

**MINUTES OF
ALL STRETTON, SMETHCOTT AND WOOLSTASTON PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING
held at Picklescott Village
Wednesday 26th July 2023**

Present

C'llr Dale (Chairman); C'llr Philips; C'llr M Morris; C'llr Hibbott-Morris; C'llr Burton; C'llr Starns
Shropshire C'llr D Morris
Two members of the public attended the meeting
Clerk : Mrs J Griffiths

Apologies

C'llr Ecob, C'llr Hibbot-Morris

1. Chairman's Introduction

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were declared.

3. Public Comments

One member of the public attending the meeting gave an update on the progress with OpenReach regarding the fibre broadband connection. He and C'llr Ecob are the contact with OpenReach and would be happy to pass any comments from members of the public to OpenReach. He explained that were possible they were either using existing poles or existing ducting. However, where this is not possible new poles are being erected as this is the only way the fibre connection can be achieved.

The other member of the public expressed concern about bracken encroaching on to the hedgerows as this is no longer cut back and will eventually destroy hedgerows. He had written to the Parish Council and his letter had been circulated to all Councillors on 19th July.

He had also written to the Parish Council expressing concern at the lack of affordable housing in the parish. Again this letter had been forwarded to all Councillors on 19th July. C'llr Dan Morris told the meeting that Shropshire has a target of providing 29,000 additional new homes.

4. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 17th May 2023

C'llr Starns told the meeting that he was shown as Starnes and not Starns in the Minutes and C'llr Phillips was shown as Philips and not Phillips. The Minutes were amended.

C'llr Starns was also shown as being elected as the Parish Council representative on the Henry Fletcher Charity, whereas this should be C'llr Phillips. The amended was made to the Minutes.

It was then proposed by C'llr Burton, seconded by C'llr Phillips and unanimously agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17th May provided a true and accurate record of the meeting. The Chairman then signed the Minutes and initialled the amendments.

5. Matters Arising (not included on the Agenda)

The Clerk had posted the Parish Council's comments on the Boundary Review, see Item 9(a) of previous Minutes. The comments, which had been circulated and agreed by all Councillors were posted as follows:-

The Parish Council have studied the Boundary Commission's report and find that, whilst its intentions are fine, the conclusions are fundamentally wrong for the parishes of Church Pulverbatch, All Stretton, Smethcott and Woolstaston Parish Councils.

The commission says it is trying to ensure:-

“that the recommendations reflect community identity”

And that it has undertaken a detailed; “virtual tour of Shropshire (to help decide between the different boundaries proposed”

As evidence of community identity, All Stretton, Smethcott and Woolstaston Parish Council submits the following:-

The “detailed virtual tour” has failed to identify that fact that these parishes are separated from Bishop's Castle by the 7 mile Long Mynd range of hills (1700 ft AOD) and the Stiperstones (1759ft AOD). Pulverbatch is just at the base of the Longmynd and relates to the easiest next town without climbing the hill, ie Shrewsbury or across country to the A49. Indeed the Shrewsbury bus route stops at Pulverbatch. Because of this geography, most roads run along the valleys with few crossing points, many of which are not maintained in winter.

No one from All Stretton, Smethcott or Woolstaston would normally expect to travel over the hill to Bishop's Castle for shop, school, work or church. These three parishes relate to Rea Valley and the A49 with Dorrington, Leebotwood or Church Stretton being the normal destinations for schools, church, doctors, pharmacies, food shopping etc. Indeed the churches in Smethcott, Woolstaston, Longnor, Stapleton, Dorrington and Leebotwood all share the same rector.

We wish to avoid getting involved in the “numbers game” and in conclusion the Parish Council has no link geographically, structurally or historically to Bishop's Castle and the suggestion that the Parish should be linked to Bishops Castle is democratically confusing and would make the Parish feel democratically incorrectly represented and we trust that the Boundary Commission will rethink the current proposals with these comments in mind

6. Correspondence

The Clerk circulates all correspondence as it is received. The Clerk also reported the following correspondence:-

- Clerk and Councils Direct Magazine – July – handed to the Chairman
- Details of funding to provide Electric Charging Points at Village Hall locations had been forwarded to the Village Hall Committee. C'llr Phillips told the meeting that the Village Hall had expressed an interest and were waiting for a response from Shropshire Council.

7. Planning

(a) Clerk to report decisions on applications previously discussed:

23/01896/FUL Redcote, Lower Wood

An application for a single plot exception site affordable dwelling south of Redcote, Lower Wood had been received on 12th May. The Clerk had contacted Shropshire Council to say that the Parish Council had not been approached to confirm the local connection. The Clerk had received a letter of apology from the Housing Enabling Officer to say she had omitted to ask the Parish Council for their confirmation and now asked them to establish the local connection.

This application was discussed at the May meeting. The Clerk told the meeting that to be eligible for this scheme applicants have to demonstrate a "Strong Local Connection" to the parish area within which the plot of land lies. It was agreed that the applicant met the following two criteria:-

- They are lawfully resident in the local area and have lived there for at least the previous five years
- They are currently employed or routinely carry out self-employment work within either the local area or 5km of the site

The Clerk will prepare a letter to the Housing Enabling Officer confirming that the applicant meets the above criteria.

The application was discussed at the May meeting and it was proposed by C'lr Philips, seconded by C'lr Hibbot-Morris and unanimously agreed that the Parish Council would not comment on this application. .

The Clerk told the July meeting that she had written to the Housing Enabling Officer on 22nd May confirming the local connection and had received an acknowledgement.

(b) Clerk to report on application received between meetings

23/01977/FUL Willow House, Picklescott

Application under Section 73a of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for conversion of garage/store to ancillary accommodation (part retrospective).

This application was received and forwarded to Councillors on 23rd May. The Parish Council did not comment on this application. The Clerk told the meeting that this application was granted on 29th June

23/02135/LBC Bank Farm, Picklescott

proposed installation of 11 No. solar panels to be installed to the roof pitch of existing detached outbuilding. This application was received and forwarded to all Councillors on 10th July. The Parish Council did not comment on this application. The Clerk told the meeting that this application was granted on 17th July.

(c) Applications discussed at the meeting

No further applications had been received.

8. Highways

(a) Clerk to report on highway matters previously reported

Shropshire Council confirmed by e mail some time ago that that Keir would be instructed to erect the Not Suitable for HGV sign to be erected at the Picklescott end of Church Lane. This has still not be carried out.

At an earlier meeting Shropshire C'lr Dan Morris agreed that the stretch of road from Picklescott to Dorrington did need resurfaced and he would be pushing for this to be included in a future works programme.

The damaged railings on Church Road have still not been repaired but a road closure as shown below is planned for 11th - 12th September to enable this work to be carried out.

The Clerk reported the following road closures:-

- Bank Farm Junction to Red House Farm Junction Picklescott – road closure 11th - 12th September for vehicle barrier repair. Circulated to all Councillors on 16th July.
- Elms lane, Little Stretton -21st - 23rd August – Severn Trent Water Hydrant Rebuild Chamber . Circulated to all Councillors on 2nd June.
- Pole Cottage to Asterton – road closure 24th August – Open Reach replacing decayed BT pole. Circulated to all Councillors 22nd June.

(b) Any further highway issues to be reported

C'llr Ecob continues to make all reports on "FixMyStreet".

(c) Environmental Maintenance work

The Clerk told the meeting that the £1,500 Environmental Maintenance Grant for 2023/24 has now been received.

9. Finance

9.1 Accounts due for payment

The following accounts are due for payment:-

Clerk salary and expenses June/July, including the £47.88 the Clerk had paid to Unlimited Web Hosting for web site hosting from 3rd June - 2nd June 2024.

The claim totalled £537.96 Cheque No. 000514

HMRC Tax due on Clerk's salary £118.60 Cheque No. 000515

It was proposed by C'llr Dale, seconded by C'llr Burton and unanimously agreed that the above accounts be paid.

9.2 Balance held at Bank

The Clerk circulated a bank reconciliation.

After payment of the above accounts, the balance at bank is £7,947.35. This includes the following sums:- . .

CIL	£ 379.09
EMG Match Funding	£1,500.00
SCC EMG	£1,500.00
Neighbourhood Fund	£1,041.43
Actual PC Balance	£ 3,526.83

It was proposed by C'llr Starns, seconded by C'llr Morris and unanimously agreed that the bank statement and the bank reconciliation provided a true financial record. The Chairman then signed the bank statement and the bank reconciliation.

(c) Confirmation of Exempt Status 2022/23 Accounts

The clerk told the meeting that she had received confirmation of Exempt status from PKF Littlejohn LLP on 10th June 2023.

10. Shropshire Council Report

C'llr D Morris reported the following:-

- The Shropshire Councillor for Worfield has resigned and a by election will take place in September. He had Cabinet responsibility for Highways and Planning which was a heavy workload. This is now being split and C'llr

Morris told the meeting that he now had Cabinet responsibility for Highways and had the remit to look at progress with the North West Relief road.

- Highways repairs are now changing and rather than one contractor carrying out all repairs they are looking at the internal market and using local contractors, which has resulted in savings.
- Shropshire Council have to identify £51m of savings this year. To date £19m has been identified.
- The result of the Boundary Review will be known in September this year and will come into force in May 2025.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting Wednesday 27th September commencing at 7.30pm.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.20pm