

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 6th November, 2024.

Present:

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

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

ONE MINUTE SILENCE IN MEMORY OF THE LATE MARY OWEN

Councillor Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE advised the meeting that the Parish had recently lost one of its real characters when Mary Owen had passed away. Mary Owen had worked for many years with not only the Scouts and Guides and the Great Wyrley Royal British Legion but many other community based activities and she will be sadly missed.

Councillor Mrs. Perry advised Members that she had represented the Parish Council at Mary's funeral which was held on 25th October, 2024 and then invited Members to observe a one minute silence in Mary's memory. This was noted by Members.

TWO MINUTE SILENCE FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Cllr. Mrs. Perry advised the meeting that as this Parish Council meeting was the closest gathering to be held prior to Remembrance Sunday it was felt that the Parish Council should take this opportunity to observe a two minute's silence in memory of all those who gave their lives to allow us all to live in the light of freedom.

The Chairman introduced Mr. and Mrs. M. Mellor of Chase Arts for Public Spaces organisation.

PRESENTATION BY CHAPS

The Chairman then advised the meeting that she was delighted to welcome Mr. M. Mellor and his wife to the meeting who had attended in order to give the Parish Council a presentation on CHAPS' plans to install a memorial to the coal mining community of Great Wyrley.

Mr. Mellor then addressed the meeting and began by congratulating the Chairman on becoming the Leader of South Staffordshire Council. Cllr. Mrs. Perry thanked Mr. Mellor for his kind words.

Mr. Mellor then gave Members a brief outline of the aims of CHAPS and explained that the project had been commissioned by an anonymous benefactor who had provided CHAPS with a budget to support the project. The Memorial was originally envisaged to be placed in the Memorial Garden, however, following consideration, it was felt that it would not have a high enough profile in this position and that many more people would be able to view it if it was placed in a more prominent position.

The aim of the installation of the Mining memorial was to produce a design which would attract interest and evoke reflection and it was felt that the design had achieved this brief extremely well.

Mr. Mellor advised the meeting that two people had been working on this project for over two

years and an attempt was being made to record exactly who had lost their lives during their time at Wyrley No. 3 Colliery and it was envisaged that there would be approximately 47 names on the Memorial.

The feeling at the present time is that CHAPS would really like to involve the whole of the community with this project and give everyone a feeling of ownership and to do this it is intended to hold a public presentation to bring this project to the whole village. Following which it was intended to ensure that collection receptacles are positioned in various places all around the village where residents could contribute towards this project and really feel that they are part of this tribute. In other words creating inclusive ownership. This was noted by Members.

The design had now been finalised and was to include seating for areas of reflection as well as the monument itself which depicted miners at work. A site for the monument has now been chosen, which is opposite The Star Public House and the design has now been amended to create a memorial which will be of the right scale to suit the area of land to be used.

In order to acquaint the Parish Council with the design of the monument. Mr. Mellor had produced a brief leaflet, copies of which were distributed to Members of the Parish Council.

CHAPS are to provide the drawings to be lodged for the planning application and building regulation requirements and take care of all the administration costs associated with the project but advised the meeting that any money raised in the community would be administered by the Parish Council in a separate fund and not by CHAPS. The Parish Council would be organising the collection of funding from the public by way of physical collection containers and a Just Giving page. Fund raising would take place over a limited period which is expected to conclude by 30th June, 2025.

Mr. Mellor concluded by saying that he felt that this project was so worthy of the Parish Council's support and he thanked the Parish Council for embracing this project.

Cllr. J. C. Jones asked Mr. Mellor if he had any idea how much the monument was going to cost and was assured by Mr. Mellor that any costs involved in this project would be underwritten by the anonymous benefactor.

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry advised the meeting that the Parish Council will be taking ownership of this structure and accordingly, will become responsible for the maintenance and insurance of the structure.

However, the Parish Council would really like the entire community to feel part of this project and are very much looking forward to actually progressing it within quite a short time scale.

Cllr. A. Newell took this opportunity to express his admiration for this project and declared his personal interest as the son of a miner.

The Chairman thanked Mr. and Mrs. Mellor for giving their time up to give this presentation to the Parish Council. Mr. Mellor advised the meeting that they were honoured to be part of the project; following which they left the meeting.

62/2024 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Cllr. Mrs. O. Brazier, Cllr. Mrs. S. M. Wood and Cllr. D. Norris (Jnr.)

63/2024 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest on this occasion.

64/2024 **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 2nd October, 2024. It was carried.

65/2024 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

WYRLEY BROOK

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE advised the meeting that she was delighted to inform the Parish Council that the works required to bring Wyrley Brook back up to anything like an acceptable condition had now been carried out by South Staffordshire Council. This had been the result of an arrangement reached between Cllr. Mrs. Perry, Cllr. R. J. Perry and two Officers from South Staffordshire Council, Mrs. J. Smith, Corporate Director of Communities and Wellbeing and Mr. B. Taylor during a recent Ward Walk. This was noted by Members. Cllr. Mrs. Perry took this opportunity to thank all of the people involved in this issue including the workers who had performed the clearance tasks.

Cllr. J. C. Jones advised the meeting that it was now a pleasure to walk down the Brook and that he would also like to thank all involved in working towards trying to make this village a beautiful place to live and that it was good day forward for the village. This was noted.

STATION ROAD CAR PARK

This agreement had also led to the tidying up of the car park in Station Road, Great Wyrley which very much needed attention having been allowed to reach rather a dilapidated state. However, there were other aspects which needed remedial works such as the damaged railings in the area which had now been brought to the attention of Mark Keeling at Staffordshire County Council, following which remedial works had been programmed. This was noted by Members.

RECENT WATER SUPPLY OUTAGE

Cllr. Mrs. Perry also advised the meeting that South Staffs Water had done everything possible to ensure that the residents of the area were not left without any water during the recent flooding problems in the adjoining village. South Staffs Water had been assisted by South Staffordshire Council in this matter who had been liaising with each other over the most sensible location to set up their water collection points. Cllr. Mrs. Perry had put forward Great Wyrley Community Centre for this purpose, however, as they had already set up a collection point at MacArthur Glen this did not prove necessary when South Staffs Water had managed to get the situation under control relatively quickly. This was noted by Members.

CARNIVAL COMMITTEE – HALLOWEEN EVENT

Cllr. Mrs. Perry took this opportunity to congratulate Great Wyrley Carnival Committee on their exceptionally successful Halloween event. The Carnival Committee had put on a Halloween Maze on the playing field adjoining the Community Centre in Landywood Lane and had managed to raise over a £1000 towards their future events.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry advised the meeting that a number of lessons had been learned from this first Halloween event including the need to provide some form of portable convenience. This was noted.

CHRISTMAS MARKET – 6TH DECEMBER, 2024

Cllr. Mrs. Perry advised the meeting that the arrangements for the Christmas Market to take place on Friday 6th December, 2024 were progressing very well indeed. There was now to be a Hog Roast as well as mulled wine and mince pies on offer to complement the Choir singing carols, the visit from Santa Klaus and the official “switch on” of the lighting of the Christmas Tree.

WALSALL ROAD CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

By way of information Cllr. Mrs. Perry advised the meeting that the main seasonal lights on Walsall Road would be switched on earlier than 6th December; either on the 16th or the 22nd of November. This was noted by Members.

GREAT WYRLEY CEMETERY MEMORIAL WALL

Cllr. Mrs. Perry also took this opportunity to advise the Parish Council that the final works to the Memorial Wall at Great Wyrley Cemetery had now been carried out. This matter would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Parish Council so that all Members could be party to taking this project forward. This was noted by Members.

SENIOR CITIZENS CHRISTMAS LUNCH – 20TH DECEMBER, 2024

Cllr. Mrs. Perry concluded her announcements with the fact that The Christmas Lunch tickets had sold extremely well and that there were very few tickets still available. This was noted by Members.

66/2024 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

SHAWS LANE ACTION GROUP

A group of residents of Shaws Lane were in attendance on this occasion. However, Cllr. Mrs. Perry could only advise the meeting that she had been informed by Mr. M. Keeling of Staffordshire County Council Highways that he was planning to request that when DHP funding became available he was to have the situation in Shaws Lane included in the programme. This was noted by Members.

One of the group reminded Cllr. Mrs. Perry that the sign still needed to be replaced. This was noted by Cllr. Mrs. Perry.

TREES IN HILTON LANE

Another Member of the group in attendance in the Public Gallery asked the question as to why works appeared to have been carried out to a number of trees in Hilton Lane. Cllr. Mrs. Perry explained that these works had been essential as both trees had needed to be removed either because of disease or accidental impact damage. The works had been carried out by Staffordshire County Council Highways. This was noted.

PARKING IN STATION STREET, CHESLYN HAY

Another member of the public present in the public gallery asked the Parish Council what its intentions were in regard to allowing the car park at Great Wyrley Cemetery to be used to ease the terrible parking situation in Station Street, Cheslyn Hay. Cllr. Mrs. Perry explained that Station Street was actually located in

Cheslyn Hay and was not in Great Wyrley.

However, Cllr. Mrs. Perry explained to all present that she was aware of all the problems being experienced in Station Street, Cheslyn Hay as she also attended Cheslyn Hay Parish Council meetings. However, it was not possible to allow the use of the Great Wyrley Cemetery Car Park for general parking as the car park had been provided to allow additional car park for visitors to the Cemetery. However, in the past when parking for other purposes had been allowed there had been a number of issues which had resulted in cars being parked on the car park had been left there overnight and in some cases for several days. This practice had been very prejudicial to users of the Cemetery and had, of course, needed to be dealt with. This was noted by Members.

The Chairman invited the remainder of the members of the public present in the public gallery to address the Parish Council.

REQUEST TO WALK THE PARISH

A resident of Great Wyrley asked the Chairman if the Parish Council could be asked to take a walk around the village not in their cars but on foot. Cllr. Mrs. Perry responded that she was sure this could take place if Councillors had time to do so.

A free and frank exchange of views then took place between the Chairman and the member of the public regarding whether or not the question had received an answer.

The Chairman reinstated Standing Orders and continued with the business to be transacted by the Parish Council.

67/2024 CLERK'S REPORTS TO COUNCIL

(a) Review and Ratification of the Accounts for the second Quarter of the Financial Year 2024/25

The Clerk had circulated a copy of the Bank Reconciliation for the second quarter of the Financial Year. Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** to ratify the figures as presented. The Chairman signed off the documents as required. It was carried.

(b) Update on Community Centre Defibrillator

Members were already aware that the Parish Council had been experiencing a lengthy delay in the receipt of the replacement part for the Defibrillator which had been inoperative for several months. The Clerk was delighted to advise the meeting that the Community Centre Defibrillator was now up and running perfectly. The device had also been re-registered with the West Midlands Ambulance Service as available if required. This was noted by Members.

(c) Repairs to Landywood Lane Skate Ramps

Members recalled that at the last meeting of the Parish Council the decision was made to go forward with the repairs required to the wooden skate ramps on Landywood Lane Playing Field.

Accordingly, the Clerk had made contact with Mr. Steele who had carried out the repairs to the structure in 2023 and had received the following information:

There's a bit to do there but nothing particularly disturbing. We may need to fit one or two new Skatelite panels, but it's as likely we'll be able to patch repair those areas and save some money. We'll need to have a good look.

In terms of cost, I think we can say it would be a maximum of £3000, with a possibility of it being as low as £1800 if we can patch everything and not fit any new full panels.

We're not available until early/mid November, so if you'd like to have a think and come back to me that would be fine.

Thanks and regards

Rob

Mr. Steele was to assess the situation during the coming week. This was noted By Members.

(d) Damage to Railing Stanchions at Great Wyrley Cemetery

Members recalled that some considerable time ago the owners of the house adjoining the left hand side of the driveway to Great Wyrley Cemetery took it upon themselves to remove the stabilising stanchions to the railings which run along the side of the driveway to the Cemetery. The residents advised the Parish Council in June 2023 that: "I have been advised that I am able to remove any part of the stanchion that is in my property as long as I have given you the opportunity to do it yourselves."

Obviously there were a number of anomalies here from the outset and the residents were advised that the advice they had been given was incorrect.

However, the unauthorised action took place and destabilised the railings. The Parish Council, accordingly, looked into the possibility of taking legal action against the residents responsible.

Whilst discussion on the best course of action was taking place, Mr. J. Webb, a local builder and staunch supporter of the Parish Council kindly offered to carry out the works required to stabilise the railings. Mr. Webb only charged the Parish Council for the fabrication he needed to procure from an independent organisation and fitted the devices free of charge. The charge for the fabrications themselves amounted to £570.

Following discussion with the Legal Department of South Staffordshire Council (to which the Parish Council had paid a retainer for works required) the choices were put to the Parish Council of the most cost effective way of recouping the monies this situation had forced to be paid from the public purse.

One of those choices was to write to the residents involved inviting them to pay for the damage and drawing a line under the matter completely, which would have been the fairest way to deal with the matter amicably should they have agreed to refund the cost. However, the resident did not see this as an acceptable solution and responded to the District Council's letter in the following terms:-

Details have been redacted to comply with General Data Protection Regulations.

----- Forwarded message -----
From: "Boz Clarke" <bozclarke@aol.co.uk>
To: "slegalservices@sstaffs.gov.uk" <slegalservices@sstaffs.gov.uk>
Cc:
Sent: Wed, 7 Aug 2024 at 10:41
Subject: FAO Rebecca Cooper RE: Damage to railings at Great Wyley Cemetery

Hi,

I have received your letter regarding the above. I did not touch the stanchions what so ever, neither did I instruct anyone else to do so. I did instruct landscapers to install gravel board fencing but i came home one day to be notified by them that they had to cut the stanchions in order to install the gravel boards. They did initially say they were going to try and work around the stanchions but were unable to do so, so took it upon themselves to cut them, stating that because they were encroaching my property and because I had given the Parish Council the opportunity to sort something out, it was my right. I had been asking for years for the stanchions to be removed as since cutting down the hedging that was hiding them, they proved to be dangerous; i tripped over them once and severely injured my shin and i had to ban the children from going down that part of the garden for their own safety. Whilst it is no secret that I wanted the stanchions removed, I resided myself to the fact that they would have to stay because of the Parish council's unwillingness to come to some type of compromise - I attended a Parish Council meeting and sent numerous emails requesting their removal but the Parish Council were unwilling to budge. I found this to be another example of the Parish Councils unneighbourly behaviour (added to the fact that the cemetery trees that overhang my garden by 15 feet or more haven't been trimmed down in the ten years, despite numerous requests for them to be cut. The last time i inquired about it, the Parish Council stated that they couldn't acquire a tree surgeon. I found this difficult to believe).

I pay a fee to the Parish council through my council tax each month, and i would have thought that the funds they acquire from this would goes towards the upkeep of the cemetery, included adding security to the gates.

I do find it unfortunate that the Parish Council felt the gates needed more secure but as i didn't touch the stanchions or give anyone instruction to do so, I cannot see how I am liable for the costs.

Kind Regards

Stacey Clarke
91 Station Street

Following discussion the Parish Council **RESOLVED** to draw a line under this matter as the cost involved in taking this matter further could escalate to at least £6-7000 and Members felt that to pursue this matter with no guarantee of not incurring even more costs would not be a responsible course of action to follow. It was carried.

(e) Signage for Community Centre Car Park

Members recalled that whilst all the works to the Health Centre were taking place the Parish Council experienced a great deal of inconvenience with motorists habitually parking on the Community Centre Car Park. Following this period of inconvenience the boundary fence was also removed by the Health Centre and the car park was now quite vulnerable, in that motorists were driving directly over the grass verge to reach the main road on some occasions from either direction. This was clearly a dangerous practice and needed to be curtailed.

Because this situation had reached unacceptable levels, the Parish Council instructed the Clerk to request quotations for a version of boundary treatment which would be the most effective.

The Clerk had now circulated copies of quotations for a suitable treatment of the boundaries between the car park. Following discussion the Parish Council **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation as presented.

(f) Upgraded Chubb Fire and Security Limited – The Pavilion

The Parish Council had recently received a proposal to update the alarm system at The Pavilion. As Members were aware The Pavilion was the building which housed the majority of the items of high value and the alarm system was now almost obsolete.

The Clerk had circulated a copy of the background information and quotation which had been received from Chubb Fire and Security and pointed out that at this stage action would need to be taken sooner rather than later due to the impending BT Switch off.

Chubbs had recommended that the existing Redcare Classic Signalling Unit be replaced with Dualcom pr2 Radio/Radio signalling unit to combat the upcoming position. Meaning when the analogue BT Telephone line switches off as signalling will potentially cease to work after analogue lines are switched off.

In addition the existing panel was showing a specific error which meant the panel was showing signs of failure. An upgrade of the panel/keyboards was recommended, however, there would also be a need to install Wifi. The cost implication of this upgrade was £1,560.70. Members noted that this figure did not include the installation of Wifi.

Following discussion the Parish Council **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation for the works required. It was carried.

The Clerk advised the meeting that on another note, unfortunately, when the Parish Council signed up to ADT Securities last year the Parish Council was given a significant amount of misinformation. It has now been revealed that ADT cannot perform any work on the system installed at the Community Centre as Chubb hold all the code numbers for this system which is changed every day.

The Parish Council's contract with ADT covered call outs which was, of course, necessary and far safer than the practice which had been adopted in the past. However, this aspect only covered notification and call-out practice and clearly not the maintenance aspect which was supposed to be included in the Contract.

By way of background, in the past a member of staff was expected to attend the premises to investigate the situation following a call out from the Monitoring system. This had been an acceptable practice when Staffordshire Police met the member of staff at the premises before entering the building. Unfortunately, Staffordshire Police withdrew this service in 2012 and the Community Centre staff absorbed this aspect of the job and carried on. This needed to change for safety reasons and became imperative when there were changes in personnel.

At the time the Parish Council entered into the contract outlined above it had been assured by the Sales Agent that the maintenance to the existing Alarm System was definitely capable of repair by ADT as the system itself belonged to the Parish Council.

When the Parish Council had occasion to call out ADT Securities to a fault on the Alarm System they were unable to carry out the necessary works as their Engineer did not have access to the necessary code; this was completely the opposite to the information given to the Parish Council by the representative from ADT. Apparently the code was actually changed every day by Chubb Securities to stop other organisations carrying out any maintenance work.

As things stood at the time of the meeting the alarm system at the Community Centre works perfectly well, however, should it develop any anomaly ADT would be unable to repair it because the system is Chubbs.

In this instance the Parish Council was faced with either funding a completely new system for the Community Centre, provided by ADT so that they were able to support the system, or staying with the existing system and returning to Chubbs in terms of maintenance and repairs.

The quotation which had been submitted by Chubbs for the alarm system in the Pavilion also depended entirely upon there being Wifi installed at The Pavilion so there were some specific issues to be dealt with before the Parish Council could resolve this issue.

Following discussion the Parish Council **RESOLVED** to return to Chubbs in terms of maintenance of the Alarm System, remain with Alarm alert supplier, and accept the quotation from Chubbs to upgrade the alarm system at The Pavilion. It was carried.

(g) Landywood Lane Play Area Crab Apple Trees

The Parish Council had recently been approached with a request from a resident of Lingfield Drive that action be taken to replace the crab apple trees at the boundary between the playing field and their homes with a species which would not provide missiles to be aimed at properties in Lingfield Drive.

Apparently this had been taking place on a very regular basis for the last three or four weeks.

The Parish Council Groundsmen had now ensured that there were no crab apples left on the ground or left on the trees. This had, of course, been explained to the complainants, however, the request had been made that the Parish Council consider the replacement of the crab apple trees with a species which would not produce any fruit capable of being used for such purposes.

Following discussion the Parish Council **RESOLVED** that it did not wish to replace healthy trees in this location, however, it was prepared to request that the Parish Council Grounds Men factor this problem into the work programme at the appropriate time of year and ensure that the crab apples were removed before any of the local youths had an opportunity to return to this activity.

The Clerk was also to advise the Police Community Support Officers that this activity was taking place and remind them that this area was covered by a Public Space Protection Notice.

(h) Progress re: Changes to website domain and email addresses

Members recalled from the last meeting of the Parish Council that there was a need to add an additional layer of security to the website and Councillors' e-mail addresses. The website is now compliant and the e-mail addresses which will take more detailed migration will be carried out as soon as possible. This was noted by Members.

(i) Climate Change

Members recalled that at the last meeting of the Parish Council it was reminded that there was a small pot of funding still available for any project which would work towards the alleviation of climate change. Accordingly, the Clerk had now submitted an application for funding towards LED Lighting in the foyer to the Community Centre.

The Clerk was to advise Members of the outcome as soon as this information became available.

68/2024 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 other than the problems relating to parking in Holly Lane which was still as worrying as ever. However, Cllr. Mrs. Perry advised the meeting that she was to attend a meeting with Mrs. M. Quinn of South Staffordshire Council and Mr. Cluer of the Primary School in the near future. This was noted by Members.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry also advised the meeting that Cadent were presently carrying out works all over the District dealing with gas pipes. This was noted by Members.

69/2024 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE advised the meeting that, at the present time, she still did not have any further information with regard to the Local Plan. Cllr. Mrs. Perry also reminded all Members that the Parish Summit was to be held in the forthcoming week. This was noted by Members.

70/2024 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCILLORS

Cllr. J. C. Jones advised the meeting that there had been an extremely bad accident at Wardles Lane the previous week which was yet another indication that motorists speeding through the village was as bad as ever. This was noted.

Cllr. J. C. Jones also advised the meeting that he felt that Great Wyrley Parish Council needed to enhance its treatment of the village to commemorate Remembrance Day. Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry advised Cllr. Jones that she entirely agreed with this sentiment and although it was too late for the current year it was to time plan for the next one. All Members agreed that the Clerk should research a number of options to be put in place before the next occasion. It was carried.

71/2024 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr. A. Newell advised the meeting that Great Wyrley History Society Open Day had been a great success. This was noted by Members.

72/2024 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no planning applications for consideration on this occasion.

24/00184/FUL CONVERSION OF EXISTING DWELLING AND SIDE EXTENSION INTO THREE APARTMENTS AT 15 HUTHILL LANE, GREAT WYRLEY HAD NOW BEEN WITHDRAWN. THIS WAS NOTED.

73/2024 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.

