



"Not for self"

Oswestry Rural Parish Council

Minutes

of the Annual General Meeting

held at 7.30 pm on Thursday 23 May 2024 at Trefonen Village Hall

Present:

Cllr Martin Bennett, Cllr Peter Richardson, Cllr Steve Watts, Cllr Mike Weston, Cllr Bob Kimber, Cllr Paul Milner, Cllr Jaz Singh, Cllr Richard Fowler

Clerk to the Council:

Kathryn Lloyd

In attendance:

Approximately five members of the public
Cllr Joyce Barrow

1955 Election of Chairman

In pursuance of the LGA 1972 S15(1)(2) nominations were sought for the election of the Chairman for the ensuing Council year.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that Cllr Peter Richardson be elected as Chairman.

1956 Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The newly elected Chairman, Cllr Peter Richardson signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

1957 Election of Deputy Chairman

In pursuance of the LGA 1972 S15(6) nominations were sought for the election of the Deputy Chairman for the ensuing Council year.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for Cllr Martin Bennett be elected as Deputy (Vice) Chairman for the ensuing Council year.

1958 Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The newly elected Deputy Chairman, Cllr Martin Bennett signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

1959 Apologies

Apologies were received from the following:

Cllr Martin Jones
Cllr William Jones
Cllr Iain Campbell
Cllr Chris Woods

1960 Police Report

a) Cllr Peter Richardson confirm there was no Police representative and read the latest Police report provided by Oswestry Rural South Safer Neighbourhood Team.

Community priorities:

1. Speeding
2. None currently provided
3. None currently provided

Priority 1. Speeding -

- *Speed enforcement and monitoring is still being conducted on Trefonen road.*
- *High visibility presence is continuing in the area when possible.*
- *Officers have attended local car meetings and spoken with attendees in regard to safe road use, offering advice and ensuring their vehicles are up to standard.*
- *Officers will be attending a further car meeting this evening and speed enforcement and monitoring is also being conducted today.*

Priority 2- N/A

Priority 3 - N/A

Emerging trends - Requests for information - other.

Please continue to provide information regarding your current priorities.

The Parish priorities for July-September 2024 will be required soon. Please discuss this with the Councillors and have an idea of what your priorities are ready for the new quarter.

The way in which Parish reports will now be completed is changing. Data relating to all crimes/calls in the area will no longer be provided, reports will, as of now, be based solely on the Council set priorities as per the policing charter. If you wish for data and or statistics, they can be obtained via www.police.uk.

Emails will be sent out within the next week or so regarding the Parish priorities for the next quarter (July-September), if you wish to continue to receive monthly reports, please ensure you continue to engage with the policing charter process and provide your 3 priorities.

Members **NOTED** the new format of the report where statistics will no longer be provided.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to send members disappointment for the new dispensation to the Police Crimes Commissioner.

1961 Shropshire Council Report

Cllr Joyce Barrow congratulated Cllr Martin Bennett in his year as Chairman to the Parish Council and wished Cllr Peter Richardson all the best in his new role.

The following report was read:

Becoming a financially sustainable council In Shropshire.

Our budget cannot meet demand for many of our services and we cannot continue the way we have in the past. The situation is even more acute for reasons unique to our county. 25.7% of Shropshire's population is aged 65 and over, in England the average is only 18.6%, By 2043 this gap is forecast to grow. We have seen a growth in children looked after. This has increased by more than 80% since 2020.

As you know, Shropshire is the largest inland county in England and sparsely populated. We have less than one person per hectare compared to the national average of more than 4. Travel and fuel costs make services more expensive to deliver.

Around 77% of our budget is spent on social care. This includes looking after people who are older or have learning difficulties; and looking after children and families, including children in care, safeguarding, fostering; education; and those with special educational needs and disabilities. We expect that figure to increase more as demand for social care continues to grow, meaning there is even less to pay other services. In the last year, we have already saved £41.3m but this is not enough. We must do more 2024/25. By law we must deliver a balanced budget and cannot spend more than is available.

So, what are we doing to make ourselves a more sustainable organisation?

We are looking at everything we possibly can to reduce spend and become a financially sustainable organisation and deliver a balanced lawful budget.

During 2023/24, we have made the highest amount of saving we have ever made in a year, currently standing at £41.3m, however, there is now much more we need to do. We need to cut our spending by another £62 million next year. We must review every aspect of the council, what we must deliver and why certain services exist in their current state.

Some of these services are statutory, which means we have a legal duty to provide them. Our budget plans will prioritise these as we focus on finding new ways to deliver these as efficiently as we can. Some of the services we provide are discretionary, which means they are not services we must provide but choose to, because they benefit the people of Shropshire. This means we will be taking some difficult and extremely tough decisions, that we know will affect a great many people and communities in Shropshire. It means we will become a much smaller organisation with fewer staff. We don't want to do this, we have no choice.

If anyone wants to go, there is a meet the leader session at Whittington Castle on Thursday 30th May 10am until 12noon. No appointment is necessary.

You may be aware of complaints to do with a cross border issue with motor bikes at Nant Mawr quarry. Shropshire council officers in highways and planning have been dealing with this. The Planning Authority is Powys Council who gave permission to a farmer, to hold events on his land. The highway to the event is Shropshire Council's. Shropshire residents are having issues with parking but more importantly with noise. Keiron Smith is the officer in environmental health, so is leading on this and has asked for residents to contact him. Keiron is speaking with his counterpart Dan in Powys Council, so they are in communication. I have communicated this to a number of residents, who have contacted me direct.

Trefonen councillors, will be aware of a fly tipping incident on Little London Lane, in Trefonen last week. A vast amount of mixed rubbish was dumped from a flatbed vehicle, 7 o'clock at night. This was very distressing for residents as you can imagine. Shropshire Council was quick to clear the mess and within two days it had been cleared up. We have some film footage from the Shop/post office showing a flatbed truck with tarpaulin over it and the time it went passed. A resident on Little London Lane also has footage of the vehicle. It is uncertain at the moment, if the registration can be seen clearly. Some of the rubbish was collected for evidence, but it seems to be from areas of Lancashire/Birmingham, and I am told it looks like someone has cleared out a commercial garage. Officers will be looking at the evidence and hopefully will be able to identify the culprits and fine them. If you would like more information about Shropshire Council services, please visit our website or sign up for email

A press release has been withheld due to the announcement of the General Election.

1962 Co-option Application – Morda & Sweeney Ward

Cllr Peter Richardson invited Mr Richard Fowler to present himself to members and explain why he feels he will be an asset to the Council. Mr Fowler provided members with a brief overview of his life, experience and involvement in another local community including working with a Parish Council. He is a committed and hardworking individual and has been recognised for his work with a British Empire medal in this year's New Years Honours. Cllr Peter Richardson advised the meetings of the Parish Council take place on the last Thursday of each month except for August and asked if he would have sufficient time to devote to the work of the Council.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to elect Mr Richard Fowler to the role of Councillor for the Morda & Sweeney Ward. Cllr Peter Richardson invited Cllr Richard Fowler to sign the acceptance of office declaration and to take his place with the other members of Council.

Cllr Peter Richardson advised members of the public present there are still vacancies for Sychtyn and Trefonen ward .

1963 Public Participation

A resident from Maesbury Marsh raised concerns with uninsured / untaxed vehicle dumping / flying tipping outside of her property. This has been ongoing for the past four years. There has been numerous altercations, and some residents feel intimidated by the person responsible. She has spoken with the neighbour directly and kept him informed of all her actions. She has safety issues with firewood being dumped within her neighbour's front garden. Cllr Peter Richardson advised he had read her very detailed email earlier and asked if she was responsible for the reporting of abandoned vehicles on the Shropshire Council Fix my street portal. He advised he had also reported this matter and a member of the parish Council will be submitting a planning enforcement complaint to Shropshire Council regarding the new structure and illegal second access. The Clerk advised a response had been received from Shropshire Council having been forwarded on by Cllr Joyce Barrow. Cllr Martin Bennett noted the owner had refused permission for an Officer to gain access to the property. He suggested writing to Shropshire Council to raise environmental concerns and that this could be one of the priorities the police can take note of with regards to anti-social behaviour. **ACTION : To be placed an agenda item for the June 2024 meeting.**

1964 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 27 April 2024 were considered for approval.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the minutes be APPROVED and ADOPTED as a true record. There was one abstention.

1965 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

In accordance with Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 Members were informed they are personally responsible for deciding whether they should disclose an interest at this meeting. Members were also reminded they should not make decisions with a closed mind and must declare a bias and not vote on matters where their decision could be pre-determined.

None declared

1966 Dispensations

None requested.

1967 Declarations of Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality

None Declared

1968 Committees/Working Groups

Members considered membership of the following committees:

a) Personnel Committee

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for the current members of Cllr Jaz Singh, Cllr Martin Bennett, Cllr Peter Richardson and Bob Kimber to remain

b) Road Safety Working Group

Members **NOTED** that former Councillors Roger Jones and Peter Davies had been members of this committee. There were no volunteers to join the group and members felt it was sufficiently represented.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for current members, Cllr Bob Kimber, Cllr Martin Bennett and Cllr Steve Watts to remain.

c) Cemetery Working Group

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for the current members Steve Watts, Mike Weston and Chris Woods to remain

d) Environment Working Group (EWG)

Members **AGREED** for Cllr Richard Fowler to be appointed as a member of the EWG .

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for Cllr Iain Campbell, Cllr Mike West, Cllr Bob Kimber , Cllr Martin Jones to remain with the addition of Cllr Richard Fowler.

e) Finance Committee

It was PROPOSED and SECONDED to AGREED for the current members, Cllr Peter Richardson, Cllr Martin Bennett, Cllr Bob Kimber and Cllr William Jones to remain.

1969 Representatives on Outside Bodies – Oswestry Area Committee

Cllr Martin Bennett advised members he is the current Chairman of the Oswestry Area Committee and was happy to continue in this capacity. Cllr Peter Richardson stated he was a representative on this committee and happy to continue in this role.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for Cllr Martin Bennett and Cllr Peter Richardson to remain as the Parish Council representatives on the Oswestry Area Committee.

1970 Policies/Terms of Reference

Cllr Peter Richardson advised members the Clerk had requested items a – h be deferred until the June Meeting. This is to allow the Finance Committee the opportunity to review the document and propose any changes.

- a) Financial Regulations
- b) Standing Orders
- c) Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee
- d) Terms of Reference for the Road Safety Working Group
- e) Terms of Reference for the Cemetery Working Group
- f) Terms of Reference for the Environment Working Group
- g) Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee
- h) Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment (to NOTE this was carried out in April 2024)

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to defer items a – h until the June 2024 meeting.

- i) Members **AGREED** the annual Parish Council subscription to SALC at a cost of £1,658.98.
- j) Members **NOTED** the appointment of the Internal Auditor for 2024/25 financial year which was agreed in 2023.

1971 Schedule of Future Meetings

Members considered a schedule of future dates of meetings and venues for 2024/25. The Clerk advised that Cllr Iain Campbell has agreed for Canal Central to be used for a meeting .

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for the schedule of future meetings and venues be APPROVED as presented subject to confirmation of the use of Canal Central for July 2024 or April 2025.

DATE	VENUE
2024	
27 June	Rhydycroesau Village Hall
25 July	Canal Central, Maesbury
August	N/A
26 September	Rhydycroesau Village Hall
31 October	Trefonen Village Hall
28 November	Trefonen Village Hall
28 November	Trefonen Village Hall
19 December	Trefonen Village Hall
2025	
30 January	Trefonen Village Hall
27 February	Trefonen Village Hall
27 March	Trefonen Village Hall
24 April	Trefonen Village Hall
*29 May (Annual Parish and Annual General)	Trefonen Village Hall

1972

a) Planning Matters

The following planning decisions were **NOTED**

Planning Application Details	Planning Proposals
24/00987/LBC Woodhill, Woodhill, Trefonen, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 9AS	Minor internal and external works to upgrade bathrooms, rooflights, soil pipe etc on a Grade II building Decision: Grant Permission

b) Planning Applications

The following planning applications were considered for comment:

Planning Application Details	Planning Proposals
24/01481/FUL The Firs, Ball Lane, Maesbury, Oswestry, Shropshire	Side extension Cllr Peter Richardson expressed his thoughts that the proposed build was too large, and that Shropshire Council may state it is out scale and proportion. It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED not to comment.

NOTE: Planning applications not listed above that are received after the issue of this agenda and included on Shropshire Council's website will also be considered to meet response timeframes.

c) Members **NOTED** the Notice and Provisional Order for the Shropshire Council (Land at Morda Bank and Glentworth, Morda) TPO 2024 (Ref: SC/00520/24). To replace TPO 1990 (Ref: OS/00025/90) which is no longer in effect.

1973 Clerk's Report

Members **NOTED** a written report from the Clerk on action taken following decisions made at previous council meetings. Members **AGREED** for all completed items to be removed.

1974 Financial Matters

Members considered for approval income and expenditure for April 2024 and I & E Balances to date.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the income and expenditure to 30 April 2024 and the balance of income received to date of £48,891.46 and gross expenditure to date of £20,662.52 be APPROVED.

b) Bank Reconciliation

Members considered for approval the bank reconciliation at 30 April 2024.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the bank reconciliation statement to the 30 April 2024 be APPROVED.

c) Payments for May 2024

Members considered the provisional payments for May 2024.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the provisional payments for May 2024 be approved as follows:

Supplier	Details	Gross £
EE	Mobile charges	16.59
HSBC	Bank charges - 30/03/2024 - 29/04/2024	10.50
Mark Evans	Bus shelter Cleaning May 2024	60.00
Colin Turner	Bus shelter Cleaning May 2024	25.00
A G Royce	Grounds Maintenance Works - 11 April 2024 and 25/04/2024	804.00
K Lloyd - The Clerk	Clerk's pay and allowances May 2024	1,520.97
HMRC	PAYE / NI Clerk Pay May 2024	273.16
Printerland co uk	Xerox High Capacity Toner Pack	351.35
Llanyblodwel Parish Council	Donation towards maintenance for Morton Churchyard	581.00
Highline Electrical Ltd	Partial Remedial works - Feeder Pillar, 27 Pole brackets and 3 columns	10,542.84
K Lloyd - The Clerk	Reimbursement - Postage for agendas and associated papers May 2024 (provisional)	41.70
SALC	ALC Affiliation Fees 1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025 - Estimated	1,958.16
Total		16,185.27

d) Llanyblodwel Grant £581 (Moreton Cemetery)

Members considered the annual grant for Moreton Cemetery.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for the annual grant of £581 be paid to Llanyblodwel Parish Council as a contribution towards the maintenance of Moreton Churchyard.

e)Members considered a request from the Defibrillator co-ordinator Val Smout for a contribution towards replacement battery / pads at Trefonen Village Hall and Shop (June 2024). This will not exceed £184.20.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to make a contribution for the costs of the battery / pads not exceeding £184.20.

1975 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24

Cllr Peter Richardson advised members the internal audit of the accounts for 2023/24 had not yet been completed. He proposed to defer items a – c which included the Annual Governance and Accounting Statement for 2023/24.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for items a – c to be deferred until the June 2024 meeting.

1976 Energy Provider

Cllr Peter Richardson advised members that Scottish Power had advised it would no longer support unmetered street lighting for the Parish Council. The Clerk has received a quote from Shropshire Council Joint Energy scheme at an annual cost of £1,857.52 plus VAT to take over this supply. He advised the annual cost was less than half of the current charge and was difficult not to accept. The Clerk advised the lighting inventory would require updating with grid references. Cllr Peter Richardson felt ‘What three words’ would be better and more accurate and was willing to undertake this task. Members **AGREED** not to seek two other alternative quotes.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to join the Shropshire Council Joint Energy Scheme for the supply of the Parish Council street lighting. The Clerk will check with Shropshire Council to determine if What three words is acceptable.

1977 The Tonys’ Community Service Award 2024

Cllr Peter Richardson advised members that to date, no nominations had been received. He encouraged councillors to find people within in their wards who have done outstanding service for their community and put them forward. The award scheme will remain open.

1978 Road Safety Working Group

Members **AGREED** to defer items a – b until the June 2024 meeting

1979 Cemetery Working Group

Cllr Mike Weston advised members no report was to be received from the Cemetery Working Group.

He asked members to **NOTE** that arrangements have been made to cover the cemetery administration in the absence of the Clerk (27 May to 2 June 2024).

1980 Environment Working Group

a & b) Cllr Peter Richardson proposed that due to no members of the Environmental Group being present items a –b be deferred until the June 2024 meeting. Members **AGREED** to this proposal.

c)Frankton Vyrnwy Connection

Cllr Peter Richardson advised members of the ‘Frankton Vyrnwy Pylon Corridor Facebook page’ (FVPCFP) noting a posting of a letter from Craig Williams MP for Montgomeryshire to the Chairman of Bute Energy. Craig Williams MP, has stated his disappointment with a meeting with the CEO of Green Gen and Senior Executive. Pointing out the company does not have an Independent Distribution Network Operators License (IDNO), cannot demand access to land or issue 172 notices. He has requested a meeting with the CEO and copied in the Office of Off Gem and Minster for Energy, Security and Net Zero. Cllr Peter Richardson followed another link to a Wind Farm Group in Mid Wales called “Stop Bute Energy” referring to a letter from Faye Jones MP to Green Gen. He recommended members join the FVPCFP group.

c)PROW – Land North of Maesbury Wharf

Cllr Peter Richardson advised members that a resident had spoken to the landowner of the PROW on land north of Maesbury Wharf who was planning to remove the finger post until being informed this would be criminal offence. The makeshift style has now been changed for a metal gate. This matter has been reported to the PROW at Shropshire Council and is being responded to positively.

1981 Consultation

Cllr Peter Richardson advised members of the following consultations:

Shropshire Local Plan Examination: Further Consultation Focusing on Additional Material Prepared in Response to the Planning Inspectors Interim Findings - 25th April 2024 until 11th June 2024 and to consult on the following documents:

- The future of its Empty Homes function - 24 April 2024 until 26 May 2024
- Proposed draft policy on Housing Provision for Older People and those with Disabilities and Special Needs and its explanation
- Updated Additional Sustainability Appraisal of the Draft Shropshire Local Plan Report
- Updated Housing and Employment Topic Paper
- Update Green Belt Topic Paper

Cllr Martin Bennett advised members he had spent time reviewing the consultation documents and commented that Shropshire Council should consider the number of policy documents being sent and the language being used. Some documents related to a myriad of other policy documents and in some areas a policy clashed with another. Some of these documents were 100’s of pages in length. He thought Shropshire Council should rethink its approach and for Officers of the Council to use plain English. Cllr Peter Richardson thanked Cllr Martin Bennet for the many hours spent on this and in his capacity as Chairman. He hoped he would continue to do this in his role as Vice Chairman as his work has been invaluable.

1982 Correspondence

a)Cllr Peter Richardson advised members a request had been received for the Council to reconsider their decision on the installation of a permanent wooden memorial cross in Trefarclawdd Cemetery. He advised this was a high quality oak cross at considerable expense. The Clerk has sent out the rules and regulations regarding this. Members had no objections although it would have to be installed on/ in the concrete plinth.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for permission to be granted for the installation of a wood memorial cross on condition it is installed on the concrete plinth already provided.

b) Off- Road Motor bike event at land off Wern Ddu Lane

Item covered in Annual Parish Meeting.

1983 Date for Next Meeting

Members **NOTED** that the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council will take place on **Thursday 27 June 2024** at Rhydycroesau Village Hall. .

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act and due to the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted it will be PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the public and press should not be present

1984 Planning Enforcement

Members **NOTED** one enforcement case.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.24 pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____

The Chairman