

***Priors Marston Parish Council Annual Meeting
Tuesday 14th May 2024 at 7.30pm
At The Priors Hall***

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Cllr Laura Lucas, Cllr. Pete Dunkley, Cllr. John Franklin, Cllr Robyn May, Cllr Chris Kettle, Cllr Nigel Rock

In Attendance: Priors Hall committee members: Lee Robinson and Jane Richards
Emma Hooker (Clerk)
2 members of public from 9pm.

Meeting was opened at 7.35pm

1. Election of Chairperson

Cllr Robyn May proposed Cllr Laura Lucas to remain as Chair and this was seconded by Cllr John Franklin. Therefore, Cllr Laura Lucas is duly elected as Chair of Priors Marston Parish Council for the forthcoming 12 months.

2. Apologies

None

3. Declarations of Interest: None

4. Vacancy of Parish Councilor

Following Cllr Evans resignation, the PC have a vacancy for a Cllr. This was advertised on the notice board and website for the statutory period of time and Stratford DC have confirmed that they did not receive any applicants. This means the PC can co-opt a Cllr to fulfil the vacancy in due course.

5. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting held on 12th March

Minutes were approved by all present at the meeting as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

- Playground moss – Clerk confirmed a suitable chemical has been procured and this has been used on the play area and resolved the moss issue.
- Drains – Keys Lane. Highways are still aware of the ongoing issue on Keys Lane and the drains will be jetted, in the meantime a landowner whose ditches are full with excess water has been asked to clear the ditches to help resolved this issue.
- Speed survey – This has been completed and we have 3 weeks of data (at this time the data has not been received by the PC) The data will be summarised and shared with the community speeding group.

6. Priors Hall Committee

Two committee members were in attendance and requested time to speak to the PC on the following matters:

- Options to secure the Priors Hall as an asset belonging to the village, potentially owned by the Parish council but operated by a management

committee. Might there be a way of linking the Priors Hall and the Priors Sports club?

- Assistance with the funding of current and future development projects such as: solar panels, upgrading the heating. Could this be done in a similar way to the original loan from the Public Works Loan Board which was repaid from the council tax precept for both Priors Marston and Priors Hardwick residents?

Discussion took place on the matters raised.

The PC support the committee in securing the future of the hall but at this time are not sure the PC taking on ownership would be the best way. The PC suggested that the committee go forward with proposals and figures to the village and gain support as any other loans the PC take on to support the hall would need to be supported by the village. The precept amount the PC receive now the loan is nearly paid off would be diverted towards the upkeep and eventual replacement of the playground.

Cllr Rock suggested the Priors Hall committee reach out to District Cllr Natalie Gist around helping signposting for legal advice regarding these matters.

7. **Annual Chair's Report**

Priors Marston Parish Council consists of the following councilors: - Laura Lucas (Chair), John Franklin, Pete Dunkley and Robyn May.

There is a vacancy for one PC currently

Emma Hooker is the Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.

In the last year the Parish Council has: -

- ✓ Maintained and repaired the playground, including monthly safety check. Repaired several areas of the flooring and climbing areas. New equipment purchased including new swings.
- ✓ Reviewed and commented on 41 (39 last year) planning applications. Applications comprised of:-
 - * Tree works – 11 applications
 - * New dwellings – 5 associated applications
 - * Conversions of existing buildings to dwellings/Holiday lets - 5
 - * Extensions – 6 applications
 - * Others – 14(Changes of use, listed building works etc.)
- ✓ Upheld the high standard of maintenance and cleanliness of the village
- ✓ Blue path – Weeding and cutting back
- ✓ Notice Board – Replaced with new board, maintained and kept up to date
- ✓ Updated and cleaned various village road signs.
- ✓ Damaged verges repaired by Highways and keep in continual contact with Highways on ways of improving verges and green areas within village
- ✓ Continual discussions with Highways aiming to jet the village drains to improve the issues along Keys Lane
- ✓ Continue to update the website to keep it up to date and relevant and holds all legal documents, agendas and minutes to comply with the Transparency Code.

- ✓ Email distribution list as an effective communication tool
- ✓ Managed the asset register and Maintenance plan
- ✓ Maintained Village Defibrillator
- ✓ Communicates with other community groups and organize Annual Village Meetings
- ✓ Created a new Litter picking volunteer group and purchased equipment for this use. Two successful events ran this year
- ✓ Supported the Volunteer speed action group and arranged speed surveys which are ongoing (April)
- ✓ Conducted Housing Needs Survey
- ✓ Commented on SDC Consultations inc. Planning policies

In the coming 12 months we aim to

- ✓ RoSPA inspection planned for September
- ✓ Look into funding for future playground funding
- ✓ continue to monitor the safety of the play equipment, and start to plan for its eventual replacement.
- ✓ Review the condition of village footpaths and rights of way
- ✓ Monitor Speeding issues within the village working with the Police and Community Speed Watch
- ✓ With other village organisations, ensure that the actions set out in the new Parish Plan are suitably actioned
- ✓ Work through the Action list for the Parish Council in the Parish Plan
- ✓ Ensure that the maintenance plan for all village assets is adhered to
- ✓ Continually update the village website and Facebook page
- ✓ Provide regular updates on the village notice board and in The Parish News as well as the email list

8 Standing Orders and Policies

The Parish Council has reviewed:

- Standing orders
- Policies
- Code of conduct (LGA)
- Financial Regulations (new)

All agreed they are fit for purpose.

9. Finance to include End of Year Accounts 31st March 2024

The Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer presented the Internal audited accounts for the Parish Council and are attached to the file set of minutes and forms part of them.

The Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 was approved

The Accounting Statement 2023/24 was approved

The AGAR forms will be forwarded to the External Auditors (Moore PLC) to be audited before the 1st July deadline.

Priors Marston Parish Council Accounts Year to 31st March 2024

Receipts	2023	2024
Precept	18560.00	18560.00
Priors Hardwick Loan Contribution	£ 920.78	£ 920.78
Rent for The Pound	£ 250.00	£ 250.00
CIL money	£ 4,876.15	£ 9,182.79
Sundry Income *VAT	£ 319.38	£ 1,589.33
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 24,926.31	£ 30,502.90

Expenses	2023	2024
Street Lighting, including maintenance & electricity	£ 2,362.24	£ 2,741.55
Village Maintenance including Grass Cutting & Amenity Cleaning	£ 10,525.54	£ 3,312.99
PWLB (Village Hall Building Costs)	£ 3,752.20	£ 3,752.13
Clerks Wages inc NI, HMRC	£ 6,307.85	£ 6,659.24
Office Expenses, Website, village hall, post office, Audit fees	£ 2,266.98	£ 1,947.72
Cost of Elections	£ -	£ 100.00
Insurance	£ 810.70	£ 913.75
Playground	£ -	£ 5,197.99
Defib	£ -	£ -
Training	£ 108.00	£ -
TOTAL EXPENSES	£ 26,133.51	£ 24,625.37

Surplus for year	-£ 1,207.20	£ 5,877.53
Closing Balance	£20,856.76	£26,734.29
Less Allocated Reserves*	£17,376.00	£16,615.00
Total Available Funds	£ 3,480.76	£10,119.29
*Allocated Reserves		
Playground	10,000	10,000
Streetlights - and village assets	2,500	2,50

CIL reserve	
Total Allocated Reserves	

4,876	4,115
17,376	16,615

10. Housing Need Survey

The parish had a high return rate at 4.84%; more than double the need normally seen across rural parishes. The survey was only seeking a response from households that considered themselves to be in housing need. The Parish Council are happy with the report as a reflection of the survey, which reiterated the need for smaller 2/3 bed properties.

11. Annual Village Meeting – Tuesday 21st May 2024

After a year off in 2023 the successful annual village meeting is back and will be held on the 14th May at 7pm in the Priors Hall.

The community groups attending are:

The Sports and Tennis Club

WI

Church

The Hollybush Inn

The Priors School

The Priors Hall

Parish Council Representatives

County and District Councilors

The evening has been advertised and Clerk will send another reminder this week through the usual outlets.

12. District Cllr Nigel Rock Report

The Annual Meeting of Stratford District Council takes place on Wednesday 15 May. This Annual Meeting is also an opportunity to celebrate the fiftieth annual council meeting of Stratford on Avon District Council. 330 Councillors have served the Council in the past fifty years and past Councillors are invited to join the Council at their Annual Meeting to celebrate this milestone.

Community Safety – CCTV

Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Cabinet has approved the direct award of UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) grant funding of £200,000 to carry out vital work to upgrade CCTV infrastructure, software and equipment.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a three-year funding deal. Funding is to be spent across the three themes of: communities and place, business support and people and skills. One of the specific objectives within the Shared Prosperity Fund Prospectus is Built & Landscaped Environment to 'design out crime' (E5) intervention. Stratford-on-Avon District Council will utilise the Shared Prosperity funding for four key initiatives:

- CCTV data storage upgrade
- Five new CCTV Camera Replacements
- Stratford-upon-Avon Recreation Ground Wireless System Upgrade
- Eight new re-deployable camera upgrades

Stratford-on-Avon District Council operates a 24-hour CCTV control room which covers nine towns and parishes across the District. Working in partnership with Warwickshire Police and other key agencies, the team deal with over 14,000 incidents per year. Not all incidents relate to criminal activity, CCTV has played a key role in supporting vulnerable people with welfare related incidents, environmental management by monitoring flooding, road traffic accidents and flagging incidents to partner agencies to allow them to deal with issues more effectively.

Public consultation shows that residents feel that crime is a principal area they wish to see more investment from authorities. The Stratford Citizens Panel 2020 revealed that residents wished to see the greatest increases in spending relating to CCTV and crime reduction in the District.

The function of the CCTV control room contributes significantly to the prevention and detection of crime which is a statutory duty of Stratford District Council under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. This upgrade also aligns with the District Council's new Council Plan 2023-27 objectives which aims to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

GP services in Upper Lighthorne

The work to provide a GP practice at the new village at upper Lighthorne near Gaydon has proceeded to a new phase. NHS Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) has awarded St Wulfstan Surgery the contract to deliver GP services to Upper Lighthorne following a successful tender process. Upper Lighthorne was identified as an area needing additional primary care provision due to the new housing development, which will see 3,000 new homes built over a 10-year period – potentially increasing the local population by more than 7,000.

St Wulfstan is rated Outstanding by the CQC and was rated the tenth best practice in England, and first for practices with over 10,000 patients, in the 2023 GP Patient Survey and have experience of opening a branch surgery. The new branch practice is set to open in summer 2027 as part of the new village centre. The new premises are part of a joint development with Stratford District Council.

The need for a such a facility at Upper Lighthorne has been highlighted by the work carried out by members of the 24 Parishes in the area and demonstrates the need for community infrastructure to go hand-in-hand with housing development.

No Mow May

Stratford-on-Avon District Council will be taking part in No Mow May this year, following the new grounds maintenance contract and the Ecological Emergency Notice of Motion passed at Full Council on 22 April.

No Mow May is one of the actions which will preserve and enhance biodiversity within Stratford-on-Avon District. This aligns with our climate emergency declared in 2019 and with one of the District Council's Council Plan objectives to increase and protect green spaces which positively affect nature recovery.

No Mow May has multiple positive impacts for biodiversity. Reduced mowing allows different plant species to grow, which provides food sources for pollinators and other animals. Longer grass also provides wildlife with shelter. No Mow May also reduces pollution, increases carbon sequestration, and reduces emissions by reducing fuel use.

It is a contractual requirement for No Mow May to be carried out on highway verges, on non-rural roads with a speed limit of 40mph or less. Some road junctions will continue to be cut to maintain sight lines and not restrict the visibility of road users.

No Mow May forms part of a wider agenda to enhance biodiversity which is being delivered by Stratford-on-Avon District Council. Other measures that have been delivered include tree planting, the creation of wildflower meadows on Council owned land and the declaration and ecological enhancement of a new Local Nature Reserve.

Open Space Supplementary Planning Document

At Full Council on Monday 22 April, formally adopted its revised [Open Space Supplementary Planning Document](#) following a public consultation, where all Public Open Space as part of new developments will now be adopted by either the local Town/Parish Council or by the District Council. For some time both here and nationally there are concerns raised by residents about:

- Charges levied by the private management companies appointed by the developers to maintain the public open space which are not always made transparent at the time of purchase, can change every year and are unlimited.
- The quality of the maintenance work carried out.

Also, where a Parish or Town Council decides not to take ownership of public open space, the District Council would generally take ownership of the land, with responsibility for ongoing maintenance. The option of passing maintenance responsibilities onto private management companies would no longer be included in Section 106 agreements.

This updated Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) clarifies [public open space](#) created as part of new development should be offered for adoption to (in order):

- a) Parish Council or Town Council
b) Stratford-on-Avon District Council

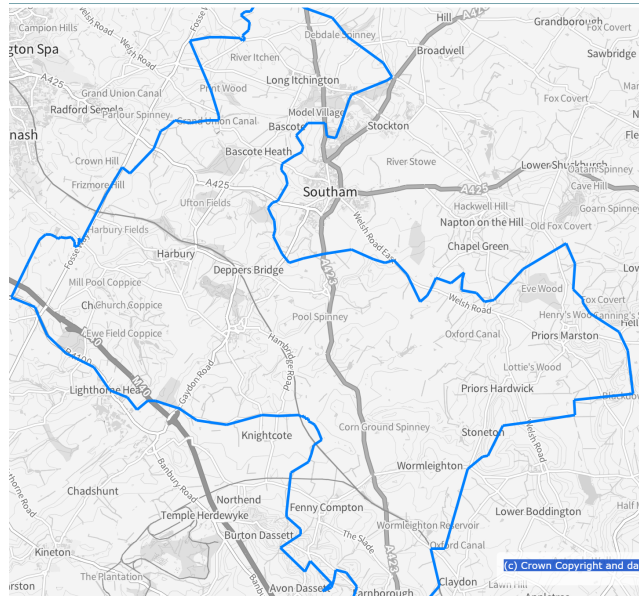
The changes provide the District Council with the basis to fulfil its decision to secure high quality open space as part of new development, and where appropriate, acquire and maintain public open spaces.

Councillor Natalie Gist

Councillor Nigel Rock

13. Report County Cllr. Chris Kettle

The Feldon Division covers an area stretching from Long Itchington, north of Southam, through Ufton, Harbury, Chesterton, Bishop's Itchington, Ladbroke, Fenny Compton, Farnborough, Wormleighton, Priors Hardwick and Priors Marston and covers some 53 square miles (138 sq kms) and has over 9,000 adult residents.



There have, unsurprisingly been a number of themes during the year that have been of concern to residents across the Division with probably the biggest issue being HS2 and the impact of its construction on residents, businesses and the road network across the Division.

In particular the closing of roads, with poor diversion route opportunities, has been particularly frustrating, along with some lorries not sticking to agreed access routes. Further the failure to control injurious weeds, particularly ragwort, has caused considerable concern to those with livestock businesses or equine yards close to land occupied by HS2.

Outside of HS2, the following have been of concern to residents:

- The volume and speed of traffic in villages and on our rural highways;
- The impact of new housing and the construction, and then residential, traffic from those sites on existing communities and transport infrastructure;
- It has been an unprecedented wet winter which has inundated roads and caused flooding in places where flooding had never been seen before. The flood risk management team at WCC has been looking at a number of sites along with the jetting teams who have been cleaning gullies across both Feldon and the wider Warwickshire road network;
- In addition the wet weather, along with some early frosts, also led to a significant number of potholes across the entire WCC road network. There has also been concern about the state of roads immediately past the County boundaries but regrettably WCC has no jurisdiction over roads in other Counties;

- The proposed reorganisation of the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service and the impact of that on rural communities away from the major urban centres;
- The location and use of a number of former quarries across the District and the licensing of activities on those sites;
- The adequacy of affordable housing provision;
- Changes to school admissions numbers; and
- The care of those more vulnerable members of our community

Regrettably, whilst WCC would like to be able to have the funding to address every resident's concerns, the budget pressures on the County Council means that it does have to prioritise in some areas.

The overall expenditure budget for 24-25 is £628 million which, less central Government grants of £241 million, leaves £387 million to be funded by tax payers through Council tax. Certain of the services provided are demand led, one of which, Social Care and Support is the biggest item of expenditure within the Council's budget costing £225 million, being 58% of the overall net budget.

So, for example, not every pothole can be filled on every road and the Council does not have the resources to introduce road safety measures in every village that wants them.

On the upside, the long awaited Harbury Lane crossroads improvements, a long term accident blackspot, will be completed by the end of this month. Also by Christmas, the sails on the Chesterton Windmill will have been reinstated and repairs made to the fabric of this listed monument.

On a personal note, I was elected Chairman of the County Council for the year 23-24 which has involved commitments across the entire County and in an executive role, I chair the Warwickshire Local Government Pension Scheme investment committee. The scheme looks after the pensions of some 57,000 LGPS members with some £2.9 billion of assets.

10. Planning Matters

New and Pending Decisions

- 24/00129/FUL – Construction of self build dwelling , new access and associated works – Cosy Nook, Keys Lane – OBJECTION – Amendment 18/04
- Clerk to confirm deadline for further comment.
- 24/00356/FUL – demolition of barn for four new dwellings – The Meadows, Southam Rd (22/3) No Objection
- 22/03132/FUL – Appeal – Land adj. to Keys House single self build and garage (08/04) Objection
- 24/01140/FUL – First floor Ext. and 2 storey porch – Honesberie Too, Southam Rd (03/06) No Objection

Decisions

- 23/02105/FUL – Change of use holiday chalets to independent school – North Farm Fisheries – OBJECTION – GRANTED on committee 20/03
- 24/00066/FUL – Single storey ext. Bicknell, School Lane – No OBJECTION – GRANTED 15/03

- 23/03204/FUL – Conversion and extension of garage for holiday let – Chestnuts House, Byfield Rd. Pending 15/01 – NO OBJECTION – GRANTED 25/03
- 24/00220/TREE - Remove 9 conifers – Stone Cottage, Hardwick Rd – NO OBJECTION – GRANTED 12/03
- 24/00167/FUL – Construction of barn for farm machinery, Cotswold Lodge, Southam Rd – NO OBJECTION – GRANTED 16/04
- 24/00275/TREE – Reduce silver birch, Laurel, cherry– Beech Cottage, Hellidon Rd- NO OBJECTION – GRANTED 19/03
- 24/00160/VARY – Reserved matters (22/02120) new double garage – Craig Cottage, School Lane (22/3) GRANTED 15/04
- 24/00461/FUL – Proposed Porch – Chestnuts House, Byfield Rd (25/3) – GRANTED 19/04
- 24/00473/TREE – Several tree works – Daneby House, Keys Lane (25/3) GRANTED 02/05

The meeting concluded at 9.15pm

The next meeting of the Parish Council is as follows:

**Tuesday 9th July 2024
At The Priors Village Hall
7.30pm All Welcome**