

Minutes of Marston Parish Council meeting held on 8th November 2023

The meeting opened at 19:00

**Present**:

Parish Cllrs; Marion Potts (MP), Phil Carter (PhC), Angela Johnson (AJ), Ian Stanley (IS), Dave Collier (DC) and Amanda Nixon (AN)

Clerk: Caroline Constable (CC)

**Apologies**:

Apologies received from Ward Cllrs Lynn Gibbon (LG) and Phil Marshall (PM)

**Declarations of interest:**

No declarations of interest

**Dispensations:**

There were no dispensations

**Public Forum:**

No public present

**Minutes:**

The minutes from the parish council meeting of 11/10/2023 were agreed and approved.

**Actions from previous meeting:**

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|  | Action | Assigned to | Actioned |
| 1 | Contact Salt Compensation Board for defib funding | CC | √ |
| 2 | Contact Wincham, Gret Budworth, Antrobus & Comberbach PC’s regarding speed reduction on Marston Lane | AJ | √ |
| 3 | Add clerk’s time to produce MM to 2024 budget | CC | √ |
| 4 | Email ward cllrs regarding new bus stop | CC | √ |
| 5 | Article for MM re defib training | IS | √ |
| 6 | Email clerk wildflower supplier details | MP | Need confirmation that funds received. Clerk will check statement |
| 7 | Choose wildflower selection | AN |  |
| 8 | Purchase wildflowers | CC |  |
| 9 | Submit ward cllr grant application for filing cabinet | CC | √ |

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Agenda Point | Assigned to.. |
| **1** | **Parish Cllr Reports**  MP – queried whether pc was to hold a Residents Christmas Party, consensus was that it was too late to organise something adequately and that best to leave til next year now. Planning for 2024 needs to start May/June time next year. AJ asked whether the last coffee morning of the year could be made more festive. All in agreement (19/12). Cllrs will work out between them what needs doing. IS to add piece to MM & requesting donations to a raffle  MP – reminded everyone that Remembrance Service 10.45am 12/11  AJ – has spoken to the resident on Higher Marston about parking in front of their property. They are to request a dropped kerb | IS |
| **2** | **Ward Cllr Reports**  LG sent update via email, available in documents |  |
| **3** | **Progress Reports**   1. Neighbourhood Plan   Meeting on 13/10 was only attended by clerk, AJ & IS. IS informed that he would be stepping down at the end of the year. Clerk was to search out the resident’s questionnaire that was used a number of years ago and edit it for the next round of evidence gathering. IS was to place an extended piece into MM to encourage residents to get involved. Clerk advised that she had spoken to her contact at Cheshire Community Action who advised that we could apply for the 2 government based grants; £10000 general grant and a further £8000 technical grant. He also advised that a planning consultant could easily help us get the neighbourhood plan together in a matter of months but it would cost at least £10000. The hiring of a consultant was discussed and agreed that if residents do not get involved then this may be the only avenue that we have to produce our own neighbourhood plan, as it is too much work for just 2 people. The next meeting date has not yet been agreed but will probably now be January/February 2024. Once evidence from the resident’s survey has been collected and collated another meeting will be confirmed   1. Defibrillators   Training scheduled for 10am 25th November, so far 4 people have signed up. Sign up sheet left in the hall. Clerk has applied for government funding for a unit on Higher Marston. AN is also in the process of applying for funding from The British Heart Foundation for the planned third unit in the village which we hope to place on The Lion Salt Works (clerk to email Kate Harland). MP has spoken to the resident of 1 Fernlea Road who is still happy for a unit to be placed on their property.   1. Triangle/Traffic Issues   AJ sent local parish councils an email with our proposal for a reduction in the speed limit on Marston Lane. So far Great Budworth and Antrobus have responded saying they will be discussing in their November meetings and Comberbach have sent a reply (see correspondence). No reply from Wincham, however MP has spoken to a cllr on Wincham PC who stated that they have spoken to CW&C about it and the response was negative and that a reduction in the speed limit was unlikely.  AJ also raised concerns with stability of the bridge as it appears that some of the brickwork is collapsing. Clerk to contact Highways to request a survey.  AJ also asked whether we could get traffic monitoring via ‘black boxes’ to determine number of vehicles, speeds etc. along Marston Lane & Ollershaw Lane. Clerk to contact PCSO in first instance  AJ also asked about the petition that the residents want to help with getting the speeding looked at on Marston Lane. Whilst the PC are committed to supporting the residents and improving road safety in the village the majority of cllrs feel that the residents need to take responsibility for the petition themselves. AJ to contact the residents asking them to go forward with the petition and then present to the PC. The PC will then forward it to CW&C & Highways   1. Marston Footpath 7   AJ had an email from the new footpaths office (Liz Holmes) who has been in contact with the contractor and asked them to strim the brambles, the contractor has advised that the ground is currently too wet and will do the work once it is drier   1. Higher Marston Play Area   PhC inspected the area on 8/11, reporting overgrown grass and grass growing through bark. MP had also reported to CW&C problems with pigeons sitting on the equipment and making a mess. She enquired as to whether spikes could be placed on the top of the equipment, CW&C said no. Clerk to ask LG to look into as it appears that Cheshire East use spikes in their play areas   1. Exercise Sessions   Still well attended and last few weeks takings exceeded payment to Josh. Clerk attended a community buildings meeting where issues over insurance were raised, particularly in relation to claims from users of community buildings. Clerk advised that if the PC supply equipment then the PC need to be adequately insured (something to think about for the future as plans were in place to look for funding for equipment for the sessions)   1. Marston Murmurs   IS confirmed that he is happy to do the Dec23/Jan24 edition and will then send the template to clerk. Clerk looked into costs associated with her taking the role back. Clerk’s salary has always been budgeted based upon previous clerk’s salary and hours, taking into consideration of increased workload since then (£6000). Clerk’s salary has not been above £5000 so budget will allow for any increased costs.   1. Hall Marketing and Management   After attended the Community Buildings meeting with Cheshire Community Action clerk advised that a number of revisions needed to be done in relation to risk assessment, hall valuation & insurance (see below for specifics)   1. Bookings   One of our regular hirers has informed of cancellation during the winter, they plan to resume use in the spring   1. Change to T&C’s   Clerk presented a revised T&C’s which everyone agreed too bar a couple of edits, clerk will edit and then publish onto website. She will also send Angie a copy and leave some copies in the hall. Issue over cleaning of hall that is included in our T&C’s, MP advised that cleaning equipment locked in cupboard. Clerk advised that a hoover should be left in the kitchen for hirers to use, she is to purchase a cheap one   1. Risk Assessment   Small edit made to risk assessment, unfortunately clerk left revised document at home so could not sign off on it. Will add to January24 meeting   1. Valuation   Presentation at the community buildings meeting from an insurance broker who advised that many community buildings are underinsured and trustees often find themselves liable for shortfalls during a claim. They advised that community buildings should be revalued every few years. Clerk advised that she does not think the church hall has been valued since 2012. The insurance broker can provide the service for £75 if their insurance is taken otherwise the cost is around £300.   1. Insurance   Clerk has asked the insurance broker for a quote   1. Safety Checks   Following on from revision of risk assessment further safety checks need to be included on a regular basis. Clerk presented a new safety checklist which was signed off and will be placed at the hall along with an incident report log. One of the new checks needs to be for slip risks outside due to fallen leaves. MP advised that we would need a news brush, shovel and gloves. PhC to source.   1. Lone Worker Policy   Following on from revision of risk assessment a Lone Worker Policy was highlighted as the PC do not currently have one. Clerk used Chalc template. Policy signed off   1. Heating   Some hirers of the hall have complained that the heating has not been coming on and cllr’s have had to reset the boiler on a number of occasion due to an ‘ignition fault’. It may just be the positioning of the external flue but it needs looking at. Clerk advised that their usual contractor was due to retire. IS advised that the contractor he uses is very good & will forward the details onto clerk. Clerk will then contact them   1. Pickmere Lake   No further update   1. Sewerage Issues on the Flash   AJ has requested information from united utilities, they have a set number of days to respond and have replied asking for clarification, she has since replied & they now have until 29/11 to send the info   1. Flooding   Clerk contacted ward cllr’s and CW&C & is awaiting a reply   1. Bus Route   Clerk has been in contact with CW&C who state that there is no funding available for a service through the village. They have supplied details of a weekly request service (see correspondence), details to be added to MM   1. Fundraising 2. Ward Councillor Grant   Clerk has applied for a grant to cover the cost of the new filing cabinet   1. Other   AN is applying to the CCA Capital Fund, which can provide upto £1000. As we still need new chairs she will apply for some new chairs  MP also stated that the gutters needed clearing, IS will pass details of a contractor he uses & clerk will contact | CC  CC  CC  AJ  CC  CC  CC  PhC  IS  CC  IS  AN  IS  CC |
| **4** | **FINANCE**   1. Clerks Purchases & Reimbursements Travel/ etc… including filing cabinet, remembrance wreaths, desk tidy purchases £267.86 total chq no. 1404   Norton update £44.12 chq no. 1407  Clerks Salary 25.75 hrs @ £15.41ph - £ 396.80 Chq no. 1405   1. Waterplus £6.47 taken 07/11/23 2. Itseeze website/email October 2023 £57 3. Williams Design & Print – October Newsletter (D010535) – £214.40 chq no.1406 4. Cleaner 15/10 – 5/11 4 wks total £40 5. Booking 15/10 – 5/11 4 wks total £40   £ 80 to Angie chq no 1408   1. Rent:   Penguin Group 16/10 £10 27/10 £20 26/10 £20 30/10 £10 5/11 £10 6/11 £10 total £80  Mind, Body & Spirit 31/10 £20 total £20  Scarlet Revolution 15/10 £20 22/10 £30 total £50  £150 in total  Coffee Morning donations £83.54, refreshments £21.06, trellis for evergreen arch £8.99 (£53.49 being banked) |  |
| **5** | **Correspondence**   1. Email(s) from Andrew Mathieson CW&C – re request for bus service – unfortunately CW&C state that there are no funds available to add a service through the village, Andrew has given details of a weekly request service that will be highlighted in MM 2. Email from Cheshire Fire Authority – Draft CRMP Summary 3. Email from Police Crime Commissioner – July Review 4. Email from CW&C – Draft Heritage Strategy consultation 5. Email(s) from Lynn Gibbon – Storm Flooding 6. Email from Northwich & Winsford Guardian – ACV – junior reporter contacted pc to do a piece on the ACV application regarding the Salt Barge, however once I informed him that it was a renewal he was not interested 7. Email(s) from Naomi Morris Wincham PC – Water safety at Pickmere 8. Email from Cheshire Community Action – Community Growing 9. Email from Chalc – CW&C Budget Plan 10. Email from Chalc – Planning Training – clerk requested future dates as current date sin November not suitable 11. Email from Cheshire Community Action – Draft Terrorism Bill (Martyn’s Law) 12. Email from Cheshire Community Action – UKSPF Community Building Capital Funding 13. Email from Historic England – Fingerpost application & Consultation Report – awaiting final decision to have the fingerpost listed 14. Email from Police Crime Commissioner – Independent survey for women & girls 15. Email from Pensions Regulator – Acknowledgment of declaration – clerk had to declare whether pc needed to set up a pension scheme 16. Email from PCSO Wiggins – October/November Report 17. Email from CW&C – planning permission for solar power 18. Email from Chalc – 2023-2024 pay agreement – clerk highlighted that The National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) has agreed the 2023-2024 pay increases and asked whether she could have the pay increase especially as she has not had an increase since 2020. AN queried whether she was entitled to an increase as her pay rate is above that of many other local clerks. MP highlighted the fact that clerk’s pay rate had been agreed after she did the job unpaid and that she is responsible for more than some other clerks. Clerk stated that she realised cllrs may need to discuss and left it with them for a future decision |  |
| **6** | **Any other business**  IS stated that he was formally handing in his notice of resignation for the 31/12/23 and that due to his resignation the google events and booking calendar will need to be taken on by another cllr. Phc & AN agreed to manage. |  |

Confirmed date of next meeting, 10/01/2024

Meeting closed at 21:25

Abbreviations: pc (parish council), cllr (councillor), cllrs (councillors), cllrs’ (councillors’), cllr’s (councillor’s), CW&C (Cheshire West and Chester), MM (Marston Murmurs), MPC (Marston Parish Council)