

# LITTLE CHEVERELL PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Meeting of Little Cheverell Parish Council Held at Little Cheverell Village Hall on Tuesday 7th May 2024 at 5.30 p.m.

### **Present: Councillors**

Mike Phillips (Chairman), Clive Broe (Vice Chairman), Andrew Spearey

**In attendance:** Rebecca Hathaway-White (Clerk), Dominic Muns (Unitary Councillor)

### **24/1 Election of Chairman**

**Resolved:** Deferred until July meeting as not enough Councillors present to vote.

### **24/2 Election of Vice Chairman**

**Resolved:** Deferred until July meeting as not enough Councillors present to vote.

**24/3 Acceptance of apologies for absence. Resolved:** Benjamin Thompson, Nicola Broe

**24/4 Minutes.** The minutes of the Council meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed Cllr Spearey, seconded Cllr Broe, voting unanimous in favour.

**24/5 Dispensations and Declarations of interest. Resolved:** Cllr Spearey declared an interest in the village hall discussion as a trustee.

**24/6 Chairman's Report (See Appendix A)**

**24/7 Parish Councillor Vacancy.**

**Resolved:** Council was asked to note that there are currently two vacancies for co-option.

**24/8 Accounts for Payment: [LGA 1972 s150 \(5\)](#)**

**Resolved:** Cllr Phillips proposed ratifying and authorising the payments listed, to be paid via cheque, seconded Cllr Spearey, voting unanimous in favour.

### **Payments Ratified**

Hugo Fox (Website)	£23.99
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### **Payments Authorised**

R Hathaway-White Salary	£106.40
HMRC	£26.40
WALC	£70.66
OASIS Grounds Care	£150.00

**24/9 Approval and signing-off of the parish accounts.**

As previously circulated.

The clerk reported Bank balances as of the 30th April 2024 were:-

Current Account           £11,811.02

**24/10 List of Regular Payments.** Some regular payments require payment prior to the next planned meeting. The Clerk had prepared a list of payments.

**Resolved:** Members approved the list of payments to be paid by the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) as per Financial Regulation 5.6. Proposed Cllr Spearey, seconded Cllr C Broe, voting unanimous in favour.

**24/11 Financial Checks. Resolved:** Councillor N Broe was nominated to complete quarterly checks to verify bank reconciliations produced by the RFO. This activity, shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the council and minuted as per Financial Regulation 2.2. Proposed Cllr Spearey, seconded Cllr C Broe, voting unanimous in favour.

**24/12 Roles and Responsibilities. Resolved:** Deferred to July meeting.

**24/13 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.** Based on NALC model regulations circulated prior to meeting for members perusal, the documents were taken as read.

**Resolved:** Cllr Phillips proposed acceptance and adoption of the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, seconded Cllr Spearey, voting unanimous in favour.

**24/14 Risk Register.** Circulated prior to meeting for members perusal, the document was taken as read. **Resolved:** Cllr Spearey proposed acceptance and adoption of the Risk Register, seconded Cllr Spearey, voting unanimous in favour.

**24/15 Internet Banking. Resolved:** Council ratified to add the incoming clerk, Rebecca Hathaway-White, as a non-signatory to bank account and delegate user for online banking, giving access to view accounts, transfer between accounts and input third party payments to be authorised by two full signatories. Proposed Cllr Phillips, seconded Cllr C Broe, voting unanimous in favour.

**24/16 Terms of Employment.** Council agreed to terms of employment and signed the employment contract circulate prior to the meeting for members perusal. The document was taken as read. Proposed Cllr Phillips, seconded Cllr Spearey, voting unanimous in favour.

**24/17 Appointment of Internal Auditors. Resolved:** The Clerks recommendation as per Financial Regulation 2.6 is to employ an independent Internal Auditor. Cllrs resolved to use Michael Gaiger as the Internal Auditor for 2024/25. Proposed Cllr Spearey, seconded Cllr C Broe, voting unanimous in favour.

**24/18 Asset Register. Resolved:** Circulated prior to meeting for members perusal, the document was taken as read. Cllr Spearey proposed to acceptance and adoption of the Asset Register, seconded Cllr C Broe, voting unanimous in favour.

**24/19 Annual Meeting of the Electorate. Resolved:** Cllrs agreed to the provision of refreshments at the Annual Meeting of the Electorate and resolved to approve costs up to a maximum of £200. Proposed Cllr Spearey, seconded Cllr C Broe, voting unanimous in favour.

**24/20 Village Gates. Resolved:** Cllrs agreed to a budget of up to £100 for the building of village gates. Proposed Cllr Spearey, seconded Cllr C Broe, voting unanimous in favour.

**24/21 Updates and items outstanding from previous meetings.**

- a) The Village Hall. Fundraising is now with CAF as Go Fund Me was proving difficult to manage. The total raised currently stands at £2615
- b) HMRC. Clerk is currently missing an HMRC accounts office number so although everything else is set up she can't currently submit the information to HMRC. Hours have been spent trying to get through on the phone with no success, so the Clerk has now written to the Complaints address.
- c) Privet Hedge at the South End of Low Road. Ongoing. Cllr Spearey did ask about hedge cutting but as the season is now over the farmer does not want to reattach the equipment to the tractor.
- d) Potholes near Myrtle Cottage. With Wiltshire Council.

**24/22 Correspondence. Resolved:** None.

**24/23 Date of next meeting.**

The next meeting of the Council will be on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024, 7.30pm at Little Cheverell Village Hall.

Approved by the Council as a true record.

Signed .....

Dated .....

The minutes of this meeting will be available to all members of the public from the village website or by contacting the Parish Clerk.

## **Appendix A**

The purpose of this report is to update the electorate on the activities of the Parish Council for the last year.

Cllr. Sue Ivey presided over the last Annual meeting of the village in May 2023. The main theme of the meeting was our approach to speeding traffic through the village and how best to control it.

Cllr. Sue Ivey announced her resignation as Chair and from the Parish Council as she had decided to move away from the village to pastures new after 47 years in the village. The occasion was marked with a gift of flowers donated by the Councillors.

The Parish Council expended much energy on speeding but without a willing team of volunteers for a community speedwatch team the options for funding speed indicator devices are limited. The devices cost upwards of £2000 each, ideally the village would need two, so £4000. Community speedwatch would give us access to funding from Wiltshire Council's Local Highways and Infrastructure Improvement scheme. Without the funding the SID's are not affordable for a council with a precept of around £6,500. The process begins with a speed survey which was completed but the results showed very little speeding through the village.

The installation of village gates is seen as a way to alert drivers that they are entering a residential area, these also cost a significant amount of money, however a member of the public has now volunteered to make the gates to be sited on Westbury Road at the start of the 40mph limit and we hope they will be ready in late spring 2024. This is a fine example of how we can help ourselves and save some money in the process.

Regarding footpaths, several residents expressed concerns about the state of a number of footpaths which were overgrown as is often the case in the summer. The Council investigate maintenance responsibilities and although technically Wiltshire Council is responsible for keeping them open, in practice they have limited resources and the best way is to ask the landowner for their help or 'do it yourself', maybe we could organise a clearing session. Let me know if you would like to take part in maintaining the paths you use the most.

Reporting any defects on paths and roads via 'My Wiltshire' preferably with photos is strongly recommended.

During the year the village website has been developed. The website is shared with the Village Hall Committee and is the place to find out about Village Hall Events, buy tickets online for those events as well as accessing the agendas, minutes, and policies of the Parish Council. Please let me know if you would like to see something else on the site and we will do our best to incorporate it.

In terms of community communication, the village WhatsApp group continues to be a great way for us to stay connected, if you are not in the group and would like to join it please let me know either via the contact details on the website or by speaking to anyone in the group who will ask me to add you.

### **Council Admin and Structure**

It became apparent that the council must have a paid Parish Clerk who would become the 'proper officer' of the council and that the Clerk must be employed by the Council on a PAYE basis. The

implications of this are that the Council must register with HMRC as an employer, have employee liability insurance and write a contract for the Clerk's employment.

Concerning finance, it became apparent that we were not at a level of financial management and transparency required for a Parish Council and as a result an action plan was put in place beginning with the creation of a proper budget for the coming financial year to ensure we would request the correct precept and have enough money in the bank to pay for the essential expenses and maintain a statutory reserve.

The current council is formed as follows; Mike Phillips (Chairman), Clive Broe (Vice Chairman), Ben Thompson, Nicola Broe and Andrew Spearey.

We welcome Rebecca Hathaway-White to Little Cheverell Parish Council as Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

The Parish Council is seeking two more Councillors. Please contact the Chairman or any of the Councillors should you be interested in the role.

A contractor is being sought to repaint the telephone box on Low Road which houses our defibrillator but no success so far, does anyone know of a painter?

Flooding and potholes continue to be problematic in Low Road and Westbury Road opposite the Village Hall. A meeting was held with the highways engineer for the area who has organised some temporary repairs near Myrtle Cottage, there is a plan to permanently repair three rough areas of road, near Myrtle Cottage, near the Old School and next to Hoddinots Cottage, this will be done when the team responsible is next in the area. The Parish Council will continue to push for improvements to the roads and infrastructure in the village, please do let us know if you are concerned about anything and we will do our best to support.

The Parish Council is aware that the Village Hall and surrounds require a significant amount of work to keep it viable. A report on the Village Hall's situation follows.

The Parish Council not only supports the Village Hall Trust but has a duty as custodian of the trust to protect it for the benefit of the village. The Council is considering making a modest grant to the Village Hall to cover the deficit between income and running costs and hopes that the public support this.

Many grants are available for improving the hall, all depend on us starting with our own fundraising. There is a Go Fund Me campaign in progress now which has raised over £2600 to date but I now need to ask for help to promote the fundraising campaign further through your own social media accounts, your employers, and your friends. I hope all of you will join me in becoming promoters. The funds we generate demonstrate our commitment to the improvement project and allow us access to further grant funding from government and other organisations. Please make a donation if you can by scanning the codes on the tables or dropping a cheque into Beech Cottage, Low Road or Rose Cottage, Low Road. We can also accept donations by card.

We also hope that some of you may volunteer your time and practical skills to assist with maintain the hall and grounds and preparing for events, helping on the day etc. The first event is the Fete on 18<sup>th</sup> May at 12 Noon.

Finally please let us know what you would like to see the Parish Council doing for you and remember we aim to be accessible, transparent and are your voice.

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