

Warslow and Elkstones Parish Council Minutes

A meeting of Warslow and Elkstones Parish Council Meeting was held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday, 24th January 2024 in Warslow Village Hall.

Present: Chairman, Mr N Searston, Mrs L Peach, Mr P Moakes, Mrs J Nash, Mr S Gould, Mr M Wardman and the clerk, Mrs S Hampson. Also in attendance for part of the meeting: District Councillor Kempster and a members of the public, in order to provide information on an agenda item, The Repair Café.

Non-Confidential items

24.1.1 Apologies and attendance register

Apologies had been received in advance from Mrs C Allsop. The members present completed the attendance register

24.1.2 Declaration of interest of councillors related to the agenda

There was no need, by any member present, to record an interest in the register.

24.1.3 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 and noticeboards.

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

24.1.4 Attendance by representative from the Best Kept Village Competition

The representative was not in attendance to provide an update on the competition. Mrs Peach advised she would invite him to attend the meeting in March.

Resolved: to move agenda item 13 to this point in proceedings

24.1.5 Repair Shop

District Councillor Kempster accompanied Mr Jones, Chairman of Moorlands Climate Action. Mr Jones also manages the Repair Café (not repair shop). Repair Cafés originated in Amsterdam to develop social cohesion, incorporating skilled volunteers to offer a repair service for local people. This reduces items going to landfill. The volunteers offer their time for free but donations are welcome. Items previously receiving attention include: bicycles, sewing machines, small electrical items, clocks, computers. Another feature of the repair café is to encourage people to reskill themselves to enable people to attempt to fix some of their own items in the future. The repair café has proved to be very successful in Leek; therefore, rolling out the scheme to rural areas is desirable for both the social aspect and the repair service.

Resolved: Mrs Peach to liaise directly with Mr Jones regarding a mutually convenient date to book the village hall for the purpose of holding a repair café. This will ideally be in a summer month such as June.

Resolved: Mrs Peach to subsequently inform the clerk and council members of the arranged date to enable advertising to take place and articles to be placed in local magazines.

Resolved: Mrs Nash to supply the clerk with contact details of an alternative source to place to informative articles covering the Warslow area.

24.1.6 Public speaking procedures document

This was available for any members of the public in attendance

24.1.7 Public speaking

Please see agenda item 24.1.5.

24.1.8 Update from the County Councillor

County Councillor Mrs G Heath had been invited to attend by the Clerk. Unfortunately, she was committed elsewhere. The clerk had liaised with the County Councillor to chase the clerk's two previous requests for grit for the bin at St Lawrence View (references 4353534 and 4358599).

24.1.9 Precept 2024-2025

Following budget discussions at the November parish council meeting, the clerk had subsequently received the precept form for completion from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC). One of the main objectives of the parish council remains to try to secure additional burial facilities in the village of Warslow and unfortunately, this may require quite a substantial budget.

Resolved: to keep the precept unchanged from the previous financial year at £14,000 representing a 0% increase.

24.1.10 Speedwatch equipment loan

The clerk had requested the contact details from the District Councillor for the local organiser of Speedwatch and subsequently emailed the police personnel concerned. A response had been received in time for the meeting detailing costs of purchasing a speed gun at approximately £500. Training can be provided for at least 4 people. Members discussed a possible source of speeding through the village which can occur when a number of staff finish work from a nearby business.

Resolved: the clerk to make contact with local business to politely request a reminder staff to adhere to speed limits when travelling through Warslow.

24.1.10 Councillor training

The clerk had liaised with the neighbouring parish council once again regarding shared training for three members of the parish council. Unfortunately, the original date had to be postponed until early 2024 due to illness of the training provider. The clerk continues to liaise with the neighbouring clerk regarding this matter and the clerk will continue to forward details of any other training from Staffordshire Parish Councils Association (SPCA).

24.1.11 Website

The clerk had made contact with a potential new website provider to replace the existing website and domain name. The website provider would be prepared to keep the annual hosting charges of the new website the same at £118.15 per year, for 5 years, and the selected domain name was available. The clerk had prepared documentation to populate the new website and had sent this to the councillors, for consideration, in advance of the meeting. The clerk would be able to manage future submissions to the website, at the request of the councillors.

Resolved: To ask the provider to supply examples of different parish council websites which they host to enable councillors to view and consider different styles and to also enquire about archiving material from the existing website.

Resolved: Mr Moakes to provide suitable photographs for the new website covering both Warslow and Elkstones.

24.1.12 Biodiversity

The clerk provided some information to consider in the future which may relate to biodiversity in the parish eg inclusion in future Best Kept Village competitions and liaison with the primary school. Climate action grants become available from 28th February 2024.

24.1.14 Items for the Community Magazine

Resolved: to place an article regarding Speedwatch, the Repair Café and dog fouling.

24.1.15 Planning, appeals, planning decisions

NP/SM/1223/1503 Site address –Hole Farm, Elkstones, Longnor.

Resolved: to support the above application.

24.1.16 Items of account, clerk, lengthsman and possible grant, wayleave, HMRC, general income and expenditure

Cq 778 S Hampson	January and February premises allowance	£52.00
Cq 779 S Hampson	January and February Salary and pay award	£652.07
Cq 780 S Hampson	Mileage, expenses and postage	£10.05
Cq 781 S Billings	Lengthsman duties (14 hours)	£168.00
Cq 782 Webicious	New website	£118.15 (VAT 19.69)
Cq 783L Peach	Reimbursement poppy wreath	£25.00

24.1.17 Highway issues, grit bins and street lighting

The clerk had reported potholes and highway issues raised at the November meeting. A former councillor had also contacted the clerk about further three potholes at Elkstones and had submitted photographs. The clerk had reported these in advance of the meeting along with chasing a request to refill a grit bin at St Lawrence View. On looking at the grit bin maps for Staffordshire County Council (SCC), it would appear that the bin at this location may not belong to SCC and could possibly belong to the housing association. If this is the case, SCC will not refill the bin. Members discussed purchasing additional grit bins and refilling them, without the use of SCC to enable grit bins to be filled more quickly. The clerk advised that SCC would have to be consulted regarding placing new bins to ensure they approve an ‘item in the highway’ and each must be at least 450 mm from the highway.

24.1.18 Correspondence and communication

Details had been forwarded to councillors in advance of the meeting and included: Licensing details, Staffordshire County Council Engagement with Communities survey and possible funding opportunities. SMDC - UKSPF business support and Community/Voluntary Sector Support grants available. West Midlands Ambulance Service experience. Staffordshire energy efficiency project from Dis Cllr Kempster, Grant funding for entrepreneurs setting up in rural areas. Grants to get green schemes going in the Moorlands have ended but hopefully a new round will appear in the Spring. SPCA - Bulletins and access to website, Parkinson audit type training courses.

23.11.22 Items for the next agenda

Website, Speedwatch, biodiversity, grit bins, burial ground. Additional items to be prepared by the clerk, as required.

23.11.23 Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday, 27th March 2024

Confidential business

23.11.24 The burial ground, update on church yard meeting

Mr Searston and Mrs Peach had still been unable to arrange a meeting with the vicar regarding the remaining churchyard burial spaces, due to the illness of the vicar. Mr Moakes had written to a member of the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) to reconsider proposals regarding proximity. Two key features to secure additional facilities include: proving need within a timescale and any archaeological findings. The existing churchyard is not yet closed and remaining capacity needs to be established.

Resolved: Mrs Peach to contact a funeral director whom she believes holds a copy of the church yard burial facilities.

The meeting was declared closed at 9.30 pm.

Mrs S Hampson,
Clerk to Warslow and Elkstones Parish Council
26th January 2024