



Meeting of **Clent Parish Council** held at **7:00pm on Monday 15th April 2024**  
at Clent Parish Hall, Church Ave, Clent, Stourbridge DY9 9QT

## Minutes

**Present:** Cllr Ed Sheppard (Chairman), Cllr Andrew Sherrey, Cllr Margaret Sherrey, Cllr Peter Bates, Cllr Sara ffoulkes, Cllr David Mudie

**In attendance:** County & District Cllr Karen May, District Cllr Simon Nock, Nick Farress (Clerk), 6 members of the public.

### **5595 Apologies for absence**

Cllr Drew Beaumont, George Kirkham (NT)

### **5596 Declarations of interest**

(a) Cllr Ed Sheppard declared a pecuniary interest in Minute 5603 as he is the parish Lengthsman/cheque payee. Cllr Sheppard did not vote on this item or sign the cheques.

(b) Cllr Ed Sheppard declared a pecuniary interest in Minute 5605(a)&(b) and left the room for these items.

### **5597 Dispensations**

There were none.

### **Open session**

*The meeting was adjourned for the open session and the following reports/updates were noted.*

### **Public comments/questions**

Members of the public raised the following issues:

### **5598 Chairman's Annual Report 2023/2024**

The Chairman read a statement highlighting the parish council's work over the past 12 months and thanked past and current district and county councillors, the clerk and parish council colleagues for their work and support.

### **County and District Councillor Updates**

Cllr Simon Nock provided updates on the following:

- BDC budget
- Local plan call for sites

Cllr May provided updates on the following:

- WCC annual update

#### **5599 Clent Connect Update**

The treasurer of Clent Connect provided an update on the company's activities.

#### **5600 Defibrillators**

Mr Richard Price who maintains the defibrillators on behalf of the parish council reported that the unit at the French Hen would soon need new pads, and each unit requires a "what3words" plaque. Mr Price would e-mail the clerk with the list of requirements for agreement at the May meeting.

#### **5601 Minutes**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 18th March 2024 be agreed as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman.

#### **5602 Correspondence**

There was no new correspondence

#### **5603 Finance**

(a) Payments: It was **RESOLVED** to approve the payment of the following for April 2024:

(i) Clerk salary & expenses	£787.46
(ii) HMRC PAYE	£20.08
(iii) Ed Sheppard Lengthsman	£165.00
(iv) WCC Street Lighting	£675.73
(v) Play Safety Ltd	£405.60
(vi) Clent Connect Ltd	£8,600.00

(b) Budget monitoring: It was **RESOLVED** to approve the budget monitoring report dated 31/03/24 prepared by the Clerk.

(c) Bank reconciliation: It was **RESOLVED** to approve the March 2024 bank reconciliation noting a balance of £120,438.78 as at 31/03/24. The Clerk pointed out that this figure was high due to the 1<sup>st</sup> instalment of the 2024/25 precept being paid early by BDC.

#### **5604 Community Orchard Signage**

It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the spending of £50 on signage to label each tree in the new community orchard.

#### **5605 General maintenance & highway matters**

(a) Beacon Great War memorial band – it was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Chairman to spend £225 on the band.

*Cllr Sheppard left the room and Cllr Andrew Sherrey took the Chair for the following items:*

(b) It was **RESOLVED** to renew the Lengthsman scheme for a further 12 months and re-appoint Ed Sheppard as the parish Lengthsman.

(c) It was further **RESOLVED** to raise the hourly rate of the Lengthsman from £14 per hour to £16 per hour with immediate effect.

*Cllr Sheppard resumed the Chair.*

(d) Road run off into the pond. Cllr May would investigate the viability of water testing with North Worcestershire Water Management and the Clerk would also investigate whether Birmingham University had a water testing service. However, it was noted that WCC would not pay for water testing and that the PC would need to be specific about what substances the water needed to be tested for and for what purpose. In addition, re-routing pipework would be very expensive and it was suggested that the pond would become stagnant if water flow was restricted.

(e) Hossil Lane drainage repairs – some work had taken place which had improved matters, but further work was required and had begun with operatives digging a new hole and filling it in again. Cllr May would follow this up with WCC engineers.

(f) Odnall Lane/Mount Lane – the pavement widths are becoming very narrow as a result of the damaged wall whose ownership is disputed. The Lengthsman pushed back as much vegetation as possible, but no work can take place near the wall.

(g) New VAS for Bromsgrove Road. Cllr May would look into the viability of this, although the signs cost £3200. The PC indicated that it would be happy to fund a new sign.

#### **5606 Field Maintenance & Play Areas**

(a) Mowing would start imminently. It had been delayed due to the recent wet weather.

(b) The annual play equipment inspection had taken place. The reports did not highlight any high risk issues and the Chairman would go through the reports in detail in due course.

#### **5607 Planning**

There were no new applications to consider.

#### **5608 Clent Youth Council**

The primary school have carried out a recruitment event and there are some children interested in joining the Youth Council. It was noted that any young person can apply direct to the parish council to be considered for the Youth Council. DBS clearance would be needed to for those councillors running the Youth Council – Cllrs ffulkes and Margaret Sherrey to begin with.

#### **5609 Parish Magazine**

The Clerk would place the annual financial report into the May edition.

#### **5610 Councillor updates and items for next Agenda.**

There were no further updates.

#### **Date of Next Meeting**

The next Meeting of the Parish Council is the Annual Parish Council meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at Clent Parish Hall.

*The meeting closed at 8.30pm*

**Signed as a true record:**

**Chairman:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_