

Minutes of Woore Parish Council Meeting



Monday 13th January 2025, 7.30pm, The Victory Hall,
Woore

PRESENT:

Cllr M. Cowey (Chairman), Cllr R. Goodman (Vice Chair), Cllr C. Hamilton, Cllr J. Higgin, Cllr C. Gath and Cllr A. Gath.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms C. Burnard (Clerk to the Council), Cllr Roy Aldcroft (Shropshire Council Representative) and Sally Tyson (Tree and Path Warden).

PUBLIC:

There was one member of the public present.

24108 Welcome / Present, Apologies and/or absent

Apologies were received on behalf of Cllr M. Carter due to work commitments and Cllr M. Austin and Cllr M. Blake due to illness.

It was unanimously **resolved** to accept all apologies.

24109 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or any other Interests

Declaration of any disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed at the meeting and which is not included in the register of interests. Members are reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the register of members' interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer. Members are reminded to declare any gifts and/or hospitality. (LGA 1972 s94). **No declarations were received.**

24110 Open Forum: to last no longer than 15 minutes

The Chair welcomed attendees to the first Council meeting of 2025 and opened discussions to the member of the public.

A resident wished to clarify information on a recent planning application the Parish Council commented on. Application 24/04556/FUL is for the change of use from agricultural land to a dog walking field and Cllr J. Higgin was the lead Councillor. The resident wished to answer some questions raised by neighbours regarding opening hours and noise. The Chair read out the Parish Council's comments on the application (See Agenda Item 24121 for more details) and confirmed the council supported the application and the applicant would get the chance to answer any questions raised by neighbours in the next stage. The resident was happy with this clarification.

Cllr R. Goodman informed Councillors that Woore Primary School has been approved to become an Academy as part of "Collective Vision Trust". This will be in effect from 3rd February 2025. The current school Governors will step down as the responsibility for governance will lie with CVT, however existing Governors do have the option to stay on in the capacity of members of a 'Local Committee'

The Chair stated he has not received any updates on his requests to resolve the flooding at Flash Farm. Both Cheshire East and Shropshire Council have investigated this matter, but it is still unresolved.

The Chair has again reported the issue of the raw sewage on the A525, Audlem Road. The delay in resolving this is due to Woore Parish being serviced by both Severn Trent and United Utilities. North of the A525 is United Utilities and south is Severn Trent however both pumping stations are managed by Severn Trent. Because of this, reporting an issue to the appropriate company can be challenging. The Chair is now concerned that this sewage is entering the ditch at the side of the A525 and flowing into the nearby field that is used by cattle. He hopes the Environment Agency will be getting involved with the assistance of Cllr R. Aldcroft.

The Chair has seen an increase in the amount of fly tipping within the Parish. He would like to thank Shropshire Council for their quick response in clearing the two previous reports. He reminded all residents to report fly tipping and incidents like this onto the 'fix my street' portal as Shropshire Council will not see it if not.

The Parish Council will do everything legally possible to ensure the culprits are caught and brought to charges and hopes it is not residents' refuse.

Cllr A. Gath asked if the sewage issue in Pipe Gate had been resolved. The Chair stated it had not.

24111 Approval of the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9th December 2024 (Local Government Act 1972, s12p41(1)).

It was unanimously **resolved** to approve the minutes of the Parish meeting held 9th December 2024.

24112 Matters arising: to cover any matters arising from Minutes referred to in 24111.

The last update the Chair received from Robert Rowen on the parish's fibre optic broadband upgrade was that 540 premises have been enabled. BT are saying it is mainly the outliner properties still to be connected, the remote properties on the edge of the parish or the ones with connection issues. They are on target to have the whole parish upgraded by the end of March 2025. Hopefully there will be no further road closures on this project now the work on St Leonard's has been completed.

The Chair has had no update on the trees at the Manor house and their condition. It is hoped that now the Christmas break is over, a response will be received from Shropshire Council.

24113 Shropshire Council Representative Report: for Cllr R. Aldcroft to provide reports/updates on any relevant matters.

Cllr R. Aldcroft confirmed that he had received a response from Northern Planning regarding Station Yard. They have requested more information on the issues and hopefully a team will be put together shortly. The Chair added that the building work should have started by 23rd November 2024 to comply with the granted planning permission so this needs to be monitored.

The flooding on Flash Farm, as discussed by The Chair already, is still being worked on. Cllr R. Aldcroft confirmed that the issue is not only a drainage issue which requires the water company to better maintain the grids/drains but is now an issue of a new guard being required around the newly formed ditch at the side of the road which now poses a danger to vehicles, however this will require Highways to resolve. Cllr R. Aldcroft will continue to press for a resolution as he believes if a car went into the ditch, it would pose a real danger to life.

The Irelands Cross development is progressing. Cllr R. Aldcroft has spoken to the contractor and he confirmed there are no plans to build any further properties on the site despite planning permission being granted. Cllr R. Aldcroft has asked again about the reduction of the 40mph speed limit and the dedicated entrance however he has not heard back. It was pointed out that reducing the speed limit takes 3 to 4 months, by which time the bungalow will be completed. This is unacceptable as the reduced speed limit was a requirement of the planning being granted. The Chair is concerned about the inconvenience to the residents near the site should any amendments be made after completion, especially if roads closures are required.

Cllr R. Aldcroft confirmed that the sewage spill on Audlem Road was known to both Shropshire Council and Cheshire Council, and both are liaising with the appropriate parties to resolve. He added that due to the increased rain fall the country experiences as a whole nowadays is not helping matters and stated that the current infrastructure will only cope if upgrades are made.

Cllr R. Aldcroft acknowledged the proposal received from the Chair regarding the Cooper Arms site and hopes Shropshire Council will fully explore the proposal. (This will be discussed in more detail in Agenda item 24118.) He confirmed that he is continuing to put pressure on Shropshire Council to reduce the speed limit outside Woore Primary school to 20mph.

The annual house building figure for Shropshire Council for 2024/2025 was 1,073 however this is going to raise to 1,994 for the year 2025/2026 for the whole county.

Cllr R. Aldcroft informed Councillors that the income for Shropshire Council from central Government is still up for debate as the grants are not confirmed yet. He added that rural counties are the last to be informed and Shropshire Council is third to last to find out.

We do know that Shropshire Council needs to save £23 million...

One final note from Cllr R. Aldcroft was updating Councillors on the upcoming elections. Looking out for the security of Councillors during election campaigns, due to certain incidents with County Councillors, West Mercia Police have issued a warning to Parish Councillors to make sure their family and friends know which routes they will be walking and what time they are expected home.

The Chair said that he appreciated the warning but felt like residents of Woore will not behave in this manner and that our Councillors don't undertake too much active campaigning.

The Chair added that Cllr R. Aldcroft will be back in the village on 21st February 2025 before the Community Café for his monthly meeting and will be happy to answer any questions.

24114: 2025/26 Precept figure to be approved.

The Clerk confirmed that she has received no comments or additional requests from Councillors since December's meeting so the Chair motioned to approve the figures which will maintain the 2025/2026 precept request at the levels from 2024/2025 to help residents manage their household budgets as Shropshire Council will likely be increasing the council tax by 4.99%.

It was unanimously **resolved** to approve the precept request amount of £31,249.00 for 2025/2026. The Clerk is to submit the precept form to Shropshire Council within the next few days.

24115: Climate Emergency Policy for Woore Parish Council.

The Chair proposed a new Parish Council policy what will ensure that any events organised or assisted by the Parish Council has taken into consideration the impact on the climate. This includes new planning applications focusing on renewable energy sources or building materials/methods. This could also include the EV charging points for the parish and the Newcastle Road project.

The policy, if implemented will be the go-to document if anyone ever questions what the Parish Council is doing to help the environment.

The Chair motioned that we, the Parish Councillors, make all efforts to meet the requirements of the Climate Change Act 2008 to enable our parish to be carbon neutral by 2030 and support, where possible, plans to achieve that goal.

The Chair also motioned that we, the Parish Councillors, support the Environment Act 2021 in relation to the local Nature Recovery Strategy and the parish will support, where possible, the local authority to develop reporting on the local natural environments and help to maintain and create nature habitats.

It was unanimously **resolved** to approve the new Climate Emergency Policy.

24116: Local Police Charter for 2025 to be discussed

The Clerk informed Councillors that every quarter we are asked to submit our top three concerns or priorities that we would like West Mercia Police to focus on when attending the parish. We have already submitted our priorities for Quarter 1 of 2025 which is –

- 1) Speeding
- 2) Thefts from Farms 3) Anti-social Behaviour.

The Clerk asked if any Councillors had any suggestions for the next submission in April 2025. Cllr R. Goodman suggested fly tipping however this is a County Council issue and not a police matter. Other than that, no suggestions were put forward, so it was agreed to maintain these priorities until further notice.

24117: CIL Funding Requests Received to be discussed

The Chair gave a brief overview of the CIL fund currently say in the Parish's bank account. It is currently £114,807.35 and pointed out this is not the precept amount we receive from residents. This is a different fund however it all sits in our bank account. Shropshire Council collect this from new builds and other similar projects and 25% comes into the Parish Councils bank account (dropping to only 15% if there is not a Neighbourhood Plan in place). Shropshire Council can reclaim this money if it is not spent within a certain time period. With this in mind, the Chair has been encouraging local organisations to submit requests for help with funding. As a result, we have received the below applications:

- i) The Methodist Chapel CIL Funding Request

The Methodist Chapel has requested £5,733.00 for an upgrade to their current heating system and general decoration of the chapel to complement their new roof which they self-funded. It is felt that this will be of great benefit to the community as the Chapel is often used as a central hub as well and positively impacting the environment by helping reduce their carbon footprint.

It was unanimously **resolved** to approve the CIL funding request

ii) New Speed Indicator Devices

The Chair reminded Councillors that the project of getting new speed indicator devices for the Parish is almost at completion. The supplier has been approved by Shropshire Council, the locations of the devices has been approved, and all parties are in agreement.

The Supplier has now agreed to swap the battery packs every four weeks for the first six months after installation as well as collect and share the data collected by the devices. The Chair hopes a service agreement can be in place for after the initial six months to help the parish maintain the devices however this agreement needs Shropshire Council's approval.

A discussion took place regarding the suggested service agreement and the Chair agreed to ask for confirmation of how the supplier will collect the data and how best for the Parish Council to collect it after the six months should they not sign a service plan.

Other than that, no further questions were raised and it was unanimously **resolved** to approve the purchasing of the three new speed indicator devices.

iii) St Leonard Play Area CIL Funding Request

Cllr R. Goodman reminded councillors that during 2024 a small amount of CIL funding went towards moving and fixing the outdoor gym equipment from behind Woore Village Hall to St Leonards play area. This project was well received by residents however the fencing around St Leonards play area now needs an upgrade. Cllr R. Goodman has received some quotes and one for £2,000 seems to be the best.

This will help keep people using the play area safe while making the area look nicer as well as make it easier to maintain the grounds.

Cllr J. Higgin asked what the other quotes were and Cllr R. Goodman confirmed she was still gathering alternate quotes. Cllr C. Hamilton asked for clarification on the access gate for pushchairs and people with accessibility needs. The Chair asked that this be deferred until the February 2025 meeting by which time all Councillors must have presented all questions for Cllr R. Goodman to answer.

24118: Cooper Arms Sale to be discussed.

The Chair highlighted the intended sale of the Coopers Arms and the significance of this for the Parish's unofficial car park. The Cooper Arms car park currently offers 28 spaces, and these are used frequently by visitors and residents using our wide range of facilities including the village shop, the cricket club and the hairdressers.

There was a recent post on Facebook asking if there would be any demand for an Indian restaurant however this (as well as any similar suggestions) would render the carpark unusable for none diners.

The Chair has asked Shropshire Council if that have received any preplanning applications on the property, but they have confirmed nobody has enquired.

The Chair has since submitted a suggestion for a building project on the site for some affordable housing. These four to six new houses would be on the footprint of the existing building using the carparking at the front while maintaining the main carpark for parish use. He is yet to hear back on his proposal. If this project was to be actioned, it would need to be funded by Shropshire Council as the Parish Council are unable to buy the plot due to existing pubs in the parish. The Parish Council is unable to purchase just the carpark alone as it was felt the seller would be unwilling to split the site.

A discussion took place the Chair informed Councillors that he has requested a remote meeting with Shropshire Council on this matter and will update Councillors in due course.

24119: Donation for Electricity to The Chapel for Christmas light power used.

The Chair reminded Councillors that we make an annual donation to the Chapel for our use of the electricity for the Christmas tree. Cllr R. Goodman asked if the Chapel are happy with this amount or if we should increase it. The Chair confirmed they are happy, so it was unanimously **resolved** to approve the cheque for £50 for our annual donation for 2024.

24120: Land on Newcastle Road to be discussed

The Chair reminded Councillors that the land on Newcastle Road has been leased for sheep grazing since January 2024 and is now up for renewal. The lessee is happy to continue so the Parish Council will now move them on to a monthly lease. The Clerk will draft up a rolling monthly contract for review.

Cllr R. Goodman added that this land is on the Woore place plan for community use (possibly a small nature reserve with paths and open spaces) and the Parish Council hope to start consultation work on this shortly. The first stage is consulting with residents to ask what they feel would be of greatest benefit to them and this is why the contract is going to rolling month.

24121 Planning:

a) Applications: to adopt comments submitted in response to the following applications and as approved by Councillors prior to the meeting;

i) Reference: 24/04556/FUL (Validated 02/12/2024)

Address: West of Villa Farm, 10 Audlem Road, Woore, Shropshire

Proposal: Change of use of agricultural field to dog walking area

“Woore Parish Council SUPPORTS Planning Application 24/04556/FUL Proposed Dog Walking Area at Villa Farm, 10 Audlem Road, Woore, Crewe, subject to any Consultee Comments.

Woore Parish Council request that it is notified of all changes to planning conditions relating to this application and subsequent applications relating to it.”

ii) Reference: 24/04629/FUL (Validated 06/12/2024)

Address: The Gables, Nantwich Road, Woore, Crewe, Shropshire, CW3 9RH

Proposal: Erection of detached dwelling and garage

“Woore Parish Council Supports this Planning Application; the applicant complies with the Policies within the Woore Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2036 as advised in the Design & Access Statement. The Parish Council would like to see as a Condition that the Applicant does include Solar Roof Panels as well as EV Charging point to the new dwelling. This would then comply with Policy HOU3 - Design G- New developments should take account of eco and environmentally sustainable technology and materials.

There is still concern of the possibility and raised in the previous refusal in 2022 that Care must be taken to ensure no overshadowing of the very small rear amenity space of the adjacent bungalow. The Parish Council would like confirmation that this revised submission now elevates this issue prior to Granting of any permission.

The Parish Council supports the Comments of the Consultees SUDS and SC Highways DC Comments received so far for the application and support any further comments received from the Consultees.

Woore Parish Council request that it is notified of all changes to planning conditions relating to this application and subsequent applications relating to it.”

b) Decisions: to acknowledge all planning decisions made between 11th September and 13th October 2024.

i) Reference: 24/04466/TPO (validated: 19/11/2024)

Address: Falcon Inn, London Road, Woore, Crewe, Shropshire, CW3 9SE

Proposal: Prune overhanging branches back to boundary and remove overhanging squirrel damaged trees protected by the Shropshire Council (Land at Manor House, Woore) TPO 2010 (SC/00033/10) **Decision:**

Grant Permission

24122 Committee and Representatives Reports: for Councillors/representatives to provide reports/updates on any relevant matters.

a) All reports as required;

Cllr C. Hamilton updated Councillors that there has been no reduction in speeding vehicles coming into the village recorded on the speed indicator devices.

Although the Chair noted that there was a reduction in the number of vehicles recorded by 8,000 across the two devices for the latest quarter and wondered if this was due to road closures. It was deemed not to be the result of

the recent road closures but it could have been because the devices are being blocked by overgrown hedges so the Chair will walk down and check in the coming days.

The community speed watchers have been out and Newcastle Road is still recording about 80% of passing vehicles travelling above the speed limit.

Cllr R. Goodman updated councillors on the latest village Hall news -

“Victory Hall Update – January 2025 Events:

Films: 11th January 8th February, 8th March

Café: 24th January, 21 February, 21 March

Barn Dance: 12th April

75th Anniversary events and celebrations will be announced late spring for November 2025

Bookings remain steady, Bridge Club has folded after many years, so the Hall is vacant now Monday afternoons.

Yoga have booked more sessions.

The Hall is in the process of upgrading to full fibre broadband & some of the sockets replaced to include USB charging points.”

The Chair informed Cllr J. Higgin that the next SALC meeting is due within the next few weeks and the Clerk will forward the invite to her and Cllr M. Carter once received.

The next Chairmans meeting is Wednesday the 15th January and The Chair will be attending raising questions of planning application processes.

The Chair had no tree and path updates.

The Chair reminded Councillors about the Woore United Charities committee which has a small fund available for use by residents in need, especially the elderly or school children struggling to afford basic educational needs. He asked Councillors to direct any residents they feel would benefit from this fund toward the charity and they will be more than happy to help out. The Chair provided the followed report -

“The Trustees met on Tuesday 19th November 2024 and agreed the distribution of donations and payments.

There is concern by the Trustees that the number of eligible payments is decreasing and will actively seek any further recipients that are eligible and reside in the Parish of Woore. They also request that if anyone knows or hears of any resident that is seeking a donation to assist them in the current climate to contact the Secretary or one of the Trustees. These donations/financial aids are available to support not only elderly residents but available for all ages subject to meeting the criteria.

The Secretary will provide the usual report for the Annual Parish Meeting.”

There have been no updates on HS2, and no responses received to explain why HS2 limited has purchased the Manor House recently.

24123: Finance

a) Date for scrutineering to be agreed with the RFO, Cllr C. Hamilton and Cllr J. Higgin.

The Clerk suggested a meeting in January with Cllr C. Hamilton and Cllr J. Higgin to complete the required scrutineering up to month end December 2024. Cllr R. Goodman confirmed Woore Village Hall was available for hire on 20th January and the date was agreed upon.

b) Invoices/payments & receipts: to resolve to approve the below detailed expenditure:

Date:	Recipient	Reason for Payment	Cheque Number	Net Amount	Vat Amount	Power of Expenditure
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13.01.2025	Chelsea Burnard	Clerk Salary (Dec month): Gross Pay - Income Tax deduction – Total -	002001	£543.84 - £108.80	- - -	LGA 1972 s. 112 (2) LGA 1972 s. 112 (2)
13.01.2025	Blachere	New Christmas Tree Lights	001994	£435.04 £415.00	£83.00	HA 1980 s. 96
13.01.2025	St Leonard's Church	Parish Magazine Content for 2025	002003	£150.00	£0.00	LGA 1972 s. 111
13.01.2025	PKF LittleJohn	2023/2024 External audit Fee	002003	£315.00	£63.00	LGA 1972 s. 111
13.01.2025	Woore Methodist Chapel	Donation of Christmas Tree Electricity	002004	£50.00	£0.00	LGA 1972 s. 137

The Clerk added that the VAT reclaim for the Parish Council has been resubmitted to HRMC due to an error with the change of address between the previous and current clerk. This has hopefully now been rectified and a claim up to month end December 2024 has been submitted.

The Chair added that a new 2025 contract for Tony Seabridge needs sending out and any price increases from him need to be received before April 2025/26.

The Clerk also updated councillors that the external audit has now been signed off and the Parish Council has successfully passed the audit regulations set out in AGAR.

Bank reconciliation:

i) For the Council to receive end of month bank reconciliation for December 2024.

Closing Bank Balance at 31st December 2024			
Current Account	100.00		
Business Reserve Account	192,828.89	192,928.89	
Less unpresented Cheques			
Cheque 001959		(200.00)	
Cheque 001990		(250.00)	
Cheque 001998		(70.00)	
Cheque 002000		(1,074.00)	
		191,334.89	
Split as follows			
Closing Balances			
Recreational fund	-		
CIL Neighbourhood Fund	114,807.35		
General Fund	76,527.54	191,334.89	-

24124 Clerk's Report and Correspondence:

The Clerk has received communication from a concerned visitor to Woore School regarding the speed of vehicles passing and the narrow pavements outside the school. The Chair replied informing them of all the work the Parish Council has put into this issue and advised this visitor to contact West Mercia Police and Shropshire Council as it was felt this would aid our mission of protecting the parish from speeders.

The meeting closed at 10.30pm.

DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Parish Council Meeting 10th February 2025 7.30pm.

Signed.....(Chair)