

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 4th September, 2024.

Present:

**(Chairman)
Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE**

Cllr. Mrs. O. Brazier Cllr. M. Jackson Cllr. J. C. Jones Cllr. A. J. Kelsey	Cllr. A. Newell 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)

33/2024 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Cllr. D. Norris (Snr.) and Cllr. D. Norris (Jnr.).

34/2024 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.

35/2024 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** to accept, approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3rd July, 2024. It was carried.

36/2024 MINUTES OF AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** to accept the recommendations included in the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee dated 6th August 2024 and accordingly, approved and signed the minutes as a correct record of the proceedings. It was carried.

37/2024 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

INOPERATIVE DEFIBRILATOR AT GREAT WYRLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Chairman advised the meeting that she was sure that Members had noticed that the Defibrillator attached to the Community Centre had not been in operation for a short while. The Chairman felt it most important that Members should be made aware that this was due to no fault of the Parish Councils. The Defibrillator at The Centre was one which was on loan from the Community Heartbeat Trust (the original device having been taken away by the Ambulance Service following an incident). Unfortunately the device needs to have a new part fitted before it would be able to work effectively again. Even more unfortunate was the fact that the part required was exceptionally difficult to source and the Community Heart Beat Trust was still in the process of tracking one down. The Chairman also advised the meeting that Great Wyrley Parish was by no means the only Parish in this situation. This was noted by Members.

STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE ORGANISATION

The Chairman advised the meeting that she was sure that everyone present was

very concerned at the number of incidents which had taken place in the Parish over the previous five days, all of which appeared to involve arson attacks. The Chairman advised the meeting that this situation had now been resolved and that hopefully the situation would now calm down. This was noted by Members.

The Chairman advised the meeting that she had received an email from The Deputy Commander of South Staffordshire Local Policing Team giving the Parish Council much reassurance and Cllr. Mrs. Perry was to invite Inspector Lee Walker to attend a Parish Council meeting so that he could share this message with all concerned. This was noted by all present.

In conclusion the Chairman advised the meeting that she had spoken to Chief Inspector Norbury regarding how disappointed the Parish Council Members were that they would no longer be receiving the normal monthly Police Report. Inspector Norbury had now sent the Parish Council a very comprehensive report which covered a twelve month period. A copy of the Confidential Report had been circulated to all Members of the Council for their information.

38/2024 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders in order to allow the members of the public in the gallery to address the meeting.

There were several residents from Shaws Lane in the Public Gallery on this occasion, all of whom had attended with the intention of ensuring that the Parish Council was aware that the situation with regard to the number of HGV's which were constantly using Shaws Lane had worsened considerably. The situation was thought to have been exacerbated by the works taking place in Holly Lane.

One member of the party in attendance from Shaws Lane asked the Chairman when the Budget Meeting, which would make the decision to include Shaws Lane Weight Restriction Notices would be held.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry explained that she had spoken with Mr. M. Keeling of Staffordshire County Council who had incidentally, advised her that he would not be able to be present on this occasion and requested her to advise the residents that it was very useful that they were submitting photographic evidence of the situation as this would undoubtedly assist with making a good case when the meeting was actually held which would be December/January. If the proposal was supported it would be delivered from the twelve month period commencing in April, 2025. This was noted.

One of the members of the public also advised the meeting that the temporary sign had been knocked over on that day and Cllr. Mrs. Perry responded that she would ensure that this situation was reported to Highways.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry thanked the residents of Shaws Lane for their attendance on this occasion and asked whether anyone had any additional issues they would like to raise with the Parish Council.

Cllr. Mrs. S. M. Wood advised the meeting that Bentons Lane was experiencing exactly the same issues and Cllr. A. J. Kelsey explained that Streets Lane was equally as bad. This was noted.

The Chairman advised the meeting that if Cllr. Mrs. Wood and Cllr. Kelsey were able to provide photographic evidence of these events, particularly if the company livery were to be visible, these were issues which she would be able to take to the Freight Forum. This was noted.

As no further questions were forthcoming from the Public Gallery the Chairman reinstated Standing Orders and recommenced the Parish Council meeting.

39/2024 CLERK'S REPORTS TO COUNCIL

(a) REQUEST FOR UPDATE ON SHAWS LANE ROAD SAFETY

As Members were already aware this matter had been fully discussed under the Public Participation Session of the meeting and no further discussion took place.

(b) Conclusion of Annual Audit 2023/24

As Members were already aware, the Parish Council Accounts were audited each year by the External Auditors, Forvis Mazars LLP. The External Auditors reviewed financial statements each year to ensure they were a 'true and fair' account of past financial performance and the current financial position. This task had now been carried out and Great Wyrley Parish Council Accounts had been signed off without any issues raised whatsoever. This was noted by Members.

The Chairman took this opportunity to give a vote of thanks to the Parish Administrator for her diligent and exceptional management of the Parish Council financial affairs. Without Debra May's dedication the Parish Council accounts would not have received such results in terms of accuracy and these had now been fully supported and signed off by the External Auditors. The Chairman also thanked the Clerk, as the Responsible Financial Officer, for her role in this process.

(c) Quarter 1 Sign Off 24/25 Accounts

As Members were already aware from the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 6th August, 2024, Quarter 1 of the 2024/25 Accounts were signed off by Members with a recommendation for ratification at the next Parish Council meeting. Following full consideration the decision of the Audit and Governance Committee was **ratified** by full Council. It was carried.

(d) Review of Financial Regulations 2024/25

As Members were already aware from the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 6th August, 2024 the review of Financial Regulations was considered by Members with a recommendation for ratification at the next Parish Council meeting. Following full consideration the decision of the Audit and Governance Committee was **ratified** by full Council. **It was carried.**

(e) Review of Financial Risk Assessment 2024/25

As Members were already aware from the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 6th August, 2024 the review of the Parish Council's Financial Risk Assessment was considered by Members with a recommendation for ratification at the next Parish Council meeting. Following full consideration the decision of the Audit and Governance Committee was **ratified** by full Council. **It was carried.**

(f) Naming of new MACC Development, Walsall Road, Great Wyrley

The Parish Council had recently received an invitation to put forward suggested names for the new MACC Development in Walsall Road. This invitation was put to the Members of the Audit and Governance Committee on 6th August as there was quite a restricted deadline to respond. Accordingly, this matter was considered and the suggestion that the entrance road to the development itself be named Olde

School Court was put forward in order to pay tribute to the site's previous purpose.

The Clerk explained that as yet the Parish Council had not received a response to its suggestion other than that it was more likely that the name would be Wyrley Court in line with the normal branding adopted by the Developer. This was noted by Members.

On another matter the Clerk was requested by Cllr. A. Newell to attempt to ascertain whether the railings to the Old School were still in existence and whether there was any plan for their re-use. This was noted by Members.

(g) Annual Play Area Inspections

The Parish Council had recently had all its Play Areas inspected and, of course, the inspections had flagged up a number of defects which needed attention.

Accordingly, the Parish Council Grounds Men had ordered the relevant parts and had been carrying out the works required. There were no major defects to report other than those mentioned in the item below regarding the wooden skate ramps. This was noted by Members.

(h) Condition of Wooden Skate Park at Landywood Lane

Much to the Parish Council's surprise the condition of the wooden skate park at Landywood Lane had been flagged up as high risk as there were a number of defects in the surface to the ramps. As Members recalled a great deal of money was spent on the replacement of the ramps with Skatelite surfacing in 2021 (to the tune of almost £8,000). Naturally, the Clerk had now looked into the terms of the lifetime guarantee of the Skatelite Ramps supplied. The Clerk was concerned that the Guarantee may well not cover the damage which had occurred.

Cllr. J. C. Jones advised the meeting that the contractor who had carried out the works to the wooden skate park had only replaced a proportion of the surface and had at that time agreed with the Parish Council that he would store the remaining panels to be used in the future. The Clerk was to contact the Contractor and ascertain the best way forward with this situation.

The Clerk advised the meeting that for the moment the Parish Council had closed the Skatepark but unsurprisingly children were not taking any notice and were removing the closure notices faster than the Parish Council could get them replaced. However, the Clerk had ensured that photographic evidence that the notices had been displayed were on file in order to provide cover for the Parish Council in case of accidents. This situation had also been discussed with the Local PCSOs who were also trying to stop children using the ramps in its present condition. This was noted.

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE asked Members whether they felt that the Parish Council had now reached a point where it needed to consider the long term future of the wooden skate park in terms of its long term maintenance which presently was leading to costs which were disproportionate to say the least.

Members agreed to await the Clerk's update on the situation following discussion with the Contractor.

On another matter Cllr. J. C. Jones advised the Parish Council that the Play Area Inspector had asked him if the Parish Council owned the disused BMX Track. Cllr. Jones advised the Inspector that the BMX Track had been installed by an independent benefactor but that the Parish Council actually owned the land.

Following discussion the Parish Council agreed that should the BMX Track have been

specifically mentioned in the Play Area Reports then it would either need to be refurbished or removed completely as it had been witnessed that youngsters were still using the ramp. The Clerk was to investigate this matter with the Parish Council Grounds Men and should the installation be referred to it would lead to its removal. It was carried.

(i) Location for Mining Memorial CHAPS

As Members recalled the Parish Council had discussed this matter at the last meeting of the Parish Council and everyone was delighted with the idea, but were concerned that the monument would not be seen by many people if it was positioned in the Memorial Gardens. This situation had now been relayed back to the CHAPS organisation and they in turn invited the Parish Council to suggest alternative locations.

Following discussion on a number of alternatives the Parish Council **resolved** that the area to the side of Radioworld at the junction of Hilton Lane with Walsall Road would be the perfect position for the Memorial and as this land was in the ownership of South Staffordshire Council Members were confident that installation of the Memorial in this position would not cause any specific problems.

The Clerk was to arrange for a site visit to take place between Mr. Mellor and the Parish Council in the forthcoming week. This was noted.

(j) Invitation to Join the Council for the Protection of Rural England

The Parish Council had recently been invited to join the Council for the Protection of Rural England.

The Clerk advised Members that they may not be aware that the CPRE were actually extremely active in fighting to protect the Green Belt in planning terms and could often be relied upon for support in such situations.

Cllr. J. C. Jones advised the meeting that from memory he thought that the Parish Council had been Members of the CPRE in the past but had allowed its membership to lapse as it had not proved beneficial. No other Members could recall this situation and were of the view that with all the new changes being put forward by the new Government in terms of planning that it may well be an extra layer of protection for the Green Belt and **resolved** to apply for Membership for the sum of £60.00. The Chairman had called a vote for this decision which had resulted in seven for and two against. Accordingly, it was carried.

(k) Invitation to Staffordshire Playing Fields Association

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE had recently been in discussion with a member of the Staffordshire Playing Fields Association who had advised her on number of issues which may well benefit the Parish Council in terms of management of its Football Pitches and Recreation Ground. Cllr. Mrs. Perry had not had an opportunity to invite a member of the Association to a Parish Council meeting, as yet, but would do so as soon as the opportunity presented itself. This was noted by Members.

(l) Condition of Wyrley Brook

Members were, of course, already aware that the condition of Wyrley Brook was really atrocious at the present time and the Parish Council had received a number of quite aggressive complaints. Accordingly, the Clerk had been in contact with both Andrew Brett, the County Flood Risk Team Leader and he in turn had been in touch with Richard Beech of Severn Trent in an attempt to resolve this issue.

The Clerk advised the meeting that she had also contacted Richard Beech and had hoped to have received a response by the meeting itself, however, this had not come to fruition.

Cllr. J. C. Jones advised the meeting that he had personally received many complaints whilst taking his dog walking that it had become an embarrassment that nothing seemed to be being done to resolve the issue.

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE gave members the full background to this issue including the fact that the District Council had carried out enhancements to Wyrley Brook 30 odd years ago but that these improvements had been carried as a "one off" project.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry then advised the meeting that in her capacity as a District Councillor she would be attending the meeting known as "the Ward Walk" along with the Director of Communities and Wellbeing at South Staffordshire Council and that she would taking Mrs. Smith to see the dangerous condition of part of the Brook and that she would be requesting urgent action on health and safety grounds. This was noted by Members.

(m) Completion of Fencing at Landywood Halt

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE was delighted to advise everyone present that South Staffordshire Council's contractors had completed the replacement of the fencing between Landywood Halt Car Park and Landywood Lane Play Area on 3rd September, 2024. This was noted.

(n) Climate Change

There were no specific items regarding Climate Change to be discussed on this occasion.

40/2024 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE advised the meeting that there was not a great deal to report on this occasion due to the Summer recess.

However, Cllr. S. M. Wood asked Cllr. Perry why it appeared that the same roads were receiving treatment over and over again. Cllr. Mrs. Perry explained that the works being carried out at the moment were known as top dressing and by their very nature did not last much more than five years. However, this treatment was a way of making the roads safer to use. Obviously some of the roads which were still awaiting attention needed to be taken down to hardcore levels and virtually rebuilt which, of course, was extremely costly. This was noted.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry also advised the meeting that she had recently visited the Ambulance Control Centre in Stafford and understood that at the level of pressure they all work, it was unsurprising that Defibrillators were not always returned to their original station. This was noted by Members.

41/2024 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cllr. Mrs. Perry MBE invited Cllr. Jackson to address the meeting should he have any report he wished to share in his capacity as District Councillor and also invited Cllr. R. Perry to address the Parish Council.

Cllr. Mrs. O. Brazier asked Cllr. Mrs. Perry whether the District Council had agreed to take up the challenge against the Planning Inspectorate's decision to dismiss the appeal relating to the Enterprise Park at Holly Lane. Cllr. Mrs. Perry explained that the challenge could only be made by South Staffordshire Council and that in this

instance they did not wish to do so. This was very unfortunate but would have incurred a great deal of expense with no guarantee of a successful outcome. This was noted.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry advised the Parish Council that she had recently attended a meeting at the District Council regarding its Village Regeneration Fund. This fund was primarily regarding the enhancement and improvement of Village Centres. Cllr. Mrs. Perry explained that she had been party to the results of the assessments of villages within South Staffordshire and that she had been appalled at the assessment of Great Wyrley and the fact that the assessors had not even discovered that the Quinton Centre was a privately owned concern. In reality Great Wyrley Parish did not actually have a Village Centre and that it would be extremely difficult to meet the criteria of the Village Regeneration Prosperity Fund.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry also advised the meeting that there was a real need for the verification of information available before it was posted on Facebook. There were a number of inaccuracies being posted presently and of course, once this information is publicised it stays there whether or not it represents the facts. This was noted by Members.

42/2024 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCILLORS

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE had advised a previous meeting that the Parish Council wished to hold a Christmas Lights Switch on this year and to incorporate a Carolling event and a Christmas Market. Arrangements for this event were now well in hand, and being arranged to take place on 6th December, 2024. This was noted by Members.

SENIOR CITIZENS CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry advised the meeting that Friday 20th December, 2024 would be a good day to hold the Christmas Lunch. The Parish Council **resolved** to select this date for the event. This matter was to be brought to the next meeting of the Parish Council in order to decide the ticket price and eligibility. This was noted by Members.

43/2024 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from outside bodies on this occasion.

44/2024 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

24/00624/COU – SUB DIVISION OF AN EXISTING DWELLING INTO TWO SEPARATE DWELLING HOUSES AT ASHLEIGH, HAZEL LANE, GREAT WYRLEY – THE PARISH COUNCIL HAD NO OBJECTION TO THIS PROPOSAL.

24/00682/FULHH – SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION WITH FIRST FLOOR BALCONY ABOVE. CONVERSION OF EXISTING ROOF SPACE TO PROVIDE NEW BEDROOM. NEW FIRST FLOOR SIDE FACING LANDING AND BEDROOM WINDOWS AT 504 WALSALL ROAD, GREAT WYRLEY. THE PARISH COUNCIL HAD NO OBJECTION TO THIS PROPOSAL.

45/2024 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 Chairman thanked all Members for their attendance and closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

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