

Sproston Parish Council
Meeting Tuesday 11th March 2025
Venue – The Barn, Parkside Farm, Brereton Lane, Sproston

Meeting opened at 19:30

Present: Councillor Peter Cunane (PC), Councillor Stephen Percival (SP), Councillor John Lightfoot (JL), Councillor James Townley (JT)
Cheshire West & Chester Council Mark Stocks (MS)

13 members of the public were present.

1. Apologies

Apologies given from Councillor Peter Gleave. He has had an unfortunate accident and is in A&E with a damaged hand. We all wish him well and a speedy recovery.

2. Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were stated.

3. Dairy House Farm Update

Mark Stocks commented that there have been a number of complaints and that the situation at DHF has become a huge issue with Sproston Parish Council and local residents. There is also an issue with the condition of the road being left from vehicles entering and exiting the site. CWAC are taking time to get to grips with the issue. CWAC refused the planning of the slurry lagoon in January and it is proving difficult to administer action against the site. The EA are also engaged in action against the site. Highways are planning to clean the A54 but there is a resource issue as there is only one road sweeper available to CWAC. They will be looking to pass charges on to the landowner.

CWAC will be looking to proceed with action in the near future but there has to be a period of time to allow compliance and if no compliance by the deadline then legal action may proceed but it will be a slow process.

There have been numerous complaints to the EA (Environment Agency) and SPC have been copied in on those via email. It is disappointing that the length of time any resolution is taking and also the length of response time from the authorities. However we are in a process and there is no magic wand. If any action is taken, it is expected that Charles Sherwin will appeal as historically he does. CS has a permit for taking in waste within a permitted area, given by the EA. However the volume and area is well in excess of that allowed on the permit. The EA is not qualified to assess the volumes and DHF/CS are a customer of the EA. The EA would prefer to work with the permit holder than take legal action.

People are complaining by phone and email. Some have sent photos but SPC are concerned that not all complaints are being logged by the EA.

4. Public Speaking

We now have all been issued with the new wheelie bins and they should all be being emptied as per the previous schedule.

The Brereton Lane end of Broad Lane still has a problem with drainage. A telegraph pole seems to be interfering with the drain and some areas of Broad Lane are still requiring

action. Gary Norbury raised the issue of flooding and explained how it is seriously impacting the farm and affecting the cattle. SPC hope that the flooding issue has been addressed by the works being carried out further down the lane. The previous works contractors managed to block the drain with soil and/or tarmac. The flooding floods the milking parlour and GN has to pump out the water.

Henk brought up the issue that once again an electricity cable had been damaged by a tipper wagon on DHF. This is the third time this year. JT said that if you want compensation as an individual you have to apply through your energy provider and we as SPC cannot apply for everyone.

Jane Norbury brought up the issue of Broad Lane and the state of the road near the shooting ground. There are many potholes and there is reported damage to vehicles. The road condition had been reported to Highways previously but it was not dangerous enough. It was acknowledged by MS & SPC that the road could do with resurfacing. MS to chase CWAC. The residents of Parkside House have an issue with their pond flooding caused by water flowing from DHF. The matter is quite serious as they have livestock on site. They are having to pump water out onto the A54. Due to an anonymous complaint to CWAC, they have received a letter saying that they were contaminating the road and local area. SPC thought this was quite ironic given the condition of what is occurring at DHF. JL has offered to sample the water coming from the land seepage into the pond.

There was also concern from local residents about asbestos being tipped at DHF. SPC were asked if they could get a soil sample – this is probably not possible without the landowners consent. The EA have responded to the query of any asbestos on site by advising the site to bag the asbestos and dispose of it. They do not regard DHF to be a dangerous site.

5. Previous Minutes

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

6. Planning Applications

There are no new planning applications in the parish.

However the Centurion Way planning is ongoing and CWAC have still not approved their part of the site. Approximately 20 houses fall into CWAC. Due to the new housing targets issued by the new Labour government, more housing sites need to be found in Cheshire West to meet the expected build allocation.

There was concern that the Cheshire Fresh site was active again as the hedge had been removed. There is an application to discharge the conditions on site however there is difficulty with the application. However there is no new planning application.

7. Roads & Highways Update

The condition of the A54 was brought up. Continuing issues with vehicles entering and exiting DHF. If the Centurion Way development goes ahead this will seriously impact the A54 and the S106 monies will not be enough. An average speed zone was requested but that seems unlikely.

The clean-up of the A54 from DHF cost CWAC £750 for the two nights. CWAC are looking to recharge this amount to the farmer.

The pavements are getting worse everytime they clean the roads. Photos of the surface break up of the pavements have been sent to CWAC. The machine they use for the roads is

too wide to clean the pavements. The surface breakup could be caused by the water leak by the Homestead, which has now been fixed.
All the gullies have now been emptied.

8. Policing Report

Our local PCSO, Phil Hambleton, is currently away but he has sent across the two local policing reports for January and February. There have been no incidents of anti social behaviour, theft or burglary in the parish in those months. There was however a parcel reported to have been stolen from a doorway.

SPC now have their own speed gun. We do however have to wait for a training update from Cheshire Police before we can use it. We are also looking at additional sites from where we can do speed management. Training takes about half an hour so if anyone is interested in helping out please let our Clerk, Alyson, know.

9. Finance

Balances – Current account £11,095 and Community account £43,344. We have received a £1,000 contribution from CWAC Councillor Mark Stocks.

10. Any Other Business & Community Updates

CWAC have increased their council tax by 4.99%. Sproston Parish Council have not increased theirs so year on year SPC element has decreased by 1.9%. The green tax on our green bins has also increased for 2025.

CWAC and CEC and Warrington have been accepted into a joint mayoral authority. There could possibly be an election towards the end of 2025.

SPC have purchased a grit bin to be located at the head of Wren Avenue. We are also in the process of trying to get a bin in the layby but this is proving difficult due to funding issues with CWAC.

Sandbach Clean Team have been out down Brereton Lane – thanks to them. They collected 27 bags of rubbish! SPC asked for volunteers for litter picking along the A54. We have litter pickers, bag hoops and hi viz vests.

We have a vacancy for a Parish Councillor. Anyone that is interested can they please contact our clerk.

We would also like to thank the Toad Team who were out in the dark last month helping the toads on Cledford Lane to move to their breeding site.

11. Next Meeting Date:

Tuesday 6th May 2025 at The Barn, Parkside Farm, Brereton Lane, Sproston at 7.30pm. This meeting will be the AGM.

Meeting Closed 20:42

Minutes Agreed by.....

Seconded By.....

Date