

Madeley Parish Council

MINUTES OF Madeley Parish COUNCIL Meeting held on Thursday 11th January 2024 commencing 7.00pm at The Madeley Centre, New Road, Madeley

Present: Councillors J. Stephenson (JS) (Chair), K. Walley (KW) (Vice-Chair), C. Hopkin (CH), J. Whitmore (JW), T. Morgan (TM), C. Cahill (CC), T. Nicoll (TN), M.B. Ruscoe (MBR), D. Whitmore (DW) A. Collins (AC), G. White (GW), S. White (SW).

In attendance: County Councillor Paul Northcott (PN), Natalie Lovell (Clerk), Nick Speakman (Neighbourhood Plan Committee) 20+ Members of the Public (MOP).

191.1/1 Apologies for Absence in accordance with Standing Orders
Council received apologies from Cllr. P. Carnall.

192.1/2 Councillors' Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in item on the Agenda
To be disclosed as matters arise. CH declared an interest in item 7a) as a current member of the Onneley Village Hall Committee and would not take part in consideration of this item.

193.1/3 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting: To be disclosed as matters arise.

194.1/4 Public Participation
In accordance with Standing Order 3e) The Chair directed that public participation would exceed 15 minutes.

MOP expressed concern with a recent article published in the Sentinel newspaper stating that a Councillor had suggested the developer for the proposed development at Bar Hill should assign part of the land for the building of a doctor's surgery. JS advised that he is unable to comment on comments made by other Councillors but all Councillors present agree that the doctors surgery should not be moved unless it would be moved closer to the village.

MOP enquired why the dog waste bins sited on the Madeley Centre grounds were not emptied by Borough Council along with other dog waste bins around the Parish. These bins can become unusable due to the contents overflowing. JS advised that the bins had been emptied in the period between Christmas and New Year. GW advised that Borough Council does not empty bins located on private property unless there is an agreement in place. JS advised that he would raise the matter with the Madeley Centre and make a request for a quote for emptying of the bins to Borough Council on behalf of the Madeley Centre.

Many MOP's made complaints regarding the flooding issues at Bar Hill and Mallard Close. The drains at Bar Hill and Mallard Close are blocked which results in flooding, flood water and sludge then enters and blocks the sewerage system which then causes sewerage to enter toilets in the properties. Residents reported being unable to use the toilets in their properties and unable to leave their homes due to lifted man holes and water contaminated with sewage covering gardens damaging garden fences and gates and entering into garages.

MOP's reported that United Utilities had attended the area on 2nd January working throughout the night and had pumped and removed around 140,000 gallons of water in tanker vehicles during one night, the works continued throughout Wednesday, continuing overnight and into Thursday. United Utilities had attempted to contact Staffordshire County Council whilst on site but were unsuccessful.

MOP advised that an officer from County Council Highways department had attended the site and advised he would contact his manager to request that works be authorised to unblock the drains.

JS and GW advised that they had contacted Staffordshire County Council and written official complaints regarding the situation, the Clerk had also reported issues to County Council on numerous occasions. Highways officers had also received an invitation to attend the Parish Council meeting. JS advised that he had also copied emails sent to County Council to 2 local MP's, Aaron Bell and Sir William Cash.

MOP advised that a large pile of effluent had been stacked at the top of Red Lane since August 2023 rainwater is then diluting this and the resulting liquid is running down Red Lane following the natural flow of the land, this is exacerbating the flooding issues.

MOP also stated that the recent outline planning application for the development of 155 new homes at Bar Hill will make the situation worse since the land identified for development is currently absorbing some of the rainwater.

Residents advised they felt abandoned by the County Council. PN stated that he was sympathetic to the resident's plight but that there are other sites around Staffordshire where problems are worse. A finite amount of funds are available to tackle the issue and a priority system is in operation throughout the County. PN advised that he had made representations to the Highways department and it has been acknowledged that there is a flooding issue with the area.

PN stated that detritus running from fields that had recently been ploughed, which had not been previously, was contributing to the issue, in addition development of land had also impacted, therefore the issues are not straightforward. JS advised that issues with flooding had been reported to County Council since 2019 therefore the recent ploughing activity was not to blame. MOP stated that the flooding issues have arisen during the last 3 years and the housing development was built around 22 years ago.

TN stated that the Parish Council have contacted the Executive Director and Assistant Director of Staffordshire County Council requesting they attend a Parish Council meeting and requested that PN, as a representative of the Parish Council, requests the attendance of an officer from County Council at an upcoming Parish Council meeting. PN advised that the Director for Highways has advised that he will endeavour to attend the Parish Council meeting to be held in February.

PN further advised that the Environment Agency will be contacted by County Council and that County Council is attempting to gain access to private land which abuts Mallard Close and Bar Hill for possible drainage works to be carried out. MOP expressed confusion as to why reference is being made to private land that cannot be accessed when drains that can be accessed are not being cleared. MOP further

enquired why new drainage and kerbs have been fitted along roads up to Madeley, but not in Madeley. PN responded advising that the issue with drainage must be rectified before any further works are undertaken.

195.1/5 Confirmation of Minutes

CC proposed, TM seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous to approve and for the Chair to sign as a factual record the Minutes of the Council Meeting held **on Thursday 7th December 2023 at 7pm.**

196.1/6 Police Update

No officer present.

197.1/7 Financial Update

To **consider Financial Matters** including:

- a) To **consider** any grant applications under the Grants Programme (balance £1,945.00/£500 per application): Council considered the grant application received from Onneley Village Hall for £350 to be used to purchase a replacement battery and pads for the defibrillator at the Village Hall. CH advised, in his capacity as a member of the Onneley Village Hall Committee, that the defibrillator had been purchased by the Village Hall 4 years ago and was available for use by all members of the community. CH took no further part in discussions. KW stated that this application should be supported since it complied with all Parish Council grant award principles and all required supporting documents had been submitted. KW proposed, CC seconded, Council **resolved** 11 in favour and 1 abstention to approve a grant award of £350 to Onneley Village Hall.
- b) Council **considered** the quotes received for new Parish Council benches as follows:
 - i) Glasdon, Lowther bench £631.77, concrete in anchor kit £39.29.
 - ii) Broxap, Irvine bench £521 bench, £69 anchor kit; traditional bench £448 bench, £30 fixing kit. Plus delivery charges.
 - iii) YPO, Traditional bench £379.49, fixing kit £16.99.The Clerk advised that all benches were made from materials which did not require future maintenance. TN proposed, KW seconded that the Glasdon bench would be the most suitable since it was a more traditional design. DW proposed, JW seconded that further options be considered such as benches similar to those in the Madeley Centre grounds, which were of a similar design but constructed from materials that would require some future maintenance works. Council **resolved** 10 in favour and 2 against TN's proposal that the Lowther bench design be the accepted Parish Council design and to authorise the purchase the 2 benches currently required.
- i) Council **resolved** 10 in favour and 2 abstentions to **approve** and authorise the Clerk to sign the submission of the formal precept request for £77,985.00 to Borough Council. No comments had been received from the Public Consultation held.
- j) Council **considered** the quote received from Tinsdills Solicitors for drafting of a lease for Madeley Pool and legal advice regarding the lease of land at Bower End Lane of £2,750 plus VAT and an additional £50 (approx.) per lease registration fees. DW stated his opposition to any additional spending regarding the BMX project at Bower End Lane and referenced the Parish Council leaflet previously distributed which advised that no cost would be incurred in obtaining the land. TM

proposed, CC seconded, Council **resolved** 10 in favour and 2 against to approve the quotation received from Tinsdills.

- k) Council **considered** the quote received from Tree Brothers regarding the works required to the 'christmas tree' at Madeley Heath of £300. JW proposed, AC seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous to obtain further quotes for the works required.

In accordance with Standing Order 1a) the Chair altered the order of agenda items in order to consider agenda items 9 and 10 whilst members of the public were still present.

198.1/9

Planning Matters

Council **considered** the following planning applications received:

a) Applications:

- **23/00934/FUL:** 6 New Row Monument View. Erection of a pair of semi detached cottages. Council resolved unanimous no comments be submitted.
- **23/00979/OUT:** Land to the North West of Bar Hill. Outline planning permission for the construction of up to 155 dwellings with some matters reserved. JS explained the importance of referencing any objection in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan. JS identified 3 issues; the proposed development was outside the village envelope; flooding issues and traffic congestion issues.

NS addressed the meeting. NS advised that the Neighbourhood Plan dated 2022 could not protect all areas from development but sought to minimise development and identify less sensitive sites as potential development sites. NS further advised that by identifying Bar Hill as a potential development site in the Local Plan Borough Council had incorrectly ignored the Neighbourhood Plan. NS referenced the recent Planning Inspectorate decision regarding Baldwins Gate and advised that Neighbourhood Plans less than 2 years old must be taken into account.

NS advised that the potential development breached the Neighbourhood Plan on three grounds:

TRA1 of the Neighbourhood Plan identifies 3 critical junctions in the village, one of which being Monument Junction. Any development must include improvements to the road junction and also must not have an adverse impact on the current traffic congestion and safety issues. The potential development did not contain details of improvements to Monument Junction and would result in increased traffic around the road junction.

NE1 of the Neighbourhood Plan requires developments to preserve or enhance the rural character of the area. The railway line is a permanent and fixed line between rural and developed parts of the area. Bar Hill sits on the rural side of that line.

HOU1 of the Neighbourhood Plan identifies areas within the village envelope where any new housing should be focused into existing settlements, preventing those settlements from encroaching into the open countryside or

from merging into each other. The proposed development sits outside the village envelope.

SW stated his agreement with the matters raised and added that current village infrastructure could not cope with an increase in residents.

GW agreed with all matters raised advising that the application had been 'called in' to the planning department by Borough Councillors, this would also provide additional time for comments regarding the application to be submitted. GW further advised that the proposed site is located adjacent to the embankment for the West Coast railway line and concerns have been raised regarding the stability of the embankment. GW advised that Network Rail have initially raised concerns.

NS advised, in response to MOP questions that the potential development site is classed as open countryside, not greenbelt, but previous development had not been considered since the site fell within the HS2 exclusion zone.

JS proposed, KW seconded, the Council **resolved** unanimous to object to the application on the basis that it contravenes the Neighbourhood Plan in 3 areas; TRA1; NE1; HOU1. The Clerk to submit an objection on behalf of the Council and Councillors could submit objections individually. The Council advised that the objection would be published on Parish Council social media sites, website and noticeboards and also the message board at the Madeley Centre.

PN advised that he had also 'called in' the application to Borough Council.

NS advised that a meeting should be held with the Borough Council planning officer dealing with the application.

- **23/00931/FUL:** The Whitehouse, Mill Lane. Single-storey front extension. Considered via email prior to the meeting. No comments submitted by Councillors.

b) Decisions: None received.

199.1/10 Parish Flooding and highways Issues

Council **considered** any action regarding the recurrent flooding and highways issues around the Parish. Council advised members of the public that it would continue to pursue a solution to the flooding issues with County Council. TN advised the importance of residents ensuring they report all issues via the County Council website.

DW left the meeting.

- 197.1/7 I) Council **considered** payments/orders, receipts and transfers, budget update and bank reconciliation, including quarterly bank statement and bank reconciliation verification.

The Clerk advised that the payments authorisation list contained 2 Council donations of £20 to RBL, paid in addition to the purchase of poppy wreaths and

£50 to Keele First Responders; being the proceeds of the Halloween tombola donations made in memory of a Parish resident.

The Clerk further reported that payment of 2 invoices dated June 2022 and July 2023 for summer planting 2023 and winter planting 2022 had been authorised by the Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk and paid on 4th January. The supplier had requested payment and due to the fact that payment was severely overdue and to ensure the supplier would continue to provide goods and services to the Parish Council the payment was authorised under delegated authority.

The Clerk advised that funds from the village appearance budget had been vired to the allotments budget at the December meeting and advised that the contingency budget of £1,000 remained and £777.99 remained in the Standard office expenses budget of which the forecasted spending to the end of the financial year would be around £200. Council agreed to consider remaining budget levels prior to the end of the financial year.

JS proposed, AC seconded, Council **resolved** 11 in favour to approve payments/orders, receipts and transfers, budget update and bank reconciliation, including quarterly bank statement and bank reconciliation verification.

200.1/8

Reports from Borough and County Councillors

GW reported that Borough Councillors had been working with residents of River Lea Mews in relation to concerns regarding dangerous trees. Borough Councillors had also reported works needed to trees on Hill wood. The play area at College Gardens would be reopened following the completion of works required due to vandalism at the site. Borough Councillors are continuing to work with residents regarding rent related issues relating to HS2 and families in 3 properties let by Aspire in relation to mould issues.

PN provided details of the planning policy framework advising that there were currently no requirements for greenbelt boundaries to be reviewed and that an increased emphasis had been placed on design of new buildings and houses needed by those who need care. PN advised that Madeley High had successfully applied to County Council for a grant to replace lighting with energy efficient LED lighting and that the Community Survey closes on 31st January and requested that the Parish Council circulate information via social media.

DW returned to the meeting.

DW advised that he had previously reported potholes which had been repaired but now required fixing again. PN advised that this should be reported via the County Council website. PN further advised that he is investigating measures to deter speeding in the village.

201.1/11

Parish Council Memorial Policy

Council **considered** actions regarding the implementation of a Parish Council Memorial Policy. JS proposed, KW seconded, Council **resolved** 11 in favour and 1 abstention to defer this matter to February's Parish Council meeting. Council **noted** that details of any future memorials should be circulated to all Councillors.

202.1/12 Parish Council Action Plan 2024-25

Council **considered** any action regarding the formation of a Parish Council Action Plan for 2024/25. JS proposed, CC seconded, Council **resolved** 11 in favour and 1 abstention to defer this matter to February's Parish Council meeting

203.1/13 Madeley Pool

Council **considered**:

- a) Establishing the terms of reference for Madeley Pool Partnership. 2 amendments were made to the Draft terms of reference during the meeting, and;
 - b) any further action regarding Madeley Pool including consideration of how the matter is progressed generally given the loss of HS2 community fund as a potential source of funding.
- JS proposed KW seconded, Council **resolved** 11 in favour and 1 abstention that the Clerk make the required amendments and circulate to Councillors for further amendment. Council further **resolved** that TN arrange a meeting of the Madeley Pool Partnership.

204.1/14 Events

- a) Council **reviewed** the events held for Christmas 2023 and JS advised that all events were well attended.
 - b) Council **considered** a structure for events planned for 2024 and delegation of powers to the events committee to start organising said events.
- JS proposed, CC seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour for the events committee to arrange a meeting prior to the next Parish Council meeting in order to consider arrangements for future events and provide an update to Council at its February meeting .

205.1/15 HS2

GW advised that he had received correspondence which he would copy to the Clerk. No further developments had been received.

206.1/16 CCTV

Council **noted** that the installation of the CCTV equipment had been completed and the system was now in operation.

207.1/17 Parish Appearance

KW advised of the damage to the grass verge around Madeley Pool caused by a delivery vehicle. The Clerk to contact the responsible party and notify Borough Council of the damage.

208.1/18 Property Issues

- a) To **note** the progress of the potential lease of land at Bower End Lane.
- b) To **note** the progress of the potential lease of Madeley Pool. Tinsdills Solicitors were appointed under item 7.
- c) To **note** the position regarding the lease of the Furnace Lane Allotments.

209.1/19 Clerk's Update

Council **received** the report of the Clerk providing updated information regarding ongoing matters. The Clerk further advised that following a meeting with Keele First Responders a report would be produced regarding the condition of the devices to be brought to the February meeting and that the tree works to the island at Madeley Pool should be completed tomorrow.

210.1/20 Equality & Diversity

Councillors are asked to be mindful of the Equality & Diversity Policy and their crime prevention powers for the Meeting.

211.1/21 Councillors' planned absence

None advised.

212.1/22 Councillors **noted** the date of the next regular Council meeting of **Thursday 1st February 2024 to commence at 7pm at Madeley Centre.**

Meeting closed at 8.55pm. Chair thanked Councillors and members of the public for their attendance.