

**Minutes of No Man's Heath & District
Parish Council Meeting
held at Cholmondeley Coronation Hall
at 7.00 pm on Thursday 1st May 2025**

PRESENT

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Chairman: | Cllr David Lithgow Smith | |
| Cllr James Crossland | Cllr Peter Guildford | Cllr Tim Harrop |
| Cllr Charles Higgle | Cllr Fran Lithgow Smith | Cllr Kathryn Collings |
| Cllr David Pegram | Cllr Trevor Parker | |

Clerk - Mrs Ruth Shackleton

Members of the Public and Parish – No members of the public attended the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr Stephen Roberts – personal reason; Cllr Michael Voisey – ill.

2. CHAIRMAN 2025 - 26

Resolved - that Cllr D Lithgow Smith be elected Chairman for 2025 – 26.

Cllr D Lithgow Smith signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Proposed by Cllr Higgle and seconded by Cllr Harrop.

3. VICE CHAIRMAN 2025 - 26

Resolved – that Cllr Crossland be elected Vice Chairman for 2025 - 26.

Cllr Crossland signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

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

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Higgle declared a non-pecuniary interest in part 2 as he is a member of Malpas Parish Council.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In the absence of any members of the public there was no consideration of this item.

6. MINUTES

RESOLVED:- that the minutes for the Parish Council meeting that was held on Thursday 6th March 2025 (previously circulated) be accepted as a true and proper record.

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

7. INTERNAL PROCEDURES

RESOLVED:- that Council agreed to the following:-

- Adoption of the Code of Conduct
- Adoption of the Standing Orders
- Adoption of the Financial Regulations.
- Adoption of the Risk Assessment

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

RESOLVED:- that Council agreed to the following:-

- Confirmation of the appointment of Ruth Shackleton as the Responsible Financial Officer.

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

Councillors were reminded of their duty to inform the Clerk of any changes to their Registration of Interests.

8. CHAIRMANS REPORT AND ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman's Report was previously circulated.

RESOLVED:- that the Council accept the Chairman's Report; it is to be posted on the website, Facebook and Council noticeboards.

Proposed by Cllr Collings and seconded by Cllr Crossland.

9. REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS

Malpas Joint Burial Committee:- Cllr D Lithgow Smith advised the new Committee is now well established and that the management of the Cemetery is now becoming routine, building on the work of the former MJBB.

Bickerton Joint Burial Committee:- Cllr D Lithgow Smith advised there were no updates.

Cholmondeley Sports & Community Association:- Cllr Parker advised that the facility has now closed.

Community Land Trust:- Cllr Parker advised there are no updates.

10. SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

10.1 Malpas Joint Burial Committee – David Lithgow Smith and James Crossland

10.2 Bickerton Burial Committee – David Lithgow Smith

10.3 Community Land Trust – Stephen Roberts and Trevor Parker

10.4 Planning– All (all councillors to be notified of applications with information regarding whether applications are in conformity to the neighbourhood plan)

10.5 Neighbourhood Plan – Peter Guildford, Trevor Parker

10.6 Police Liaison – Tim Harrop

10.7 Highways - Tim Harrop

10.8 Public Rights of Way – Fran Lithgow Smith

10.9 Littlers Croft Co-ordinators – Kathryn Collings

10.10 Events Working Group - Kathryn Collings

10.11 Planters and Village Appearance - Mr Tony Day and Kathryn Collings

Proposed by Cllr Pegram and seconded by Cllr Harrop.

11. ACCOUNTS AND PAYMENTS

11.1 Accounts:-

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

Proposed by Cllr Guildford and seconded by Cllr Collings.

11.2 Payments:-

| Chq No | Payee | Amount |
|--------|--|----------|
| 1008 | R Edwards (replacement cheque) | £ 50.00 |
| 1009 | Running Costs | £ 52.70 |
| 1010 | CHALC (annual subs) | £ 404.82 |
| 1011 | Clear Insurance Management Ltd | £ 488.57 |
| 1012 | Reimburse K Collings | £ 27.74 |
| 1013 | Cholmondeley Coronation Hall (room hire) | £ 30.00 |

11.3 Receipts:-

United Utilities (kissing gates) - £4,896.00

11.4 Bank Account:-

Reconciled balance of the Current Bank Account as at 30th April 2025:- £23,077.24

Balance of the Deposit Bank Account as at 30th April 2025:- £ 7,842.82

(CIL / NHB funds available - £22,125.70; Parish Council fund available - £8,794.36

RESOLVED:- that the Council accept the above payments and accounts as circulated.

Proposed by Cllr Parker and seconded by Cllr F Lithgow Smith.

12. AUDIT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024 - 2025

12.1 To approve the Fixed Asset register as circulated:-

The Clerk is to query how to record the kissing gates.

RESOLVED:- that the Council approved the Fixed Asset register as circulated.

Proposed by Cllr Guildford and seconded by Cllr Pegram.

12.2 To approve the Annual Governance Statement:-

RESOLVED: that the Council approve the Annual Governance Statement as circulated.

Proposed by Cllr Guildford and seconded by Cllr Pegram.

- 12.3 To approve the year end accounts, explanation of variances and audit summary for year ended 31st March 2025:-

RESOLVED:- that the Council approve the year end accounts, explanation of variances and audit summary for year ended 31st March 2025.

Proposed by Cllr Guildford and seconded by Cllr Pegram.

- 12.4 To approve the Statement of Accounts and Annual Return for year ended 31st March 2025:-

RESOLVED:- that the Council approve the Statement of Accounts and Annual Return for year ended 31st March 2025.

Proposed by Cllr Guildford and seconded by Cllr Pegram.

- 12.5 Internal Audit:- to receive report and agree any actions required:-

The Internal Audit is due to be carried out.

13. PLANNING

Planning Register:-

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

24/02559/FUL - Erection of one dwelling with detached garage and associated works at Land At Coach Road Duckington Malpas - The Council has no observations other than to ensure that any local drainage issues are resolved.

14. POLICE CLUSTER MEETING

Cllr Harrop updated the meeting about the Police Cluster meeting which was held on 29th April 2025:-

- Recent fraud incidents in the local area;
- Road safety / courtesy e.g. horse riders, cyclists and walkers;
- Signage – lack of co-operation by CWaC regarding Speedwatch signage (the police are to look into this with CWaC);
- Parking concerns outside the Bishop Heber High School and what action the police can take.

The Clerk is to pass on any police updates to the local doctors surgery and to Malpas Community Minibus.

15. HIGHWAYS

Cllr Harrop provided the following update:-

- Speedwatch:- One Speedwatch session has taken place this month on a Saturday morning on Cross o' th' Hill Rd. 60 vehicles were recorded covering both directions, 12 were over the 30 mph limit and of these 5 were in excess of the 35 limit so have been sent warning letters by the Police.
- Mini Roundabouts:- there is nothing positive to report regarding the repairs to the mini roundabouts (despite it now being 27 months since the issue was first raised at a site meeting with the Highways team). CWaC have emailed to confirm they have chased the contractor again and escalated the problem up the chain of command.
- Warning Signs:- a reminder has been sent to Highways to advise that the Council still await improved warning signage on the A41 for the various crossing points.
- Dropped Kerb - on Cross o th Hill opposite Cholmondeley Rise walkway (it was been installed in the wrong place). CWaC advised that the works are just outside of the area proposed for road closure during the mini roundabout works; they have asked to see if this can be extended to include these works.
- White lines painted to stop parking near alleyway - where the footpath from Cholmondeley Rise comes out on Cross o th Hill (these were going to be done at the same time as the roundabout to stop the road being closed twice). CWaC advised that subject to the dropped kerb being completed during the min roundabout works. The road will not require closure to complete the lining of the

access point and must be completed following the dropped kerb introduction o/s 2A Cross O Th Hill Road.

- Warning Signage:- options / signs for near the park alleyway on Cross o' th' Hill to warn drivers of children crossing. CWaC advised that as discussed at the meeting last year CWaC typically would not introduce warning signs in a 30 mph limit. However, CWaC does understand the concerns raised and visibility from and to the footpath exit is poor. It is on the CWaC list for investigation and potential introduction within this financial year.
 - Village gates - it was hoped that these would be installed at the same time as the new speed signs (and when the roundabout is being done).
 - Speed Signage at the village entrance to NMH – it was said that CWaC would pay for the RHS new speed sign and posts and we'd pay half towards LHS speed sign – CWaC advised these are currently being designed and costed. CWaC's understanding was the PC would fund the works on the LHS.
- Costings are due to follow.

16. PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Cllr F Lithgow Smith circulated the following report:-

United Utilities kindly refunded the Council the £4,896.00 that was previously paid for the purchase of 10 kissing gates, with the promise of providing a further £4,104.00 to use for the installation of the gates.

Paul Hellmers of Tattenhall has been appointed the installation contractor at a cost of £150.00 install costs per gate.

The CW&C Footpaths Officer has agreed to provide a further 10 gates which are currently on order awaiting delivery .

Seven stiles were identified on land at Broomy Bank. The landowner has been very helpful with regards to fitting some of the gates and also temporarily re-routing footpath B5 that starts in No Mans Heath and joins the Sandstone Trail, thereby avoiding the bog. This will not only mean that Sandstone Trail walkers will have dry feet without the need for a very expensive boardwalk, but it also opens up a dry and pleasant circular walk from No Mans Heath, using footpath B5, joining the Sandstone Trail, Flag Lane, Bradley Lane and back into No Mans Heath.

In the meantime CWaC, will apply for both these footpath changes to become permanent rather than "permissive".

Other farmers have been contacted regarding permission to change out their stiles with varying degrees of helpfulness, however, a further 5 will hopefully be installed shortly by Paul Hellmers.

United Utilities have promised the Council a total of £4,104.00 to fund installation of the gates, in theory this could fund the installation of 27 gates (this is assuming no additional work is required at each of them). Currently the Council has 20 gates, and 6 of them will be fitted free of charge by resident. In order to ensure that we get the invoice for Paul Hellmers installation work into United Utilities in a timely manner to ensure their kind offer doesn't time expire.

RESOLVED:- that the Council purchase a further 10 kissing gates at a cost of £4,896.00 (this is the money that United Utilities refunded to the Council) and to instruct Paul Hellmers of Tattenhall to carry out the installation of the gates at a cost of £150.00 install costs per gate.

Proposed by Cllr Guildford and seconded by Cllr Collings.

17. LITTLERS CROFT

Cllr Collings provided the following update:-

- The football goal nets are now up. Special thanks to Richard Latham and Keith Jones who have cut the pitch to a good football standard, marked out and put the nets up.

- Ongoing issue regarding the reported flooding on the grassed area in October (TR655847939) which no one has responded to. A further email has been sent for a response. The Clerk is to follow this up with CWaC.
- Local residents have been asked what they would like to see / happen on the park in the future. There was a good response for Gym equipment from the younger and older residents. The Clerk is looking into options to apply for the lottery grant for adult gym equipment rather than a child's gym trail.
- Cllr Collings has contacted the Tree Officer at CWaC regarding the trees on Littlers croft, he has a job created to have the tree stem bases cleared so that he can take a better look at the trees, this is planned for the beginning of May, he would then like to meet to discuss future works.
- The Clerk is to make enquiries with CWaC about installing a picnic bench (which would be paid for from village funds).
- The Clerk is to chase the quote for outdoor gym equipment and look at applying to the lottery ourselves, also to contact CWaC regarding the Council's intentions and if they will permit it.

18. EVENTS WORKING GROUP

Cllr Collings updated the meeting:-

- Village Fete:- local residents would like another village fete after last year's success, maybe with bands, it was suggested that one is planned for next year.
 - Easter Egg Hunt:- There was a lovely Easter Egg hunt around the village for the children.
 - Scarecrow Trail:- this is due to start again soon.
 - Christmas:- the Clerk is to contact Core Highways and request that the same plans be used again for this year's event and also if they would allow the volunteers to put out the road closure signs in order to save costs.
- The Council is to apply for a full road closure from 3.00 pm until 9.00 pm for the event (with the ONLY access for emergency services).

19. VILLAGE APPEARANCE

- Village Gateway Signs:- Cllr Collings advised the joiner is ready to make the wooden style gates. CWaC is due to contact Cllr Collings regarding discussing about the footing depths required, as they are hoping to install these while changing the road side signs, as discussed in highways meeting. The required calculations were emailed to CWaC 10 weeks ago.
- Planters:- Cllr Collings advised that the village planters are looking lovely around the village, special thanks to Tony Day and all the volunteers for continuing with these.
- Noticeboard NHH:- The Village notice board has now been mended, the Council passed on their thanks to Keith Jones for carrying out the repairs.

20. SUMMER PLAY SCHEME

Update:-

- The Summer Camp will take place 28th July –1st August (inclusive) for 5 - 12 years.
- The providers, Military Style Education (MSE), have been booked to provide the summer camp.
- Cholmondeley Coronation Hall has been booked at a cost of £500.00 for the week
- MSE have provided a flyer for the event which is in the process of being circulated (previous attendees and local primary schools) and shared on social media and noticeboards.
- The Clerk is in the process of writing to local businesses to request sponsorship
- The booking form and register have been prepared.

21. CLERK'S REPORT

Nothing further to report

22. CORRESPONDENCE

A list of correspondence received was previously circulated.

PART 2

1. **RESOLVED:-** to exclude the press and members of the public as the items to be discussed are either of a contractual or sensitive nature.
Proposed by Cllr D Lithgow Smith and seconded by Cllr Pegram.
- 2.

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