



*"Not for self"*

Oswestry Rural Parish Council

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Minutes

of the Ordinary Meeting

held at 7.00 pm on Thursday 26 September 2024 at Ryhdycroesau Village Hall

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**Present:**

Cllr Martin Bennett, Cllr Peter Richardson, Cllr Bob Kimber, Cllr Martin Jones, Cllr Steve Watts, Cllr Mike Weston, Cllr Peter Davies, Cllr Richard Fowler, Cllr Paul Milner, Cllr Iain Campbell

**Clerk to the Council:**

Kathryn Lloyd

**In attendance:**

Approximately six members of the public

**2033 Chairman's Welcome**

a) The Chairman extended a warm welcome to those present. He advised members both he, the Vice Chairman and Clerk had attended the Parish Wide Meeting held on 20 September 2024 attended by Helen Morgan MP. This will be covered under agenda item 18. There are no other engagements this month.

**2034 Apologies**

Apologies were received from the following:

Cllr Chris Woods  
Cllr William Jones  
Cllr Jaz Singh

**2035 Police Report**

The Chairman advised members that the Police representative had sent apologies for not being able to attend. No Police report has been received only the team newsletter. A Councillor raised the issue with a fatal accident on the A5 and issues with vehicles jumping lights at Maesbury. He advised of an articulated lorry which jumped a red light in the presence of a marked police vehicle. This was NOTED.

**2036 Shropshire Council Report**

Cllr Joyce Barrow provided the following report:

*"Shropshire Council still has a £38 million deficit in the budget and has to make some drastic cuts, meaning certain, non-statutory services may be cut. This is still being worked on. Redundancies at the council are ongoing.*

*SC are planning to move its administrative base from Shire Hall to The Guildhall in Shrewsbury Town centre, as the council downsizes. It is proposed to have hubs around the county, creating a more community based approach. Services will start moving there from November 2024. Public meeting will take place there from the new year. A new law is coming into force to make it easier for small businesses to tender for council contracts and will come into force February 24th, 2025.*

*£100,000 has been awarded to Shropshire Community Transport Consortium to invest and improve services across the county. The consortium represents seven community groups. This is for vulnerable and isolated resident who cannot access a traditional bus service.*

*Recycling centres are to stay open every day with no closures now planned.*

*Shropshire Councillors are putting forward a motion to full council (Thursday) Instructing the leader of the council to write to Rachael Reeves regarding the Winter Fuel Allowance withdrawal for the 82,000 pensioners in Shropshire. It asks her to reverse this decision and if the Chancellor is not minded reversing this decision, we ask that the income level at which Pension Tax Credit can be obtained should be increased significantly to protect those less well off.*

*Cabinet agreed ambitious plans to transform Shrewsbury Sports Village in Sundorne have taken a step closer after cabinet agreed on 11th September to undertake the detailed designs and planning application at a cost of £2.248 million. A report goes to full council this Thursday asking for approval due to the value of the investment.*

*Demolition continues on the Riverside development in Shrewsbury ahead of redevelopment.”*

On behalf of a resident, Cllr Joyce Barrow asked how the request for a bleed kit in Morda was progressing.

Councillor Martin Jones asked whether the Council would provide a breakdown of the costs for changing from Shire Hall to hubs and given the increased number of fly tipping how much this was costing Shropshire Council to clear. Cllr Joyce Barrow requested an email to take this forward. Councillor Martin Bennett asked how effective online services would be given the move to hubs.

### **2037 Public Participation**

A member of the public from Trefonen raised his concerns regarding Trefarclawdd Farm latest planning application - agenda item 10b. He commented on the inevitable increase in traffic with tractor movements, issues with road safety and damage to the highways. He noted the efforts of the Parish Council having scrutinised previous applications. He believes residents have lost faith in the planning process and requested the Parish Council express the concerns of the community. Cllr Peter Richardson thanked the resident for his comments and advised Trefarclawdd Farm features on every Parish Council agenda and covered under Environmental Working Group due to the potential impacts. Councillors believe the aim is for 1500 cattle rather than the current level of 500.

A resident advised he was the owner of Pool Cottage. Local Planning Officer / case and conservation office on site . Agreed to reduce in size. Family home having relocated . Cllr Peter Richardson advised this application had been received this afternoon and would be discussed. Cllr Martin Bennett gave notice he wished to speak on this application.

### **2038 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 25 July 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.**

### **2039 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.

Cllr Steve Watts and Cllr Martin Bennett both made non-pecuniary interest. This related to item 26c and Morda & Sweeney Village Hall item 21, respectively.

#### 2040 Dispensations

Cllr Martin Bennett submitted a written request for dispensation for item 21. The Clerk has granted this.

#### 2041 Declarations of Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality

None Declared

#### 2042 Planning Matters

The following planning applications was **NOTED**.

Planning Application Details	Planning Proposals
24/01901/FUL Holly Cottage, Morton, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 8AJ	Conversion of 1No dwelling to 2No dwellings  Decision: Grant Permission
24/02275/FUL Cleddon, Aston Square, Aston, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 4LR	Proposed single storey extension to form additional living accommodation to existing dormer bungalow  Decision: Grant Permission
24/02474/FUL Lavender Cottage, Sweeney, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 9EY	Erection of two storey workshop outbuilding  Decision: Refuse
24/02774/HRM Land East Of Penylan Lane, Trefarclawdd Farm, Trefarclawdd, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 9DE	To remove a 12m section of hedgerow to create an access for farmland and movement of livestock on land east of Penylan Lane, Coed-y-Go  Decision: Grant Permission

#### b Planning Applications

Members provided retrospective **APPROVAL** for the August 2024 planning applications. A member raised concerns with application 24/03015/EIA , as detailed.

Planning Application Details	Planning Proposals
24/03020/CPL Arosfa, Croesau Bach, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 9AY	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for single storey rear extension  For Information only
24/02960/FUL Pentre Coed Farm, Maesbury Road, Maesbury, Oswestry, Shropshire	Conversion of barn and erection of link extension
24/03154/FUL Wotton Fields, Queens Head, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 4LJ	Demolition of dog kennels and store and erection of four holiday lets and associated works.  Cllr Martin Jones commented this can only be an improvement, However, the area is overrun with holiday lets.  <b>Members NOTED Cllr Jones was supportive of this application.</b>

Planning Application Details	Planning Proposals
24/03015/EIA Trefarclawdd Farm, Trefarclawdd, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 9DE	<p>Construction of two cubicle buildings, a slurry lagoon, and all associated works</p> <p>The Chairman advised members this consultation is still open and the Parish Council has the opportunity to comment. Cllr Martin Jones stated this should be objected to. The original application was for 500 cattle but believes this is now 1500. Another farm has been taken over from the tenant. There is concerns over the expansion of the farm , size of the lagoon, storage of slurry and spreading of waste on fields and effects from rain with phosphates on the tributary water system.</p> <p>Another member expressed concerns that small farms are closing with tradition dairy farming being replaced by this modern method. He suggested a moratorium on this and that the Council should object strongly to this application. Questions should be raised with Shropshire Council</p> <p>A member stated this is a planning issue as well as environmental one. The Parish Council must sight policies at National and Local level which oppose this. The applicant has the right to appeal any refusal. This should be dealt this by the EWG and expert advice on planning as the Council must provide evidence.</p> <p>Cllr Peter Davies stated the evidence is the River Wye and River Severn.</p> <p>Cllr Joyce Barrow advised members she has asked for this to be called in and considered the North Shropshire Planning Committee.</p> <p><b>It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to object on scale and size being a material consideration</b></p>
24/03236/AGR Land North West Of Tyn-Y-Bwlch, Llanforda, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 7HJ. OS Reference 325778 - 329683	<p>Forestry Track</p> <p>For Information only</p>

c. Members considered the following planning applications:

Planning Application Details	Planning Proposals
23/03808/HHE 19 Marshfields, Maesbury Marsh, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 8JE	<p>Erection of a single storey rear extension to a semi-detached dwelling, dimensions 4 metres beyond the rear wall, 3.45 metres maximum height and 2.5 metres to the eaves.</p> <p><b>Members believed planning permission for this application had been granted</b></p>
24/03371/FUL Cherry Trees, Maesbury Road, Maesbury, Oswestry, Shropshire.	<p>Proposed single-storey front extension and a single-storey detached double garage</p> <p>A number of members commented that the planning application could not be located on the Shropshire Council Planning portal.</p>
24/03492/FUL New Barns Farm, Trefonen, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 9DS.	<p>Construction of a calf rearing building</p> <p>A member advised this was a replacement of units already in situ.</p> <p><b>Members AGREED not to comment.</b></p>

**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

Planning Application Details	Planning Proposals
24/03604/FUL Pleasant Grove, Wern Y Wiel, Treflach, Oswestry, Shropshire.	Erection of a 4 bay garage  <b>Members AGREED not to comment.</b>
24/02663/FUL (resubmission) Pool Cottage, Morton, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 8BQ.	Erection of two storey and single storey extension to dwelling and relocation of a stable block.  Cllr Martin Bennett provided a lengthy update to members on the history of alterations and number of previous planning applications.  <b>It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to support this application. There was two abstentions.</b>  <b>The Parish Council having considered the planning history of the site from the original construction in the 17th Century, subsequent alterations in the 19th century to create a Heritage Assessment and the record of largely approved application in the 21st Century, fully supports the application and considers that the relocation of the stable block is non-contentious, and that the proposed extension has the greatest impact on the existing 2013 extension, with minimal impact on the designated historic fabric of the cottage.</b>  <b>The Parish Council further considers that the application conforms with NPPF Section 14 and paragraph 152 and Shropshire policies CS6 Sustainable Design and Development and MD2 Sustainable Design with a designed scheme that adequately addresses resources and energy efficiency of the proposed development, together with CS17 Environmental Networks and current SAMDev Plan Policies.</b>

#### 2043 Clerk's Report

A member commented on the newsletter item and advised details needed to be firmed up. He requested this be an agenda item for the October meeting. Members agreed for all items with Yes be removed.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to accept the report.**

#### 2044 Financial Matters

a) Members considered approval income and expenditure to 31 July 2024, I & E Balances

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the income and expenditure to 31 July 2024 and the balance of income received to date of £53,199.51 and gross expenditure to date of £37,913.77 be APPROVED.**

##### b) Bank Reconciliation

Members considered for approval the bank reconciliation at 31 July 2024.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the bank reconciliation statement to the end of August 2024 be APPROVED.**

##### c) August 2024 Payments

Members **APPROVED** the payments for August 2024.

d) Members considered for approval income and expenditure for August 2024, I & E year to date balances, forecasted outturn position to 31 March 2025

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the income and expenditure to 31 August 2024 and the balance of income received to date of £53,729.43 and gross expenditure to date of £40,362.28 be APPROVED. Members NOTED the financial outturn position for 2024/25**

##### e) Bank Reconciliation

Members considered for approval the bank reconciliation at 31 August 2024.

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED** that the bank reconciliation statement to the end of August 2024 be **APPROVED**.

**f) Provisional Payment September 2024**

Members considered the following provisional Payments for September 2024 :

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

Supplier	Details	Gross £
TEEC	Additional 10gb storage for email account of The Clerk	14.40
EE	Mobile charges 11/09/2024 - 10/10/2024	14.81
HSBC	Bank charges - 30/07/2024 - 29/08/2024	8.00
Mark Evans	Bus shelter Cleaning August 2024	60.00
Colin Turner	Bus shelter Cleaning August 2024	25.00
K Lloyd - The Clerk	Clerk's pay and allowances August 2024	1,537.91
HMRC	PAYE / NI Clerk Pay August 2024	268.56
K Lloyd	Reimbursement of 365 windows license	59.99
K Lloyd	Reimbursement - Postage for agendas and associated papers September 2024	23.80
K Lloyd	Reimbursement - Hospitality expenses Parish Wide Meeting	8.05
Peter Richardson	Reimbursement - wireless keyboard and mouse combo	31.99
Unit Trust Bank	Bank charges	18.00
PKF Littlejohn LLP	Limited assurance review of Annual Governance & Accountability Return 31 March 2024	378.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,448.51</b>

**g) Community Infrastructure Return (CIL) 2024.**

The Clerk provided members with the details for the Community Infrastructure Return for 2024 including committed spends for various planned projects The form will be completed and submitted to Shropshire Council by 30 September 2024.

**h) Street Lighting**

The Chairman advised members that having completed the mapping of all the Parish Council's street lighting, a revised offer from Shropshire Council Joint Energy Scheme had been received. This totalled £2,400 plus VAT per annum.

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED** to **APPROVE** the revised offer.

**i)Unity Bank Changes**

Members **NOTED** Unity Trust Bank changes from quarterly to monthly charges and statements.

**2045 Finance Committee Update / Polices**

Cllr Martin Bennett advised members the Finance Committee had reviewed the following documents:

- a) Financial Regulations
- b) Standing Orders
- c) Email
- d) Publication Scheme
- e) DPI Dispensation Procedure
- f) Staff Performance
- g) Investment Strategy

Cllr Martin Bennett proposed members approve items c – g and for items a and b be deferred until the October meeting. This is to allow a number of minor changes to financial limits. The Clerk advised the Financial Regulations had been updated to reflect the NALC April 2024 model to ensure Council is compliant. Cllr Martin Bennett commented that as part of the changes, any Councillor who is in arrears of their Council Tax at the time of the budget setting / precept process must declare it and will not be able to vote on this element.

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED** to **APPROVE** items c – g and to **defer** items a and b.

**2046 Annual Internal Audit Action Plan 2023/24**

The Clerk provided an update on the action plan as part of the internal audit recommendations advising a number of actions had been completed. The Clerk read each objective, recommendation and action and provided proposals.

There were two actions outstanding from 2022/23.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to accept progress of the plan to date.**

#### **2047 External Auditor's Report and Certificate / Conclusion of AGAR 2023/24**

The Chairman advised members the External Auditor's report and Certificate for the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24 had been approved.

Members **NOTED** The external audit for 2023/24 had been concluded and that the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR was in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters had come to the auditors' attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met.

#### **2048 SALC Executive**

- a) Cllr Martin Bennett advised members the draft minutes of the SALC Executive had been circulated via The Clerk. There had been a proposal from Shropshire Council to increase the precept by 10% – 15% which would be handed over to support services. At a meeting of the SALC Executive Working Group, an officer had stated Shropshire Council were not interested in the devolution of services.
- b) Members considered nominating a member to represent the Parish Council at the SALC Executive AGM being held on 30 October 2024.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for Cllr Martin Bennett to represent the Parish Council at the SALC AGM.**

#### **2049 Parish Wide Meeting with Helen Morgan MP**

a) The Chairman updated members on the Parish Wide Meeting with Helen Morgan MP. He chaired this, supported by Cllr Martin Bennett and The Clerk. He read the attendance list noting those present. He provided details of the aims of the meeting and the agenda and some of the key issues discussed. A letter will be sent on behalf of the group to raise concerns. A copy of this will be circulated to members. The meeting was extremely well attended and positive and plans will be made for one to be held in the Spring 2025. Helen Morgan MP observed the process and will take forward a number of issues. Cllr Martin Bennett thanked the Chairman for chairing the meeting and signing the letter to Shropshire Council.

#### **2050 Shropshire Council's Survey "Partnering to Provide Services for your Area"**

a) Cllr Peter Richardson advised members the "Partnering to Provide Services for your Area" survey deadline has been extended to the 30 September 2024. Members **NOTED** a response will be issued.

#### **2051 Rural Library Service**

a) Cllr Richard Fowler advised members that at the last meeting he spoke about the risk of a reduced Mobile Library service had been raised. He has drafted a letter requesting the service is not reduced further and to work together to increase take up of mobile / home library service. A volunteer run service is currently being offered to six residents  
**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for letter to be sent on behalf of the Council.**

#### **2052 Morda & Sweeney Village Hall**

a) Cllr Richard Fowler advised members the minutes of a recent meeting with some trustees of Morda & Sweeney Village Hall had been circulated. Representatives from Community Resources also attended who had been approached by the trustees to help resolve the issues. Both he and Cllr Bennett had reviewed the 1966 deeds and subsequent transactions and assessed the request for the return of the document is legitimate and there is no legal justification for these to be retained. This opinion was also expressed in the legal advice provided to the Council in 2023 regardless of the Parish Council's concerns over the governance arrangement of the hall. He believes the result of this may improve the relationships between the trustees and Parish Council.

b) Cllr Peter Richardson asked members to consider the release of all currently held documents relating to the Morda and Sweeney Village Hall, into the care of the Trustees, in response to their request, in order to fulfil their legal obligations, and in accordance with legal advice already issued to the Parish Council. Cllr Peter Richardson proposed this and asked for a poll of voting. The results were : For – Seven, Against – 0 and Abstentions - Three  
**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for the deeds pertaining to Morda & Sweeney Village Hall to be released via the solicitors.**

### 2053 The Tonys' Community Service Award

a) The Chairman advised members a joint nomination had been received for John Evans and Rebecca Greenwood who complete a daily / weekly litter picking sessions in Morda. There has been no other nominations.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for The Tonys' Community Service Award be awarded jointly between John Evans and Rebecca Greenwood.**

### 2054 Road Safety Group

a) There was no update from the Road Safety Group. However, Cllr Peter Richardson advised members that Keir should be complete the Coed Y Go speed reduction scheme by the end of October 2024.

b) Members **NOTED** the concerns on traffic speeding in Morda. The Chairman felt this was also about anti-social behaviour on the estate. This matter can be reported to the Police.

c) The Chairman advised members a request had been received from Llanyblodwel Parish Council for an Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) in Nantmawr to measure current speeds. This is at an estimated total cost of £600 - £1,000. The Clerk confirmed CIL funded had been set aside for traffic calming measures in Nantmawr although this had not been progressed

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to support the request for an ATC to be completed in Nantmawr to measure current speeds at a total cost between £600 - £1,000.**

### 2055 Cemetery Working Group

a) Cllr Mike Weston provided an update advising in was unlikely any major works would be incurred in this financial year. The Clerk confirmed adjustments had been made to the forecasted position to reflect this together with costs for Professional fees which may be incurred depending how the scheme progresses. This has increased the financial outturn position.

### 2056 Environment Working Group

#### a) Water Pollution

Cllr Martin Jones advised members water testing had not been undertaken in September. August testing results have shown from Candy to the Water Treatment works Ph levels are rising and this is caused from runoff. A farm in Crick heath is turning manure into pellets which reduce phosphates and runoff into water courses. Results from testing at Bromwich Park Brook were disappointing with samples showing Strep and E coli. Results from a brook (The Perry) from Ruyton to Baschurch showed phosphates. The Up Sewage Creek Group have reached out and a working group set up with seventeen permanent members on committee. It is hoping to engage with more Local councils. He is hoping to get more testing including soil samples. He commented on an article in the Guardian on chemicals in water. He wishes to plot the testing on a map which can then up upload on the website / Facebook page. Cllr Martin Bennett congratulated Cllr Martin Jones and Cllr Iain Campbell for their work and felt the issues raised should be highlighted more widely. Cllr Iain Campbell is hoping to present results with others so that there is a broader picture of what is happening across the whole of Shropshire.

#### b) Trefarclawdd Farm

No further update

### 2057 Correspondence

a) The Chairman advised members of concerns raised by a resident on the pathway and hedgerow between Sweeney Drive and Erw Wen. He confirmed this had now been cleared by Shropshire Council. Cllr Steve Watts advised this issue had been reported earlier in the year with a further two complaints regarding the pathway. The issue with the hedge / fence remains. It is believed homes are owned by Shropshire Council with STAR housing the letting agent. The Clerk advised she has emailed a contact at Shropshire Council to establish who will be responsible for this moving forward.

b) The Chairman advised an invitation has been received from the Shropshire Union Canal Society for a member to attend a presentation at Crickheath between 4 – 6 October 2024.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for Cllr Martin Bennett to represent the Parish Council with a preferred date of Friday afternoon.**



- c) The Chairman advised members a request had been received from Trefonen Post Office for the replacement of CCTV camera. He suggested the Post Office consider completing a grant application under the Council's policy. Cllr Martin Jones asked who would benefit from this. Cllr Joyce Barrow provided background by advised poor footage from the CCTV had been handed over to Shropshire Council following a fly tipping incident. Members **AGREED** for the applicant to complete a grant application or approach the Police Crime Commissioner who has a budget for local initiatives.

**2058 Date for Next Meeting**

Members **NOTED** the next meeting will take place on Thursday 31 October 2024 at Trefonen Village Hall.

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**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

**2059 Staffing Matters**

a)The Chairman advised members The Clerk had submitted a comprehensive self-assessment / appraisal of her performance. This has been forwarded to the Personnel Committee. He recommended deferring this item until the next meeting to allow The Personnel Committee the opportunity for a formal employer response.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to defer this until October 2024.**

b) The Chairman advised members the Clerk's Working From Home Allowance has not increased since January 2019. Given the cost of living increases, The Finance Committee recommended this be increased. The Clerk advised the maximum amount payable under the scheme before tax and NI is £26.00 per month.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for the Working from Home Allowance to be increased from September 2024 at a rate of £26.00 per month.**

c) The Chairman asked members to consider the replacement of the Clerk's keyboard / mouse at a cost of £31.99.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for the Clerk's keyboard / mouse be replaced at a cost of £31.99.**

**2060 Quote for Noticeboard maintenance**

The Chairman advised members that a quote had been received for the annual maintenance of the Parish Noticeboards. The Finance Committee considered this to be value for money and asked for the Financial Regulations to be waived to allow the quote to be accepted. The Chairman commented the rain doors on several noticeboards required attention.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for the quote of the annual maintenance of the Parish Noticeboards to be APPROVED.**

**2061 Planning Enforcement**

Members **NOTED** a recent planning enforcement case.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.49pm

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The Chairman