

Sproston Parish Council
Meeting Monday 7th August 2023
Venue – The Fox & Hounds, Sproston

Meeting opened at 19:33

Present: Councillor Peter Cunane (PC), Councillor Peter Gleave (PG), Councillor John Lightfoot (JL), Councillor Stephen Percival (SP), Councillor James Townley (JT)
Apologies from Councillor Christy Ilgman (CI)

Also present was Chester & Cheshire West Councillor Mark Stocks (MS)

9 members of the public were present

No Declaration of Interests were declared.

Mark Stocks opened the meeting – there has been no council since 2021. Following the election in May 2023 six unopposed councillors were elected (as above).

1. Election of Chairman for the Year 2023-24

James Townley was nominated by Stephen Percival and seconded by Peter Cunane. James Townley duly elected as Chairman of SPC.

2. Election of Vice-Chairman for the Year 2023-24

John Lightfoot was nominated by Stephen Percival and seconded by Peter Gleave. John Lightfoot was duly elected as Vice-Chairman of SPC.

3. Apologies

Apologies of attendance from Christy Ilgman were given.

4. Finance

Treasury will be run by John Lightfoot until a clerk is found.

5. Open Forum

Any questions were asked of the public. No questions were submitted at this time.

Jim McKechnie (previous Chairman of SPC) brought along the book of minutes dating back to 1935.

MS commented that he was pleased that the SPC is reinstated. He suggested that they have a meeting every six weeks until the Precept has been submitted and when running costs and a clerk have been established.

JT has been in discussion with Jackie Weaver of CHALK regarding a clerk and an advert will be issued in due course for both a temporary and a permanent clerk. In the meantime the website and any correspondence will be covered by SPC members.

Question from member of the public – ‘How will you notify people of meetings?’ Response – Notices on the Parish notice board on Wren Avenue. A diary of this year’s meetings will be agreed and a leaflet will be dropped to the local area. When we get access to the website it will also be updated on there.

Question from member of public – ‘Do people know it’s an open meeting?’ Response – this will be made clear on the leaflet etc. All welcome.

6. Planning Applications

The Borough Council CW&C send through planning applications to the Parish council. The main concern at the moment is the OPP (Outline Planning Permission) off Centurion Way, Middlewich as 75% is in Cheshire East and the remaining 25% is in CW&C and within the parish boundary. MS informed the meeting that one of the planning policies of CW&C is that no building is permitted on agricultural land. MS has already objected as a Councillor to this application. His thoughts are that this development will severely impact the local community and local highways, particularly the A54 that runs through the parish. There is the possibility of S106 monies, which are a levy for new houses that is passed to the parish within which the development falls.

With regard to the ongoing applications at Dairy House Farm. Kate Richardson (CW&C) is currently assessing the legalities of the application. KR is currently discussing the issue with the EA. The main planning concerns are that the waste materials currently on site are not suitable to make a slurry lagoon. MS is concerned about the impact to the local community and local highways.

7. Finance

MS told the meeting that the bank balance as of February 2021 was £42,254.99.

JT told the meeting that the balance as of August 2023 was £7,897.08 in the Parish Council account and £42,439.77 in the donations account.

No precept increase over the last two years as no SPC.

The play area on Wren Avenue is covered by £28 special expenses of CW&C council however the SPC may wish to adopt the play area if the cost is beneficial. If so, then the residents would not get the £28 extra cost.

8. Previous Minutes

No previous minutes for previous meeting from 2021.

9. Appointment of a Clerk

JT has contacted Jackie Weaver of CHALK and an advert will be issued for a temporary and a permanent clerk. The temporary one will assist us with getting the council up and running. MS has also talked to other local parishes to see if any of their clerks can assist. It was commented that it would be useful if the clerk, temporary or permanent, had experience dealing with CW&C.

10. Any other business

Discussions were had regarding the Barclays Bank accounts. JT & JL are the signatories and both have access to online banking.

Highways – it was requested if a cattle crossing sign could be installed on Brereton Lane and also a speed review as it is currently 60mph.

Insurance review is required as it has not been actioned since 2021.

The current Defibrillator installed at the F&H is out of date and needs renewing. Costs would be got for an update refurbishment and/or a new one. (JT)

MS discussed the upcoming alterations to Junction 18/M6 regarding HS2. There will be some changes to the road layout and he thinks it would be useful for noise monitoring on the roads and highways.

(PC) A speed watch has been set up by the SPC and when the equipment becomes available again shortly we will do another monitoring session.

11. Next Meeting

Dates will be agreed by all and a notice put out to the local area via the Parish notice board, the website and a leaflet drop.

Future Dates of Sproston Parish Council Meetings:

Tuesday 12th September 2023 7.30pm

Tuesday 10th October 2023 7.30pm

Tuesday 14th November 2023 7.30pm

Tuesday 5th December 2023 7.30pm

Meeting Closed 20:32

Minutes Agreed by.....

Seconded By.....

Date