

LLANFAIR WATERDINE



PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Annual Meeting held on 20th May 2024 at 6.30pm at The Everest Hall

In attendance: Cllr Beavan (Chair), Cllr Lane, Cllr Lloyd, Cllr Plumb.
Cllr Hughes joined the meeting at 6.45pm.

Apologies: Apology received in writing from Cllr Knipe.

1/24-25 ELECTION OF CHAIR

- (a) Cllr Knipe had indicated that he would be willing to stand as Chair. There being no other nominations, **IT WAS RESOLVED** by a unanimous vote that he be appointed as Chair for 2024/25.
- (b) Since he was unable to attend the meeting, **IT WAS AGREED** that Cllr Knipe could sign the Declaration at some point prior to the next meeting of council. In the interim, Cllr Beavan would remain in office.

2/24-25 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

- (a) Cllr Hughes had indicated that he would be willing to stand as Vice Chair. There being no other nominations, **IT WAS RESOLVED** by a unanimous vote that he be appointed as Vice Chair for 2024/25.
- (b) Since Cllr Hughes was not, at this point, present, **IT WAS AGREED** that he could sign the Declaration at some point prior to the next meeting of council.

3/24-25 WELCOME

Cllr Beavan welcomed those attending, including the incoming Clerk. It was noted that there were no members of the Public present and also that the Shropshire Council councillor was absent.

4/24-25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology had been received from Cllr Knipe who had had to absent himself because of an urgent family matter.

5/24-25 INTERESTS & DISPENSATIONS

- (a) No Declarations of Pecuniary Interest were made by those present.
- (b) No requests for Dispensation had previously been received and none were presented.

6/24-25 TO CONSIDER APPLICATIONS FOR CO-OPTION TO THE COUNCIL

No applications for co-option had been received since the last council meeting. One vacancy remains.

7/24-25 ANNUAL ITEMS - DOCUMENTS

Council noted the resolution in March 2024 (Item 23/100) to approve (subject to amendment of dates and contact details) the following documents and to re-affirm their adoption by the Council:

- (a) Standing Orders
- (b) Financial Regulations
- (c) Local Government Association Code of Conduct
- (d) Asset Register
- (e) Risk Management Policy

- (f) Banking policy
- (g) Planning Applications received between Parish Council meetings
- (h) News and Events items
- (i) Grant awarding Policy
- (j) Llanfair Times Policy
- (k) Publication Scheme

The Clerk reported that all of the amendments had been made. **IT WAS RESOLVED** by a unanimous vote to confirm the approval and to adopt the amended documents.

8/24-25 TO ADOPT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AN ENVIRONMENTAL CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP

After discussion, **IT WAS RESOLVED** by a unanimous vote to adopt the Terms of Reference as presented.

9/24-25 ANNUAL ITEMS – OTHER

Membership of committees and working groups, and council representation on external bodies, was discussed. **IT WAS AGREED** that membership or representation for 2024/25 be as follows:

- (a) Financial Working Group members (Cllrs Hughes, Knipe and Lane)
- (b) Care of Clerk Group members (Cllrs Knipe and Plumb)
- (c) Llanfair Times representatives (Cllrs Hughes and Knipe)
- (d) Environmental Maintenance Grant co-ordinators members (Cllrs Beavan and Lloyd)
- (e) Environmental Climate Change Action Working Group member (Cllr Plumb)
- (f) SALC South Shropshire Area Committee representative (Cllr Knipe)

10/24-25 OPERATING ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2024/25

- (a) The Clerk had sought and received a quotation from the current Internal Auditor, RTL Auditing, for internal auditing services for 2024/25. He had also received a quotation from another firm and had examined prices being offered by other auditors. On the grounds of value-for-money and proven quality, he recommended that the quotation from RTL Auditing be accepted. **IT WAS AGREED** to appoint RTL Auditing as the council's Internal Auditor for 2024/25.
- (b) The Clerk reported that Barclays had not yet approved the change to the Bank Mandate to give him access to the council's bank account. Barclays had requested a revised signature for Cllr Hughes as they did not believe that the signature on the form to change the mandate agreed with their records. Cllr Hughes had spoken to Barclays and presented forms, counter-signed by Cllr Beavan, to the Clerk that would allow the registration of a variant signature. The Clerk stated that he would return these forms, together with one to change the council's Business Address to his own. He hoped that this would finally resolve the issue.
In the interim he sought the council's agreement to ask the former Clerk, who still retained access to the account, to set up payments for authorisation as necessary. **IT WAS AGREED** that the Clerk may do so.
- (c) **IT WAS AGREED** that the provisional dates and locations for council meetings in 2024/25 will be:
 - o 15th July, 2024 at the Everest Hall
 - o 23rd September, 2024 at the Everest Hall
 - o 25th November, 2024 at the Pavilion
 - o 20th January, 2025 at the Pavilion
 - o 17th March, 2025 at the Pavilion

11/24-25 END OF FINANCIAL YEAR ITEMS

- (a) The Clerk presented the former Clerk's Year End Report for 2023/24 – he himself had only taken office on 6th April 2024, after the end of that financial year. Council noted the report.
- (b) Council discussed the Internal Auditors report for 2023/24. It was noted that the auditor had been impressed with the council's internal controls but that she had raised concern about the council's financial reserves, which she felt were inadequate. The Clerk stated that he was to present a revised budget for 2024/25, together with recommendations on financial reserves, under item 16/24-25(e) and asked that discussion of the council's response to this concern be delayed until that item.

- (c) The Clerk presented the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the AGAR). On the basis of the Internal Auditor's report and his own assessment of the council's controls during 2023/24, he recommended that it be approved. **IT WAS RESOLVED** by a unanimous vote to approve the statement and it was signed by the Chair and the Clerk.
- (d) The Clerk presented the Accounting Statement (Section 2 of the AGAR) together with the Asset Register, the end of year Bank Reconciliation and the Explanation of Variances against Budget for 2023/24. **IT WAS RESOLVED** by a unanimous vote to approve the Accounting Statement and it was signed by the Chair.
- (e) The Clerk recommended that the dates for the exercise of public rights be from Monday 3rd June to Friday 12th July inclusive. **IT WAS AGREED** to accept these dates.
- (f) The Clerk confirmed that the conditions for completion of the Certification of Exemption from External Audit had been met. **IT WAS RESOLVED** by a unanimous vote to complete the Certificate of Exemption and it was signed by the Clerk and the Chair.

12/24-25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

- (a) No representations or questions from the public were received.
- (b) It was noted that no written report from Shropshire Councillor Nigel Hartin had been received.

13/24-25 MINUTES

- (a) Council noted the minutes of the Council Meeting of 18th March 2024 and **IT WAS RESOLVED** by a unanimous vote to approve them as a true record of the meeting.
- (b) Council noted the minutes of the extraordinary Council Meeting of 4th April 2024 and **IT WAS RESOLVED** by a unanimous vote to approve them as a true record of the meeting.
- (c) The Clerk reported that there were only two outstanding actions arising from the previous minutes. Cllr Beavan confirmed that he had delivered the King's portrait to The Everest Hall and this action was, therefore, closed. The remaining open action will be addressed at the council's meeting in July.

14/24-25 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

Cllr Plumb gave a brief update on the actions being taken to set up the Environmental Climate Change Action Working Group.

Cllr Lane reported that the PCC would like a written contribution from the council towards a 'Welcome Pack' that is preparing for new residents of the parish. Cllr Beavan agreed to provide them with a short statement.

The Chair proposed that the meeting be suspended in order for the Annual Parish Meeting to commence at 7.30pm; the council meeting would recommence after that meeting had concluded. **IT WAS RESOLVED** by a unanimous vote temporarily to suspend the meeting. The meeting was suspended at 7.28pm.

The Annual Parish Meeting being concluded, the council meeting recommenced at 8.22pm.

15/24-25 PLANNING

There were no planning applications to consider.

16/24-25 FINANCE

- (a) The Clerk presented a financial report containing the bank account reconciliation and balance as at 3rd May. Owing to him not yet having access to the council's bank account, this was the last date for which he had been able to obtain a statement, courtesy of the former Clerk. The contents were noted by council.
- (b) The council noted the account of income received since 18th March 2024.
- (c) The Clerk stated that no payments had been made since the previous council meeting.
- (d) The Clerk presented the following payments for approval:

Payee	Description	Amount
James McVicar	Payroll for months 1 & 2	£484.36
HMRC	PAYE for months 1 & 2	£121.00

Craven design & print	Printing of March 2024 Llanfair Times	£244.50
RLT Auditing	Internal Audit services 2023/24	£100.00
SALC	ALC Affiliation Fees 2024/25	£163.76
James McVicar	ILCA Training Course (paid by Clerk)	£144.00

IT WAS RESOLVED by a unanimous vote to approve the above payments.

- (e) The Clerk presented a revised Budget for 2024/25 together with other recommendations; these were documented in a written report circulated to councillors with the agenda (**FR02.2024-25 Version 1.0**). In particular, he recommended: that the Budget be cut back to reduce the impact on the Working Balance of the increase in costs arising from his appointment at a higher salary than the previous Clerk; that the council create a General Reserve as part of its accounting practices rather than using a Working Balance and that the current Working Balance be moved to that reserve; and that the council seek to increase the amount held in the General Reserve to be at least 6 months of its nett annual revenue expenditure. This latter recommendation would address the Internal Auditor's concerns (see Minute 11/24-25(b) above). After discussion, **IT WAS RESOLVED** by a unanimous vote to accept the report and to adopt its recommendations, including the setting of a revised Budget for 2024/25. Further, **IT WAS RESOLVED** by a unanimous vote to amend the report so that the target period, for increasing the General Reserve to be at least 6 months of the council's nett annual revenue expenditure, will be 3 years rather than 2 years.

17/24-25 LLANFAIR TIMES

The Clerk noted that the Budget for 2024/25 includes a grant from The Llanfair Trust towards the costs of publishing and distributing the Llanfair Times but that this income had not yet been sought. **IT WAS AGREED** that the council should apply for the grant.

18/24-25 PARISH MATTERS

- (a) Cllr Beavan reported that there was a large pothole between Teme Cottage and the bridge. Councillors noted that, in general, the state of the parish's roads was poor with the surface of some roads having reached a stage where they were more-or-less impassable. The Clerk reminded councillors that it was the responsibility of Shropshire Council, as the Highway Authority, to repair the parish's roads and that the Parish Council (and, indeed, individual residents) had no power to do this. He agreed to report the pothole mentioned by Cllr Beavan but asked that councillors try to report such matters themselves using the Shropshire Council website (<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/roads-and-highways/report-a-highways-fault-or-concern>). He also stated that although the report of a road issue from a parish council had carried some weight a few years ago this no longer seemed to be the case.
- (b) Nothing to report.
- (c) Nothing to report.
- (d) Nothing to report. Cllr Beavan proposed that this item be removed as a standing item on agendas.
- (e) The council had received a request to consider the safe-keeping of Census records for the parish obtained some years ago as part of the Millenium Project. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk would write a response.

19/24-25 CORRESPONDENCE

- (a) The council had received a request from Llanfair Waterdine Community Trust for it to be involved in and/or support a proposed Community Fun Day. Cllr Beavan had attended a meeting held by the Trust and, given what he heard, suggested that the best way for the council to respond would be for individual councillors to offer time/help on the day to the Trustees. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the Trustees to this effect and that he would advertise the Fun Day on the council's website.

Business being concluded, the council meeting was declared closed at 9.00pm.

Signed _____

Dated: _____

Chairman