

St Martins Parish Council

Minutes of a Council Meeting of the St Martins Parish Council held on Thursday 12th September 2024 at 7.00 pm in St Martins Village Hall.

PRESENT: Cllr's Neil Arthan, Nigel Court, Mark Hayball, Duncan Laing, Nina Mistry, Sophie Hughes-Saunier, Sue Schofield, George Smith and Helen Williams.

Also in attendance, three members of the Public.

The meeting commenced by Council Chairman noting the sad absence of Council Clerk Edward Davies. All Cllrs wished him a speedy recovery. Elected Chairman advised that in this unusual situation, he would assume the role of Clerk (for these minutes recorded as Cllr George Smith) and the Vice Chair would assume the role of meeting Chair. He further asked for the cooperation of attendees as he would have to balance the role and duties alongside that of providing comments to areas within the agenda so the meeting may well take longer to conclude than normal.

167/09/24.C Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence have been received from: Cllrs Alan Langley, and Natalie Rowley, Shropshire Cllr Steve Davenport and Parish Clerk Edward Davies.

Proposed, seconded and carried that these apologies are accepted.

Absent but without an apology: Cllrs Andrew Cast and Peter Holmes.

It was noted that Cllr Vivienne Fisher had submitted her written resignation that afternoon. That action was immediately effective. The Parish Council noted the fact and thanked Cllr Vivienne Fisher for her excellent service to the Parish Council and community of St Martins over several years.

168/09/24.C Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

- a) 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. **None received.**
- b) To consider any applications for dispensation. **None received.**
- c) Declaration of any other interests in the agenda items. Cllr Sophie Hughes-Saunier declared an interest on agenda item 188/09/24.C.

169/09/24.C Minutes

Resolved: with four abstentions that the minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 11th of July 2024 having been previously circulated be approved and adopted as a true record.

170/09/24.C Urgent Items

There were no urgent items that related to financial, health and safety issues or issues that required immediate attention.

Action

Parish Clerk

Chairman

171/09/24.C Public Session

One member of the public explained his concerns over the Pedestrian Crossing by Stans. Cllr George Smith explained that he would be bringing this up under agenda item 174/09/24.C

172/09/24.C Parish Clerk's Progress Report

The parish clerk had forwarded the following update.

Ray Parry Playgrounds would be starting the work on the repairs to the playground at the end of the month. This included supply and install new ramp timbers to the large slide unit and remove damaged/vandalised mats, repair the area with topsoil, install new grass mats with mesh underlay and reseed the top soil under the cantilever swing unit.

Parish
Clerk

Arrangements are well in hand for this year's Remembrance Day including the approval of road closures and booking of Valley Security for these road closures. This year the service will be at the church. Cllrs unanimously agreed that Cllr Sue Schofield should again manage the event.

Parish
Clerk
Cllr Sue
Schofield

173/09/24.C Police Report

The latest police report has been circulated to all Cllr's prior to the meeting.

Cllr George Smith advised that, following enquiries to all Cllrs and their responses, he reported to the request from West Mercia as to the policing priorities within the village were:

- (1) Speeding Traffic: (2) Parking on Footpaths blocking pedestrian access:
- (3) Lack of visible Police presence across the village.

As an additional comment, on Friday last he met with Officer Michael Hogg who was undertaking a village walk in full uniform. He thanked him for his appearance and listening to our response.

There was then a discussion and a request to minute that there were clear signs of drug-related activity in the area around Greenfields. Somebody had found discarded Syringes and there was unambiguous and clear dealing of drugs around the Cottage Lane, Coopers Lane, Ellesmere Road, Green Lane areas in the early evening periods over weekend. It was described as "Obvious as a Pizza delivery service". It was requested that our local policing community be provided with these details. Cllr George Smith to directly action.

Cllr
George
Smith

174/09/24.C Highway Issues

With Shropshire Cllr Steve Davenport, Cllr George Smith had attended a meeting with Shropshire Officers at the Pedestrian Crossing by Stans. The area was examined. After the meeting he had received an estimate from Shropshire to change to crossing to a 'Puffin' type. He was shocked and astounded to say that the ESTIMATE was £15,000 for the scheme plans and £40,000 for the physical works, plus the expected inevitable extras.

Discussion ensued and with great concern that such a great financial figure had been quoted, especially as Cllr George Smith had advised that the cost of an individual post plus unit was £3500. Two would total £7,000. How then would the actual works then total another £38,000? Cllrs requested that he respond to Shropshire Council with questions as to why this scheme was so expensive and were there any better value options.

Cllr
George
Smith

175/09/24.C St Martins Amenities Fund

There was no written report from the Parish Clerk, but Cllr George Smith understood that the scheme was progressing as per the contract. Two small additional areas had been included to the pilot. It was further noted that some Cllrs were receiving continual compliments as to the general appearance of the village since we took control of the project.

176/09/24.C Street Lighting

An extensive report was submitted to our Parish Clerk by a Cllr as to lights which needed attention: Overton Road, Columns 55 and 56 were identified. The Parish Clerk had previously received an independent report via email identifying these issues. One was not our responsibility (trimming of overhanging tree foliage) and it was requested that we contact the landowner to advise him of his responsibilities. The Parish Clerk to liaise with the Parish Council Vice Chair as to the landowner details for the Parish Council to formally communicate.

Parish
Clerk

The annual 2024 street lighting stock survey had been carried out by Highline Electrical. They have added in the new columns into the inventory. The Parish Clerk had noted in writing that the survey had been completed by Highline. No further comment was needed.

177/09/24.C Financial Matters

Cllrs retrospectively approved accounts paid in August.

Accounts for Payment

BACS	Nicola Chilvers	Watering Contract	£900.00
BACS	Staff	Salary & Expenses	£1009.07
BACS	HMRC	PAYE & NI	£301.30
BACS	Nigel Thomas	Play Area Inspections	£65.00
BACS	Huw Manford	Litter Picking, etc.	£639.10
BACS	A G Royce	Grass Cutting Pilot	£1190.00
BACS	Parish UK	Business Directory	£19.00
BACS	Highline Electrical	Yearly Street Lighting Survey	£780.90
DR	HSBC	Bank Charges	£8.00
DD	Veolia	Bin Emptying	£35.93
BACS	Nicola Chilvers	Watering Contract	£300.00

Resolved that the above payments be agreed in accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

Parish
Clerk

Income

CCLA	July Reinvestment	£1,863.99
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Cllrs considered a grant application from St Martins Parish Church. On a show of hands, it was unanimously agreed to support the application for £1400. There were no objections or abstentions.

Parish
Clerk

Cllrs received the external auditors report for the year ending on the 31st of March 2024. All noted.

Cllr considered the appointment of Audit Solutions as our internal auditor for the accounts ending on the 31st of March 2025. All noted and unanimously approved.

Parish
Clerk

178/09/24.C

Planning

To note the following applications and decisions agreed by Cllr's during August.

Reference: 24/02632/FUL (validated: 10/07/2024)

Address: 12 Baytree Close, St Martins, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 3QQ

Proposal: Extension to side and rear of dwelling

Parish Council Decision: Support.

Reference: 24/02702/FUL (validated: 15/07/2024)

Address: 4 Beech Tree Lane, St Martins Moor, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 7DB

Proposal: Erection of a summerhouse and a greenhouse (part retrospective)

Parish Council Decision: Support.

To consider the following application(s)

Reference: 24/03083/OUT (validated: 21/08/2024)

Address: Former Site Of 7 , Moors Lane, St Martins Moor, Shropshire, SY10 7BQ

Proposal: Outline application for 1No dwelling (to include access appearance layout and scale)

Parish Council Decision: Noted and unanimously approved on a show of hands without objections or abstentions.

Schedule of additional planning applications

There were none.

Cllrs noted the following planning decisions and recommendations of the planning authority listed in the schedule below.

Reference: 24/02033/FUL (validated: 24/05/2024)

Address: 9 Glynmorlas, St Martins, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 3EE

Proposal: Proposed removal of existing store and replacement with timber and reclaimed brick and slate side extension to create lounge and dining room

Decision: Grant Permission

Reference: 24/02151/FUL (validated: 06/06/2024)

Address: Conversion of Agricultural Building At Wigginton Grange,
Wigginton, St Martins, Shropshire

Proposal: Conversion of redundant agricultural outbuilding into a dwelling.

Decision: Refuse

179/09/24.C Shropshire Council.

Shropshire Cllr Steve Davenport had sent his apologies.
No report was submitted or available.

180/09/24.C Funding various projects through CIL

Cllrs received a progress report from Cllr George Smith on the current position of funding various projects in the parish through CIL. (Report attached Appendix B). This report was accepted.

181/09/24.C Rights of Way

Cllrs received a verbal update report from Cllr Sophie Hughes-Saunier on work on the footpaths in the parish including a programme of replacement 'Kissing Gates' including costings.

She advised that there were several "kissing gates" that were needed, and that Shropshire Council seem to have a stock that they were willing to provide without cost to our Parish Council. Cllr George Smith commented on the issue associated with the Public Footpath alongside Ridgway Rentals. He had met their MD and noted the problems that the business had with Health & Safety of walkers across their property and the somewhat unusual and inconclusive maps which showed that the route of the existing footpath uniquely ended at what was assumed to be an ancient stone wall. He also advised that the business wished to work alongside the Parish Council and parishioners to reach a satisfactory conclusion by the business constructing a revised path across their land which would create a safe environment for walkers. It was hoped that this offer could be noted in writing and the path completed without delay.

Cllr
Sophie
Hughes-
Saunier &
Parish
Clerk

182/09/24.C Member of Parliament

Cllrs noted recent correspondence from our MP Helen Morgan including a recent incident of Zero Mobile Phone Coverage in various parts of the parish.

However, all Cllrs agreed that the matter was now serious. It was affecting all parishioners in the East of the Village (Ellesmere end). It was agreed that we formally contact mobile signal providers directly and without reference to our MP. Surely some provider could assist us, especially with all service providers now insistent with what is called "two factor authorisation" for security reasons and which are dependent upon a code being sent to a mobile phone for authorisation. No signal means no security access which means no process to allow a transaction to progress.

Parish
Clerk

183/09/24.C Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC)

All correspondence received from the County Secretary had previously been circulated to all Cllr's and noted.

Cllrs George Smith and Helen Williams will be attending a meeting at Oswestry Town Council on the 20th of September with our MP Helen Morgan to discuss the operation of Shropshire Council. Nothing else to report other than what had been included within the agenda.

184/09/24.C Correspondence

Whilst we had received a letter from the Allotments Association declining the offered Lease, the matter was to be discussed under 187/09.24.C so no reference was made under this agenda item.

185/09/24.C Members Reports

It was reported that Churchfields Pond (owned by Shropshire Council) is extremely overgrown and one of the large Oaks trees overhanging the pavement was showing signs of decay. Cllr George Smith to contact Shropshire Council Tree Officer as a matter of urgency.

Chairman

Moors Bank Methodist Chapel will close on 1st January. The Parish Council Notice Board needs to be removed before that date.

Parish Clerk

Continued concern was reported over the Dexter Cattle on Ifton Meadows. The original agreement was that a maximum of 8 beasts would be allowed to roam. That has now increased to 14. That is causing a Health & Safety issue, especially for any disabled access. The Parish Clerk to contact the 'area ranger' from Ellesmere.

Parish Clerk

186/09/24.C Next Meeting

Next meeting Full Council on Thursday 10th October 2024 @ 19.00 in St Martins Village Hall.

187/09/24.C Closed Session

Resolved: that: In accordance with s1(2) Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960, members of the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the following items to be considered involve the likely disclosure of confidential information.

188/09/24.C Arthan's Pond/Allotments

Cllr George Smith gave a progress report on the future management of Arthan's Pond/Allotments. He presented a lengthy verbal report on the complete matter and what had occurred over the past year and that the ongoing management was now under the full control of the Parish Council. He requested that Cllr Sophie Hughes-Saunier provide him with the database of allotment users so that individual agreements could be created for each user.

Sophie Hughes-Saunier

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance, and declared the meeting closed at 20.58 pm.

Signed
Chairman

Date