

Monkland and Stretford Parish Council

*Minutes of Monkland & Stretford Parish Council held on
Tuesday 20th October 2020 from 7.00pm*

Website address: monkland.org

Clerk's email address: thelesleyhay@hotmail.co.uk

**Due to present Government restrictions this meeting was
a 'virtual' meeting held via Zoom.**

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

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

Present: 5 members of the public

The Chairman welcomed those present to the October virtual/Zoom meeting.

Minutes

- 1. Acceptance of apologies for absence:** No apologies received
- 2. Declarations of interests,** Disclosable Pecuniary, Non-Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary interests. No interests declared.
- 3.** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 22nd September 2020 were agreed as a true record and it was unanimously voted that they be adopted and signed by the Chairman.
- 4. Highways and Environmental Matters – A44 speeding issues**

The Chairman gave a brief but detailed report of all the work that had taken place over the last 30-40 years in an attempt to reduce the speed limit on the A44 through Monkland from 50mph down to 40 mph.

Despite visits from the Police Commissioner; Safer Roads Representatives; Senior Engineers from Balfour Beatty including an independent survey by

Balfour Beatty – it seems there is no hope of a speed reduction happening in the foreseeable future.

The Chairman explained that this extra meeting had been called to discuss/explore ways of possibly reducing speed or at least to encourage drivers to drive within the 50mph restriction.

The Chairman opened the discussion to the public.

It was acknowledged that, during the last three years, over £10,000 has been spent on improving the approach to the bridge from the Leominster side together with a new anti-skid surface being laid. However, it was felt that these improvements had made no difference to the speed of vehicles - in particular those travelling towards the bridge from the Bainstree Crossroads.

A lengthy discussion followed - in particular discussing possible ways of achieving a speed reduction along this stretch of road. During discussion, it was also acknowledged that further investigation into noise pollution from the A44 would be beneficial mainly because it is something that can be measured at low cost and at low risk.

The discussion centred on two alternatives – (a) the gateway scheme – having white gates erected on both sides of the road at both ends of the village to give the impression of entering a narrower road and a village community or (b) using Speed Indication Devices (SID) which flash the speed being travelled and also records data for reference and comparison.

The first scheme would be a one-off cost and would just require maintenance with paint/cleaning. The second option is a more expensive option –but the option statistics prove to be more effective - both require consultation with Balfour Beatty.

It was eventually agreed that Cllr Neave will draw together all the information including costs involved and will produce a leaflet to be included in the next Newsletter. A draft to be circulated to the councillors in approximately two weeks to allow discussion. This information will inform

the local community that the Parish Council are discussing the problem – and to give local folk an opportunity to give their opinion on which scheme they would prefer – bearing in mind that the costings will have to be met through the Precept. It was also acknowledged that a 'do nothing' option should be included as a choice. but it was agreed that this is not really an option. It was suggested that we should get a survey completed for the positioning of gates and consider installing them at each end of the village as a first step. The difficulty would be to show the effects the gates have had other than marking the village boundary more clearly.

5. Footpath Officer's report and Monkland Common

The Footpath's Officer will give a report to the November meeting ready for inclusion in the November newsletter.

5.1 Village green – since the last meeting the residents at Pleck Cottage have signed a simple contract with the Parish Council with regard to mowing the village green outside their property – however, there is an understanding that this does not give any rights to ownership in the future.

There was a discussion with regard to the bollards – and it was agreed to keep them in place and that the Footpath Officer and Mr Wheeler will meet to discuss replacing some of the rotten ones.

The piece of village green on the left-hand side approaching the common – is no longer needed for grazing – so it has been agreed to ask the lengthsman to mow from the Telephone Box to the brook.

Mr Wheeler very kindly offered to trim between the bollards and will mow the verge along the roadside.

There was a short discussion with regard to residents who live on the common and who cut/mow the grass in front of their properties. It was explained that the Parish Council did not have any enforcement rights but has noted that 10% of the common is being lost for grazing. Although it was acknowledged that this practice of mowing in front of the properties had gone on for many years – it did not imply any rights of ownership.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Turner for repairing/refurbishing the Notice Board by the bus shelter – and also for giving the bus shelter itself a coat of preservative ready for the winter.

6. **Finance:** Accounts sheet/schedule of payment

6.1 Schedule of Payments sheet had not been circulated as the Clerk explained that, as this was an extra meeting, she is waiting for October invoices.

7. **Planning issues**

7.1 Update on the hedge opposite Manor Cottage. Cllr Turner reported that the hedge sides have now been cut back but the top remains overgrown. Cllr Turner has contacted the Harpers representative on two occasions with regard to getting the top lowered – but, to date, has not received a reply.

7.2 The Old Vicarage planning application 202905 – the planning application details had been circulated and were available on line. After discussion – it was agreed that the Parish Council have no objection.

8. **Newsletter** – it had been agreed to hold the next issue of the Newsletter until after the November Parish Council meeting as this will allow the inclusion of some financial figures with regard to the Precept/Budget for 2021-2022. Residents have been asked to forward some editorial content together with a write up on the harvest church service and the Remembrance Service. Hopefully, details about the Christmas services/celebrations will also be available but it was acknowledged that these will have to be very restrained this year due to Covid19 guidelines/restrictions.

Date and time of next meeting – it was agreed to meet on Tuesday 17th November to include Precept/budget planning for 2021-2022. Draft figures will be circulated in advance of the meeting.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending – in particular the members of the public – and closed the meeting at 8.40p.m.

Signed:

Date: