

ASTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Astley Parish Council, Wednesday 20th April 2022 7.30pm at Astley Village Hall

PRESENT

Councillors: K Lloyd, E Bedell, S Robinson, H Mardell

D Williams joined the Parish Council meeting, following co-option, agenda item 6.1.

Also Present:

G Power (Locum Clerk), Cllr Lezley Picton (Shropshire Council) Cllr Dean Carroll (Shropshire Council), Flt Lt. Stu Mason, 20 members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr Wheeler.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3. MINUTES OF ASTLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 16th March 2022 RESOLVED: Minutes approved.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were a significant number of the public present who indicated that they wished to speak, it was clear that the topic they wished to speak on was A53 road safety. Cllr Lloyd explained the Parish Council's procedure for public participation, stating that 30 minutes was allowed for this item, a maximum of 5 minutes per person and people were asked to avoid repeating anything previously said.

The first member of public to speak identified himself, saying that he had been a member of the Parish Council in 2014 when a Steering Group had been set up to look at traffic problems. Around this time the A53 had been resurfaced and the solid white lines had not been replaced. When questioned as to why the solid white lines had not been put back, Shropshire Council had told him that they were not needed. It was the view of this member of public that the solid white lines should be re-instated.

Members of the public continued to speak, identifying themselves, raising the following concerns and opinions:

Living right by the A53, this person felt that the 50mph advisory speed limit should, at the very least, be compulsory. They had to cross the A53 every time they needed to get to their farmland, which was at times a terrifying experience.

As a business owner of a driving school, this person had lots of experience of seeing overtaking on blind bends on the A53. His thoughts were that the speed limit on the A53 was either too fast, or the road was not wide enough for the current speed limit, and said that something desperately needed to be done, suggesting white lines /hatch.

A couple of residents mentioned that when an accident happens, traffic cuts through the back roads, at speed, ignoring diversion signs, causing danger to other road users.

Referring to an accident that had occurred earlier today, involving a lorry that had overturned, this resident stated that the camber on the road looks wrong, looks like it has sunk.

One resident said that he had raised his concerns over this road 6 years ago with Shropshire Council and had been told that they didn't think it was dangerous enough to investigate. This resident expressed his concern, saying that cars seem to be driving faster and faster.

A resident living in Astley Court suggested installing Average Speed Cameras and asked what they could do as a community to help.

A resident of Shawbury speaking as a friend of the family involved in the tragic recent accident, expressed his support in everything that had been said, saying that action was urgently needed.

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The Chairman expressed the Council's condolences to the family concerned in the accident.

A resident who identified himself as an ex-fire officer, put forward, as a minimum, that the data of accidents, before and after the white lines, should be examined.

Living in Upper Astley, this resident said that he had previously worked in Highways, in his opinion the road is sub-standard, when it was re-surfaced in 2014 it had been done cheaply, there is a double camber in the bend, half way through the bend it goes to a negative camber, he said that the camber needs to be positive all the way around the bend and double white lines need to be put back.

A resident living in Bings Heath for nearly 50 years, said that motorists drive fast through Bings Heath, cars go off the road into a ditch regularly as there is a steep drop at the side of the road. In one accident, a car had left the road and ended up crashing through the living room of her home.

The first resident to speak, spoke again to add that the A53 is listed as 'a black road' by Royal Mail (they have road safety concerns).

A member of the public spoke of the collapsed drain covers and hydrants on the road from Battlefield to Bings Heath saying that these had been reported to Shropshire Council some time ago but were still awaiting repairs. This resident also reported that the cross-roads sign at Astley has been obscured for some time, the lettering 'NHS' having been painted over the sign.

Bings Heath two words

The safety of cyclists was also raised as a concern.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their contribution and then brought forward Agenda Item 6.1.

6.1 Co-option

An application to join the Parish Council from Mr David Williams had previous been circulated to members. The application was considered by the Parish Council.

RESOLVED: That Mr David Williams be co-opted to Astley Parish Council.

Mr Williams then proceeded to sign his Acceptance of Office and joined the Parish Council Meeting.

5. UPDATE

5.2 Update from RAF Shawbury

A letter regarding forthcoming activities at RAF Shawbury had been previously received and circulated to members (appendix a).

Flt Lt Mason added that night flying will commence on 23rd May and will last until 16th September. New contact details for any complaints should be directed to: SHY-LowFlying@mod.gov.uk, tel. 01939 251712.

The Chairman brought forward Agenda Item. 6.6

6.6 A53 Road Safety

Cllr Lloyd stated that the Parish Council is extremely concerned about the road safety on the A53 and has been raising their concerns with Shropshire Council ever since it was resurfaced. Everything that has been said at this meeting will be taken into account.

Cllr Lloyd invited Cllr Picton to introduce Cllr Dean Carroll, Shropshire Council, Portfolio Holder for Highways and also Shropshire Councillor for the Battlefield area.

Cllr Carroll started by saying that the A53 statistics on accidents would not be accurate because not all accidents are reported, he said that Astley Parish Council have been very vocal with Cllr Picton, trying to get something done about the A53. Cllr Carroll expressed condolences to the

Signed by Chairman

family connected with the recent tragic accident on the A53, adding that he hoped that the Police will support a reduction in the speed limit.

Cllr Carroll explained that in the second half of last year, design contractors had been put together a solution to resolve the issues with the A53, between the Battlefield roundabout and Shawbury, this work was currently being done at an accelerated pace.

With regard to double white lines, Cllr Carroll explained that Highways Engineers follow strict guidance in the 'Manual for Streets'. Shropshire Council are now doing a thorough review of the Manual with regard to the guidance on double white lines and broken white lines and will also be looking at what other Councils are doing to their roads in similar situations.

Cllr Carroll stated that it was important that there is speed limit enforcement by the Police, if the speed limit were to be lowered and not enforced, the situation could end up more dangerous. Cllr Carroll urged members of the public to write to the Police, requesting the speed limit to be reduced and expressing their support in Shropshire Council, for the speed limit to be reduced between Battlefield and Bings Heath. The public were also urged to write to Cllr Picton, giving details of any personal experiences, including diversions/rat runs, email lezley.picton@shropshire.gov.uk

Cllr Carroll confirmed that Shropshire Council were carrying out a review of the A53, which included all signage, verges, road surface, manhole covers etc.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That a letter be sent to Shropshire Council, reiterating concerns of road safety.**
- 2. An email be sent to Cllrs Picton and Carroll, with points raised by the public at this meeting.**

5.1 Update from Shropshire Council

- Cllr Picton apologized for not being able to attend the previous meeting, before giving the following update:

Shropshire Council:
 - Did not get the 'Bus Back Better' grant that they had applied for but will be putting in a grant application for the 2nd allocation of funding
 - Have stepped in to support some of the services that have been cut by Arriva.
 - Came 7th Nationally in the allocation of funding they received from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. A significant amount of this funding will be used for supporting skills in green technology.
 - Are thrilled to receive a 'good' rating by Government Inspectors Ofsted, for Children's Services, this inspection is carried out every two years.
 - Shrewsbury swim project is on hold, going ahead with Whitchurch swim project.

6. OFFICIAL PARISH MATTERS

6.2 Annual Meetings –

The Chairman asked if Members would consider re-scheduling the date of the Annual Meeting of the Parish and Annual Meeting of the Parish Council (currently 18th May 2022), for personal reasons Cllr Lloyd would not be able to attend on 18th May. After discussion Members were in agreement to re-schedule the date of both meetings.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council be rescheduled to 7.30pm on 4th May 2022 and the Annual Meeting of Astley Parish be re-scheduled to 7pm on 4th May 2022.

6.3 Parish Council Insurance - Renewal 2022-23

Members discussed two quotes for the renewal of insurance for 2022-23, one received from Ghalliers (formally Came & Co), present insurers, and a quote from Zurich Insurers. The quote from Zurich was considerably less than the quote from Ghalliers.

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RESOLVED: To renew parish council insurance for 2022-23 with Zurich, at a cost of £241.

6.4 Joint Energy Contract (Street Lighting) – Renewal 2022-23

An email from Shropshire Council had been circulated to Members, giving details of renewal, total cost for the year £110.40 plus VAT. A short discussion took place.

RESOLVED: That the contract with Shropshire Council be renewed for 2022-23 at a cost of £110 + VAT.

6.5 Parish Council Asset Register

A draft copy of the Asset Register for 2022 had been circulated to Members. Discussion too place, it was noted that the telephone box light needed to be removed from the Asset register.

RESOLVED: Approved subject to removal of telephone box light. The Asset Register to be reviewed as assets are added.

6.7 Planning Application

Reference: 22/01477/FUL (validated: 28/03/2022)

Address: Vespadene, Astley, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY4 4BS

Proposal: Erection of a two storey extension to side and single storey extension to rear

Applicant: Mr and Miss Dan and Charlie McCulloch and Dorricott (Vespadene , Upper Astley, Shropshire, Shrewsbury, SY4 4BS)

A brief conversation took place, Members had no comments on the planning application.

RESOLVED: No comments.

7. PARISH ACCOUNTS –RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS TO NOTE/APPROVE

Payments

22.4.2022 – £63.40 HMRC Locum Clerk April 2022 tax on salary

22.4.2022 - £271.80 G Power Locum Clerk salary April 2022

The Locum Clerk informed the meeting that expenses of £59.99 for purchase of Microsoft 365 License renewal was also outstanding and a payment needed to be set up to G Power for reimbursement of this sum.

RESOLVED: All above payments approved, including additional payment of £59.99 to G Power (Locum Clerk) for re-imburement of sum paid for purchase of Microsoft 365 License renewal fee for 2022-23.

8. COUNCILLORS REPORTS

8.1 Correspondence Received

Letter from RAF Shawbury outlining activities between May 2022 – Nov 2022 (appendix a.)
Cllr Lloyd read the letter aloud to the meeting.

9. CLERK'S REPORT

The Locum Clerk reported that Dianne Dorrell, the newly appointed Clerk to Astley PC, had confirmed a start date of 1st May 2022.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

4th May 2022 – 7pm Annual Parish Meeting, 7.30pm Annual Meeting of Astley Parish Council.7

The meeting was closed at 9.30pm.

Signed by Chairman