

SNELSON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Shareen Worthington Email: council@snelsonpc.org.uk

Chairman: Cliff Walsingham Vice-Chairman: David Clarke

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held remotely via Zoom at 7.30pm on Tuesday 4th May 2021

Present: Cliff Walsingham (Chair), Janet Winrow, Hazel Ardern, David Clarke, Frazer Lloyd-Jones and the Parish Clerk

Members of Public: None

1. Chairman's Annual Report

The report was circulated and is attached at the end of the Minutes

2. Questions and comments from the public

There were no questions or comments

Meeting concluded at 7.35pm

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Members of Public: Two

21.13 Receive apologies for absence

No apologies were received. Ward Councillor Marc Asquith was absent.

21.14 Consider co-option of a councillor to fill vacancy on the Parish Council

Following the expiration of the casual vacancy notice period, Mr Frazer Lloyd-Jones expressed an interest in joining the Parish Council. A motion to co-opt Mr Lloyd-Jones was proposed by Cllr Winrow and seconded by Cllr Clarke. Mr Lloyd-Jones was duly co-opted onto the Parish Council. The Clerk to submit the completed Declaration of Acceptance of Office form and Register of Interests form to Cheshire East Council.

Action: Clerk

21.15 Receive questions from members of the public

a. Phone cable damage on Mill Lane

A resident wished to express her grievance over telephone and internet disruption on numerous occasions following cable damage caused by tractors. It was pointed out this is within Over Peover, not Snelson, and the resident should contact BT.

21.16 Receive an update on policing matters

Cllr Clarke reported on a recent knife amnesty in Congleton and a theft prevention scheme for marking catalytic converters.

21.17 Declarations of Members' interest in any agenda items

No interests were declared

21.18 Approve the Minutes of the last meeting held on 2nd March 2021

The Minutes were agreed as a correct record. To be signed by the Chair at the next 'physical' meeting.

Members expressed their disappointment at the lack of engagement from the Ward Councillor. A neighbouring parish council is to write to the Conservative Chairman and enquired if Snelson would like to be represented in the shared letter. Members approved the request and the Chair will inform the parish council.

Action: Chair

21.19 Note the following updates from the previous meeting

a. Ownership of field opposite Highfield Farm

Cllr Winrow carried out a further Land Registry search and confirmed the field belongs to the owners of Highfield Farm.

b. Date of the Holly Tree House Strategic Board meeting

The date of the Holly Tree House meeting has been postponed to 19th May. The Chair has written to the CE Planning Officer asking if the meeting is to be held remotely or in Macclesfield.

21.20 Finance

a. Approve the Receipts and Payments Report

The Receipts and Payments report had been reviewed and was duly approved.

b. Approve the Audited Accounts & Annual Governance Statement

The audited Accounts and Annual Governance Statement were reviewed and duly approved. Once signed by the Chair, the Clerk to send to the external auditor and publish on the website, along with the Notice of Public Rights.

Action: Clerk

21.21 Highways

a. Receive an update on the drainage/flooding issues on Common Lane and Common Farm Lane, and potholes on Mill Lane and Common Lane

Mr John Firth submitted the following update:

I am pleased to report that, during March/April, significant progress has been achieved and is ongoing. The current position regarding our major items is as follows:-

1. Flooding problem between Heath Cottage and Highfield Farm-
Despite the extensive purging work carried out by Highways on 10th February this year, the road was flooded again after rainfalls in February and March, taking several days to drain on each occasion. Accordingly, it was arranged that Highways Dept

would carry out further work and this was done over several hours on 16th April. From this, it was found that, despite clearing the road drains, there was a blockage in the pipe running underground from the "collecting" manhole, located opposite the entrance to Ivy Farm, and under Massey's field to discharge into the Common and hence drain into the ponds. High pressure tests confirmed that water is seeping to the surface in the middle of the field which indicates a broken pipe. We shall be locating this in the next few days and deciding, with Highways, the responsibility for repair and implementing on an urgent basis to eliminate the flooding.

2. Flooding near the two ponds on to Common Lane and start of Common Farm Lane – The main problem here is that the drains are not dealing with the volume of water flowing in from surrounding fields, after heavy rainfalls, because of blockages. As I reported at the March meeting, work had been carried out by the farmer, Simon Massey, assisted by local residents, particularly Jack Wood, and the flow improved to the extent that the roads were clear. It was agreed, in conjunction with Highways that a drying out period of several weeks was then required to allow the water level to fall so that access could be gained to determine whether there is a significant blockage, in the culvert under Common Lane, which would require Highways Dept involvement in addition to our ensuring that the land drains across the fields to Peover Eye are operating properly and maintained as such.

Highways had agreed to do the work on and under the road, if and when informed by us. As the rainfall is forecast to increase, rather than diminish, for some years to come, this overall project, including maintenance, has a high priority for our area.

Due to a prolonged period of dry weather, and ditch digging by Jack and Simon, the immediate vicinity dried out comparatively quickly and it was established that the culvert under Common Lane was severely blocked and Highways assistance was required. Accordingly, this was provided while they were on site dealing with item 1. and high pressure jetting, from both ends, cleared the culvert.

Further work is needed to turn this into a "permanent" solution and Jack and Simon will submit a proposal in conjunction with Cllr Dave Clarke. Highways have agreed to be involved if, and when, necessary.

3. Potholes-
Now that the weather is dryer, I expect the long awaited pothole repairs to begin and note that a number of holes on Mill Lane and Common Lane have been edged with white paint, which indicates that repair is imminent. Not all the holes on the list we submitted have been marked but I will expedite the others shortly.

Members praised the sterling effort and achievements by Mr Firth on the Highways issues.

Cllr Clarke confirmed he is awaiting pricing on the plastic piping from Jack Wood before investigations can continue.

b. Seek agreement from Cheshire East to install road safety signs on the local lanes, Pepper St, Mill Lane and Snelson Lane.

Due to the lockdowns, good weather and two new housing estates in Chelford, there has been a significant increase in the number of walkers and cyclists on Snelson lanes. It was decided that safety signs should be installed and the Chair will write to Cheshire East Highways on this matter.

Action: Chair

21.22 Planning

a. Receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan

The Chair confirmed work on the Plan is taking longer than expected but a first draft should be available before the July meeting. It was noted that a new revised Countryside Code has been issued.

Action: Chair

b. Note any planning decisions received

The following planning decisions were reported:

Application 19/4493M: Manor Cottage, Snelson Lane – Approved with conditions
Application 19/0631M: Manor Cottage, Snelson Lane – Withdrawn

21.23 The Common

a. Consider the report for Cheshire Wildlife and what could be done in co-operation with the Astle Estate. Agree works to try and resolve the flooding issues on Common Lane.

The Chair and Cllr Lloyd-Jones met with a representative from Cheshire Wildlife Trust to seek advice on works required at The Common. The recommendations were circulated prior to the meeting.

It was agreed that an old road alongside the pond should be reinstated as a footpath. The Chair offered to obtain a quote for the removal of some Ash trees which have Ash Dieback.

Action: Chair

Due to the large sums needed, the work should be carried out in stages to allow the use of funds from this year's precept and the next. It was also felt that some voluntary labour would be necessary.

An investigation into septic tanks overflowing into a stream behind Snelson Farm Cottage was considered too costly and time-consuming therefore it will not be pursued at present. Cllr Ardern to prompt her neighbour again over the deeds.

Action: Cllr Ardern

21.24 Housekeeping and Maintenance

a. Consider renovation/replacement of the PC noticeboard

Due to the current condition of the noticeboard, it was felt it should be repaired or possibly replaced. Cllr Clarke agreed to make enquiries with a firm based in Northwich.

Action: Cllr Clarke

b. Consider PC appointment for Peover Educational Foundation trustee

Following the departure of Mr Les Stanier from the parish council, a Snelson PC member is needed to sit on the Peover Educational Foundation. Cllr Lloyd-Jones agreed to represent the parish council. The Clerk to inform the Foundation trustees.

Action: Clerk

c. Discuss the consultation on rural broadband connectivity

Due to the broadband problems experienced in the village, the Chair is to circulate a letter to all residents inviting comments on their issues. These will be collated and used in a response to the broadband questionnaire from ChALC.

Action: Chair

21.25 Note items for inclusion on the next agenda

Appoint Councillor Roles and Responsibilities
Review Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
Conduct Risk Assessment

Meeting concluded at 8.35 p.m.

The date of the next PC meeting is Tuesday 6th July 2021

SNELSON PARISH COUNCIL

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ANNUAL REPORT 2021

This has been a year completely overshadowed by the COVID pandemic and so we have all had to adjust to life with little social contact. As a result, we have learnt to Zoom (and Skype) and this has been how the Parish Council meetings have been conducted for the last twelve months.

The year has been marked by ongoing highways issues on which John Firth has continued to take Cheshire East to task and as a result some progress has been made in Common Lane in particular.

There have also been two major significant planning applications, at Holly Tree House and Radbroke Hall, although not in this parish both would have a major impact in Snelson. With both applications, all four local parishes, Chelford, Ollerton with Marthall, Over Peover and Snelson collaborated to object and produce detailed comments on both applications. I believe that this joint approach made a difference to how our objections were received and taken into account by Cheshire East.

Traffic and speed remain a concern although the amount of vehicles passing through on Pepper Street and Snelson Lane remains low due to the Covid restrictions. However, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of walkers and cyclists on all the lanes in the Parish, which is the result of the pandemic and to the development of the two new housing estates in Chelford.

With regard to the Neighbourhood Plan, I regret that progress has been slower than hoped as it has been a moving feast over the past year with proposed and enacted legislation regarding agriculture and farming, planning and ecology,

which has meant rewriting some parts. If possible, I do not want to produce a Neighbourhood Plan which is out of date as soon as it is adopted.

Flooding in parts of the Parish was a major concern earlier this year particularly in Common Lane, Common Farm Lane, the Common and the flooding of some gardens off Snelson Lane. As a result of continued efforts by John Firth in getting Cheshire East to attend on several occasions and thanks to Sam Massey and Jack Wood and their efforts in Common Lane the flooding was eventually abated . There will be work needed on the Common this summer to try and resolve the problem for the future.

With regard to the Common we had a visit and brief report from Cheshire Wildlife Trust on small improvements could be made in order to enhance the ecology and diversity of this protected area.

The Parish finances were low and careful control was needed to ensure that funds were available for any unexpected costs, such as our contribution for the highways consultants for the two major planning applications. An increase in the budget was sought from Cheshire East which means we should have funds available for any forthcoming proposals and projects.

It is with some regret that we have been unable to attract any interest in the Parish Council from residents on Snelson Lane.

With regard to the Police and crime reports, thanks to Dave Clarke for continuing to be our eyes and ears with reporting on these matters. We have tried again to get Cheshire East to install road safety signs on all the local lanes but without success to date. I would like us to continue to press for these speed restriction signs in the coming year.

Thanks also to John Firth for keeping C E well aware of the highway issues in this Parish, which he does voluntarily for the Parish.

Finally, my thanks to Shareen for keeping us on the straight and narrow with Parish Council process and procedures.

Details of some items

1. Highways

Continued efforts to resolve flooding and to get potholes repaired.

The need for road safety signs on all lanes that recognise their regular use by walkers, cyclists and riders.

2. Neighbourhood Plan

More effort needed by CW.

3. Planning – applications at:

Radbroke Hall – granted planning permission in February with conditions that require an improved Travel Plan, a limit on parking spaces within the site and the formation of a Liaison Group from Cheshire East, Barclays and the local parishes to monitor the Travel Plan and any other development.

Holly Tree House – this application still remains undetermined. There have been many objections to the retirement village proposal with some minor support. It is due to go to the Strategic Board at Cheshire East in May.

4. The Common

Flooding to be resolved and work to improve its diversity and ecology from the report by CWT.

5. Police and Crime

Ongoing liaison with the local PC and PCSO about traffic speeds and crime prevention.

6. Covid 19

The lockdown continues but is gradually being relaxed by the Government Road Map which will mean we can once more meet in person in July.

My thanks to you all for continuing to look after the best interests of this Parish. Sometimes it probably feels that we have little influence or effect but we must persist.

Cliff Walsingham.

25.04.21.