

Sproston Parish Council
Meeting Tuesday 7th May 2024
Venue – The Barn, Parkside Farm, Brereton Lane, Sproston

Meeting opened at 19:37

Present: Councillor Peter Cunane (PC), Councillor Peter Gleave PG), Councillor Christy Illgman (CI), Councillor Stephen Percival (SP), Councillor John Lightfoot (JL), Councillor James Townley (JT)
Also present: Mark Stocks (CWAC councillor)

10 members of the public were present.

JT opened the meeting and thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and the AGM.

1. Election of Chairman for the year 2024-2025
JT nominated by JL and seconded by PG.
2. Election of Vice-Chairman for the year 2024-2025
JL nominated by JT and seconded by PC.
3. Apologies
No apologies given. All attended.
4. Declarations of Interest
No Declarations of Interest were stated.
5. Public Speaking
Potholes! A new resident to the area asked if anything was planned for ongoing pothole maintenance. He is a new resident to Kinderton Park Homes. JT explained that because KPH is close to the boundary with Cheshire East Council (CEC) and Cheshire West & Chester Council (CWAC), as discussed at the last meeting, it is difficult to get a maintenance schedule from CEC. There is an app (Phone App) for both councils where potholes can be reported and he encourages everyone to report them. In particular the potholes on the bend by Briar Pool Farm. MS commented that the council (CWAC) budget for highways has been reduced year on year but with HS2 now being cancelled, there will be funds redirected to repairing roads in the borough and particularly potholes.

MS commented that Broad Lane is disgraceful. He drove down it earlier this evening and said that if you can report it at the actual location rather than when you get home, this is better for locating the pothole. The process is that CWAC will come out and assess the issue. If it meets the criteria then it will be repaired within two weeks. If it does not meet the criteria for repair, then this will be fed back. Ringway are no longer the contractors as CWAC were not happy with the work being done. Poolford Lane is dissected by both CEC & CWAC however if there are any issues please report to both.

There is a blocked gulley outside Dairy House Farm. CWAC have agreed it is blocked but will only put it on the maintenance schedule and will not unblock it as a one off job.

There will be a new traveller site in CEC off Cledford Lane. There have been ground drains put in by KPH management but are not good enough for the job. PC & JL visited KPH site following the last meeting to view the drainage system for the residents. JL reported that there is insufficient drainage on site. MS to see if he can get CEC to do anything about the drains but as it is private land this may not be resolved.

On Cledford Lane they have cut down a lot of hedges but as the bypass is now on hold SPC is not sure who now owns which bit of land. MS to ask who now owns what and what is the status of the bypass.

MS gave an update to Dairy House Farm. The Environment Agency have given the farmer a permit to import soil. Any legal action to cease operations will take a long time and is outside of the remit of SPC. Local residents have asked that the operations cease.

6. Previous Minutes

These were approved by JT and JL seconded. The minutes were available if anyone would like to see them. These will be loaded onto the website as soon as available.

7. Planning Applications

There is an ongoing application off Centurion Way which partly falls into CWAC & SPC. It is a 25% in CWAC with the remainder in CEC. CWAC have not approved this development as it does not fall in their plan. It is felt that if the development were to go ahead it would cause more traffic chaos into Middlesbrough and the surrounding roads. The application with CEC is pending and CWAC is still waiting for more information from the developer. There are no new applications in Sproston.

8. Roads & Highways Update

There are no new issues. However we still have issues with Broad Lane as discussed at the previous meeting. There are still a lot of pot holes in the SPC area. The grid/gulley map is still awaited from CWAC.

9. Local Policing Update

Phil Hambleton is our local PCSO. He has supplied us with a local policing report which has been uploaded to the website. In brief, he has been on a local speedwatch on the A54 and there were two speeding enforcements.

We have a new Police & Crime Commissioner. Price.

The black boxes to monitor vehicles, speed and number have been sited on Byley Road and Penneys Lane but they only report on average speed and not the range so it will be interesting reading when they are placed on the A54 through Sproston.

10. Finance

We have now received the precept for the new financial year of £3,900. Our clerk, Alyson Townley (AT) explained the accounts procedure and the AGAR which has to be submitted yearly. We are currently looking for an auditor but the price is £250 from other local councils so we are looking for an alternative auditor. We currently have £10,946 in the current account and £42,861 in the community fund.

11. Chairman's Report

Please see attached.

12. Any Other Business

Speed Limits: We have been using equipment supplied by CWAC to monitor traffic speeds on the A54. Unfortunately this is now supplied by Cheshire Police and we have to go through different procedures to obtain this equipment. Hopefully by the next meeting we will be able to update the SPC with new information. We have requested a reduction in the speed limit on Brereton Lane however we do not meet the criteria in full to get this reduction.

Currently it is set at 60mph, which given that pedestrians use the lane and a lot of farm traffic is entering and exiting the lane is felt to be too fast. If we can get CWAC to agree that there exceptional circumstances then we may be able to put a case to Cheshire Police to get it reduced.

MS gave us an update on Wren Avenue. No decision has been made by CWAC as to transferring the play equipment over to SPC. The condition of the equipment is very aged. SPC would prefer CWAC to replace the play equipment before it is transferred to SPC but this will probably not happen due to budget constraints.

The hedges need cutting back on the A54 as you are turning out of Brereton Lane. JT will speak to Charles Sherwin re the hedges.

13. Next Meeting Date:

Tuesday 9th July at The Barn, Parkside Farm, Brereton Lane, Sproston at 7.30pm.

Meeting Closed 20:42

Minutes Agreed by.....

Seconded By.....

Date