

Minutes of Tilston Parish Council Meeting held at Tilston War Memorial Hall 2nd November 2023

PRESENT

Councillors Bill Joyce (Chair), Chris Kenny, Ben Hatton, Paul Roberts, Julie Horner, Lynsey Jackson

Non-Parish Councillors CWAC Cllr, Adrian Waddelove
Public

APOLOGIES Not applicable

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

RESOLVED 23/054 That Cllr. Julie Horner had a spousal interest in the co-option of Mr. Russell Horner and as such would leave the meeting when this agenda item was discussed and would take no part in discussion or voting.

COUNCILLOR WADDELOVE REPORT

CWAC Councillor Adrian Waddelove apologised for not being at the last meeting due to a clash of engagements. However, he had sent a report.

There was not a great deal to report since he had last been to Tilston. Regarding the trees at Stanley House, Malpas Road, this matter was now with a Senior Officer of Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cllr. Waddelove was awaiting the outcome of their investigation.

Digital Connectivity was high on Cllr. Waddelove's list of priorities and he was fully aware that Tilston is a "black spot" in terms of digital connectivity. CWAC are also fully aware of this situation. None of the current mobile providers are particularly good and it is up to the digital consultants to explain exactly what is needed and what provision is going to be put in place.

Cllr. Waddelove had responded to a complaint about the footpath at the bottom of Long Lane in Tilston and he hoped this had either been attended to (overgrowth cut back) or was at least in the queue of jobs to be done by CWAC in the coming weeks. As with many councils in the country, Cheshire West and Chester council had budgetary problems at the present time with a projected overspend of some £10.6m. Cllr. Waddelove explained that a voluntary redundancy scheme was in place at the Council together with scrutiny as to where budget savings and cuts can be made.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chair of the Council, Cllr. Bill Joyce explained that it was not possible for the public to enter into lengthy discussion of issues with councillors at this part of the meeting but that all issues raised would be noted by the clerk and a response made in due course either by letter or email and at the following meeting.

A resident asked if it was now the policy of the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee to allow cars to park on the field at the rear of the hall when there are events taking place at the village hall as this had happened recently and which, should it be allowed to continue, would have serious consequences for the condition of the field as well as the likelihood of cars getting stuck in mud on the field. Cllr. Joyce stated that it was categorically not the policy or intention of the Parish Council or the Village Hall Committee to allow cars to park on the field.

A further issue was the discovery of food being left on the field which would exacerbate a rat problem in the area. Cllr. Joyce said that the Parish Council and Village Hall Committee had been made aware of this matter and that the clerk would provide the resident with the response they had received to date.

CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR

RESOLVED 23/055 – That the Council co-opt Russell Horner and that he signs the Acceptance of Office and joins the meeting.

MINUTES

RESOLVED 23/056 – that the Chairman signs, as a correct record the circulated minutes of the Parish Council meeting on the 7th September 2023.

PLANNING

The Council noted the planning register as circulated:

23/02825/FUL – Single storey side extension and single storey rear link extension - The Heathers, Malpas Road, Tilston, SY14 7DR

RESOLVED 23/057 The Council had no objections to this application.

23/03309/S73 – Application to vary condition 2 (approved plans) of planning permission 23/00652/FUL Two storey side extension, part two storey and single storey rear extension. Construction of a new detached carport – School House Farm, Church Road, Tilston, S714 7HB

RESOLVED 23/058 That the Council had not had time to consider this application fully but that they would make a response within the timescale and certainly before November 21st 2023.

ACCOUNTS & PAYMENTS

RESOLVED 23/059– that the Council approve the accounts and payments as circulated on page 47 of the Cash Book and additional payments as below: -

To whom paid	Particulars	Amount
Cllr. Julie Horner	REIM Keys for Hill Field	£13.50
PQR Limited	Shires Payroll	£122.40
TWMH	Room Hire Sep. 2023	£60.00
ChALC	Training	£25.00
Marian Hagan	REIM Suggestion Box	£24.99
Marian Hagan	Clerk's Salary Sep. 2023	£269.30
HMRC	PAYE	£202.00
RBL	Poppy Wreath + Donation	£100.00
Cllr. Julie Horner	REIM Signs for Hill Field	£138.20

Outstanding payments

RESOLVED 23/060 - that the Council pay the following outstanding payments:
Marian Hagan, Clerk, Tilston Parish Council Salary, October 2023, £269.50
Marian Hagan, £39.81 as reimbursement for printer ink and stationary.

Accounting Requirements in Grant Applications

RESOLVED 23/061 – Council agreed the accounting requirements in grant applications from 2024 including adding a request for permission to discuss and publish any accounts submitted as part of the application. Should any group or association request confidentiality, a substantial, valid reason for the request would be required and this would not automatically be accepted.

Arrangements for Setting the Precept 2024-25

RESOLVED 23/062 – Council agreed to discuss the Precept at their next informal meeting in December.

Prior to the meeting in December Council agreed that a notice would be placed in The Reporter local newspaper and a Leaflet produced and published requesting residents to inform the Council via the Clerk's email address of anything they felt deserved the financial support of the Council.

HILL FIELD DEVELOPMENT

Update from Cllr. Julie Horner

The Friends of Hill Field had met on September 27th. The entire field had been cut and the ponds are now visible. Wild flower seeds have been sown and these should be in bloom in the late spring and summer. A Health and Safety Audit which has been completed will take place every three months. The fencing has been removed and safety signs are in place. Following a recent on-site meeting with CWAC Pond Restoration Group and having met all the necessary criteria, the Friends of Hill Field have been informed that the Pond Restoration Group are happy to provide assistance in fully restoring the ponds so that they provide a healthy habitat for the newts known to be in the area. This will be fully funded through Natural England. This support is a very welcome addition although it cannot be undertaken until late summer 2024 when the waters in the ponds should be at their lowest.

Update from Cllr. Paul Roberts

A meeting had taken place recently with representatives of the Probation Service Community Payback Scheme with a view to utilising persons on the scheme to undertake community work on Hill Field. The scheme had been fully explained to Cllrs. Roberts and Horner who were satisfied that this would be a safe and commendable opportunity for all involved. All that was required was to agree access to the toilets in the village hall, the PC Public Liability Schedule to be made available to the Probation Officers and the Memorandum of Understanding to be signed. In the discussion that followed concerns around "undesirable" people being introduced into the Tilston area and given access to the village hall were raised. There was also the issue of who would have a key to the hall for toilet access. Councillors were assured that no workers would be on site when children were using the village hall or grounds. Cllr. Roberts stated that there was no history of offending as a result of this work in other areas and Cllr. Julie Horner offered to be on site at the start and close of each work session on a Thursday when this work would be taking place and would open and close the village hall so that no other person would need to have a key to the hall. It was envisaged that 6 to 8 workers would be on site closely supervised by an officer of the Community Payback Team.

RESOLVED 23/063 Council adopted the Annual Maintenance Plan for the development of Hill Field as drawn up by Cllr. Horner together with associated costs.

Next steps in the Hill Field Development project would be to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the Probation Service Payback Scheme and engage their services as soon as practicable.

HILL FIELD CAR PARK

Update from Cllr. Chris Kenny

Three companies had been asked to give an estimate of costs for the development of the car park but only one had provided a written estimate so far. With some additional work required such as gates, lighting and disabled access the cost would be in the region of £20,000-£25,000.

The matter of the need to provide drainage was discussed as the area is very wet when it rains and tends to pool in the exact spot earmarked for the car park. Cllr. Julie Horner asked that no drainage be placed where there is any likelihood of car park water draining into and contaminating the ponds. Cllr. Kenny suggested that the entire field needed to be drained. He had been advised to see that enough stone was laid at depth to allow the water to drain away but the only way to be sure was to ask for a hole to be dug and to observe what happened with excess water.

RESOLVED 23/064 That the Council agree the Tendering Strategy 2023 drawn up for the proposed car park at the rear of Tilston Village Hall.

Next steps in the TWMH Car Park project would be to contact three architects or planning consultants to quote for the drawing up of plans for the car park. Cllr. Joyce reminded the meeting that the process agreed was that the full cost of building the car park was to be established (this would include plans, survey, building, drainage) and then a decision would be reached as to whether it was a viable project. The car park cannot be funded through existing funds.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Update from Cllr. Lynsey Jackson

As a result of a suggestion from a resident CWAC had surveyed the new footpath to school and concluded there was no need for dog poo bins at each end or along this path. They had not found any evidence of dog poo or bags in this area.

No further suggestions had been received via the Parish Council Suggestion Box placed in the village shop.

It was hoped that the Christmas Letters to Santa would go ahead this year if a resident who had previously undertaken this initiative was willing to do so again.

There was money in the budget to cover the cost of materials.

RESOLVED 23/065 That Council adopt a Community Engagement Strategy 2023 and Social Media Policy 2023 to support Community Engagement in Tilston.

Planned community events in the near future would include the village Christmas Lights switch on Friday, November 24th.

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

Update from Cllr. Bill Joyce

Analysis of the survey undertaken in the summer had shown that peoples' experience of mobile and internet connectivity in Tilston is that it is universally very poor. No one network provider stood out as better than any other. Without "wifi calling" mobile phones in Tilston would almost be redundant and that the information that network providers state regarding mobile signal strengths in Tilston does not bear up to the evidence of the findings.

The findings had been forwarded to Mike Dugine, CWAC Digital Sector Specialist. He had responded quickly pointing out he was looking at asking consultants to help with the increase in coverage necessary across the region and would report back when he understood a way forward for the residents of Tilston.

The Parish Council will continue to act as a pressure group in the matter of internet and mobile connectivity with the next step being to contact Ofcom regarding this issue.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Cllr. Roberts leading on Traffic Management for the Parish Council asked if the concerns around speeding traffic on Malpas Road was a perception or a reality. Certainly the data suggests most traffic is within legal limits. The new path should be reducing traffic and Cllr. Roberts felt it needed to be given a chance to see if there was a genuine reduction in traffic and speed.

The crossroads at the Carden Arms had been raised in previous meetings as a potential accident black spot due to motorists not adhering to the "Give Way" signs. Traffic Speeds on Church Road have also been raised with motorists not adhering to the 20mph limit in this area.

RESOLVED 23/066 That the Clerk request the re-painting of lines at the Crossroads by the Carden Arms in Tilston village and requests the Speed Gun from the clerk at Farndon Parish Council so that it can be used to acquire evidence of traffic speeds on Church Road.

WELCOME SPACES

The application process for funding for Warm, Welcome Spaces from Cheshire Community Action had still not opened so the initiative due to start at the Carden Arms from the beginning of November had been put on hold. Discussion took place around need and uptake of this facility in Tilston and whether it was necessary to wait for funding.

RESOLVED 23/067 Council to provide a budget of £500 for refreshments at the village Welcome Space to be opened at the Carden Arms from 10.30-14.00hrs. each Tuesday starting 7th November 2023.

COMPLAINTS' PROCEDURE

RESOLVED 23/068 Council adopted the Complaints' Procedure 2023

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A resident felt that the awarding of grants should always be open to the public and discussed in open forum. It was very important that this process should be transparent.

Another resident spoke of his experience with probation workers which had not been very good and had resulted in them being asked to leave the place of work permanently.

A member of the Parish Council raised a concern regarding the condition of one of the hedges on Malpas Road and asked that the clerk contact the owners of the property in this vicinity to ascertain if the hedge belonged to them and if so, could they make arrangements to have it cut as it is impeding access along the footpath.

RESOLVED 23/069 -That the public leave the meeting and councillors and clerk move to Part B of the agenda

PART B

SMALL GRANT APPLICATIONS

Following a further request Council had received the accounts of TPFA in compliance with due process in the matter of grant applications and awarding of funding.

RESOLVED 23/070 – Tilston Parish Council to grant £1100.00 funding to Tilston Playing Field Association towards the cost of the group’s annual Insurance and draw the attention of the Association to the new criteria for funding from 2024.

SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

RESOLVED 23/071 – That a Certificate be awarded to two long serving councillors in recognition of their service to the community of Tilston.

Signed

Dated

The Meeting closed at 21.00

**The next PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
will be on Thursday January 11th 2024 7.00pm**

Tilston Parish Council

This page has been left intentionally blank.

DRAFT