



"Not for self"

Oswestry Rural Parish Council

Minutes

of the Ordinary Meeting

held at 7.00 pm on Thursday 31 October 2024 at Trefonen Village Hall

Present:

Cllr Martin Bennett, Cllr Peter Richardson, Cllr Bob Kimber, Cllr Martin Jones, Cllr William Jones, Cllr Steve Watts, Cllr Mike Weston, Cllr Peter Davies, Cllr Richard Fowler, Cllr Iain Campbell, Cllr Chris Woods

Clerk to the Council:

Kathryn Lloyd

In attendance:

Approximately ten members of the public
Inspector Claire Greenaway

2062 Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to those present and thanked Inspector Claire Greenaway for attending. He advised there had been no engagements since the last meeting.

2063 Apologies

Apologies were received from the following:

Cllr Paul Milner
Cllr Peter Davies
Cllr Jaz Singh

2064 Police Report

Inspector Greenaway provided an update to members advising that from the facts and figures available the Parish is one of the lowest crime areas. Data to show this is available on the Police website. On average there is 30 - 40 reported crimes per month including anti-social behaviour. Violent crime is the highest reported and includes Domestic Abuse. Support is provided to victims by sign posting services which support individuals and they are encouraged to report incidents.

Morda is the main area of concern with 23 offences. Shropshire Council ASB officer is working alongside the Police and Housing needs to step up. She invited questions from members. Cllr Martin Bennett raised issue with drugs and Inspector Greenaway confirmed this an issue in the community. The Police are aware of where drugs are and intelligence is recorded daily. Cllr Martin Bennett advised of the recent Anti-Social behaviour at the Racecourse. Inspector Greenaway is keen to know about this. She is aware of the three key priorities of the Parish Council of Anti-Social behaviour speeding and drugs. There is six sites for testing speeds and if concerns are reported resources can be targeted.

Inspector Greenaway advised of the requirement to commit 8 hrs per week to speed enforcement . Cllr Chris Woods advised of the work by Trefonen Speed Watch Group with regular reports being submitted to the Police. Cllr Martin Jones raised the issues with drugs in schools and the lack of interaction by the Police. He questioned how the Police is tackling this and protecting children. Inspector Greenaway advised, her Oswestry Town Centre Police team had removed £80k of drugs off the street and the Police has regular contact with schools, which provides the opportunity to share information. She advised there is currently no County line in Shropshire for reporting. Cllr Martin Jones mentioned Youth Engagement and she advised there has been improvement with engagement at Lakelands. She also advised the Police is often working with other forces and the National Crime Squad. Cllr Martin Jones mentioned the issue with the lights at Maesbury which he raised at the last meeting. Inspector Greenaway was not aware of the issue but advised that Road Traffic Offences and Collision Data can be shared with Shropshire Council to consider. Cllr Martin Bennett suggested the Parish Council write to the Police Crimes Commissioner to raise concerns regarding a recent accident at the lights and request measures are put in place to monitor this He is happy to draft a letter.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to Cllr Martin Bennett to draft a letter to the Police Crimes Commissioner.

The Chairman thanked Inspector Greenaway for her comprehensive assessment .

b)Members **AGREED** the Police priorities for the Parish Council for October to December 2024 as Speeding, Drugs and Anti-Social behaviour.

2065 Shropshire Council Report

There was no report from Cllr Joyce Barrow

2066 Public Participation

A representative from the Shropshire Union Canal Society (SUCS) provided an update on the restoration work of the Montgomery Canal in Crickheath. A celebration event was held in October with Cllr Martin Bennett in attendance. The representative thanked the Parish Council for its donation of funds to support this work. The Society received funds last year from Shropshire Council's Rural Prosperity Fund and had significant support from volunteers. He thanked the Parish Council for its contribution and hoped the Society may benefit from further goodwill to support further plans. There is a wildlife survey the outcome of which will determine what works can be taken forward. Cllr Chris Woods enquired when the survey will be completed and was advised by the end of November 2024.

Cllr Martin Bennett advised that at the celebration event he was presented with four bottles of navigation ale. These have been disposed of and from the sale presented a personal cheque for £40.00 to the representative of the SUCS.

A resident from Croesaubach asked members to consider adding Llansylin Road issues as an agenda item for the next meeting. The resident raised issues regarding various sections of the road and concerns with designated speed limit, blind bend, and speeding. The Chairman agreed for this to be added to the next agenda under the Road Safety Working Group. He asked the resident to email The Clerk with the details raised.

A resident from Treflach raised a road safety issue and asked members to consider and provide options for Stoney Road, a no through road. He advised this is being used as a cut through by drivers. When the road was adopted in 1997 by Highways there was a condition which prohibited vehicles from using it. The Chairman agreed for this to be an agenda item under the Road Safety Working Group. He asked the resident to email details to The Clerk.

2067 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 26 September 2024 were considered for approval.

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

2068 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

2069 Dispensations

None received

2070 Declarations of Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality

Cllr Martin Bennett declared receiving four bottles of Navigation Ale from the Shropshire Union Canal Society. These have been sold with the proceeds of £40.00 donated to Shropshire Union Canal Society. Minute reference 2066.

2071 Planning Matters

The following planning applications was **NOTED**.

Planning Application Details	Planning Proposals
24/02663/FUL Pool Cottage, Morton, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 8BQ	Erection of two storey and single storey extension to dwelling and relocation of a stable block Decision: Grant Permission
24/03154/FUL Wootton Fields, Queens Head, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 4LJ	Demolition of dog kennels and store and erection of four holiday lets and associated works. Decision: Refuse

b Planning Applications

Members CONSIDERED the following :

Planning Application Details	Planning Proposals
24/03371/FUL Cherry Trees, Maesbury Road, Maesbury, Oswestry, Shropshire	Proposed single-storey front extension and a single-storey detached double garage. Cllr Martin Bennett advised this application fell within the appropriate Shropshire Council planning policies and complies with the Core Strategy. He asked members to support this application. Vote: Support 7 Object 0 Abstentions 3 It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to support this application.

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
24/04173/FUL Top House, Middleton, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 4LT	Construction of calf rearing shed. Cllr Martin Bennett proposed this application be supported given it meets the Environmental and Planning policies. Vote: Support 7 Object 0 Abstentions 3 It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to support this application.
24/04054/FUL Pentre Cefn, Craig-Ilwyn, Trefonen, Oswestry, Shropshire	Erection of two storey extension and associated works Cllr Martin Bennett advised members this is a listed building in a poor state. It represents an important part of local history and made reference to the Heritage Impact Assessment. The conditions will not superimpose on the existing structure. The extension provides a living and bedroom at a lower level and measures are being taken to make it more carbon neutral. He proposed the Council supports this application to protect and preserve a Grade listed building and as it complies with Heritage, Environmental and planning policies. Vote: Support 3 Object 0 Abstentions 5 It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to support this application

c. Planning Policy Framework Update

Cllr Martin Bennett advised members he had circulated information about the proposed revision of the National Framework, and the draft of the new framework which would impact on Shropshire's policies and the Local Development Plan, on which The Dept. Communities and Local Government invited comments and recommended that the Council make a response in view of the potential impact on rural areas and recommended that this matter be watched closely as it progresses. He anticipated the SALC would urge all Parish Councils to respond due to the urgency and speed with which it is already being taken forward.

2072 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.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to accept the report and for all completed actions to be removed.

2073 Financial Matters

a) Members considered approval income and expenditure to 30 September 2024, I & E Balances and forecasted outturn to 31 March 2025.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the income and expenditure to 30 September 2024 and the balance of income received to date of £55,284.23 and gross expenditure to date of £40,362.28 be APPROVED. Members NOTED and APPROVED the forecasted outturn position for 2024/25.

b) Bank Reconciliation

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

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

c) Provisional Payment October 2024

Members considered the following provisional Payments for October 2024:

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

Supplier	Details	Gross £
Scottish Power	Electricity charges 30/06/2024 - 30/09/2024	947.27
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 October 2024	60.00
Colin Turner	Bus shelter Cleaning October 2024	25.00
K Lloyd - The Clerk	Clerk's pay and allowances October 2024	1,522.97
HMRC	PAYE / NI Clerk Pay October 2024	268.56
K Lloyd	Reimbursement - Postage for agendas and associated papers October 2024	30.00
K Lloyd	Reimbursement - File Dividers, notebook, stamps and printing paper	27.17
Trefonen Village Hall	Hire of Hall April & May 2024	60.00
Trefonen Village Hall	Hire of Hall September 2024 - Finance Meeting	7.50
EDG Ltd T/A Water Treatment Services	Water Testing -Samples, certificate and courier charges 2/10/2024 & 24/10/2024	636.00
A G Royce	Grounds Maintenance Works - 12/09/2024 and 25/09/2024	602.00
William Jones	Reimbursement - Postage (Special Delivery)	8.35
Cartridge World	Xerox 006R0438 4 Colour Toner Cartridge Multipack	296.92
Unity Trust Bank	Bank charges 4/09/2024 - 30/09/2024	5.40
Colin Turner	Annual maintenance of Parish Noticeboards	460.00
		4,979.95

d) Members **NOTED** a reduction in interest rates on the HSBC accounts

e) Members **AGREED** to write off £0.40 in respect of an overpayment to Highline Ltd

2074 Finance Committee and Policies Update

Cllr Martin Bennett advised members the Finance Committee had met to review the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders. The Clerk advised a document detailing changes had been issued to members. He recommended Full Council approve the changes.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to APPROVE the changes to the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.

2075 OAC Committee Update

Cllr Martin Bennett advised members a report on the Oswestry Area Committee (OAC) had been circulated earlier. Members **ACCEPTED** and **NOTED** the report.

2076 SALC AGM

Cllr Martin Bennett advised members that he had circulated a report on the AGM held the previous day, by email to all members of the Council and would answer any questions. There were no questions and Members **NOTED** the report.

2077 Road Safety Group

a)Members were advised the Coed Y Go Road Safety Scheme works due to be implemented by the end of October 2024 had not been completed. The Clerk has taken this forward with Shropshire Council.

Cllr Martin Jones raised concerns with the disproportionate number of enforcement notices issued within a small hamlet. He commented that the Traffic Management Plan at Trefarclawdd Farm remained unenforced. He suggested the Parish Council write to Shropshire Council to question why the Traffic Management System is not being followed and to provide an explanation why there has been no enforcement. He noted the disruption and risk to people's lives. The Chairman proposed the planning conditions for Trefarclawdd Farm be researched and any planning enforcement breaches be submitted via Shropshire Planning site. Cllr Martin Bennett volunteered to undertake this and to report back to members on any breaches for the next meeting. Members **AGREED** to this proposal.

b)Members **NOTED** the suggestion from Shropshire Council Highways Officer for The Parish Council to assess whether the implementation of a speed limit through Nantmawr would have a high, medium or low impact prior to any Automatic Traffic Count ATC being undertaken. Members considered this to be high and **AGREED** to this.

Cllr Martin Jones requested the Council receive a copy of the results. Cllr Chris Woods advised a Traffic Management Plan is available and agreed to forward this to The Clerk

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to a high level impact and to notify Shropshire Council of this.

2079 Cemetery Working Group

Cllr Mike Weston provided an update to members of The Law Commission's Consultation Paper on Burial and Cremation (13 week consultation period from 3 October to 9 January 2025). He confirmed there are three areas of investigation, one of which was nearing completion. The latest consultation covers five areas of which four are pertinent to the Parish Council. There is sixty-six questions with some requiring expressing views / opinions. The Law Commission wishes to unify the law to cover the Church of England for private and Local Authority cemeteries so obligations and requirements continue.

He advised that both himself and The Clerk had attended an online seminar led by The Law Commission which covered the consultation.

He proposed the Cemetery Working Group and The Clerk meet to review and respond to the questionnaire. Answers will be reported to members for consideration at the November meeting.

2080 Environment Working Group

a)Cllr Iain Campbell provided an update to members advising that water testing has commenced again. Test site 3 at Trefarclawdd Farm showed pollution issues remain despite previous assurances that the results may be affected by drainage pipes. Testing has been conducted at Candy, Weston and the Sewage Works (SW). The SW results showed pollution was poor with high levels of Streptococci and E.coli and increased water temperature. There is a new testing site at Coed y Rae. A map of the Parish is being updated to plot test sites and this together with results will be published on the website. The group is working on a simplicity way of delivering information on what the results mean. It highlights the problem with large scale industrial farming sites. Parallels may be drawn between the Judicial Review with the Chicken Shed. Cllr Iain Campbell has submitted a FOI request to find out what Shropshire Council has to answer for. Numerous emails have been received from members of the public voicing concerns with Trefarclawdd Farm.

Cllr Martin Jones advised the group is using the result to evaluate at what level of pollution will cause illnesses. Cllr Chris Woods advised the Environmental Agency has been testing at Maesbury and it will be useful to compare the two sets of results. Cllr Iain Campbell advised he was seeking to find a forensic water testing company which may be considered.

b) Cllr Martin Jones stated that in light of new planning legislation more industrial farms are likely. Cllr Joyce Barrow advised she had received an invitation to revisit the farm which she had declined. She understands the Planning Committee will be considering the latest application in December / New Year. She also advised that several Senior Officers have left the Authority. Cllr Martin Bennett advised members that the Environmental Assessments are using data which is more than a decade old. There is the potential for major public health issues and that a copy should be sent to the EA and Helen Morgan MP.

2081 Social Media

Cllr Richard Fowler requested members to forward any items from their wards which can be shared via the Parish Council Facebook page and community noticeboards. Cllr Bob Kimber advised that when looking up the facebook page there appeared to be two sites. The old site cannot be removed due to a lack of access.

2082 Remembrance Sunday – 10 November 2024

The Chairman advised members of the arrangements for the Remembrance Sunday Service being held on 10 November 2024 in Trefonen. He confirmed a risk assessment has been undertaken and a temporary road closure notice issued by Shropshire Council. Cllr Bob Kimber advised he may require assistance with the road signage. The Chairman confirmed name reading and the purchase of a wreath be delegated to Trefonen Councillors.

2083 Newsletter

Cllr Martin Bennett, Cllr Richard Fowler and Cllr Chris Woods volunteered to be members of a Newsletter Working Group to liaise and take forward the arrangements for a Parish Newsletters. Cllr Martin Bennett requested an article from the EWG in regard to Water Pollution testing which can be included.

Vote : Support 9 Against 0 Abstention 1

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to the formation of a Newsletter Working Group with members of Cllr Martin Bennett, Cllr Richard Fowler and Cllr Chris Woods.

2084 Website Compliance

The Chairman advised members TEEC have offered to update the back-end code to ensure full compliance with WCGA 2.2 at no cost.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to ACCEPT the offer from TEEC.

Cllr Martin Bennett advised members that consideration should be given to a change of website supplier. There were several website providers advertising at the SALC AGM. There was a suggestion of researching and obtaining three quotes for this service. Cllr Richard Fowler offered to take this forward.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for this to be taken forward by Cllr Richard Fowler and brought to members at the next meeting.

2085 Correspondence

a) Members **NOTED** the resident's letter of objections to planning application 24/03015/EIA Trefarclawdd Farm.

b) Members **NOTED** receipt of Trefonen Road Morda Safety Campaign petition.

c) Members **NOTED** the concerns from a resident regarding anti-social behaviour / activities at the Racecourse. This matter has been raised with West Mercia Police by the Clerk.

d) Members considered the concerns from a resident regarding flooding in Weston. Cllr Martin Jones commented that flooding has only been since the new homes have been built. There has been no water course maintenance and there has been an exceptional amount of rainfall recently. It was **NOTED** the Environmental Agency is responsible for the maintenance of culverts / ditches and Shropshire Council for drains. The EA should be contacted and Shropshire Council petitioned to clear drains. Members **NOTED** this and the situation will be reviewed as necessary.

2086 Consultations

The Chairman advised members of the Government Consultation on remote meetings which ends on 19 December 2024. The proposal is to have fully remote meetings facility available including the use of proxy voting. He suggested the Parish Council respond to support. Cllr Martin Bennett agreed with this so long as there is strong and robust infrastructure to support this. Cllr Richard Fowler shared his concerns with proxy voting which may be open to abuse. The Chairman asked for any concerns to be forwarded to himself and The Clerk.

2087 December Meeting

Members considered the next meeting of the Council scheduled to be held on Thursday 12 December 2024. The Chairman advised the Village Hall is available on 19th. However, he proposed the meeting be cancelled and the same arrangements for August recess be implemented. Cllr Martin Jones suggested postponing the November meeting and holding one earlier in December.

Vote to cancel the December meeting : Support 9 Object 0 Abstention 1

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to cancel the December meeting and delegate responsibility on the same basis as the August recess.

2088 Date for Next Meeting

Members **NOTED** the next meeting will take place on Thursday 28 November 2024 at Trefonen 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

2089 Staffing Matters

a)The Chairman advised members the Personnel Committee has undertaken a performance review of the Clerk. A formal employers response has been completed which The Clerk agreed was fair and balanced. This will be circulated to members. The Personnel Committee recommended an incremental increase from SCP 27 to SCP 28 payable from 1 September 2024.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for The Clerk to receive an increment from SCP 27 to SCP 28 payable from 1 September 2024.

b) The Chairman asked members to consider a request by the Clerk for 9 hours overtime relating to September 2024. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to APPROVE 9 hour overtime payable to The Clerk.**

c)The Chairman advised members the Personnel Committee had met earlier and **NOTED** the NALC Pay Services Agreement 2024. He recommended Full Council approve the arrears of pay due from 1 April to 31 October 2024. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for the Clerk to receive the arrears of pay due as part of the NALC Pay Services Agreement 2024, payable from 1 April 2024.**

2090 Planning Enforcement

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

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.42pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____

The Chairman