

GREAT WYRLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF GREAT WYRLEY PARISH COUNCIL held at Great Wyrley Community Centre, Landywood Lane, Great Wyrley which commenced at 7.00 p.m. on Wednesday 8TH November, 2023.

Present:

**(Chairman)
Cllr. J. C. Jones**

Cllr. A. J. Kelsey Cllr. A. Newell Cllr. D. Norris Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE	Cllr. R. J. Perry Cllr. Mrs. C. Whiston-Taylor Cllr. Mrs. S. M. Wood
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Also in attendance was Parish Clerk (Mrs. S. McGlue).

65/2023 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Cllr. Mrs. O. Brazier, Cllr. M. Jackson and Cllr. D. F. W. Norris.

66/2023 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE had a standing interest in any items relating to planning applications on the basis that she represents Locality 3 at South Staffordshire Council's Planning Committee meetings, and would, therefore, not vote on any planning matters brought before the Parish Council.

67/2023 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Parish Council resolved that the Chairman be requested to accept, approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 4th October, 2023 and the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 26th October, 2023. It was carried. The following discussion took place prior to the authorisation of the minutes and Cllr. D. Norris abstained from giving his approval for the following reasons:-

Prior to the Parish Council making the above resolution, Cllr. D. Norris advised the Parish Council that he did not agree that the content of the minutes was accurate as a number of items had not been reported on. Cllr. Norris also advised the meeting that his comments had been reported under the heading of Outside Bodies and he was not an Outside Body. The Chairman explained that Cllr. Norris had addressed the Parish Council during the Outside Bodies Agenda Item and that was why his observations had appeared under that heading. This was noted.

Cllr. Norris then challenged the contents of the minutes in terms of the matters which he had referred to which included encroachments into Great Wyrley Cemetery. Two of these issues were being dealt with by Southern Staffordshire Legal Partnership; however, Cllr. Norris had raised a third issue and received an explanation from the Chairman that the item which had not been recorded referred to the item raised which was not on the agenda to be discussed or under a general matter arising. This was noted.

Cllr. Norris then requested that the matter be included on the agenda at the next meeting of the Parish Council. The Chairman advised Cllr. Norris that this was not a subject which would be debated by the Parish Council. By way of clarification the Clerk explained that the Parish Council had taken the decision to not enter into any discussion on this particular subject and that resolution had not been

rescinded, accordingly the decision still applied. This was noted by Members.

With regard to the minutes of the Mid Term Audit and Governance Committee meeting held on 26th October, 2023. Cllr. Norris challenged the fact that Cllr. R. Perry was present at the meeting but was not voted on to that Committee at the Annual General Meeting in May. This was noted.

The Chairman explained that any Member of the Parish Council was entitled to attend that meeting should they have wished to and taken part in the discussion including Cllr. D. Norris. The meeting was open to the public and it was at the discretion of the Chairman who spoke at such a meeting. This was noted.

68/2023 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman reminded the Parish Council that there would be a service of Remembrance held at The Memorial Gardens on Sunday 12th November, however, there would not be a Remembrance Day Parade this year as it had not been possible for the Royal British Legion to secure either a road closure or a Police presence on this occasion. Accordingly, concerns had been raised by the Scout and Guide Organisations for the safety of the young people in their charge. However, those wishing to be part of the Remembrance Event would muster either at the Church or on the land to the rear of the Memorial Gardens. This was noted by Members.

69/2023 **STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE SERVICE**

The PCSOs for Great Wyrley were unable to attend on this occasion, accordingly a copy of the Police Report had been circulated to all Members. This was noted.

70/2023 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow the Parish Council to be addressed by Members of the public.

There were several members of the public present in the gallery on this occasion, a number of which had attended with the intention of making their views known on the consultation presently in progress by Stone Bond Properties. The consultation related to a proposed residential development on land to the north of Pool View, Great Wyrley.

There were a number of issues raised against this development which included the view that additional building would exacerbate the traffic issues already being experienced. This would have a really bad effect on parking problems and possibly put access to other properties at risk for emergency services. Additional houses were going to be built on flood plain and would make the flooding problems worse as the drainage was inadequate and more building would impact badly on the existing infrastructure. One resident asserted that the amount of traffic which would be generated would have terrible affect on the surrounding area.

Another member of the public also drew members' attention to the surrounding areas which had been flooded in the past.

The Chairman advised the member of the public that he sympathised with the issues which had been raised. The Chairman then explained that this proposal had been included in the Local Plan, which was agreed in 2018, and it was unfortunate that Staffordshire County Council (Highways) had not objected to this proposal at the outset which he felt was a blow in terms of traffic generation.

Cllr. Mrs. C. Whiston-Taylor suggested that the access to the development should come directly off the A5 and also advised the meeting that there should be a "face to face" consultation which was not internet based, as many people were

uncomfortable with dealing with everything on line. It was felt that if a face to face consultation was to take place it needed to be carried out prior to the planning application being lodged with the Local Planning Authority.

The first member of the public who had spoken then requested if there was any way that a developer could be made to put things right should everyone's concerns prove to be true "after the event".

Another member of the public was very concerned that there would not be enough school placements for an additional 50 families. Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE explained that consultation in this regard was part of the planning process and would be determined as part of the application. This was noted.

The Clerk was instructed to put forward the view that the Parish Council supported the issues raised by the public.

A member of the public advised the Parish Council that he had attended the Community Centre on Wednesday 1st November and there was no meeting. The member of the public asked the Chairman the reason for this. The Chairman explained to the member of the public that it had been agreed at the 4th October meeting (at which the resident concerned had been present) that the November meeting was to be postponed until the following week.

The same member of the public complained that Cllr. R. J. Perry should not have been present at the Audit and Governance Committee because he had not been appointed to that Committee at the Annual General Meeting. The Clerk advised the meeting that this was because Cllr. R. J. Perry was co-opted onto the Parish Council at the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting in May, 2023 and automatically took his place back on the Audit and Governance Committee.

The member of the public who had raised this issue was advised by the Chairman that it was now the Parish Council's standing policy that any member of the Council was entitled to attend and take part in any of its meetings, should they so wish. This was noted. This explanation was followed by a further expression of disagreement from the member of the public concerned, however, in terms of the business being transacted at the meeting its content bore no relevancy and accordingly was not recorded.

The Chairman reinstated Standing Orders and continued with the business of the meeting.

71/2023 CLERK'S REPORTS

(a) Interim sign off - Parish Council Accounts 2023/24

In accordance with the recommendations of the Annual Governance and Audit Committee it now fell to the Parish Council to review its income and expenditure on a half yearly basis. The figures which had been provided to Members for scrutiny represented the financial situation from 1st April, 2023 to 30th September, 2023. Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** to accept the figures as presented. It was carried.

(b) Review of Community Centre Alarm System

As Members were aware by 2025, traditional landline phones, using 100-year-old technology, were set to be switched off in favour of a digital network fit for the modern era. This would apply to both home and business phone lines, so as the Parish Council was still relying on analogue equipment, plans were now in place to both upgrade the internet provider and to source quotes for a new alarm system.

The Clerk had contacted Virgin Media for fibre broadband and had contacted ADT Security for a quote for an alarm system. Cllr. J. C. Jones had also provided details for the system outlined at the last meeting of the Parish Council to enable an informed decision to be made in due course.

The Clerk advised the meeting she had now met with a representative of ADT Security who had provided the Parish Council with a quotation to take over the management of the alarm system as from 1st December. This quotation included a fee of £450.00 per annum to have an independent organisation act as key holders to the premises. This was noted.

The Clerk took this opportunity to explain to the Parish Council that when the alarm activated, the monitoring system operator would telephone the independent key holder who would then attend the site and secure the premises if necessary. This was noted.

If no intrusion had actually taken place the Parish Council would receive an email the next morning stating that there had been a call out. Three call outs were included in the annual fee of £450. Any additional call-outs would cost in the region of £60.00 per call. Utilisation of this option would remove the responsibility from the Parish Council staff or Councillors completely. This was noted.

Members were made aware that this would not be the case should the Parish Council choose to install its own security system which would require a dedicated member of staff or Councillor to take responsibility in times of intruder situations. This was noted.

ADT Security had also advised the Parish Council that the alarm would not be affected in any way by the WiFi signal. Apparently the alarm worked on a two pronged approach which involved a mobile phone signal and not an internet signal.

ADT had also advised the Parish Council that it was able to set any price given for a period of three years. ADT were also offering the Parish Council a contract which included maintenance and would negate the need to carry on paying call-out charges three or four times per year.

Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** to accept the quotation by ADT Security which would commence on 1st December, 2023. It was carried.

(c) Parish Council Senior Citizen's Christmas Lunch

Members were already aware that the date had been set for the Christmas Lunch on 8th December, 2023. There was to be one sitting and Whitehouse Catering had been booked to provide the catering. At last year's costs this was set at approximately £12.80 per head. This included the majority of the crockery, cutlery etc. being taken off site to be commercially dishwashed.

It now fell to the Parish Council to set its subsidy for the Christmas Event in order to allow for sale of the tickets and for other arrangements to be clarified. One of which was "would the event be open to non-residents" and if so what ticket price needed to be applied in those circumstances. For Members information historically non-residents had been charged the full cost price for the meal.

The Parish Council had now received the very competitive quote from Whitehouse Catering of £14.00 per head and an additional £50 would cover the attendance of two servers from Whitehouses to be in attendance on the day. Cllr. Mrs. Perry had also secured the removal of the used crockery by 4.00p.m. on the day of the

event. This was noted.

Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** that the event would be open to all diners wishing to attend for the same ticket price of £10 per head. It was carried.

Cllr. A. J. Kelsey advised the meeting that the Carnival Committee would again be providing wine and crackers for the diners. This was noted by Members.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Kelsey for the kind donation of the Carnival Committee towards the event.

(d) Christmas Lights

Members were already aware that there had been an element of confusion regarding the Christmas Lights for 2023/24. Unfortunately, as the Parish Council's existing supplier did not have the benefit of a HERS Certificate it was not possible for them to carry out the required works this year.

The Clerk advised the Parish Council meeting that a HERS registration is an accreditation which all organisations which wished to work within the highway electrical sector must be registered to otherwise no permission is given to attach any structure whatsoever to a lighting column. The original supplier was fully aware of the need for this registration and had chosen not to pursue the matter accordingly, the Parish Council was left with no other choice than to find a new supplier with the relevant registration at extremely short notice.

The cost implication of procuring a new supplier would result in increased cost, however, the following figure was to include the stress testing of the lighting columns to be used; this task had previously involved the payment of an additional £800 - £1000 to a separate contractor. The Clerk advised the meeting that the lights would cost in the region of £7,000 rather than was originally thought nearer to £10,000. Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE advised the meeting that this amount of money would not be vastly different from the amount which the Parish Council would have spent on the Annual Bonfire Event and the budget already in earmarked funds to pay the original contractor for Christmas Lights.

It was proposed by Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE and seconded by Cllr. J. C. Jones that that the Parish Council accepts the quotation on the basis that the Christmas Lights were very much appreciated by the residents and the Parish Council did not wish to disappoint the residents in this regard.

Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** to accept the quotation by Turnock Limited to provide, install and store the Christmas Lights and noted that this price also included the stress testing of the lighting columns. The Clerk explained that Cheslyn Hay Parish Council was in the same position this year in terms of Christmas Lights and had employed the same new contractor.

Cllr. Mrs. S. M. Wood also suggested that the Parish Council might wish to consider the idea of holding a Christmas Decoration Competition to run in conjunction with the Christmas Lights which would be installed for the Parish Council. This was noted by Members.

(e) Projects for Inclusion in Earmarked Resources

The Clerk had been unable to secure any confirmed costings for the items which had been put forward at the present time. Accordingly, these items could be discussed and a decision made once the relevant financial implications can be determined.

The main suggestions at present were:

- Parish Council Play Areas
- New Partition Doors between the Main Hall and The Lounge
- New chairs for use in the Main Hall

The Chairman invited the Parish Council to contact the Clerk with any other projects they would like to be considered.

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE advised the meeting that Outdoor Gyms needed to be added to the list for consideration. This was noted.

(f) External Drainage – Community Centre

Members were already aware that a member of the public had requested that this item be added to the agenda for the next meeting of the Parish Council.

For Members information the Clerk had advised Members that the resident who raised this question was mistaken in his assertion that the Parish Council had never made any attempt to investigate any improvements to the drainage system at the Community Centre since the present Clerk had been in the Parish Council's employment. The following report had been circulated to all Members of the Parish Council.

"A complete investigation was carried out into the drainage situation by Staffordshire County Council and an independent survey was also carried out in 2013.

Following the flooding incident which took place in 2018 further investigations were carried out which included a site survey which was attended by Cllr. J. C. Jones, Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE, Cllr. R. Perry and Cllr. A. J. Kelsey. Mr. A. Brett, (Principal Flood Risk Engineer - Staffordshire County Council - South Team Leader - Covering Cannock District, Lichfield District, South Staffordshire, Walsall MBC, Wolverhampton, Sandwell MBC and Dudley MBC - LLFA Role) led the investigation into this matter along with a representative of Severn Trent Water.

This exercise revealed that there were a number of factors which needed to be included in any amelioration of the problems being experienced in this area, none of which bore any relevance to the size of the drainage outlets associated with Great Wyrley Community Centre.

In reality the size of the drainage outlets at Great Wyrley Community Centre have no bearing on the situation at all and the Parish Council's assertion that Aco drainage fitted to the main car park would alleviate this problem was deemed to be of no value as it was the main drainage system which needed to be reviewed. The Parish Council also researched the possibility of raising the kerb between the main highway and the car park, also incorporating a ramp which it was thought would both contain and divert the overflow from the main highway.

Suffice it to say that following a thorough investigation by Staffordshire County Council and Severn Trent Water the decision was made that a much larger project needed to be formulated and presented to DEFRA along with a business plan. This task was carried out and driven by Andrew Brett. This course of action took the matter out of the hands of Great Wyrley Parish Council and accordingly, a number of public meetings were held jointly with Severn Trent and Staffordshire County Council.

This is not to say that the Parish Council took no action to protect Great Wyrley Community Centre from flooding. This is evidenced by the low brick wall which

was constructed between the Landywood Lane Playing Field and the grounds of Great Wyrley Community Centre. However, the resident who has raised this issue is adamant that this is not the issue he is referring to.

For Members information the project which is now in the hands of DEFRA is being funded by DEFRA and also involves the reconfiguration of Great Wyrley Brook. As Members are already aware, this matter has been fully discussed (each year) under projects which have been selected for earmarked funding. The larger project by DEFRA also led to the decision to transfer the earmarked funds for drainage works to a smaller project which aims to enhance the appearance of Great Wyrley Brook and will take place at the appropriate stage in the overall project."

The contents of the report was noted by Members and Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE gave Members a brief report on the main differences between the proposed enhancements to Wyrley Brook and the main project which was being both funded and managed by DEFRA. This was noted by Members.

(g) Assessment of Trees on Millennium Green

The Clerk advised the meeting that it had recently come to the notice of the Parish Council that some of the trees in its ownership located on Millennium Green were now extremely high. As these trees were not included in the assessment of trees which was carried out this year the Clerk requested authorisation to have the trees assessed and any works carried out should this prove necessary.

Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** to instruct the Clerk to have the trees on the Millennium Green assessed and secure any works required. It was carried.

(h) Parish Council Boundary with Landywood Lane Emergency Tree Works

The Clerk advised the meeting that it had recently come to the Parish Council's attention that one of the trees on the boundary between Landywood Lane and the Playing Field was extremely overgrown and was obscuring the lighting column. As the Parish Council had the responsibility for the tree in question and also a responsibility to the residents of the Parish to protect their safety the Clerk requested Members' authorisation to contact the Parish Council's contracted Tree Surgeon to carry out the necessary work.

Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** to instruct the Clerk to have the tree on the boundary of Landywood Playing Field and Landywood Lane assessed and secure any works required. It was carried.

(i) Compromised Railings at Great Wyrley Cemetery

As Members were already aware the owner of the property adjoining the driveway to the Cemetery took unauthorised action by cutting off the supporting stanchions to a section of the Cemetery Railings. As Members were also aware this matter was now in the hands of the Southern Staffordshire Shared Legal Services Partnership.

The Clerk advised the meeting that as things stood at the present time Webb Outdoors had very kindly offered to provide the labour to stabilise the railings and in addition to this, was presently in the process of fabricating a set of ironworks which could be utilised to stabilise the railings without needing to be set at an oblique angle which would compromise the width of the Cemetery Drive. The Parish Council would, of course, be responsible for any costs involved in the fabrication which was being carried out by an independent source. These works

were expected to be carried out in the near future. The fabrication of the posts had come to a total of £560.00.

The Parish Council **resolved** to accept the kind offer of Webb Outdoors to provide the labour free of charge and agreed to the expenditure involved of £560 to ensure that the railings were made safe and no longer a danger to the public.

72/2023 **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE advised the meeting that she did not have a great deal to report on this occasion.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry explained that she had now presented the petition regarding the use of Shaws Lane by heavy goods vehicles compiled by residents of Shaws Lane to Staffordshire County Council. Cllr. Mrs. Perry had asked the petition to be put before the Freight Forum and this matter was being monitored. Cllr. Mrs. Perry reiterated the fact that it was not only Shaws Lane which was being abused in this way. This was noted.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry advised the meeting that the County Council was currently having their Children's services reviewed and of course it should be recognised that the number of children being cared for by the County Council, which used to be in the early hundreds was now over 1000. This was noted by Members.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry also advised the meeting that it was her understanding that the area from the Tesco Garage to Meadowbank Grange at Cheslyn Hay was to be closed in the near future for maintenance works to be carried out. This was expected to cause considerable disruption to traffic in both parishes and was thought to be commencing at the beginning of December. This was noted by Members.

72/2023 **DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE advised the meeting that the District Council had recently carried out a Residents' Survey, the responses to which would be published in due course.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry also reminded Members of the item which she had reported on at an earlier meeting relating to Heritage Assets. The following assets were put forward to be included in the list of properties to be protected.

- The Swan Public House
- The Pump in Wharwell Lane
- The Star Public House
- The Institute on the corner of Norton Lane
- St. Mark's Church
- St. Andrew's Church
- Streets Lane Chapel
- The Old Vicarage behind St. Marks
- The Old School

Cllr. Mrs. Perry gave Members brief resume of the situation including the details of the Heritage Sink Fund. This was noted by Members. Members were to consider this issue when setting the Parish Council budget for the forthcoming financial year.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry asked Councillors to give some thought to this proposal prior to the meeting when the precept was to be set. This was noted.

73/2023 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCILLORS

CLLr. Mrs. S. M. Wood advised the meeting that she had recently been advised that a resident of Bentons Lane had been in the company of Sir Gavin Williamson MP and that he had been made aware of all the problems being experienced due to the level of commercial traffic in Bentons Lane.

CLLr. Mrs. Wood also advised the meeting that the lighting columns had now been replaced with the exception of the lighting column outside No. 55 Bentons Lane which had not been replaced because there was a vehicle parked in the way.

The Clerk was instructed to contact various organisations including Housing Plus and South Staffordshire Council with a request that arrangements be made to avoid this situation happening again by carrying out at least some degree of liaison prior to arranging for works to be carried out.

74/2023 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from outside bodies on this occasion.

75/2023 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

23/00794/FULHH – PART TWO STOREY, PART SINGLE STOREY SIDE AND REAR EXTENSION AT REAR OF 115 WALSALL ROAD, GREAT WYRLEY. THE PARISH COUNCIL HAD NO OBJECTION TO THIS APPLICATION BUT RESERVED THE RIGHT TO SUPPORT NEIGHBOUR OBJECTIONS SHOULD THIS BE REQUIRED

23/00776/FULHH - TWO STOREY AND SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION TO EXISTING BUNGALOW AT 494 WALSALL ROAD, GREAT WYRLEY – THE PARISH COUNCIL HAD NO OBJECTION TO THIS APPLICATION BUT RESERVED THE RIGHT TO SUPPORT NEIGHBOUR OBJECTIONS SHOULD THIS BE REQUIRED.

23/00804/FULHH – DEMOLITION OF EXISTING SIDE GARAGE AND REAR GARDEN ROOM AND ERECTION OF NEW TWO STOREY EXTENSION AT 15 HUT HILL LANE, GREAT WYRLEY THE PARISH COUNCIL STRONGLY OBJECTED TO THIS DEVELOPMENT. MEMBERS FULLY SUPPORTED ALL THE OBJECTIONS WHICH HAD ALREADY BEEN SUBMITTED BY THE RESIDENTS OF HUT HILL LANE ON THE BASIS THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT WOULD HAVE A VERY DETRIMENTAL AFFECT ON THE AMENITY OF NEARBY PROPERTIES.

CLLR. MRS. K. M. PERRY MBE AND CLLR. R. J. PERRY DECLARED AN INTEREST IN APPLICATION 23/00804/FULHH AND DID NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THE DETERMINATION OF THE PROPOSAL.

23/00707/FULHH – APPLICATION TO DROP A KERB OUTSIDE NO. 7 NORTON LANE, GREAT WYRLEY TO ALLOW ACCESS TO NEW DRIVE. THE PARISH COUNCIL HAD NO OBJECTION THIS PROPOSAL.

76/2023 REPORT OF OUTSTANDING ACCOUNTS

A report on the outstanding accounts for authorisation for payment was presented to Council and it was **resolved** that the report be accepted, approved and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 8.25 p.m.

Chairman.....Date.....