and a response is awaited from PCSO Stephen Parr.
     Action – Councillor O'Connor to continue to follow up when the funding application process is available again.
   - Councillor Edwards is continuing to follow up the legacy money and the promised funding for a £1,000 donation for the village from Partner Construction and reported that a cheque is to be sent to the PC.
     Action – Clerk to update Councillor Edwards when the cheque is received.

- Councillor Fifield has continued to follow up the possibility of having bylaws for wild swimming at Hatchmere due to concerns about the behaviour of users and parking in the area. A response is awaited from Cheshire Wildlife Trust who have been liaising with Cheshire Police.
  Action - Cllr Fifield to continue to follow up.
- CW&C have responded to the PC about the report of Japanese Knotweed encroaching on a residential property at West View Road. They have confirmed that the land at the back of the property does not belong to Cheshire West and that the land search advises unadopted. Highways have visited the site; initially in 2019 and again in February 2020. If a decision to treat is taken by the PC, the work will need to be undertaken in September by stem injection. CW&C can provide a price from their contractor or provide the parish council with the appropriate contact details. The PC are awaiting confirmation of the council's stance on unadopted land.
  Action - Clerk to follow up with Councillor Fifield the ownership of the land.
- CW&C have confirmed that the cost to the PC to provide traffic management, remove/patch the "SLOW" markings at the 3 sites (Blakemere Lane/Delamere Road and Ashton Road) and add 30 mph and 40mph roundels in opposite directions will cost £1000. As the 30-mph sign was painted on Ashton Road as part of the resurfacing job, the PC are to ask CW&C for a revised quotation.
  Action – Clerk to request a revised quotation from Steven Bentley.
- **Signs to the Stores**
  The application to complete the licences for the siting of the two fingerpost direction signs to The Stores on the highway has been submitted to CW&C. The PC had agreed that the Signs to the Stores should be green in colour with white or cream writing on. The wording to be included on the sign is to be followed up outside of the meeting.
  Action – Councillor O'Connor to liaise with Mike North at Rock Graphics about the production and installation of the signs.
- The PC has now received the Norley Housing Needs Survey. Martin Bell has completed a report comparing the 2014 and 2019 surveys, which has been sent to Cheshire West and Chester for approval. Once it has been approved, the report will be published on the Parish Council website.
  Action – Councillor O'Connor to circulate the survey and report once it has been finalised.
- **Noticeboard Repair**
  The noticeboard on Blakemere Lane by the Chinese Restaurant is not yet repaired, as there has been some difficulty in obtaining the clear Perspex. Once this has been received the noticeboard will then be repaired. Mike North from Rock Graphics will inform the PC when he has repaired the noticeboard.
- **Norley Sign**
  The Norley sign has now been installed. The PC are to arrange for an 'official' opening once the current restrictions due to COVID-19 are lifted. A plaque commemorating Phil Hough will also be added at that time.
- **Defibrillator Cabinet**
  Councillor O'Connor is to liaise with the electrician about arranging a date for opening up the village Hall to arrange for the installation of the electricity supply and a new electrically heated defibrillator cabinet in a new position.
  Action – Councillor O'Connor to follow up with the electrician and order the cabinet.
- The clerk is continuing to follow up the options for a new computer to carry out the PC work. Councillor Jon Wild has an approximately 2 year old laptop that he does not need. He has very kindly offered it to the Clerk, which was accepted by the Clerk and Parish Councillors. Thanks were given to Councillor Wild for this generous donation.

- **Format of Parish Council meetings**
  It was agreed that the next meeting should be held virtually and that virtual meetings should also be considered for future meeting dates.

6. APPROVAL OF THE AMENDED STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Standing Orders

Suggested amendments for the Standing Orders: To add:

1 a – final paragraph – "In exceptional circumstances Parish Council meetings may take place as videoconferences when so decided by the Chair, and this will be specified in the notice of the meeting. Voting on items requiring a decision will be made by noting which councilors are in favour or not of a particular decision.

Members of the public are asked to contact the Clerk for details about joining virtual meetings."

Action – Clerk to update and circulate the amended Standing Orders.

Financial Regulations

The PC are in the process of completing an application for Internet banking. Once this has been completed, the financial regulations will then be updated.

7. HEDGE CUTTING/FOOTPATHS

The PC will continue to monitor the hedge cutting and footpaths.

The footpath on Norley Road has still not been cleared.

Action – Clerk to follow up the incident number for the clearing of the footpath on Norley Road.

8. QUOTE FOR INSTALLATION OF POSTS FOR SPEED INDICATOR DEVICES

Following the last PC meeting, the Clerk had confirmed with TWM that the quotation provided for the 6 speed indicator devices had been approved by the PC and the decision was not to take out any extended warranty.

TWM do not install the posts and usually subcontract the installation at an additional cost.

Rock Graphics, who are installing 'The Stores' signposts in the village, had been asked to provide a quotation to install the 6 posts. The quotation of £1029.60 for the installation of the 6 posts was approved by the PC.

The proposal for the siting of the devices on Blakemere Lane had been forwarded to the Forestry Commission for approval, as it is believed it would be on Forestry Commission land. The siting of the device on Ashton Road had been forwarded to United Utilities, as it would be close to one of their Pumping Stations. A response has been received from United Utilities who have confirmed that a pressurised sewer runs under the land at this point into the pumping station. In order to protect its assets, United Utilities cannot allow anything to be erected either above or within a 3-metre distance either side of the sewer. Following this response, the PC will look for an alternative location for the speed indicator on Ashton Road.

A response is awaited from the Forestry Commission.

Action – Councillors O'Connor and Harvey to look at an alternative location on Ashton Road.

Action – Clerk to follow up with the Forestry Commission

9. MARKER POSTS ON MARSH LANE

Councillor Edwards reported on an enquiry that she had received from a resident relating to the grass verge near to the highway on Marsh Lane, which cars are driving over. The 2 options that had been followed up related to the installation of kerbstones or marker posts. CW&C have confirmed that they are unable to fund the kerbstones due to the costs involved, but they would allow marker posts. The total cost would be approximately £200-£250. Councillor Edwards confirmed that some funding may available from the members' budget for the marker posts. After considering the proposal, the PC supported this in principle and agreed to assist with the funding of the installation of the marker posts.

Action – Councillor Edwards to send the link to the Members Budget application form to the Clerk.

10. PLANNING

The following applications had been received for consideration since the 20th May 2020 meeting:

- **20/00752/FUL –** Land at Virginia Lodge, Moss Lane, Crowton, Northwich – Excavation of a pond – There were no PC comments.

- **20/01769/S73 –** Greenslade Farm, Norley Road, Norley WA6 6LH: Variation of Condition 2 of 16/03416/FUL (To enable the re-alignment of the internal access to safeguard the existing hedgerow in the interests of landscape character and its importance for ecological value) **–** There were no PC comments.
- **20/01833/FUL –** Griffin Court, Town Farm Lane, Norley WA6 8NG: Front porch, single storey rear extension and loft conversion – Comments to be submitted to the Clerk before 2nd July 2020.
- **20/1726/573 –** Delamere Forest School Blakemere Lane Norley Frodsham WA6 6NP**:** Variation of condition 2 (plans) of planning permission 18/01862/REM **-** Comments to be submitted to the Clerk before 29th June.

Decisions

- **20/00659** - Land at High Street Norley Frodsham: Erection of steel portal framed commercial building and change of use of land - **Refused**.

11. CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk reported on the following:

- Prior to the meeting, the PC had received and considered a report that had been provided from Phil Gifford, the Chair of the Wildlife Group, relating to the cutting of grass verges. Councillor Edwards has been working with the wildlife group recently following the mowing of some verges that were wildflower verges. The Wildlife Group have been asked to provide a list of all the verges which are currently or will in the future be wildflower verges so that Highways can be asked to ensure that they only cut at the appropriate times (dependent on the safety element form a highways perspective). The Councillors supported this request.
- Following an enquiry that had been received about the cutting of the grass in an area between the road and the bungalows at Hambletts Hollow that has not been cut for quite a while, the PC are in the process of establishing whether it is CW&C responsibility to cut this area of grass to ensure that it is maintained in the future.
- Following an enquiry that had been received about the installation of a roadside mirror on a Bridle Way, the PC had followed this up with CW&C Highways. A response is awaited from Public Rights of Way, but it is unlikely that Public Rights would action this request.
- Delamere and Oakmere Parish Council are progressing with their neighbourhood plan.
- The Clerk is in the process of updating the Parish Council Website and had asked Rabbit Digital to provide a quotation for updating the website so that additional parish council information could be added into sub folders. Rabbit Digital estimated that there would be an hours' work (at £35 per hour) to add a new tab, sub folders, photo gallery, back up the database and bring the software up to date and secure. This was approved by the PC.

12. FINANCIAL MATTERS

The PC account balance on the current account as at 1st June 2020 was £60,395.19 and the balance on the Business Reserve Account at 1st April 2020 was £6259.52.

Approval of Accounts and Internal Auditor's Report – 2019/20

The end of year accounts were approved and the internal auditor's report and recommended action items were noted as follows:

- The deposit account interest has now been added to the accounts and the bank Reconciliation has been amended to include the 10 pence interest.
- Section 2 – Accounting Statements for 2019/20 – the rounding up on the Agar annual return has been amended as recommended.
- The Clerk noted that cheque payments should be supported by an invoice voucher and

that records of payments made against supplier invoices should be retained.

- The Risk Assessment should be approved by the Council in each financial year. It was agreed that the Risk Assessment should be reviewed in March each year. **Action – Clerk to add Approval of Risk Assessment to the March 2021 agenda.**
- The fidelity insurance of £25000 does not cover maximum projected cash and bank balances calculated as year end balances (£52251) plus the next precept instalment, which is £65272. The PC agreed that the level of fidelity insurance should be increased to at least £65272 and that the adequacy of fidelity insurance should be assessed annually as part of the annual risk assessment review. **Action – Clerk to notify Zurich Insurance about the increase in the fidelity insurance and to note the adequacy of fidelity insurance should be assessed annually as part of the risk assessment review at the March 2021 meeting.**
- The format of the fixed asset register is very basic and contains no information as to when assets are purchased. The accounts show a £600 payment for a hand-made village sign which if owned by the council is an addition to fixed assets. *The format of the fixed asset register should be expanded to include a column for date of purchase (and disposal). The fixed asset register should be updated for all additions during the year.* **Action – Clerk to update the fixed asset register as recommended and to note as an agenda item for the March 2021 agenda.**

Approval of 2019/20 Annual Audit Return

- Completion of Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20: The PC considered and voted on points 1-8 of the Statement in Section 1, which was approved and will be signed by the Chair and the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer.
- Completion of Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20: The PC considered the Statement in Section 2, which was approved and will be signed by the Chair and the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer.

Approval of Exemption Certificate

After consideration of the Certificate of Exemption, the PC agreed that as the PC annual gross income and annual gross expenditure for 2019/20 did not exceed £25,000 the PC wished to certify themselves as exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Small Authorities) Regulations 2015. The certificate to be signed by the Chair and the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer.

Action – Clerk to notify the External Auditor about the Certificate of Exemption and to publish the 2019/20 Annual Internal Audit Report, Annual Governance Statement, Annual Accounting Statements on the PC website.

Appointment of Auditor for 2020/21

It was agreed that JDH Business Services Limited should be asked to completed Norley PC internal audit for 2019/20.

Action – Clerk to notify JDH Business Services Limited.

The following cheques were approved and are to be signed outside of the meeting:

- Completion of 2019/20 Internal Audit - £241.20 – JDH Business Services Ltd
- Reimbursement - payment of a book of 12 first class stamps – Mrs G Hawthornthwaite - £9.12
- Reimbursement - payment for Zoom PC meeting on 15th June 2020 – Mr K Fayle - £14.39

It was noted that Councillor O'Connor had purchased boxes of disposable gloves (from Just Gloves - £66.80 and HotOffer4U - £47.97, totalling £114.77) to be used by the volunteers at the Stores. The total amount of £114.77 is to be reimbursed to Councillor O'Connor. This money will be deducted from the £2,000 grant money relating to COVID-19 reduction received from CW&C and temporarily paid into the Parish Council account. The new bank account for 'Norley Community Funding Group' is now open and the remainder of the £2,000 is to be paid into it. A cheque for £1,8885.23 was approved for this amount.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following were reported:

- The signage on School Lane has now been actioned.
- The forest car parking sign near to the station is causing some confusion.
  Action – Councillor O'Connor to follow up with the Forestry Commission.
- A noise issue, believed to be scrambling motor bikes, just off Post Office Lane was mentioned.
  Action – Councillor Duff to follow up with Environmental Health.
- There has been no update on the Community Application to register the Tigers Head as a community asset.
  Action – Councillor Wild to follow up with Councillor Edwards.
  A house in Hatchmere is currently having a large garage built and the Parish Council were not sure if planning permission was required and could not recall seeing an application.
  Clerk to check planning application with CW&C.
  Some of the hedges in the villages are becoming overgrown and encroaching onto footpaths. A note is to be put in Norley News reminding people to keep their hedges trimmed.
  Clerk to arrange for note re cutting hedges to be put in Norley News

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is **Monday 27th July at 7 pm.**

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm