Minutes of the Meeting of Littleton Parish Council held on

Monday 19 January 2015 at Chester Rugby Club, Hare Lane, Littleton.

# **PRESENT**: Parish Councillor David Brodie (in the Chair)

# and Parish Councillors Anne Stockdale, Hilary Davies,

# Clive Lovering, Bettie Gilliatt and Sara Rao

**IN ATTENDANCE:** CW&C Councillor S Parker

CW&C Highways Officer Mr Kieran Collins

36 Residents as recorded on the Attendance Sheet

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**15/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Parish Councillor Jonathan Bellis and Mr G Clifton

**15/02 HIGHWAYS ISSUES**

Mr Kieran Collins was attending the Meeting in order to discuss the issues relating to the highways in Littleton that were of longstanding concern to the Parish Council and residents.

i) Junction Improvement – Mr Collins presented a working draft of a scheme to improve the A51/Hare Lane/Littleton Lane junction which involved a left turn only from Littleton Lane. He stated however that all options were being examined and once the scheme was fully worked up it would be put out for consultation.

The ensuing discussion included suggestions to create a roundabout at that location and the need for a pedestrian crossing. Mr Collins responded to the former saying it was not workable due mainly to the land that would have to be acquired and the latter would be examined but could add to the cost of the scheme considerably and thereby threaten its progress.

Apart from the hazards of vehicles crossing the flow of traffic the central area was overworked as motorists queued to turn into Littleton Lane, causing tail backs to the roundabout. The new scheme would alleviate this, Mr Collins stated. He also undertook to provide a variety of statistics on density of traffic and incidents in Littleton.

It was felt that a crossing would alert drivers to the presence of pedestrians – it would also help people get out of Littleton Lane as the A51 traffic was interrupted by people crossing.

ii) Traffic Volume – the routing of traffic to/from the motorway was discussed. Mr Collins stated that he was trying to get this changed via the Highways Agency. There had been some success with this ie. some signs on the M6 attempted to dissuade drivers from using A51 but this was often countered by sat navs…

The possibility of a by-pass was discussed. This had originally arisen many years ago but was shelved due to a change in Government policy. The question of route was discussed. Whilst it was acknowledged that other lengths of the A51 had secured by-passes decades ago it was felt that it would now be hard to make a new case for a by-pass for Littleton. In the current climate of cut-backs this was a non-starter.

iii) Yellow Boxes on Roundabout – the question of traffic jams on the roundabout was discussed with particular reference to obstruction caused by people blocking the yellow hatched areas. This was seen as a matter for the Police and they would be asked to crack down on the problem. It was also suggested that the Vicars Cross roundabout was in desperate need of yellow boxes!

iv) Safety in Heavy Rain – the threat of aquaplaning on the road during heavy rain was a concern as in the past there had been flooding on and beyond the carriageway which had created this hazard. Mr Collins reported that significant drainage works had been carried out in recent times and the gullies were cleaned regularly.

v) Road Maintenance – the standard of maintenance of the road in Littleton was praised by one resident. However a number of residents had concerns ,

and in response Mr Collins undertook to ensure that loose drains and gullies on the A51 were checked and repaired. Residents felt that Pearl Lane required a total resurfacing due to the number of potholes on this rat run.

vi) Littleton Lane – Speed Limit – it was asserted that the 30 mph sign on Littleton Lane was too small. A “30” on the road was suggested and Mr Collins undertook to look into this.

vii) A51 Road Surface – noise emanating from the new road surface was of major concern to a large number of residents on Tarvin Road. Mr Collins pointed out that the specification for the new surface was a recognised maintenance treatment. However, it was argued that a noise reduction surface such as had been laid before had not been used and this was causing noise and vibration nuisance to many residents, exacerbated by the HGVs thundering through the parish late at night. It was agreed that there needed to be speed enforcement to curtail this. The Parish Council would pursue the deployment of a speed camera to help with this. In the meantime further clarification on the relative specifications of road surfacings used for Tarvin Road was being sought.

**15/03 SURFACE OF FIR TREE LANE**

Councillor Stuart Parker reported on action that had been taken in relation to Mr Jones of Fir Tree Cottage using low quality builder’s rubble to fill in the pot holes on Fir Tree Lane and then resurfacing the lane with a limestone dressing.

The Parish Council had seen a letter to Mr Jones from the CW&C Public Rights of Way which was, they felt, ambiguous and could result in no real remedial action being taken. Councillor Parker stated that he had demanded that the material be removed and the lane properly reinstated. If Mr Jones did not carry out the appropriate work the Council would carry it out and charge him.

It was pointed out that there used to be a gate and stile at the point in the lane where the tarmac ended. It was suggested that this be reinstated, thus emphasising that the lane was a Public Right of Way rather than a road. The Clerk was asked to take this up with the PROW Officer.

Action: Clerk to contact PROW re gate and stile

15/04 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 December 2014 be

confirmed as a correct record

15/05 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

1) Police Attendance at Parish Council Meetings – the Clerk was asked to contact PC Busby to ask him to ensure that should he not be able to attend a meeting that another Police Officer attend in his stead. DT

2) Neighbourhood Plan – Councillor Lovering wondered whether if there was anyone willing to get involved (such as himself) should the Parish Council be interested in producing a Plan. Information the Parish Council had on this would be passed to him but it was pointed out that the production of a Plan entailed a massive commitment of time and energy with no guarantee that what was finally proposed would be adopted by the residents of Littleton. AS

3) Parish Field – the Clerk reported he was arranging a meeting with the Tree Warden to look into a tidying up of the overgrown area adjacent to the veterinary surgery. He would also get costings for digger and skip for levelling the area. Some concern was expressed that the creation of an orchard etc could provide a haven for anti-social behaviour. DT

4) Speed Camera – it was recognised that there were people in Littleton who were willing to get involved in speed calming measures and their participation was essential to make any initiative work.

5) Parish Field Lease – it was reported that this was now complete. It was suggested that the lease agreement be lodged with the Parish Council bank for safe custody. DT

**15/06 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

1) 14/04182/FUL – 107 Tarvin Road – Replacement Dwelling

14/4324/FUL - 50 Tarvin Road – Ground Floor and First Floor Extension

14/04641/FUL23 Grove Gardens – Conservatory to Rear

14/04498/FUL – Littleton Hall Farm – Variation of Condition 2 of 14/02964/S73

to allow for increase in boundary wall of Plot 1

14/02962/FUL – 84 Tarvin Road – New Gospel Hall

It was noted that Planning Permission had been granted for all of the above proposed developments.

**15/07 PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES**

# The Clerk presented his customary report on the finances of the Parish Council and set out what the likely income and outgoings for 2015/16 to enable the Parish Council to set a Precept. Members were mindful of the impending loss of Stamford Court and Broadmead and the resultant loss of income and were keen to ensure that the cost to Littleton households remained the same as the previous year.

# RESOLVED: that i) the report of the Clerk be received

ii) the Precept be set at £3,500 adjusted in consultation with

CW&C to not disadvantage Council Tax payers as a result of

boundary changes

15/08 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

RESOLVED: that the following accounts be paid:- £

1) Clerk’s salary – Jan & Feb (less tax) 236.80

2) HMRC – PAYE – Jan & Feb 59.20

3) Typing and office services 29.50

4) Chester RFC – Room Hire – Jan 30.00

5) Litter Warden – 14 hours @ £6.50 91.00

6) Oliver & Co – Fee for Parish Field lease 712.00

**15/09 INCOME**

RESOLVED: that the following income be received:- £

1) War Stock Dividend 15.78

2) HMRC - VAT refund 99.68

3) CW&C – New Homes Bonus 14/15 2,063.00

**15/10 CLERK – PETTY CASH**

# RESOLVED: that i) the Clerk’s petty cash float be reimbursed in the sum of

# £40.50

ii) the Clerk approach local firm Deva Print to obtain prices for

the printing of newsletters

# **15/11 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

Since their last meeting the Parish Council had received correspondence which included:-

## Cheshire West and Chester Council

Members’ Briefings – various

Councillor S Parker re Fir Tree Lane and Highways Issues

New Homes Bonus Grant

Boundary Review Transfer Pro Forma

Council Tax Reduction Scheme Grant 2015/16 and Precept 2015/16

Local residents Mrs S Thompson, Mr T Wakeling, Mr J Cleland, Mr R Chadwick, Mr H Morgan, Mr D Lovatt, Mr M Rocke and Mrs G Tooley re Highways Issues

Local residents Mrs C Bower, Mr P Smith and A Samuel re Fir Tree Lane

### PC N Busby/Inspector P Hodgson – Policing Reports - various

Mr C Elston – general query about Grove Gardens

Mr R Ingram, Your Housing Group re contractor parking

**15/12 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS**

RESOLVED: that the next meeting of the Parish Council be held on

Monday 9 March 2015

**15/13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1) Contractor Parking at Littleton Hall Farm Development – the Clerk reported he had received an assurance from Your Housing Group that the verge opposite the development would be re-instated once the work had been finished.

2) Parish Field Lease – it was agreed that following the completion of work on the lease the Parish Council would move towards establishing their Title of the land at the Land Registry. This would probably require the obtaining of competitive quotes for the work involved. **DT**

3) Twinning Association – Councillor Bettie Gilliatt informed the Parish Council of the AGM of the Twinning Association which was taking place on 27 February 2015.

4) Allotments in Littleton – Planning – Councillor Davies reported on a building which had appeared on the allotments situated behind 70 Tarvin Road. As this was of a substantial nature which could require planning permission the Clerk was asked to raise this with the Enforcement Officer.

5) Litter in Parish – it was reported that the individual who had caused problems by accumulating litter in the wild area next to the veterinary surgery was now dumping rubbish in Pearl Lane. The Clerk was asked to contact PC Neil Busby to see what could be done to curtail this activity. In the meantime the Litter Warden should be advised not to approach this person if encountered on her rounds.

**DT**

6) Vandalism – it was reported that there had been a number of cases of vandalism in the parish including graffiti on the BT box on Pearl Lane.

7) Littleton Hall Farm Development – Wall – concern was expressed about the portion of perimeter wall which appeared to be suffering structural damage due to ivy growth. **DT**