

Madeley Parish Council

MINUTES OF Madeley Parish COUNCIL Meeting held on Thursday 3rd October 2024 commencing 7.00pm at The Madeley Centre, New Road, Madeley

Present: Councillors J. Stephenson (JS) (Chair), T. Morgan (TM), C. Cahill (CC), T. Nicoll (TN), M.B. Ruscoe (MBR), D. Whitmore (DW), J. Whitmore (JW), O. Shevket (OS).

In attendance: County Councillor P. Northcott (PN), Borough Councillor M. Berrisford (MB), 12 Members of the public (MOP), Natalie Lovell (Clerk).

118.10/1 Apologies for Absence in accordance with Standing Orders
Council received apologies from Parish Cllrs D. Banish, C. Hopkin, K. Walley, A Collins and P. Carnall.

119.10/2 Councillors' Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in items on the Agenda
To be disclosed as matters arise.

120.10/3 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting:

121.10/4 Equality & Diversity
Councillors were asked to be mindful of the Equality & Diversity Policy and their crime prevention powers for the Meeting.

122.10/5 Councillor Code of Conduct
Councillors were asked to be mindful of the standards of the Councillors Code of Conduct and conduct themselves in a professional manner.

PN arrived.

123.10/6 Public Participation

Several MOPs raised concerns regarding the planning application for the development of the garage site at Birchdale. Residents requested the Parish Council's support in objecting to the application. Residents stated that issues included access and egress of emergency vehicles and advised that a storm drain was located in the middle of the proposed access route. Residents also stated that some residents had allocated parking spaces on the site.

JS advised that the planning application would be considered by the Parish Council during the meeting and further advised residents that they may be entitled to claim a right to park vehicles at the site using the Prescription Act, which allows rights which have been used continuously for 20 years+ to be legally retained.

PN advised residents to ensure their objections were made personal and individual to each objector and that if the application were to be decided by the Planning Committee each objector would be entitled to speak at the Committee meeting.

MOP advised that the vegetation at Keele Roundabout was severely overgrown and a danger to road users. There was also a large pothole to the left, which was first noticed in April and had been identified with both white and yellow markings but still no works had commenced. JW advised that she had reported the pothole to Staffordshire County Council who replied that the works were non-urgent.

MOPs also expressed frustration that they were unable to speak to Staffordshire County Council Highways Department since all reports must be made online.

PN advised that Councillors also had to contact the Highways Department in this way and advised residents to continue to report issues via the mystaffordshire app or County Council website. Stating that the more reports received regarding an issue would ensure the issue is dealt with faster.

MOP stated that there is a large pothole on Bower End Lane which had been reported several times since 9th December 2023. The road is in a state of disrepair and turns into a stream following any rain, one side of the road has collapsed. MOP advised that this was having a detrimental effect on the charity located there since volunteers and visitors are unable to safely access the site.

MB arrived.

JS advised that he had arranged a meeting to obtain legal advice to ascertain whether it would be possible to force action by Staffordshire County Council regarding the disrepair of some of the roads within the parish.

JW advised that she had contacted Adam Jogee MP regarding the issue. TM stated that she had also contacted Mr Jogee and provided a copy of a letter sent by him to the Chief Executive of Staffordshire County Council requesting urgent works at Bower End Lane.

TN advised residents to highlight the issues on social media and with the local press.

A representative of the Madeley Darby & Joan Club provided a receipted invoice to the Clerk for coach hire following the recent grant award to the club.

124.10/7

Confirmation of Minutes

Council considered whether to approve and sign as a factual record the Minutes of the Council meeting held on **Thursday 5th September commencing at 7.00 pm.**

CC proposed, TM seconded Council **resolved unanimous** in favour to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5th September 2024.

125.10/8

Police Update

- a) Council confirmed receipt of the written police report, received shortly before the meeting. The Clerk provided details, advising of 2 road traffic accidents, with no injuries reported and one instance of anti-social behaviour at Greyhound Court. Police advised that they had been in contact with the landlord of Greyhound Court and there has been a suggestion that the landlord is looking into fitting a gate to the entrance and a fence at the side of the Chinese takeaway.
- b) There were no items to note for consideration at a future Council meeting.

126.10/9 Reports from Borough and County Councillors

Council **noted** receipt of Borough Councillor J. Whitmore's report. Report appended to the minutes. JW added that Borough Council are considering possible works at the playground at College fields and exploring funding options available. TN requested that JW provide details of the works planned by Borough Council.

PN advised that a meeting of the whole County Council will be held next week.

PN further advised that cases of covid and flu were increasing and stressed the importance of vaccinations which can be accessed, by those eligible, through the NHS at GPs and pharmacists. County Council are also implementing a Health In All Policies approach, which seeks to ensure that when considering all Council policies, attention is given to the potential health impacts contained within that policy. County Council have also launched a period support scheme, offering free sanitary products at libraries in 5 Staffordshire towns as part of a pilot project, which will run until January 2025.

The County Council Climate Action Fund had received an application under part 1 from Madeley High School for improvements to inefficient lighting, which PN had approved in principle. The amount of Universal Credit claimants in Staffordshire were below the national average at 3.5%.

The highways department had carried out over 14,000 pothole repairs and gully cleaning works during the past few months and were currently undertaking a mapping exercise to identify gulleys which required more arduous cleaning. TN requested information detailing the number of potholes within the parish, the number of reports made to County Council and the number of repairs carried out. TN further requested a report detailing the classification of road conditions. PN advised he would try to provide the information requested.

County Council are currently holding discussions regarding the flooding issues around Bar Hill, which are subject to financial limitations. Most of the additional £30million highways funding has been spent over the summer months.

In response to a question PN advised that the County Council did not have any plans for budget cuts next year. The County Council is struggling to provide the required services under its SEND responsibilities and due to spiralling costs for SEND and adult social care provision will require further funding from central government. However, the Council does have a costed 5 year budget which includes such provision.

JS enquired whether County Council have an emergency fund for repairs to roads. PN replied that Council has a general contingency fund, but that this is not specific to highways.

JS advised that he had contacted the County Council on numerous occasions in order to arrange a meeting regarding the flooding issues and has met with the local MP. The flooding issues at Bar Hill were first raised with County Council in 2019.

PN responded advising that £8million of contingency funding has been spent across the county. Any potential solution for the flooding issues at Bar Hill would be complex, requiring both funding and co-operation of local landowners. The issue has been exacerbated by the development of the previous reservoir site. TN asked whether the County Council could share a copy of its strategic transport maintenance plan with the Parish Council.

PN further stated that the Parish Council chairman 'shut down' the County Council highways officer who attended the Parish Council meeting in March and did not allow her to provide the information available. The Chair (JS) refuted this claim. PN stated

that the minutes of the meeting were not an accurate reflection of the discussion and that a recording of the meeting was available.

TN advised that, in his opinion, a full discussion was held during the March Parish Council meeting and that the officer who attended the meeting on behalf of the highways department was a junior officer.

The Clerk advised that Parish Council minutes are not a record of discussions, they are a formal record of Council decisions.

127.10/10 Clerk's Update

Council **confirmed** receipt of the Clerk's report previously circulated. The Clerk advised that the Parish Council were now registered as the custodian of the war memorial at Madeley Heath.

128.10/11 Planning

Council **considered** the following planning applications received and recommendations of the planning committee.

a) Applications:

- **24/00421/OUT.** Land Rear Of 5 Morningside & 16 Laverock Grove. Erection of 2 dwellings.

MOP advised that they had made several requests for scale plans of the development but had not received any. DW stated that the current application plans were not to scale and raised concern regarding the space available within the development for the safe access/egress of emergency vehicles. JS proposed, CC seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour that the Parish Council object to the application on the following grounds:

- i) The development would have an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties, policy HOU1 of the NDP.
- ii) The development would have an adverse impact on traffic safety and capacity, policy HOU1 of the NDP.
- iii) The Parish Council request that a swept access plan be provided.
- iv) The Parish Council request that Borough Councillors 'call in' the application, in order for the application to be considered by the Planning Committee.

- **24/00541/FUL.** The Cottage Moss Lane. A single three-bedroom custom built self build detached house with new vehicle and pedestrian access to the existing dwelling.

JW proposed the Parish Council object to this application based on issues with drainage at the site and over development of the site. The proposal was not seconded. JS stated that drainage issues should be considered by United Utilities, who should raise such objection and in the absence of material planning reasons to base an objection on proposed that no objection be submitted. Council **resolved** 2 in favour, 1 against and 5 abstentions that no objection be submitted.

DW left the meeting.

- **24/00619/FUL.** Land At Moss Lane. Full planning application for the redevelopment of the site to include 37 residential dwellings, along with associated access, open space, drainage basin and pumping station.

TN suggested that a location plan for applications be provided.

DW returned to the meeting.

JS stated that the development was outside the village envelope, the access provision was not satisfactory and the housing mix of the development was also questionable. DW advised that an objection should be made on environmental grounds since newts were present at the site.

TM left the meeting.

JS further stated that the Parish Council should support objections raised by Network rail regarding surface water drainage overspill onto the railway and the impact to the stability of the railway embankment. In addition to issues with surface water drainage at the site and the capacity of the mains drainage and SUDs.

TM returned to the meeting.

JS proposed, DW seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour that the Parish Council object to the application on the above grounds.

b) Decisions:

- **24/00569/COUNOT**. Bar Hill House Farm Bar Hill. Conversion to 2 bed dwelling. **REFUSE**.

c) Council **noted** the Parish Council response to the Borough Council Local Plan consultation.

129.10/12 Financial Update

Council **considered Financial Matters** including:

- a) Council **considered** a new grant application received from Lea Court Residents Association for £500 for the provision of outdoor furniture, following the withdrawal of the application previously submitted.
TN declared an interest in this item and did not take part in discussions and abstained from voting. DW stated that a representative from the organisation needed to attend a Council meeting in order for Council to gather further information regarding the application. JS advised further information was needed regarding previous items becoming damaged and how this would be avoided in this instance. JW proposed, CC seconded, Council **resolved** 7 in favour and 1 abstention that this item be deferred until a representative of the organisation is available to attend a Parish Council meeting.
- b) Council **considered** the purchase of additional grit bins. TN proposed, DW seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour that this item be deferred until the report of the condition of all current grit bins had been completed.
- c) Council **considered** the purchase of gardening tools and equipment. JS proposed, TM seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour that this item be deferred to the next Parish Council meeting in order to receive further information from Cllr. D. Barnish.
- d) Councillors considered suggestions for actions/items to be included in the Parish Council budget for financial year 2025/26. TN proposed, JW seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour that the Clerk produce a draft budget, including only

basic/must have items, to be considered at the November Budget meeting when any additional spending suggestions can be considered.

- e) Council **considered** any amendment to the level of contractor insurance stated in the Parish Council Risk Assessment. TN proposed, JS seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour to add the following statement to the financial risk assessment in relation to contractor insurance:
'A lower level of insurance may be appropriate in certain limited circumstances which would need to be approved by the Council following a risk assessment of that individual contract and the risks posed.'
- f) Council **considered** the making of a donation to Prostate Cancer UK, following the cycling challenge undertaken by local residents in support of the charity. The Clerk advised that the Council had the power to make such a donation under Section 137 LGA, but that there was no specific budget provision for this. DW proposed, JS seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour that a £100 donation be made using funding from general reserves.
- g) Council **received** the ½ yearly financial report from the Clerk and raised no questions.
- h) Council **received** payments/orders, receipts, transfers, and bank reconciliation including quarterly bank statement verification. TM proposed, CC seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour to approve all payments and documents.

130.10/13 Policies

- a) Council **considered** the draft Freedom of Information Act Policy. TM proposed, JS seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour to adopt the Freedom of Information Act policy.
- b) Council **considered** the draft general terms of reference for committees. TN proposed, JS seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour to remove the final paragraph in relation to the application of Standing Orders, since the committees were only authorised to make recommendations to Council, and **adopt** the general terms of reference for committees.
- c) **Council considered** actions required in order to review existing procedures to ensure compliance with s40A Equality Act. JS proposed, TM seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour to delegate the review to the staffing committee. The staffing committee to then provide recommendations to full council.

131.10/14 Community

- a) Council **considered** any action regarding the purchase of planters for the memorial garden. In referenced to previously agreed memorials. TN proposed, JS seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour to purchase one planter costing up to £60 from eBay for the planting of the pink flowering memorial.
- b) Council **considered** the provision of a scout hut following receipt of suggestions from Councillors. JS proposed, TN seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour to defer this item until further information had been obtained regarding possible locations.
- c) Council **considered** appropriate uses for the Parish owned Phone box near All Saints Church following suggestions received from residents and an offer to 'curate' the phone box received from All Saints parochial council. TN proposed, JS seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour that the offer to 'curate' the phone box received from All Saints parochial council be accepted for an initial 12 month period, after which arrangements would be reviewed.

132.10/15 Issues Reported

- a) Council **noted** new matters reported and update of ongoing matters.

- b) Council **considered** any action following the information received from Staffordshire County Council Highways regarding the flooding/drainage issues at Bar Hill. JS proposed, CC seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour that the Clerk respond requesting clarification of works to be undertaken and a further update of decisions to date.

133.10/16 Parish Appearance

- a) No reports or queries were circulated prior to the meeting. JW advised that Borough Council would provide 250 daffodil bulbs for planting to Councils who requested them. Council **requested** that Borough Council provide the bulbs as stated.
- b) Council **noted** the purchase of remembrance statues/installations and large poppies for display.
- c) Council **considered** any action regarding the cleaning of bus shelters within the Parish. Council **resolved** unanimous in favour to defer this item in order for further quotes to be obtained.
- d) Council **considered** any action regarding grass cutting provision in the Parish. This item was considered as part of item f).

The Chair changed the order in which items would be considered in order for items d) and f) to be considered together.

- f) Council **received** the report of Cllr. T Nicoll following a meeting with a Borough Council officer regarding open spaces within the Parish. TN advised that Borough Council were currently reviewing the locations of all waste bins and had offered to remove charges made to the Parish Council for emptying of dog waste bins at Morningside and Heighley Castle Way, since these were located on public land.

Borough Council were also keen to work with the Parish Council in order to develop a scheme for the small woodland area near poolside and Madeley Pool. DW stated that a report regarding the areas had previously been completed. JS stated that a meeting of the Madeley Pool Partnership was required in order to establish priorities. TN advised that Borough Council would make an officer available to attend any such meeting.

TN further advised that Borough Council are unable to provide a schedule of grass cutting dates, due to external factors such as weather and staff availability and are also unable to offer a cut and collect service, but are keen to have a discussion with the Parish Council regarding grass cutting provision and possibly provide grass cutting for part of the year, with the Parish Council responsible for the remainder.

Borough Council are also open to discussions regarding the play area provision and open spaces at Heath Row.

JS proposed, CC seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour that the Parish Council accept the Borough Council offer to reduce the dog waste bin charges; that a meeting of the Madeley Pool Partnership be arranged with an invitation sent to Borough Council; that the Clerk obtains costings from the Parish Council contractor to provide grass cutting during the summer months for 6 months, 5 months and 4 months; and that the play area/open spaces at Heath Row be considered at a later date.

- e) Council **considered** any action regarding possible works at Greyhound Corner. JW advised that she had received a quotation to remove the 2 existing trees, dig out another border, replant and weed the area for a cost of £480, including waste removal. TN suggested that the existing borders and trees be removed and new turf or grass seed laid. TM requested a visual plan for the works suggested by JW. JS proposed, JW seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour that details of the plants and a site plan be provided in relation to the quote received by JW and 2 further quotes be obtained.

134.10/17 Allotments

Council **received** the report of the allotments committee.

135.10/18 Loan of document to Brampton Museum

Council **considered** renewing the loan arrangement of an 1870 lease relating to the collieries in Madeley Parish to Brampton Museum. JS proposed, CC seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour to renew the loan arrangement.

136.10/19 Electric Safety Campaign

Council **considered** supporting the campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries (used in e-bike and e-scooters) and their disposal. JS proposed, JW seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour to support the campaign.

137.10/20 Communications

- a) To **consider** professional standards of Councillor email correspondence sign-off. Cllr. D. Whitmore to speak to this item. This item was withdrawn prior to the meeting.
- b) Council **considered** arrangements for the Parish Council newsletter. JS proposed, CC seconded, Council **resolved** unanimous in favour that this item be deferred to the next Parish Council meeting in order to receive further information from Cllr. D. Barnish.

138.10/21 Councillors' planned absence – None received.

139.10/22 Council **noted** the date of the next regular Council meeting is currently scheduled as **Thursday 7th November to commence at 7pm at The Madeley Centre**. Council **resolved** to hold an extraordinary Council meeting to consider the Council budget for financial year 25/26 to be held on **Thursday 7th November commencing at 6pm at The Madeley Centre**

The meeting closed at 9.20pm. The Chair thanked Councillors and members of the public for their attendance.