

**MINUTES OF
ALL STRETTON, SMETHCOTT AND WOOLSTASTON PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING
held at Picklescott Village
Wednesday 27th November 2024**

Present

C'Ilr Starns, C'Ilr Morris, C'Ilr Phillips (Vice Chairman)
Shropshire C'Ilr R Houghton
Four members of the public attended the meeting .
Clerk : Mrs J Griffiths

Apologies

C'Ilr Dale (Chairman) and C'Ilr Hibbot-Morris had sent apologies
Shropshire C'Ilr D Morris sent apologies as he had another meeting

1. Chairman's Introduction

The Vice Chairman, C'Ilr Phillips took the Chair. welcomed everyone to the meeting

2. Declarations of Interest

The Vice Chairman reminded everyone to declare any interest in any items where they thought they have an interest. No declarations of interest were received.

3. Public Comments

A member of the public asked if the Parish Council could help with the maintenance of the stream as the culvert in Picklescott could not cope with the flow of the stream and after the recent heavy rainfall this was causing flooding in the centre of the village. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Shropshire Council.

Another member of the public asked for an additional grit box on the bank on the road from Dorrington as you approach Picklescott. The Clerk agreed to obtain a map showing the position of the grit boxes in the Parish and the Parish Council can then carry out a review of the position of the boxes in the parish.

Other highway issues were reported and are shown in Item 8.

C'Ilr R Houghton introduced herself to the meeting and explained that following the elections in May 2025 our Parishes moved move from Burnell to Bishops Castle, where she hopes to be re-elected.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 25th September 2024

It was proposed by C'Ilr Morris, seconded by C'Ilr Starns and unanimously agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 25th September provided a true and accurate record of the meeting. The Vice Chairman then signed a copy of the Minutes .

5. Matters Arising (not included on the Agenda)

There were no matters arising not covered on the agenda.

6. Correspondence

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

- Letter from resident received on 30th October and forwarded to all Councillors on 31st October. Also enclosed was a newspaper cutting praising a farmer who cleared a fallen tree from the highway.
- The Clerk had been handed a copy of the Bishops Castle Division Focus Magazine Summer/Autumn 2024 and a copy of the Picklescott Area Focus
- Clerk and Councils Direct Magazine November
- SA:LC informing Parish Councils that the SALC fee for 2025//26 would increase by 5p per elector. Which will mean around £10 increase for this Parish Council..
- SALC have advised that election charges for the May 2025 elections are likely to be £2.30 per elector.
- SALC consultation on remote meetings which closes on 19th December

7 Planning

Applications previously discussed

21/03794/ENF Alleged Breach of Planning Permission

The Clerk received a report that an alleged breach of planning permission had taken place at the property known as The Retreat, Lower Wood. The application approved was for a single garage with annex ancillary to main dwelling. It was reported to the Clerk that the North elevation which showed the garage doors on the plan approved has only two small windows. The South elevation has a large picture window and the finish is unmistakably that of a dwelling. The Clerk made a report to planning enforcement on 14th August and the Enforcement notice issued on 16th August. The Clerk told the September meeting that she had received a reply from Planning Enforcement dated 27th September. The letter stated that the work had been carried out as per planning permission (ref 21/03704/FUL). Minor amendments have been made to the structure to comply with fire regulations and no further permission is required. This letter was forwarded to all Councillors on 27th September.

(b) Clerk to report on application received between meetings

No applications were received between meetings

(c) Applications discussed at the meeting

24/04306/LBC The Gate House, Picklescott

Alterations to boundary fence. This application was received and sent to all Councillors on 15th November. It was proposed by C'Ilr Starns, seconded by C'Ilr Phillips and agreed that the Parish Council would not comment on this application.

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 been carried out at the time of the September, 2023 meeting. This had been continually chased up by C'Ilr D Morris and the Clerk. It was agreed at the November meeting that this has now been erected.

C'Ilr Burton told the July meeting that she had reported that the road from Leebotwood to High Park has many potholes and although she has reported

on FixMyStreet nothing has been done. This road is well used by locals and visitors accessing the Longmynd. C'llr Ecob would also be asked to make a report on FixMyStreet. This work has still not been carried out. The Clerk agreed to report again.

C'llr Burton told the September meeting that the white lines need replacing at High Park crossroads and also at the crossroads for Smethcott off the Picklescott to Dorrington road. Again, C'llr Ecob would be asked to make a report on FixMyStreet. This work has still not been carried out. The Clerk agreed to report again.

C'llr Ecob was unable to attend the September meeting. On the day of the meeting he forwarded an e mail from a resident regarding potholes on Smethcott Bank. The work recently carried out to repair potholes has missed a large running gully down the right hand side of the road. He had attached photographs. C'llr Ecob reported this on FixMyStreet and the resident had also copied Shropshire C'llr Dan Morris into the e mail sent to C'llr Ecob.

C'llr Burton was unable to attend the September meeting. She had sent an e mail to the Clerk asking her to raise the state of the highway from Mynderley through Dead Man's Hollow up to the crossroads. There are so many potholes and bad road surface. C'llr Burton felt there were too many potholes to report on FixMyStreet and this would further deteriorate in the winter months. The Clerk had passed this to Shropshire C'llr Dan Morris and C'llr Ecob. The state of the highway in Deadmans Hollow was discussed again at the November Meeting. In public comments members of the public also commented on the state of the road, particularly following the recent heavy rainfall when debris was washed on to the highway. This had been cleared by C'llr Dale and reports made to Shropshire Council. The Clerk agreed to contact Shropshire Council to ask when this road would be repaired as it is almost unusable.

Road closures reported at the November Meeting:-

- The road from the A49 to Lower Wood was closed due to a collapsed culvert. It is unclear when this road will be reopened.
- Unnamed road Medlicott. This road closure has been extended until 25th March, 2025. The notice of the extension was received and forwarded to all Councillors on 10th October.

(b) Any further highway issues to be reported

The Clerk was asked to contact Shropshire Council to ask when a permanent solution would be carried to avoid the flooding by New Hall Farm on the Dorrington to Picklescott road. This has been reported many times throughout recent years and the Chairman and other Councillors have attended site visits with members of Shropshire Council Highways team. C'llr Dale continues to carry out work to avoid serious flooding but a more permanent solution is required..

(c) Environmental Maintenance work

C'llr Dale is continually clearing gullies in the parish and attempts to keep on top of flooding in the Parish. In the recent heavy rainfall he had worked all weekend and estimated that he had removed around 200 tons of large boulders and debris washed onto the highway, particularly in Deadmans

Hollow. The Clerk told the meeting that she had contacted Shropshire Council outlining the work undertaken but this had not been acknowledged.

9. Finance

(a) Accounts due for payment

The following cheques were due for payment:-

Tax due on Clerk's salary £125.60 cheque No 000541

Clerk's salary and expenses £517.00. Cheque No. 000542

It was proposed by Phillips, seconded by C'lr Starns and unanimously agreed that the above accounts be paid.

The Clerk told the meeting that SALC have now circulated the 2024 pay award for Clerks with effect from 1st April 2024. This shows a pro rata increase of £1,290 for part time employees for pay points 2 – 43. This means an increase of £139.46 per annum for the Clerk. It was proposed by C'lr Phillips, seconded by C'lr Morris and unanimously agreed that the increase will be included with the January salary plus £92.96p back pay for the period April – November. .

(b) Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk circulated the Bank reconciliation showing a balance held at bank, after payment of the above accounts, amounting to £5,679.86.

It was proposed by C'lr Phillips, seconded by C'lr Starns and unanimously agreed that this provided a true and accurate financial record. The Bank reconciliation was then signed by the Vice Chairman.

(c) Bank Mandate Additional Signatories

At this time the signatories on the account are the Chairman, Jeremy Dale, Councillor Jo Burton and the Clerk. The Clerk told the meeting that Chairman has indicated that he is not likely to re-stand in the May 2025 elections and C'lr Burton has recently resigned as a parish councillor with immediate effect and there is a need to complete a new mandate to add additional signatories. Two signatures are required on cheques.

The Clerk had the mandate form and had spoken to TSB to say that as Wellington is our nearest branch it would not be possible for any new signatories to go into the branch to prove their identity. She had been informed that if the full address and e mail was given for additional signatories the bank would contact the individuals, and they could upload their identity on online.

It was unanimously agreed that Councillors Starns, Phillips and Morris would be added as signatories on the account. The mandate was completed, and the Clerk handed the individual forms for personal details to each of the Councillors asking them to complete their personal details and return the form to the Clerk. The mandate changes will then be forwarded to TSB for action.

10. Vacancy for a Parish Councillor

C'lr Chris Ecob, having moved from the Parish, has resigned as a Parish Councillor representing All Stretton Parish. The Clerk told the meeting that as he was due to retire and seek re-election in May 2025 the Parish Council are free to co-opt a person to fill this vacancy. The formal notice advertising a casual vacancy to serve until the May 2025 elections was prepared and put on village notice boards and on the web site on 14th November. The period for anyone to contact the Clerk to express an interest in filling this vacancy will expire on 4th December.

The Clerk told the meeting that a further vacancy has arisen as C'Ilr Jo Burton contacted the Clerk on 13th November and resigned as a Parish Councillor serving Woolstaston Parish with immediate effect.

The Clerk had prepared the formal notice advertising a casual vacancy to serve until the May elections was prepared and this is dated 28th November and will be placed on village notice boards and on the web site from that date. The period for anyone to contact the Clerk to express an interest in filling this vacancy will expire on 19th December.

11. Shropshire Council Report

C'Ilr Dan Morris had sent his apologies as he was unable to attend the meeting. The following day he forwarded the report shown below, which the Clerk then forwarded to all Councillors:-

Shropshire Council has published its second quarterly report for the year, detailing its financial position as of 30 September 2024, as part of the agenda for a Cabinet meeting on 20 November. The report shows a projected overspend of £35.1 million, marking a slight improvement on the projected position at the end of August. Whilst this could be covered by the council's £38.8m general fund reserves balance, this would leave funds for unforeseen emergencies as low as £3.7m. The council has published monthly finance reports since the start of the financial year, as it overcomes a challenge from increased demand and cost for services, especially in social care, like councils all over the country. Shropshire's position is made even more challenging by its rural geography, it costs more to deliver services when communities are spread across a large area. The council has carried out a number of its savings plans since the start of the financial year. This includes introducing a new charge for collecting garden waste, a booking system for household recycling centres, and moving out of its Shirehall headquarters in Shrewsbury.

A reminder that Shropshire householders need to subscribe to Shropshire Council's garden waste service if they want to continue having their garden bin emptied. More than 62,000 households in the Shropshire Council area have now signed up to the service, which came into effect Monday 4 November. Subscriptions cost £56 per bin and cover the period 4 November 2024 to 31 October 2025. A payment window is open until 31 March 2025 and people must sign up by this date if they want to have their bin emptied in the spring and summer months.

A new booking system for people wishing to visit any of Shropshire Council's five household recycling centres came into effect on Monday 4 November 2024. From 4th Nov those visiting the centres will need to book a slot in advance – and bookings can be made up to six days in advance. All residents living in the Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council areas will be able to book to visit one of the centres – located in Craven Arms, Bridgnorth, Oswestry, Shrewsbury and Whitchurch. Bookings will be able to be made online via the Shropshire Council website – or by phone by calling the council's customer services team. Bookings can be made for cars, and for vans/trailers. Fifteen-minute slots will be available for cars, with 30-minute slots (or 60 minutes at weekends) available for vans/trailers. The booking system will save Shropshire Council money by reducing the cost of disposing of trade waste, non-recyclable waste and waste from outside Shropshire. It will help to reduce congestion and queuing times, increase recycling as centre

staff will be able to better engage with visitors, and reduce the amount of trade waste taken to the centres.

Shropshire Council and Age UK Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin have urged people over the state pension age to check if they are eligible for pension credit, winter fuel payments and other benefits they may be entitled to. The call out follows the announcement of the closing date for applications on 21 December 2024. The payments from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) tops up pension income and can help with day-to-day living costs. Those over State Pension age, may be eligible to claim Pension Credit, even if they own their home or have savings. They could be eligible for Pension Credit if their weekly income is below £218.15 or, if they have a partner who lives with them, £332.95. Qualifying income level may be higher in some circumstances. People who claim Pension Credit may also be able to get:

- The Winter Fuel Payment and other help with heating costs
- Help with rent and Council Tax
- A free TV Licence for those aged 75 or over
- Help with the cost of NHS services, such as NHS dental treatment, glasses, and transport costs for hospital appointments.
- It is estimated that up to a third of pensioners (880,000) could be missing out on Pension Credit worth on average up to £3,900 per year.

Shropshire Council and its highways contractor Mutevo have won a second national highways award in a week, after scooping the prestigious Collaborative Partnership Award at the Department for Transport (DfT) Special Recognition Awards 2024. The Collaborative Partnership Award recognises the different ways that public and private sector are working together to improve the highways and transportation sector. Shropshire Council and Mutevo beat 22 other entries involving 123 organisations. The previous week the two organisations won the Highways Award for Team of the Year 2024.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 22nd January, 2025 commencing at 7.30pm.

The Clerk circulated the remaining 2025 meeting dates as follows:-

Wednesday 26th March Annual Meeting followed by Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday 28th May Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 23rd July

Wednesday 24th September

Wednesday 26th November.

C'llr Phillips took a copy of the 2025 meetings to hand to the Village Hall.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.30pm.