

**Minutes of No Man's Heath & District
Parish Council Meeting
held at Cholmondeley Coronation Hall, Bickley
at 7.00 pm on Thursday 9th January 2025**

PRESENT

Chairman:	Cllr David Lithgow Smith	
Cllr Kathryn Collings	Cllr James Crossland	Cllr Peter Guildford
Cllr Tim Harrop	Cllr Charles Higgle	Cllr Trevor Parker
Cllr David Pegram	Cllr Stephen Roberts	

Clerk - Mrs Ruth Shackleton.

Members of the Public and Parish – none

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr Fran Lithgow Smith, Cllr Michael Voisey

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no consideration of this item.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED:- that the minutes for the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 7th November 2024 (previously circulated) be accepted as a true and proper record.

Proposed by Cllr Higgle and seconded by Cllr Harrop.

5. CASUAL VACANCY

Co-option:-

David Pegram has written to express an interest in being co-opted onto the Council.

RESOLVED:- that Council co-opt David Pegram onto the Council. He signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

Proposed by Cllr Higgle and seconded by Cllr Roberts.

6. POLICE

This was discussed further under Highways.

On 27th January 2025 there is a quarterly cluster meeting of the parish councils and parish meetings in the Malpas ward with the local policing team.

7. ACCOUNTS AND PAYMENTS

7.1 Accounts:-

RESOLVED:- that the Council approve the accounts as previously circulated.

Proposed by Cllr Higgle and seconded by Cllr Guildford.

7.2 Payments:-

Chq No	Payee	Amount
999	Running Costs	£ 67.07
1000	Community Heartbeat Trust	£ 162.00
1001	HMRC (Oct - Dec 2024)	£ 314.60
1002	K Collings – reimburse Christmas Lights and goalposts	£ 116.78
1003	Cholmondeley Coronation Hall	£ 60.00
BACS	Core Highways (road closure for Christmas event)	£ 270.00

RESOLVED:- that the Council approve the above payments.

Proposed by Cllr Higgle and seconded by Cllr Guildford.

7.3 Bank Account:-

Reconciled balance of the Current Bank Account as at 31st December 2024:-
£20,382.08.

Balance of the Deposit Bank Account as at 31st December 2024:- £ 7,772.62.

7.4 Budget to Date:-

The Council received and noted the Budget to date as at 31st December 2024.

8. **PRECEPT / BUDGET**

Earmarking funds for 2025 – 2026:-

RESOLVED - that the Council earmark the following funds for the 2025 – 2026 financial year:-

Essential Council Costs: £8,585.62

Non-essential costs: other projects (e.g. Neighbourhood Plan; Grants and Donations; Christmas; Contingency etc) are to be agreed

The Village Appearance and Speeding Schemes are to be funded using the balance of NHB / CIL funds.

The Summer Play scheme is self-financing.

Setting the Precept for 2025 – 2026

The Local Tax Base for NMHD Parish Council for 2025 – 2026 for Band D equivalent properties is 547.3.

RESOLVED - that the Council set the 2025 – 2026 precept at £14,400.00

In 2025 – 2026 the Band D Precept charge will increase from £22.10 (based on Band D charge) to £26.31. This represents an annual increase of £4.21 (19%).

Proposed by Cllr Parker and seconded by Cllr Harrop.

9. **ANNUAL MEETING**

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place before the business meeting on Thursday 1st May 2025.

10. **PLANNING**

Planning Register:-

The Council noted the planning register and the observations previously circulated.

11. **HIGHWAYS**

11.1 Witney Lane:-

CWaC has advised the cost to implement the 20mph speed limit on Witney Lane is £2,590.75 plus VAT. The Council is to pay 50% of cost to install the 20 mph speed limit.

RESOLVED:- that the Council pay £1,290.37 plus VAT (50% of the cost) to install the 20 mph speed limit on Witney Lane.

Proposed by Cllr Guildford and seconded by Cllr Higgie.

11.2 Highways:-

Cllr Harrop circulated the following report:-

- The damaged manhole on Cross o th Hill has still not been repaired despite assurances from CWaC.

- Potholes in the area are multiplying faster than they are being inspected and the speed of actual repairs seems to have slowed too. It is also noticeable that many new potholes are in previous repairs as the original repairs were substandard. This is to be raised at the next meeting with CWaC.

- There have not been any recent Speedwatch sessions.

11.3 Flooding:-

Cllr Harrop raised the issue of the increase of flooding in the parish.

Cllr Roberts explained the issues faced by CWaC due to the increase in rainfall in recent years.

Cllr Pegram informed the meeting of a potential collapsed drain in NMH.

12. **PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

See item 18 for update.

13. **LITTLERS CROFT**

Cllr Collings sent out the following report prior to the meeting:-

- Flooding on the park:- the new drains don't appear to be fit for purpose. This has been reported to CWaC and they are yet to respond.

- New football goal nets have been purchased and delivered; these will be installed in the warmer weather.

14. REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

14.1 Malpas Joint Burial Committee (MJBC):-

Cllr D Lithgow Smith circulated the following report:-

The former members of the MJBC having all resigned. The first meeting of the newly formed Committee was held on Monday 16th December 2024, attended by representatives of Malpas Parish Council (3), No Mans Heath & District Parish Council (2) and Bradley and Cuddington Parish Meetings (1 each). 4 other non-voting members were co-opted onto the Committee to facilitate continuity.

David Parry (Malpas Parish Council) was elected as the Committee Chair.

Arrangements were agreed to recruit a new MJBC Clerk as quickly as possible. The Clerk will be responsible for running the Cemetery under the direction of, and with the support of, the Committee.

Meetings of the MJBC will be open to the public but there is no provision for members of the public to speak at meetings

Arrangements were also made to ensure continuing operation of the Cemetery pending appointment of the Clerk, including the removal of the tree which fell during the recent storm.

The next meeting of the MJBC will be held on Tuesday 14th January 2025.

RESOLVED:- the Council agreed to follow the Code of Conduct in respect of the MJBC. This reflects the legal position that the MJBC is a Joint Committee of several Councils / Meetings and acts collectively in the interests of all the residents of the constituent parishes. This includes:-

- Parish Councillors will refer any issues or concerns that they have, or which they receive from their respective residents, to the Council's representatives on the Burial Committee.
- The Council's representatives will raise the issues with the MJBC Chair, the MJBC Clerk or at a meeting of the MJBC as appropriate.
- Although the public will be permitted to attend meetings of the MJBC there will be no 'Public Participation' at the meetings and the code outlined above will, therefore, be the only channel for Councillors and Residents to raise issues or concerns other than in the Public Participation item at a Parish Council Meeting.

Proposed by Cllr D Lithgow Smith and seconded by Cllr Crossland.

14.2 Bickerton Joint Burial Committee:-

Nothing to report.

15. CHRISTMAS EVENT

Cllr Collings circulated the following report:-

The No Mans Heath Christmas Tree Light Switch On event was held on Saturday 30th November and it was a very successful evening. There was some mixed communications from the road closure company at the start which was soon sorted out.

There were around 200 local residents and from further a field that attended and enjoyed a complimentary mulled wine (kindly donated by Steelforce) and a mince pie (kindly donated by Wises Ltd).

54 children visited Santa and Mrs Clause and received a lovely gift from Santa, they were a big hit with all the children and parents.

A big thanks to Antony Day and Jeanette Woolley for stepping in at the last minute and doing a fabulous job.

Rev Green attended with her little band and said a few words before the light switch on; there were then carols around the tree.

A big thank you to Dave Pegram for arranging all the music for the whole event and for his extra support.

There were some lovely local stall holders, selling their makes and bakes, and a pizza van which was a big hit with the local residents.

The local ward councillor Rachel Williams and the Local MP Aphra Brandreth attended the event; both really enjoyed the Christmas community feel.

It was a lovely and a successful evening enjoyed by all.

Cllr Collings said they will look to apply for a full road closure again this year with access being only for the emergency services.

A special thanks for help and donations to this year's Christmas Event to the local companies who supported the event:-

Wises Ltd

Steelforce

Corbetts Ltd

16. SUMMER PLAY SCHEME

The Council discussed whether to host the summer play scheme this summer.

RESOLVED:- that the Council host the summer play scheme on the basis that it does not make a loss.

Proposed by Cllr Guildford and seconded by Cllr Crossland.

17. VILLAGE GATEWAY SIGNS

Cllr Collings advised that a joiner is ready to make the wooden style gates; CWaC is due to contact and advise regarding discussing the footing depths required. It is hoped that CWaC will install the gates when they change the road side signs, as discussed in the recent meeting with highways.

18. KISSING GATES

Cllr F Lithgow Smith circulated the following report:-

Cllr D Lithgow Smith and Cllr F Lithgow Smith David met with United Utilities (UU) in December, regarding potential UU funding for Kissing Gates. UU were extremely optimistic that they will be able to offer £10k in the immediate future, with the possibility of more once the UU work in the area is complete.

UU require information regarding the number of people who reside in the parish, to be used to demonstrate how many could potentially benefit from the gates for UU to proceed to request the funding.

UU may also be able to consider installing a few of the gates that have already been purchased. Another quote is to be obtained from another supplier before they can look at this.

19. LAUREL BANK SURGERY

Cllr Harrop raised concerns regarding the pharmacy service at Laurel Bank Surgery (this was based on personal experience and comments made by others).

The Council discussed the issue and understands there is a national issue regarding availability of some medicines.

Cllr D Lithgow Smith is to speak with a member of the Patients Participation Group regarding the concerns.

20. DOMAIN NAME

Parish Councils are being strongly encouraged to move their websites and emails used for official business to a gov.uk domain name; there is support available at present.

The Council agreed to look into the matter.

21. CLERK'S REPORT

21.1 Lloyds Bank:- The bank has written to advise of the introduction of bank charges for the Council's bank account.

22. CORRESPONDENCE

A list of correspondence received was previously circulated.

Signed

Dated

Scheduled Parish Council Meetings

DATES FOR 2025 MEETINGS

Thursday 9th January 2025

Thursday 6th March 2025

Thursday 1st May 2025

Thursday 3rd July 2025

Thursday 5th September 2025

Thursday 6th November 2025