

*Monkland and Stretford Parish Council*

*Minutes of the meeting of Monkland & Stretford Parish Council  
held on  
Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020 from 7.00pm  
in Monkland Village Hall, Monkland.*

Website address: monkland.org

**PRESENT:** Cllr L Brook (Chairman); Cllr A Turner (Vice Chairman) Cllr P Povall.

Present: Lesley Hay (Parish Clerk) Ward Cllr Trish Marsh;

One member of the public present.

The Chairman welcomed those present to the March meeting.

***MINUTES:***

- 1. Acceptance of apologies for absence** – Lee Fishwick – Locality Steward; Cllr T Neave; Cllr M Louth.
- 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** – no representation present.  
Following on from the last meeting, the Chairman wondered if PC Sarah Smith had managed to visit the A44 with her speed gun.  
Clerk to make enquiries.

4. **The minutes** from Parish Council meeting held 21st January 2020 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) No matters raised that would not be covered within the agenda.

**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 Chair's report to Parish Council March 2020

*'It never rains but it pours ' 'Rain rain go away – come again another day'*

Since our last meeting the excessive rain and consequent flooding has been a preoccupation for us – the Common was cut off several times and a couple of residences were flooded. It looked beautiful but a horrific set of circumstances for all affected. Lesley H. passed on info from HCC to show where financial help might be available to those affected. Local fields have also been badly flooded.

Thank you to:

Villagers for helping out those who have been 'displaced' with the flooding and offering practical help where possible. Eg Peter P, Alan and Terri, Dave Jeffries and Jenny Barnes and others.

A warm welcome to new people in the village

New baby Pheobe ..... for the Weatheralls

In Harry Lee's 's house – Lyn and Mark Jenkins

In John Edwards house - Sarah and Craig Carroll and their two daughters.

3 houses now occupied in Pleck Orchard – which has a wonderful new tarmac surface as from today.

Family in the mobile home near Brick Farm, a difficult few month to be living in a mobile home surrounded by thick mud and torrential rain.

A busy time ahead, to be discussed in more detail later:

A gate to replace the stile at the bottom of Bakerlea to help Commoners access the Common on foot should road access be impossible

The stile on the A44 to be repaired.

Monkland Common issues: setting up and meeting of the Commons Group eg flooding, blocked culverts, damage to housing and property, damage to grass, summer management of grass, harrowing, tree safety setting up wildflower area.

Road Safety – still to be considered and confirmed. We have discussed installing SIDs at previous meetings and decided against - any change of thoughts?

Coronavirus – a Neighbourhood scheme to be established to help those who are housebound as a result of the virus outbreak to offer shopping and prescription collection and a friendly phone call to offset the possible effects of cabin fever

Thank you to everyone for your support and hard work and for ‘keeping an eye on the village and caring for our environment and surroundings.

Lesley Brook Chair Monkland and Stretford Parish Council

## 8. Footpath Officer's report

Nothing to report since last meeting other than footpath access opposite Cheese Shop which is covered in the Common Working Group Meeting Report. Next complete footpath walk is scheduled for April 2020.

## 9. Monkland Common issues:

### Common Working Group Meeting Report

We held the first meeting of the working group on 11TH March 2020. A small agenda of discussion items was covered.

**Grass Cutting/Hay Crop** – After the problems last year finding anyone who would be interested in the hay crop it was discussed and agreed that we would intend to cut/top the grass around the usual time of year but would not be actively seeking anyone to take the grass as a hay crop. Cutting the grass at the usual time should ensure the continued biodiversity which is currently enjoyed on the common.

**Flooding/Drainage/Leaks** – We discussed the recent flooding and noted that very little can be done when conditions reach the point that they have recently. Thankfully the common is very free draining and will release water back to its normal confines as soon as possible after a flooding incident.

A burst pipe under the road which passes through the common had been identified and reported to Welsh Water. Thankfully Welsh Water have attended and repaired this leak, causing a road closure for a couple of days. We suspect there is another leak somewhere on Tagwell Lane which is causing the road to be continually wet and hope to help Welsh Water identify this if it is a leak. Please let Welsh Water know if you become aware of any other leaks, or let me know and I will advise them with the exact GPS location of the affected area.

The recent flooding also highlighted a potential issue with foul drainage at the three properties alongside the stream. Whilst there are no known regulatory changes being required by the Environment Agency it is possible that this will change in view of the proximity to the stream. In this event we need to be aware that works will possibly extend into the common if soak away systems need to be improved.

The flooding also highlighted a problem with access to the common when the roadways are blocked. We are investigating the option of replacing the stile opposite the Cheese Shop with a metal, self-closing gate, which will improve the footpath access to the common.

**Track from Tagwell Lane to Common Road** – The track is in a very poor condition and concerns have been raised by people who commonly uses this to access their homes. Having researched the track, it appears to have been created many years in the past and has never been adopted by the local council. On that basis, there is no support available for maintenance of the track. It is therefore recommended that the people who commonly use the track work together to maintain the track themselves, inkeeping with the existing structure of the track.

**Track from water splash to Common Road** – The track alongside the stream is again in a poor condition but those using this to access the fields have done well this year by keeping to the track and reducing the width of the track. Once the weather has improved it is hoped that we can level this track off a little but will not be “stoning” it as the cost is prohibitive. All that can be done to reduce the impact on the common is already being done.

**Long Term** – The long-term plan is to continue to monitor the common and protect it, keeping it in its current condition as far as possible. We discussed if there was an option to plant some

additional trees on the common to help reduce flooding but this was dismissed as not viable as we do not think planting of trees on the common would be allowed. However, there are two areas of Village Green which adjoin the common so we are investigating the option of planting some additional trees in these areas. We are also investigating if a replacement tree can be planted should one of the existing trees on the common be lost.

Overall, we all enjoy the open space that the common provides and are looking to protect it for generations to come.

Peter Povall 01568 720250 peter@hufc.com

## **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.

(10.2) It was unanimously agreed to continue the SLCC membership and contribute towards the annual subscription

(10.3) End of year accounts. Internal and External audit.

The Clerk confirmed that there had been no correspondence as yet from the external auditor – but once this is received and completed, the accounts would go to the internal auditor.

(10.4) To agree Clerk's annual increment. After discussion, it was agreed to increase the Clerk's salary point from Grade 25 to Grade 26 as from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. It was acknowledged that as yet a revised salary scale for 2020-2021 had not yet been received. The Clerk also explained that there had been no indication, as yet, of any 'cost of living' increase for 2020 -21 - any information with regard to this usually comes via SLCC.

After discussion, it was unanimously agreed between the Clerk and Councillors that her hours would remain at 6 hours per week – but that any increase would be discussed at the budget/precept setting

**11. Highway; Locality Steward and Environmental Matters.**

11.1 Lengthsman worksheet -March/April– nothing outstanding.

11.2 A letter had been received from Harper Group Construction Ltd with regard to the footpath MK1 being re-routed due to the proposed development of 3 detached houses – planning permission 172236. After discussion, it was agreed that there was no objection and the Clerk was asked to confirm this decision.

**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 completed. 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. The Clerk confirmed that she had once again approached Harpers and had been reassured that the hedge would be trimmed and generally tidied before the birds return in the Spring.

**13. Correspondence:** It was acknowledged that all correspondence had been circulated. It was acknowledged that sadly many of the events would now have to be cancelled due to the Coronavirus. Receipt of all circulated correspondence was acknowledged and there was no further comment.

**14. Date of next full council meeting:** Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – with an earlier start - 7.00p.m.

Chairman thanked those for attending and closed the meeting at 8.30p.m.

Signed:

Date:

Ward Councillor's report

200317: Ward Councillor report for Monkland parish council

Herefordshire has so many doughty over 70-year olds. I'm really not sure how we are going to manage without their input in person for the next few months. They hold together so much of the community fabric. But we owe it to them to step up and have a go at finding and developing ingenious ways of helping each other safely and finding ways to join together and retain our sense of community.

It's been a full-on time for the council and county with floods and now corona virus to deal with. Both of these challenges involve massive joint working across the public sector and with communities. Flooded households and affected businesses are eligible for grants and council tax reductions - check the council's website to find out more.

Fastershire continue to roll out superfast broadband to the rural areas and are now offering free training for Farmers and Tourist enterprises: visit the Fastershire website to find out more - and to check out your own broadband speeds.

I've just attending a briefing on corona virus via a web on my computer: we are increasingly looking at how we can work remotely. This reduces public health risks and also cuts down on



travel time for staff and councillors. Businesses are increasing their use of broadband and remote working too.

Herefordshire's budget and precept are now set for 2021, with a 3.9% rise, 2% of which is dedicated to the expanding need for adult social care. Herefordshire's county plan has also been updated. There is more money for heritage and tourism- though starting from a low base.

Its already a year since the council unanimously declared a climate emergency. We now have a much-improved section on our website, which also includes response to the ecological crisis. There are grants for businesses to install renewables and for homes needing first time central heating – have a look.

With all the difficulties we have been facing there is also room for chinks of optimism.

Community spirit came to the fore during the flooding and is very strong locally.

Queenswood are just launching their sustainable futures centre

Our council pension fund is looking at some positive investments in renewables and hydroponics

I've now stepped back from the Cabinet role I've been doing since last June: it's been fascinating and a massive amount to learn. There is such a lot to learn about the many responsibilities Herefordshire Council has. And now we have the extra responsibility of delivering those with our staff mainly working remotely!

Please keep checking our website. And of course, getting in touch by email – mine is [trish.marsh@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:trish.marsh@herefordshire.gov.uk)