

## **Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held at Whitegate Primary School Hall on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 7.30pm**

Members of the public present: 6 members of Cassia Green attended (A Quirk, R Quirk C Fisher, C Parker, D Vorberg, D Grady), 3 members Grange Lane (J Garvey, K Garvey, L Stafford) and A Ingleby (Home watch).

5 members of the Council present: Cllr Rayner (Chair), Cllr Baldini, Cllr Leech, Cllr Haigh, Cllr Cotterill.

### **1.1 Apologise for absence.**

Cllr Matthews Cllr Campbell holiday /  
Cllr Heath - working

### **Declarations of interest.**

None

Resident spoke on behalf of members of Cassia Green. They feel forgotten and fed up, their concerns in summary include: state of the roads, only two pot holes have been filled despite being continually reported; Speed limit 40 mph is too high (with blind bend) there are 2100 movements per week and huge agricultural tractors use the cut through (not main routes of Clay Lane/Dalefords Lane) and walkers take life into their own hands walking route; Broadband speeds very poor (3-20mbps download / 0.8-1.8mbps upload speeds) and no planned upgrades expected (not getting fibre to premises ever) and this is a real problem; United Utilities despite dialogue direct with them, they are not interested in adding Cassia Green onto the network despite local works at the pumping station impacting directly on them; A resident took an interest in the bank of trees and PC did not consult with them before making their representation to the planning application. They feel they are not getting the support they want and nobody is listening to them. They want to step up their campaign and ask the Parish Council (PC) for their support.

Cllr Rayner welcomed them to the meeting. Cllr Rayner explained that we undertook a resident road safety survey last December, and asked if they participated? We had a good uptake to the survey (anonymous unless chose to give details). Residents asked how this was publicised. It was publicised on social media (Facebook, X, Next Door) and PC website (residents do not use social media), reiterated it was on our website too. This was used as the basis to update our road safety risk priority areas (identified 6 top sites) and we have taken steps on our highest priority area.

The whole country has a pot hole crisis, residents said we need to tap into the additional funding made available to repair rural roads. Cllr Rayner explained the CWAC financial position (30 million reduction from budget and only getting worse). We don't know their criteria for highways prioritisation, previous experience the more reporting of faults the better chance of prioritisation. PC are regularly reporting pot holes on all roads. Your opportunity to give your views at our annual village meeting 29<sup>th</sup> April, 7.30pm in school hall. We are currently looking at our strategy to address road safety, which will include asking resident to write on mass to CWAC. Residents asked how Cassia Green could now be included in our priorities. Discussed making representation to MP (election coming up), Ward Councillors, attend council meetings. Cllr Rayner confirmed our Ward Councillor Gina Lewis (Labour) is very active and supportive.

Residents have liaised with Colin Grant regarding their broadband project, it is not feasible for those houses on Cassia and residents not prepared to put own money into the project. PC commented that another resident has raised concerns regarding broadband on Cinder Hill, saying we have been removed from the national programme.

Resident confirmed they have already completed the upgrade to the Winsford exchange, with no further works scheduled, Government made a commitment to rural areas and we need to lobby this with the support of PC.

Discussed the United Utility (UU) scheme, which does not include joining Cassia residents to the network, despite pumping station works in progress. Spoke about tankers to/from the Paddocks there is no intention by UU to include them on the network either, as it is too costly, despite the cost of several tankers daily due to the lakes leaking into their septic tank. UU difficult to liaise with, they have declined requests to attend our meetings in the past. They did hold a consultation event when launching their project to improve the pumping stations. Resident has the information gathered by landowner of Marton site pump station, which has not been able to cope with capacity for a number of years. Resident has a senior contact at UU, time limited whilst on site and asked for PC support.

Tree management: PC confirms, we are not experts and believe the LA Tree Office is best placed to make recommendations on these applications. Residents concerned PC did not engage before making comment, it is an unadopted bank and individuals are putting own money in to improvements. PC confirmed we receive planning applications and make comment on the application, applicants/residents should use PC meetings as opportunity to make representation, PC cannot visit every application, trees are often an emotive subject. Contact details for all parish councillors also available on our website if want to contact and discuss further.

Residents feel they are not engaged and it's not joined up, and PC needs greater engagement. If residents have concerns, they need to attend our meetings and let us know. PC confirmed this is the first time we have been contacted regarding any of these concerns.

Residents of Grange Lane discussed bows of trees on Grange Lane (could cause damage to car if left unchecked and fall on vehicles). Leaves are no longer picked up by residents since the introduction of charging for wheelie bins, these are now blocking grids and roads are not cleaned regularly (when asked CWAC to clean roads mentioned can't do during school term time due to cars parked there all day). Yellow lines on the corner only, school intake has increased, vehicles drive/park on pavement, using driveways to turn around (one vehicle got stuck on driveway and had to be towed off).

Cllr Rayner outlined the parking scheme which had planning permission but which is on hold due to access, the Diocesan won't do a 'deal' for the land needed. PC can do nothing more.

Agricultural traffic constant, with large double articulated lorries trying to navigate the parked cars, concern regarding staff parking obstructing driveways. Huge demands on the road and collectively we need to address these issues. Residents questioned why Hartford was mainly 20mph everywhere? Cllr Rayner explained our problems in relation to the speed limit on Whitegate Road, had to accept 50mph (but we want 40mph). PC have paid for the speed limit reduction; we were advised to accept the 50mph then move towards a 40mph at a later date.

Residents say that CWAC budget cuts are not our concern it is their concern to deliver service.

Residents confirmed we are suffering from other people's effect (i.e. pupils from school are from out of area).

## Summary:

- Residents encouraged to attend our annual village meeting, last year no residents attended to raise their concerns. We will further discuss road safety at this meeting.
- Check social media / website for what's happening in the community.
- We'll see if there is interest for a working group to be set up to lobby regarding Broadband and agree how this can be progressed politically.
- Resident to make initial contact with UU and involve PC.

*Residents left 8.30pm*

Home watch - Andrew Ingleby requested PCSO email address to make contact. He now has access to the W&M database, there are 12/13 listed and he will make contact to gauge continued support. Andrew will use 29<sup>th</sup> April to 'start the ball rolling' and will engage with PCSO in the meantime. The best schemes involve community cohesion working together.

*AI Left meeting 8.33pm.*

**2.1 To approve the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March. 1466/24 resolved that the Council approved the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024.**

## **3. Matters arising from the minutes Ordinary meeting on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024.**

3.1 no matters arising not included on the agenda.

3.2 action log update was noted:

- A54 – still waiting for date. Clerk has the job number and has used online form to contact Colas.
- Zig Zag scheme in the queue, Vicar has been kept informed and is agreeable.
- D-day bench, Vicar would like a ceremony and suggested 15<sup>th</sup> May (King's birthday) as not available 6/6.
- Cllr Rayner has emailed Highways with the improvements we intend to make at the Beeches, no reply so will go ahead.

## **4. Clerk's report and correspondence**

4.1 Discussed and agreed action to Clerk's report and correspondence: actions complete or on the agenda. None

## **5. Planning**

**5.1 1467/24 resolved the following planning application responses:**

|              |             |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 24/00766/TPO | Beech House | T1 - beech - shorten longest lowest limb (over road) by 4 metres. T2 - beech - fell | Whilst we refer to the tree specialist at CWAC as the expert, we are very concerned about the amount of trees being felled or work being undertaking within the parish on historic trees. |
|--------------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

5.2 To discuss enforcement/complaints:

- Rushmere lodge – still with planning inspectorate
- The Mosses – understand enforcement officer due to visit next week.

- Clay Lane Farm/Old Oak stables- owner has written to PC, unsure who else he has corresponded with, regarding our minutes following resident attending last meeting. The wording of the minutes accurately reflects the conversation at the meeting, which confirmed that the owner currently has planning permission and there are conditions to the application to remove the four sheds once replaced. Chair to provide wording to respond to resident acknowledging receipt of emails. Action: KR / Clerk
- Nova Scotia Lane – all removed.
- Clerk noted sign at field on Nova Scotia Lane, Cllr Baldini confirmed owner had had to register address to enable them to obtain electrical installation at site.

### 5.3 Updates Granted/declined/public speaking/enforcement – none

## 6. Finances

6.1 The bank statements: Lloyd's account showed a balance remaining of £61,085.81. The Barclays account balance is £11,933.20 (£98,692.17 including savings accounts and expected precept in April). Clerk commented the Lloyds account is not accruing any interest. Some accounts which are paying minimal interest attract business charges to use the account. Suggested Clerk ask ChALC for investment / saving recommendations. Action: Clerk

6.2 Noted change signatories at Barclays Bank online banking completed.

**1468/14 agreed** the following payments:

6.3 Paid Mid Cheshire footpath society £8

6.4 Paid Tesco invoice (chased for invoice) £720 incl VAT

6.5 Paid ChALC £356.44

6.6 **1469/24 agreed** quote for cutting at The Beeches confirmed as same price as last year.

Richard will provide a price for more daffodil bulbs.

6.7 Received CIL funding £3985.99 for Abbots Moss development.

6.8 Annual Accounts shared pre- internal audit by Julia Roscher. Noted had to restate last years accounts due to lost checks and reduce the expenditure amount by £260.

6.9 Agreed revision to Financial Standing Orders to reflect assets value at £1 and reserve policy and note annual review of asset register.

## 8. Road Safety update

8.1 Discussed general road safety issues and road safety survey next steps/Cinder Hill speed & parking. Clerk sent the summary road survey to CWAC Highways, outlining our desire for 20mph limit outside school, and interactive signs on Cinder Hill. They have responded that the location has been assessed twice previously and would not support reducing the limit to 20mph which would be difficult to enforce, they have said we can apply for a licence to install interactive signs which must be regularly moved. Chair to draft a response outlining our disappointment about the speed limit reduction outside the school. Action: KR/Clerk

## 9. Parish Issues

9.1 The Beeches – Cllr Rayner emailed Highways officer Jamie Barron with our proposals for the Beeches, he has not responded, we will progress with the measures outlined which included visual impact of site (grass cutting, bulb planting), improving pathways and surface of lay-by safe filling pot holes. PB / RM to liaise to agree quantity of 'MOT' needed to fill potholes to be completed when the weather is dry (suggested summer holiday when parents not using site for pre-school), cut back lower branches which obscure vision, the response was copied to Jackie Weaver who helped facilitate the meeting with Highways. Agreed PC should progress they proposals as they have not responded. Action: PB / RM

9.2 United Utilities (UU) works to improve treatment at existing site – no formal update, Cllr Haigh confirmed they have tunnelled under the road. This scheme is completely separate to joining properties on septic tanks to the mains network, it was noted a significant proportion of the village are not on the mains network, not just those properties at Cassia Green. They continue to tanker away the sewage from Grange Lane due to issues with the station.

Cllr Campbell is councillor part of this housing development and Cllr Rayner will ask her to liaise closely with them.

9.3 General parish issues – Sandy Lane tractors and Grange Lane parking are being supported by PCSO who is carrying out review at both locations, he commented that the parking obstruction could be issued a fixed penalty notice, PC support enforcement action being taken. Cllr Cotterill to ask school to remind parents & staff to park with consideration of residents following complaints to the Parish Council. Action: VC

9.4 Litter, footpaths, styles - Cllr Rayner thanked volunteers for their efforts at our annual litter pick and acknowledged the ongoing efforts of a few residents who regularly litter pick throughout the year. Clerk to purchase 5 more litter pick hoops for next year.

It was suggested that we invite Mid Cheshire Footpath Society to meet with footpath officer at our next meeting. Cllr Haigh outlined a summary of their outcomes for the previous year. Action: SH

9.5 Installation of bench arrangements – delivery due end of May, RM, PB, KR, CL to install once arrives. Action: RM, PB, CL, KR

9.6 Annual meeting arrangement – arrive at 7pm to set up ready for 7.30pm start. Clerk has ordered signage to be put up few days before meeting. Action: All

## **10. Items for information and discussion only.**

**None**

Cllr Baldini enquired about the agricultural building at Cookstool Farm, Clerk confirmed a AGR application has been approved (which has been circulated to PC), the PC were not consulted on it. It was noted the lighting is very bright.

There being no further business meeting was closed by the chairman at 9.41pm

**Signed by the Chairman ..... Dated .....**

**Outstanding actions (if removed they are complete)**

| Ref | Date    | Action Log                                                                                                                      | Responsible            |
|-----|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 3.2 | ongoing | Road safety - A54 speed limit reduction (40mph)<br>Speed limit 40mph Cassia Lane PENDING                                        | Pending implementation |
| 8.1 | June 23 | Zig Zag lines – pending                                                                                                         |                        |
| 8.1 | Oct 23  | Speak to landowners regarding PROW and respond to walkers                                                                       | PB                     |
| 9.5 | Dec 23  | D-day commemoration bench installation                                                                                          | RM, KR, CL, PB         |
| 9.4 | Jan 24  | Purchase replacement bulbs green/yellow for tree                                                                                | CL                     |
| 9.1 | Apr 24  | Progress improvements at the Beeches<br>Order MOT for filling in the summer holidays/when dry.                                  | KR / RM / PB           |
| 8.1 | Mar 24  | Email Highways regarding speed indicator signs and 20 mph at school – Chair to provide wording for response                     | KR / Clerk             |
| 9.4 | Apr 24  | Order litter pick circles                                                                                                       | Clerk                  |
| 5.2 | Apr 24  | Clerk to respond to resident of Clay Lane following email received                                                              | Clerk                  |
| 6.1 | Apr 24  | Saving account's - ask ChALC for advice                                                                                         | Clerk                  |
| 9.2 | Apr 24  | Chair to discuss with LC regarding liaising with residents of Cassia Green                                                      | KR                     |
| 9.3 | Apr 24  | To ask school to put reminder out to parents regarding parking with consideration of residents and not obstruct their driveways | VC                     |
| 9.4 | Apr 24  | Arrange meeting with footpath officer and invite Mid Cheshire Footpath Society to attend                                        | SH                     |

**Agenda Call forward**

| Ref | Call forward date | Description                 |
|-----|-------------------|-----------------------------|
|     | Tbc               | VRA re gritting, nuns grave |
|     |                   |                             |
|     |                   |                             |
|     |                   |                             |
|     |                   |                             |

Notes: LC/VC not available May.