

Minutes of Marston Parish Council meeting held on 8th September 2021

The meeting opened at 18:53

**Present**:

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

Ward Cllrs: Norman Wright (NW)

Clerk: Caroline Constable (CC)

**Apologies**:

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

**Declarations of interest:**

There were no declarations of interest

**Dispensations:**

There were no dispensations

**Public Forum:**

Three members of the public were present; residents Dot Fraser, John Fraser & Lynn McGahern.

Residents raised issues with traffic on Ollershaw Lane, particularly HGV’s. Dot asked why there were no weight restrictions on the bridge and whether the police were doing anything about speeding? She also commented on the narrow pavements, partly due to overgrown vegetation, and the frightening nature of walking along Ollershaw Lane when large HGV’s drive past creating a slip stream that pulls one along. John mentioned the noise that these HGV’s cause and that Ollershaw Lane was just being used as a short cut into and out of Northwich and whether it would take a serious accident before anything was done.

Ward Cllr NW stated that he and Ward Cllr LG regularly drive through the ward and have recently taken photographs of the overgrown vegetation affecting pavements and curb edges and had reported this to CW&C. He also stated that a concealed traffic counting/speeding device had recently been erected along Ollershaw Lane and that this had not shown any problems with significant speeding.

Chair Cllr MP sympathised with the residents and pointed out that all cllrs and the clerk lived within the village and were well aware of the problems regarding traffic, and that they were doing everything that they could to help alleviate them. She highlighted the recent meeting with Highways about the traffic issues through the village, particularly the increase in HGV traffic and speeding and that we were attempting to rectify these issues.

Clerk then advised that with regards to the bridge and any weight limit, it was advised that there was effectively no limit on the bridge as it has been reinforced to take over 40 tonnes of weight and that Ollershaw Lane being an ‘A’ road means that HGV traffic can not be prohibited.

Clerk advised that with regards to speeding and the traffic surveys that have been conducted by the PC and the police in the past, evidence has shown that whilst there is speeding through the village the percentage of speeders does not warrant any intervention. One of the possibilities to help alleviate the speeding issue is to add interactive traffic signs and this is discussed in item 3 (please see below). Clerk also stated that a possibility that was under review by Highways is to add signage at the junction of Ollershaw Lane and Marston Lane advising HGV’s to use the designated route into Northwich via Manchester Road, however, this has to fall in line with regulatory guidelines and is still under review by Highways.

Chair Cllr MP, thanked the residents for their input and invited them to stay to listen to the further discussions regarding interactive traffic signs and the recent email from Steve Bentley of Highways. Residents declined and left the meeting at 19:03

**Minutes:**

The minutes from the parish council meeting of 14/07/2021 were agreed and approved.

**Actions from previous meeting:**

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|  | Action | Assigned to | Actioned |
| 1 | Visit Higher Marston play area and check out building work going on at properties adjacent to the play area | PM | Clerk emailed PM for response. PM had contacted relevant person in CW&C regarding the bollards and access but so far has had no response. He will chase again. Cllr MP advised that the bollards have been secured. |
| 2 | Create an alert on planning system | CC | To be done |
| 3 | Fire Safety Check | MP/PhC | Done but issues with alarm board. Clerk to contact Miles |
| 4 | Look at replacing hall sign on external wall | CC | Clerk unable to get ladders to the building to remove old sign |
| 5 | Check budget then contact fingerpost contractor | CC | √ - work under way |
| 6 | Add hourglass charity details to MM | CC | √ |
| 7 | Set up a meeting to discuss weight limit on Ollershaw Lane | CC | √ |
| 8 | Accounts print offs for cllr AJ (noticeboards) | CC | √ |
| 9 | Check whether petition for legislation to disqualify cllrs is individual or PC | CC | √ - email sent to cllrs |
| 10 | Email wincham pc about nieghbourhood plan | CC | √ - see agenda item 4.d |
| 11 | Fire assembly point sign | CC | √ - gave to Cllr PhC |
| 12 | Do not block sign | CC | √ - gave to Cllr PhC |

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|  | Agenda Point | Assigned to.. |
| **1** | **Parish Cllr Reports**Cllr PhC – the fly tipping in the layby on the bend of Ollershaw Lane as you go up towards Great Budworth has been ‘dealt’ with but in parts looks like it has just been spread about.Cllr MP – has received an email from Andy Wady of Highways regarding the steps between Fernlea Road and Mere Road; he is going to get Streetscene to tidy up the area but has no plans to repair the steps. The state of the play area at Higher Marston was reported at the start of the summer holidays by Cllr MP and Cllr AJ and although some tidying up has been done (strimming and application of weedkiller) it is still not ideal.Cllr AJ stated that she had spoken to the person doing the work who had informed her that things are taking longer to get done as all work now has to be inspected before any work can be sanctioned.Cllr MP – Community Payback Scheme have still not been to tidy the church yard. She has been advised that due to COVID restrictions they are now only doing Great Budworth. Clerk advised that it is Great Budworth’s responsibility for the upkeep of the church yard but that the PC could look at budgeting for the work themselves in the December budget and then add any cost to the Precept. A working party had been formed over the summer to tackle the church yard and there had been a great turn out on 4th September and that whilst a lot of the work was completed there is still more to do, so she is to advertise another session for 18th September.Cllr AN – stated that bulb season is now upon us and as we usually plant bulbs did we want to do so this year? All agreed that they did and so authority was given for Cllr AN to purchase 1000 bulbs. A date for the planting them would be agreed at next month’s meeting. |  |
| **2** | **Ward Cllr Reports**Ward Cllr NW – brought up the meeting with Highways about traffic issues along Ollershaw Lane and that having spoken to Ward Cllrs LG & PM they were prepared to put £1000 each towards the cost of an interactive speed sign but that the remaining £4000 or so would have to be found by the PC. Clerk advised that it would be discussed in item 3.Also mentioned that meeting with MP Ester McVey regarding Winnington Bridge went ahead over the summer. Highways are currently in favour of replacing the current bridge with a new two way bridge but cllrs would rather a bypass be put to the A49, utilising the old ICI railway line. Ester McVey has pledged her support which will be vital as all funding will need to come from central government |  |
| **3** | **Speed Indicator Devices**At the meeting in the summer with Highways to talk about the traffic issues along Ollershaw Lane a number of issues/solutions were raised, for which Steven Bentley of Highways has responded as follows:* Conduct Traffic Survey, preferably at 3 points (before the bend after Chapel Street, at the cross roads of Cross Street & The Avenue and outside the Salt Barge pub); Each traffic survey would cost £250 (we have been warned there is a long outstanding list given the pandemic etc). Our recommendation (given costs) would be to dismiss the one suggested outside the Salt Barge Inn given the vast majority of vehicles will be slowing on approach to the traffic signals & I doubt it will generate any data of significant value. If you wish to pursue the one at junction of Cross Street (to compare with previous survey) & one just before the bend after junction with Chapel Street you would need to submit a request to communityspeedmanagement@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk
* Renew Road Markings and add ‘SLOW’ signs where appropriate – markings examined, the faded centre line & existing “SLOW” markings will be refreshed (job submitted to contractor) between the entry to the 30mph limit & near to Cross St. Given the location benefits from existing markings, yellow backed chevrons & bend warning signs as well as the existing “SLOW” markings further carriageway marking were not deemed appropriate.
* Cut back Trees around current 30mph sign after junction with Chapel Street – 30s examined, all in place & visible
* Add second 30mph sign on right hand side of road after junction with Chapel Street – 30s examined, all in place & visible
* Look at adding directional signs at junction of Marston Lane/Ollershaw Lane to direct traffic down to Manchester Road/Chapel Street. This is still being examined, as discussed at our meeting any new signage would need to be in line with the DfT regulations & would also need to be clearly beneficial/consistent with other locations.

The traffic surveys were discussed and whilst highways recommend reducing it to two surveys, after hearing from residents Dot & John Fraser, it was deemed that another survey may be required towards the top end of Ollershaw Lane towards Marston Lane. Due to the cost of these 3 surveys (£750) and the problems with scheduling, it was unanimously decided to put the traffic surveys on hold until next year.One of the solutions to help alleviate the speeding problem on Ollershaw Lane is to add interactive speed signs and so this was discussed further. Clerk advised that the sign from CW&C would be permanent and maintained by CW&C and although the cost is high at around £7000 it would mean that once erected the PC would have no further costs or involvement. She had also received a brochure from a supplier of other interactive signs that cost as little as £2000 but these are not maintained and the PC would be responsible for their siting and maintenance. Highways were suggesting that a sign be erected before the bend at the bottom of Ollershaw Lane (after Chapel Street) and had suggested a ‘SLOW BEND’ signage. All were in agreement that this would be acceptable and that the partial funding from Ward Cllrs would help with the costing (this has already been budgeted for). Chair Cllr MP thanked Ward Cllrs NW, LG and PM for the funding.Clerk is to contact Fiona Dunning applying for the device. | CC |
| **4** | **Progress Reports**1. No Parking Traffic Cones.

Clerk had put in an order for 50 cones in July at £229 that could not be honoured and then discovered that there was a national shortage. She managed to reorder 24 cones towards the end of August but at a cost of £289.99. These 24 cones have now been distributed to 3 residents. Cllr AJ obtained forms from the residents that the PickMere Working Group had drawn up, listing the number of cones obtained and that they would be used in line with the working groups recommendations.1. Cenotaph Repair

Contractor contacted and responded that he had had COVID and lost most of his workforce and so could not honour the job (email in Correspondence). Clerk had then contacted the alternate contractor who had originally quoted and although he too currently has COVID he is happy to look again at the work. He is to contact the Clerk once he has recovered.1. Heritage Signpost

Contractor has now taken the signpost for repair. He has suggested that we get the surrounding area flagged and fenced in. Clerk to contact highways to see if this is possible1. Neighbourhood Plan

Clerk emailed Naomi, Wincham PC’s clerk to ascertain whether Wincham still want to do a plan. Naomi responded that she would raise it at their next PC meeting (July). No further response. Clerk to chase. | CCCC |
| **5** | **Finance*****Invoices received & cheques created*:** 1. Clerks Purchases and Expenses - £155.91

Including traffic cones @ £289.99 (£60.99 owed), envelopes @ £3.49Clerks Salary hrs 42.58 @ £15.41ph - £656.21Total payable 812.12 Chq no. 13011. Itseeze website/email July and August @ £57 per month - £114
2. Williams Design & Print – newsletter £119.00 chq no. 1302

***Rent received*** *(via Angie):* Mark Spruce – The Penguin Group band practice – 19/7 £25, 3/8 £20, 13/8 £17, 20/8 £25.50 7/9 £20£107.50 in total***Cleaner***6 weeks 18/07/21 – 22/08/21 £60***Bookings agent***6 weeks 18/07/21 – 22/08/21 £60£120 to Angie chq no. 1303 |  |
| **6** | **Correspondence**1. Email from Cheshire Stone Masonry re Cenotaph Repair
2. Planning Application 21/02373/FUL – Mere View Ollershaw Lane, Single & 2 storey rear extensions with balcony – cllrs contacted and no objections
3. Email about bulk buying chairs – cost £32.99 per chair and at 60 chairs rather expensive when not budgeted for. To be revisited next year
4. Email from CW&C regarding reports about Fernlea Road
5. Planning Application 21/02582/FUL – 6a Ollershaw Lane, 3 storey side and single storey rear extension with car port – cllrs contacted and requested that comments regarding the removal of the hedgerow and size of the property be sent. Clerk had sent these comments and reported that a number of residents had objected
6. Email regarding National Bus Strategy survey – clerk advised that Ward Cllr PM had been involved in a committee within CW&C looking at local public transport and that the issues with the village having no bus service would be included, nothing has since been said about this and so it would be pertinent for cllrs to voice their opinions in this survey
7. Email from Carla Harazny regarding memorial plaque – cllrs had agreed that she could place a plaque on the carpark fence and it has since been added and is unobtrusive
8. Email from SLCC – Branch Conference regarding Trees in our Community
9. Letter from ScottishPower regarding end of fixed tariff – needs to be renewed – clerk to renew on a fixed tariff
10. Email from CW&C regarding deadline for submission of Remembrance Sunday event applications – as this is about the closure of roads it does not refer to Marston
11. Email from resident regarding Fibre Broadband – cllrs discussed and decided that it was not something that they could advocate as a PC as it may mean that any future issues with the service may mean that residents blame the PC for endorsing it. Clerk to respond to resident
 | CCCC |
| **7** | **Any other business**Clerk – advised that she has reviewed the policies and will update the documents and email out to cllrs for approval at next month’s meeting. Item to be added to the agenda.Cllr MP ask clerk to write to farmer MR Gibbon thanking him for tidying up the hedgerow behind Manor Avenue and asking whether he could do the same for the adjoining fields as CW&C will not cut back the front of the hedgerow until the top has been done. Clerk to send letter. | CCCC |

Confirmed date of next meeting, 13/10/21

Meeting closed at 20:17

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)