

Monkland and Stretford Parish Council

*Minutes of the meeting of Monkland & Stretford Parish Council
held on
Tuesday 21st January 2020 from 7.00pm
in Monkland Village Hall, Monkland.*

Website address: monkland.org

PRESENT: Cllr L Brook (Chairman); Cllr M Louth; Cllr A Turner (Vice Chairman) and Cllr T Neave.

Present: Lesley Hay (Parish Clerk) Ward Cllr Trish Marsh; PC S Smith.

One member of the public present.

The Chairman welcomed those present to the January meeting.

MINUTES:

- 1. Acceptance of apologies for absence** – Lee Fishwick – Locality Steward; Cllr P Povall.
- 2. Declarations of interests, Disclosable Pecuniary, Non-Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary interests** – none declared
- 3. To receive a report from the local Police Officer** –The Chairman welcomed PC Sarah Smith. PC Smith explained that she and a colleague, PC Peter Knight, had recently been appointed as Rural Crime and Business Officers within the West Mercia Police.

PC Smith explained that this new role covers all aspects of rural crime but, in particular, encompasses 'We Don't Buy Crime' and the 'Smart Water' campaign. It also includes local speed awareness and PC Smith agreed to return to the area, in particular the A44, with a speed gun at some time in the near future. PC Smith will share her findings with the Parish Council who may then be able to use this information in support of their on-going case to reduce speed on the A44.

Cllr Louth explained that following a flyer in the last Newsletter - explaining the concept behind Smart Water - he had only received 20 replies from 81 residences. The Smart Water issue was discussed at length and it was agreed that the Parish Council would invite PC Smith's colleague, Ram Aston, to give a presentation at an Open Evening.

This item to remain on the agenda and to be discussed/finalised at the next meeting.

The Chairman thanked PC Smith for a very interesting and information presentation.

4. **The minutes** from Parish Council meeting held 19th November 2019 were unanimously approved as a true record and were adopted as such and signed by the chairman.

5. **Open session - Matters raised by local residents.**

(5.1) A resident informed those present that she had gained a place on the Herefordshire Bee Keeper's Association workshop and will be attending two theory sessions and two practical sessions. The resident explained that she had been able to gain considerable general information from various websites – and it was agreed that

she would write an article of the next Newsletter including links to these various sites.

(5.2) The Clerk reported that she had received an email from a resident who lives on the common which highlighted the following problem: On the 19th December both Pleck Lane & Tagwell Lane were flooded and residents could not get home - 5pm & dark - so they were forced to leave their car in Old Road. The only way home was via the stile by the Baker Lea sewage system. This is not ideal for the 'not so young' and as this is the main walking access to and from the Common in flood situations it is essential that they can gain access to the field.

After discussion – it was agreed that the Clerk would liaise with the lengthsman about the feasibility of replacing the stile with a kissing gate/gate. The Clerk reported that Hope under Dinmore Parish Council would be prepared to sell Monkland one of their spare kissing gate – clerk again to liaise with regard to price etc.

Clerk will acknowledge receipt of the resident's email and will liaise with Councillors regarding her findings.

The Chairman closed the open session

6. **Ward Councillor's report:** please see added to the end of these minutes
7. **Chairman's report:** Monkland and Stretford Parish Council Chairman's report January 2020

Flooding on the Common could have been more of a problem – fortunately there was very little effect on houses on the Common, but water levels were very high and in early November the Common was cut off, following unprecedented levels of high rainfall.

Locality steward meeting – 12th December 2019:

We met with Phil Pankhurst our former Locality Steward (Lee Fishwick our current Locality Steward was unable to attend and sent apologies) and we discussed the following:

Drains and gullies by Cheese Shop. The drain sump was cleared in the summer but the culvert is possibly silted up. In dry weather the drain from the culvert contains stagnant smelly water.

Baker Lea trees – a tree survey is carried out in rotation every 3 years on all tree in the county and trees are only cut back, trimmed, felled etc if they are dangerous. However, the large Horse Chestnut tree at the top of Baker Lea – could be owned by the landowner of the neighbouring field. It appears to be healthy just now, but does overhang the road.

Replacing missing cats' eyes along main road – these are only replaced if a section of road is being resurfaced, too costly to replace individual cats' eyes.

Mud on the roads especially across the Common – it is illegal for anything to be deposited on the road by anyone e.g. mud, waste etc. this therefore is a police matter – call 101

Road sweeper - along Old Road etc – as this and Baker Lea and the road across the Common are low traffic roads sweeping of leaves is not a high priority.

Overall messages from the Locality Steward – Balfour Beatty would love to do this work but the Council does not have the funds to pay for it!

Money is very tight – consequently where we can we should ask the Lengthsman to do local work for us – but this means a direct cost for the Parish

Cllr Povall and Cllr Turner have kindly offered to use draining rods to try and clear the culvert by the cheese shop

ALL problems should be reported on-line. We should encourage everyone in the Parish to report problems directly and individually on-line or by phone – ‘the more the merrier’ principle.

It was suggested and agreed that a short article should be included in the next Newsletter encouraging all residents to individually report potholes/defects etc directly via the link.

8. Footpath Officer’s report

Footpaths Officer reported that lots of paths have issues with flood/standing water but there is nothing I can do about that. Hopefully the weather will improve soon. He has started replacing some of the worn away footpath signage and is aware of some minor repairs which need to be completed and have reported them to Balfour Beatty.

9. Monkland Common issues:

Common – Cllr Povall reported that he is going to arrange a meeting for the second or third week in February with those people who were interested in being part of the working party. He will be contacting them directly and will feed back the results of the meeting. Intention is to discuss the roadway to the water splash which is in a terrible state, the roadway to the bottom of Tagwell Lane, and the grass crop from the common and possible ways forward.

10. Finance.

10.1 Current Schedule of Payments had been circulated and it was unanimously agreed to pay the outstanding invoices and the clerk raised the cheques.

11. Highway; Locality Steward and Environmental Matters.

11.1 Lengthsman worksheet - January/February– nothing outstanding.

11.2 The daffodil banks were mowed in December and the bulbs are already beginning to show.

11.3 After discussion it was agreed to defer a decision on the Spring litter picking programme until the next meeting.

12. Planning issues – no new planning applications received to date.

12.1 It was noted that the new entrance to Plot A has still to be made in the hedge. Once this is done – this will then be the main entrance/exit for lorries delivering building supplies etc.

12.3 Land opposite Manor Cottage – land owned by Harpers. It was noted that the hedge along the Old Road was becoming very thick and spreading out on to the road. It was agreed that the Clerk would again approach Harpers to ask if the hedge could be trimmed and generally tidied before the birds return in the Spring.

13. Correspondence: It was acknowledged that all correspondence had been circulated and there was no comment.

14. Date of next full council meeting: Tuesday 17th March 2020 – with an earlier start - 7.00p.m.

Chairman thanked those for attending and closed the meeting at 8.40p.m.

Signed:

Date:

Ward Councillor's report

“Herefordshire’s county plan for the next 4 years is now near completion. Thanks to all the many people who fed into the consultation. It has three principal themes of economy, community and environment, interlaced with wellbeing, sustainability and connectivity. These will underpin the revenue and capital budgets for the next 4 years. The budget will be set by full council in February and the precept in March.

Capital spend will be more widely spread across the county with investments planned in incubation and business space across the market towns. Other priorities include supporting the building of genuinely affordable homes, using technology to help support older people, natural flood management works and community hubs. There will be increased emphasis on working more effectively with partners, including parish councils.

Resources for Tourism will go up and there will be a Heritage Action Zone programme in Leominster. Additionally, we expect to be offering businesses across the county the opportunity to form a Business Improvement District, levying funds to spend for mutual benefit.

Phosphates have reached unacceptable levels in the Lugg, impacting on wildlife and on planning application in the North. The Council is working actively with partners to address the issues.

The whole of Leominster should have good quality broadband by Easter: we hope Fastershire’s rollout, which is also linking up remoter communities like Orleton and Leintwardine, will help attract businesses to the county.”