

# Warslow and Elkstones Parish Council

## Minutes

The annual meeting of Warslow and Elkstones Parish Council Meeting was held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023 in Warslow Village Hall.

**Present:** Mr N Searston, Mrs L Peach, Mr P Moakes, Mr S Gould, Mrs C Allsop, the clerk, Mrs S Hampson and County Councillor, Mrs G Heath (for part of the meeting).

### Non-Confidential items

#### 23.5.1 Attendance and apologies for absence

The members present completed the attendance register. Mr Gilman was not in attendance due to employment duties.

#### 23.5.2 Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

Chairman: Mr Searston (Prop. SG, Sec PM)

Vice Chairman: Mrs Peach (Prop. NS, Sec SG)

#### 23.5.3 Declaration of acceptance of office of Chairman and councillors

These were duly completed by the Chairman and councillors, before the proper officer, Mrs Hampson

#### 23.5.4 Register of interest of councillors

The clerk had forwarded Register of Interest documents to the councillors in advance of the meeting. These were completed by all present

#### 23.5.5 Declaration of interest of councillors related to the agenda

Mrs Peach declared an interest in an item of account related to Warslow Village Hall insurance.

#### 23.5.6 Minutes of the previous ordinary meeting

The clerk had forwarded the minutes in advance of the meeting and these had been posted on the website.

**Resolved:** to accept the minutes as a true record of proceedings. The minutes were signed by the Chairman, Mr Searston.

#### 23.5.7 Public speaking procedures document

This was available for any members of the public in attendance; however, there were no members of the public in attendance.

#### 23.5.8 Public speaking

See above.

#### 23.5.9 Update from County Councillor, Mrs G Heath

The clerk had requested the attendance of the County Councillor, Mrs Heath due to a lack of response from Staffordshire County Council (SCC) when highway issues have been reported. Cllr. Mrs Heath was supplied with a number of reference numbers related to reported highway problems, some of which have been outstanding for a year. Cllr. Mrs Heath agreed with the clerk that the method of reporting highway issues is time consuming. At present, multiple issues cannot be reported together. She advised that SCC intends to change some ways of working to get to more local people, with more inspectors returning to an 'in house' method. There will be a blitz on pot holes and gullies due to a serious past neglect with a large cash injection of around £80 million. Cllr. Mrs Heath was asked if SCC will adopt the use of 'What 3 words' to specifically identify locations of highway need. Cllr. Mrs Heath was advised that one of the requests not dealt with was the request for a grit bin at the end of the approach to the primary school.

Cllr. Mrs Heath reported that she has access to a small fund which could possibly address this request. She was also advised that piles of grit requested for Elkstones had also failed to arrive.

**Resolved:** Cllr. Mrs Heath to raise with SCC, the issue of outstanding references, outstanding complaint references and whether What 3 words will be adopted for future use and to respond to the clerk accordingly.

**Resolved:** Cllr. Mrs Heath to investigate the possible purchase of a grit bin for use at the end of the school drive.

#### **23.5.10 Casual vacancy notice (for one vacancy on the parish council)**

The clerk had prepared a casual vacancy/co-option notice related to the one vacancy available on the parish council following the recent elections. This has been forwarded to the website and placed on the parish noticeboards. The clerk had received one verbal expression of interest. The closing date for receipt of applications is 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

#### **23.5.11 Accounts for the year ended 31.3.2023**

The accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 had been prepared by the Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer and signed.

**Resolved:** to accept these as an accurate record of the financial transactions during the previous financial year.

#### **23.5.12 Internal audit report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

The accounts and audit documentation had been internally audited in advance of the meeting. There were no matters to bring before the council.

#### **23.5.13 AGAR 2023 annual governance statement**

**Resolved:** Members accepted this document as an accurate record and was subsequently signed by the chairman and responsible finance officer.

#### **23.5.14 AGAR section 2 accounting statement**

**Resolved:** Members accepted this document as an accurate record and was subsequently signed by the chairman and responsible finance officer.

#### **23.5.15 Certificate of exemption for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

**Resolved:** Due to both the income and expenditure figures being less than £25,000, members accepted this document as an accurate record and it was subsequently signed by the chairman and responsible finance officer.

#### **23.5.16 Update on Wayleave**

Mr Moakes advised that there had been no communication from the Land Agent connected to the wayleave.

**Resolved:** to remove the item from future agendas unless contact is made by the Land Agent.

#### **23.5.17 Update of visit to the archive office**

The appointment with the Staffordshire Archivist had been delayed.

#### **23.5.18 Best Kept Village Competition**

It was reported that the lengthsman had carried out mowing prior to a visit from judges connected with the competition. A great deal of hard work had also been carried out by many residents in the parish.

#### **23.5.19 King's Coronation outcome**

As approved at the previous meeting, Mrs Peach brought invoices for two of the bands who had played during the Coronation weekend. Feedback has been amazing regarding the whole programme of events; the

community pulled together and contributed to all the events and tidying up. Thanks were expressed to all of those involved.

### 23.5.20 Planning applications, appeals, planning decisions

New planning applications had been received in advance of the meeting for:

NP/SM/0523/0493 Hole Farm, Elkstones Rear single storey extension

Members discussed the proposal and agreed that this extension will not be visible.

**Resolved:** To support the above proposal.

A certificate of lawful use had been received on NP/SM/0522/0721 Land at Shorecroft, Back Lane, Warslow.

Permission had been granted for NP/SM/0323/033 1 Hope Terrace, Warslow for a first-floor extension over an existing structure.

### 23.5.21 Items of account, clerk, lengthsman and possible grant, wayleave, HMRC, general income and expenditure, Best Kept Village Competition, parish council insurance, Warslow Village Hall insurance

Cq 748 Peak Park Parishes forum	Annual subscription	£12.00
Cq 749 Sandra Hampson	May clerk's salary	£236.34
Cq 750 Sandra Hampson	June clerk's salary	£236.14
Cq 751 HMRC	Quarter 1 income tax	£177.20
*Cq 752 S Billings	Lengthsman's duties	£240.00
Cq 753 Zurich Municipal	Insurance premium 2023-24	£257.60
Cq 754 S Hampson	Premises allowance May & June	£26.00
Cq 755 S Hampson	Mileage and reimb of expenses	£12.90
Cq 756 EMAS Ltd	Internal audit service 22-23	£58.50
Cq 757 Warslow Silver band	Coronation performance	£250.00
Cq 758 Mr A Preston	Coronation performance	£200.00
Cq 759 S Garde	Reimb. Plants for Best Kept Village	£81.40
**Cq 760 Warslow Village Hall	Insurance premium for 2023-2024	£946.46

\* This payment included the cost of weedkiller. The clerk had requested a separate receipt for the weedkiller for VAT purposes but this had not been possible due to purchasing in bulk quantity. The alternative would be to purchase weedkiller exclusively for Warslow and Elkstones but this would present a storage safety issue connected with a hazardous substance. A revised contract had been prepared for the lengthsman in regard to the increase in the hourly rate approved at the previous meeting.

**Resolved:** to lose the VAT element connected with the weedkiller.

\*\* Mrs Peach had declared an interest in the contribution towards the Warslow Village Hall Insurance Premium and left the room during this discussion.

**Resolved:** as the budget provision for a contested election would not be required, to meet the entire cost of Warslow Village Hall's insurance premium for 2023-2024 but to request that in future years, Warslow Village Hall committee to obtain more than one quote for the insurance, to ensure best value has been obtained. This will enable the parish council to reach an informed decision regarding a contribution/full payment of the insurance premium for Warslow Village Hall for 2024-25. Mrs Peach was advised accordingly.

### 23.5.22 Highway issues

Please see item 23.5.9

### **23.5.23 Items for the next agenda**

Agenda items to include: casual vacancy/co-option, burial ground, PCSO, new grit bin, asset register possible disposal of assets, Best Kept Village competition, review of policies, archive. Additional items to be prepared by the clerk, as required.

### **23.5.24 Date and time of next meeting**

Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023. This represents a change to the previously advertised date.

### **Confidential business**

### **23.5.25 The burial ground**

Mr Moakes provided an update on the burial ground developments. It would seem advisable to attempt to meet with personnel from the Diocese, in Warslow either in May/June or at the July parish council meeting. Correspondence received included an item regarding grant funding which could possibly be investigated for the burial ground. Mrs Peach had not been able to find out the number of available spaces remaining in the church yard, prior to the meeting; however, if possible, this figure will be found before the July meeting as this could aid/influence future discussions with the Diocese.

There being no other business, the meeting was declared closed at 8.55 pm.

Mrs S Hampson,  
Clerk to Warslow and Elkstones Parish Council  
20<sup>th</sup> May 2023