

Llanfair Waterdine Parish Council

Minutes of scheduled meeting Monday 21 November 2022, 7:30pm at the Pavilion.

Present: Cllrs Andrew Beavan (Chairman), Zoe Croose, Mark Hughes, John Lane, Roy Lloyd.

In attendance: Mrs Maggie Brown, Clerk

1. **Welcome.** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllrs Darren Knipe, Abbie Price and Shropshire Councillor Nigel Hartin.
3. **Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations.** None received.
4. **Open Discussion**
 - 4.1. Views of the public parish matters. No members of public were present.
 - 4.2. A written report from Councillor Nigel Hartin was discussed at the meeting. It can be seen at Appendix 3. attached to these Minutes. **Agreed** information on Cost-of-Living Help from Shropshire Council to be circulated via a News Item from the website.
5. **Minutes.** Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 26 September 2022 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
6. **Matters arising from the previous meeting.** No matters were raised.
7. **Reports from Councillors**

Warm Hubs. Report from Cllr Lane. A meeting of representatives from Everest Hall, Llanfair Church, the Community Trust and the Community Pavilion took place on 8 November. The scheme was supported in principle, and will be considered further if a need is identified. An article raising awareness will be included in the December edition of Llanfair Times. Cllr Lane was thanked for representing the Parish Council at this meeting.
8. **Finance.**
 - 8.1. The quarter end report to the end September was received from the Financial Officer. No specific recommendations were made.
 - 8.2. **RESOLVED** to ratify payments made between meetings: £272 to Craven Design & Print for September edition of Llanfair Times.
 - 8.3. Noted: Barclays Bank Account balance 15 November 2022 £5,318.06, and **RESOLVED** to approve payments as follows: Everest Hall £21 (hall hire for 3 meetings), Clerk's Payroll Months 7 & 8 £325.24, HMRC PAYE Months 7 & 8 £81.40 and the Community Pavilion £10 (hall hire for 21 November). Total payments £437.64.
 - 8.4. Arrangements for Internal Audit for 2022/23. **RESOLVED** to appoint Rebecca Turner, RLT Auditing, as internal auditor for 2022/23. The Clerk will confirm the arrangement.
 - 8.5. A report following Finance Working Group meeting was received and the following noted.
 - 8.5.1. The clerk's payslip had been checked and found to be correctly calculated.
 - 8.5.2. Calculations for a pay award (if agreed at item 8.6) were checked and found to be correct.
 - 8.5.3. Bank reconciliations for Quarters 1 and 2 were verified.

The Clerk left the room prior to discussion on item 8.6
- 8.6. Information received from the National Association of Local Councils was noted. Whether to implement pay award for April 2022 onwards was considered. **RESOLVED** to implement the award, with backpay of £1 per hour as recommended from 1 April 2022 to be paid in January with next scheduled payroll.
9. **Budget.** The first draft of the budget for 2023/24 was discussed. A copy of the draft figures can be seen on the website www.llanfairparish.co.uk. Purchase of Jubilee mugs was considered under the Contingency budget heading. It was **agreed** the remaining mugs will be shared between the Everest Hall and the Pavilion.
10. **Llanfair Community Trust.**
 - 10.1. **Requirements for additional Trustee.** Noted: Explanation from Councillor Beavan – there can be five Trustees. The Parish Council is responsible for recommending four, and a fifth may be co-opted by existing Trustees.

Report from Trustees. Ideally looking for a person who is keen to have a positive impact on the parish and its environs; an historical knowledge and understanding of the needs of the parish would be a huge benefit; a person able to commit to an estimated 1-3 hours a week, who is computer literate, with a willingness to contribute. The Trust seeks to improve the well-being of residents, to the benefit of the parish and its environs.

The Trust's mission statement can be seen at www.llanfairwaterdinecommunitytrust.co.uk

The Chairman recommended a renewed effort to encourage suitable candidates to apply. All applications will be considered. The Parish Council is keen to appoint a fourth Trustee.

10.2. Advertising Trustee vacancy in Mid Wales Journal. Noted: Quote of £99 higher than anticipated. **RESOLVED** to not place an advertisement in the newspaper. It was **agreed** to re-advertise via a News Item on the website.

11. **Llanfair Times.** The final version of a survey on the future of the Llanfair Times, to be included in the December edition, was noted. The Clerk thanks Cllr Croose for setting up the online survey.

12. Highways / Public Rights of Way

12.1. Issues relating to Highways. None reported.

12.2. Noted: letter received from Cllr Richard P Marshall, Portfolio Holder for Highways advising new 'Multihog' technology used for recent patching. This is reportedly returning in excess of 95% permanent repairs which will be monitored by Shropshire Council.

Agreed: To write to Cllr Marshall thanking him for works completed, confirming the Parish Council will also monitor the repairs, and that overlaying is still the preferred option due to difficulties arising from patching, e.g., when using snow ploughs.

12.3. Works required under the Environmental Maintenance Grant. None reported.

12.4. Issues to report to the Footpaths Warden. None raised. Reported: Part of Offa's Dyke path is temporarily closed for tree felling. An alternative route is marked.

13. Correspondence. **Discussed in detail items of correspondence (so requested by members before the meeting).**

Email from a resident re Llanfair Times. One household had reportedly been missed from the delivery route. Having checked the circulation list this was confirmed. Councillors **agreed** to make a further check of the list to ensure no other properties are missing.

RESOLVED Clerk to respond to the resident on the above and other aspects of the correspondence.

A resolution was **not** passed to exclude the press and public (Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960) from the following item as it was confirmed prior to the meeting that it is not confidential.

Email received from Mr Chris Taylor, Broadband Manager, Shropshire Council. Discussed under item 14.1.

14. **Airband Fibre to the Premises in the Parish.**

14.1. An update was received on 14 November from Mr Chris Taylor, Broadband Manager, Connecting Shropshire. It can be seen at Appendix 1.

An update from Airband was received by residents on 15 November and can be seen at Appendix 2.

It was **RESOLVED** to offer the Pavilion for a meeting with Mr Taylor, Cllr Hartin and councillors from Bettws y Crwyn, Llanfair Waterdine and Stowe Parish Councils.

Cllr Hartin is to be thanked for facilitating this joint meeting.

14.2. Response to letter from Chairman of Bettws y Crwyn Parish Council 27 Sep 2022. The Parish Council is in entire agreement with the sentiments expressed, and looks forward to further discussions at the joint meeting.

15. **Noted:** Date of next scheduled meeting – Monday 16 January 2023, to be held at the Pavilion.

16. The meeting closed at 20:53

Signed
Cllr Andrew Beavan, Chairman

Dated 16 January 2023

Appendix 1. Update from Chris Taylor, Broadband Manager, Connecting Shropshire. 14 November 2022

Following the recently issued communication from Airband to the parish, I am now able to confirm a formal contractual position on behalf of Shropshire Council.

Numerous options, ranging from alternative routes to different broadband technologies have been explored as part of this phase. When the revised costs were shared with the Council in September 2022, we asked Airband to update the Parish Council of the immediate financial risk and the potential impact on the local community.

Following the evidence provided by Airband, it is clear that the projected work to complete the build to premises in the Parish will significantly exceed the original modelled and contracted costs agreed between parties in 2019.

Because of these high costs, we will need to remove these premises from our contract with Airband. I appreciate this will be disappointing given the time that the community has been waiting for a solution from this contract.

However, by removing the premises from the contract it will enable BDUK (Building Digital UK) and Shropshire Council to look proactively at alternative opportunities to connect the premises that are descoped.

I expect Shropshire Council to undertake the necessary contractual change before the end of this financial year (March 2023).

I would be more than happy to have a conversation with the Parish to explain the circumstances in more detail. Please be aware, that owing to commercial sensitivities the matter will need to be undertaken in a closed session with the Council.

Appendix 2. Update from Airband to householders. 15 November 2022

Unfortunately following a comprehensive review of this part of the build, it is clear that the projected work to complete the build to premises in the Parish will significantly exceed the original modelled and contracted costs agreed between parties in 2019.

Because of these high costs, we will need to remove some premises from our contract with Shropshire Council.

I appreciate this will be disappointing given the time that you have been waiting for a solution from this contract and should you wish to discuss further please contact us at communityengagement@airband.co.uk or contact Shropshire Council at: connecting.shropshire@shropshire.gov.uk.

Appendix 3. Report from Shropshire Councillor Nigel Hartin

Cost of Living Help – Shropshire Council are encouraging residents worried about money to:

- Visit the cost of living help page for information on what support is available in Shropshire. [Cost of living help | Shropshire Council](#)
- Use their checklist to see if there are any steps to take which may help in coping with rising costs. Recommended steps include using a benefits calculator to check that not missing out on income, exploring schemes which help with household bills, getting support with debt, and reaching out for mental health support. [Cost of living checklist | Shropshire Council](#)
- Use the 'Worrying About Money' leaflet to identify which organisation in Shropshire can offer support. Go to: <https://www.worryingaboutmoney.co.uk/>

There is an additional source of support if you are a Severn Trent Customer unable to pay water and sewerage bills. Please go to: [Severn Trent Trust Fund | Help with paying your bill | Help when you need it | My Account | Severn Trent Water \(stwater.co.uk\)](#)

Housing stock: Against a background of some Housing associations looking at selling off poor

energy performing stock rather than retrofitting (This is because they face compulsory EPC rating on their housing stock) - this has led to an ongoing net loss of affordable homes in the County & we have seen this happening right across South Shropshire as Connexus sell off such stock to concentrate on affordable housing in more urban areas. I & my SC colleagues locally have previously suggested that the Council purchase such properties to bring them up to standard and keep them in affordable/social housing stock through its in-house housing company Cornovii. We are now working with Green party colleagues to firm up a proposal for Council to push this forward - as even refurbishment and let at market rent would be better than the loss of rental properties all together, especially in our area where development is on hold due to the Clun river problem.

Free School Meals -Children in receipt of benefits-related free school meals in Shropshire will now continue to receive support with food costs during the school holidays until the end of the spring term 2023. Each child who receives free school meals will receive £15 a week towards the cost of a school meal equivalent throughout the two-week Christmas school holidays and the February 2023 half-term holiday. Most of this support will be through a voucher to spend at a local supermarket, distributed via the children's' early years setting, school or college.

On-street EV Charging Points: SC made an announcement last month in respect of a successful bid for Government funding which has secured the Council almost £902, 940 to install more on-street electric vehicle charging points across the county. The grant award came from the 'Office for Zero Emission Vehicles', with support of the Energy Saving Trust. This will enable the installation of on-street charge points for residents wishing to charge their plug-in electric vehicles. SC will now work with their charge point operator, 'Connected Kerb', to bring the number of EV charge points to 320, across 45 locations in the county. - Shropshire Council and its existing technology provider Connected Kerb will also actively engage the community to promote increased public awareness of the new infrastructure and its advantages. Community engagement will take place at the point of installation, information will be distributed to residents to providing detail on electric vehicle technology and how to use the new charge points. The charge point system provides real-time charge point usage data.

Shrewsbury NWRR: More uncertainty over whether this bypass will go ahead following the MP for Shrewsbury asking government for an additional £27.5M to deal with the increase in costs for construction etc - Even with this extra (which it's almost certain the Government won't agree to), it still would leave SC to find an additional unbudgeted £9.1M from somewhere to make it viable, (without the extra grant from government it's got to find the full £36.6M).

Community Hospitals: Concerns were raised at a Scrutiny meeting in Shirehall recently by my Colleagues Cllrs Heather Kidd & Tracey Kidd over the future of community hospitals in Shropshire - this follows the announcement earlier in the month that the former maternity unit in Ludlow has been sold. calls have now been made for urgent discussion with NHS Community Health Trust after staff at Ludlow hospital were faced with contractors measuring up the building for future disposal around them, without the staff previously being told what was going on.

Grants: There are some useful grant opportunities in this funding Digest - grants towards supporting young people, rewilding, tree planting and refugee support amongst others - at <https://rsonline.org.uk/rural-funding-digest-november-2022>

Heating oil grant – regarding the £100 payment for oil or LPG customers Shropshire Council have confirmed that unfortunately they have not yet received any notification as to how this is to be paid to householders.

Cllr Nigel Hartin