

Acton Bridge Parish Council Meeting minutes

Date & time	6 th April 2021 at 19:30	Location	Video conference
Attendees	R Holt (Chairman), T Brocklebank, C Ballantyne-Roberts, D Charlton, G Hayward, D Hall, Cllr C Fifield CW&C, Cllr G Edwards CW&C, Cllr P Williams CW&C, Mrs C Robinson (Clerk to the Parish Council)		
Apologies	R Forbes		
Absent	Michelle Gillet (PCSO)		
Minutes written by	Mrs C Robinson (Clerk)		

The discussion commenced at 19:35

Note – This meeting has been held using Zoom conferencing facilities. The structure of this meeting has been agreed by all Parish Council Members. The Agenda for the meeting has been circulated to all Members and has been published on the Parish Council web site, members of the public were invited to join by contacting the Clerk for meeting invite details.

Agenda Item	Notes & Actions
1. Apologies	Apologies for Absence – as noted above
2. Declarations of interest	No pecuniary interests were expressed.
3. PCSO Update	No update received
4. Public Open Forum	There were no members of the public present.
5. Minutes of the meeting held on 1st March 2021	With removal of the last line in the last paragraph under Village Matters, the minutes of the meeting held on 1 st March 2021 were accepted as a true and correct record.
6. Matters arising - a review of the March Parish Council meeting	
PCSO use of Parish Rooms	Cllr Holt had raised the request from the PCSO to use the Parish Rooms with ABCA, but the rooms are very busy (normally) apart from the Billiards room, but that is currently used for the one-way system to exit. ABCA are happy for the PCSO to have a key to the Parish Rooms but wanted to know how and when the PCSO wanted to use the room, Cllr Holt had emailed, but had yet to receive a response.
Flooding – Station Road	Cllr Edwards has asked for 3 convenient dates for the meeting with Highways and is waiting for a response. One contact is currently on leave. Action Cllr Edwards
Bank Account signatories	The form to close the account was sent to NS&I 26 th March, the balance of £919.62 should be transferred to Co-op bank account shortly.
Remembrance Plaques	Cllr Holt will continue to try and contact the vicar about the re-dedication as lockdown is easing. Action Cllr Holt
Ward Member budget applications	The Parish Council will contribute 50% of the balance, after deduction of the Ward Councillor's grant, to the gable end remedial works, once the quotes have been received and reviewed, but ABCA is still waiting for another quote.
Neighbourhood plan	The Neighbourhood plan is on hold until the Parish Council can get consultation with the Council Planning Officers. Planning guidelines/regulations are being reviewed and there are some planning variations and changes in a number of places. This is ongoing. C/F

Speed data	The meeting with Highways has yet to be re-arranged (<i>see Flooding – Station Road</i>). Action Cllr Edwards
Maypole Inn	Cllr G Edwards's meeting with Fiona Dunning (Localites) to look at the viability of creating a support hub in the village, is still to take place. C/F Action Cllr Edwards
Website updating and historical minute filing	Cllr Hayward & Clerk have arranged to meet on Tuesday 13 th April to try and find a solution for where they can be filed safely, e.g. Dropbox. The historical minutes will need to be accessible to anyone who wants to see them. Action Cllr Hayward/Mrs Robinson
Weaver & Cuddington Beat community funding	Cllr Holt has heard nothing further, but as we are now in Purdah due to the Police & Crime Commissioners' election in early May, it is unlikely anything further will be heard in the short term. Cllr Edwards confirmed, after referring to a Solicitor that nothing was likely to be heard in the short term.
Station Car Park misuse	Cllr Holt didn't have any update on CCTV at the station but had used the email address supplied by Cllr Ballantyne-Roberts and had circulated the response to the Parish Council.
Grass Verges Chapel Lane/Orchard Avenue	After Cllr Fifield submitted a photo to CW&C, some work has been done and it has been tidied up a lot, there were 2 workmen there for a couple of hours. Whilst it is just soil at the minute, it does seem to be in a better state. Cllr Fifield has sent a chaser re the corner sections, to see if some kind of soil stabilisations can be used. Action Cllr Fifield
Overgrown hedge letter	In response to work request CW&C ref. no. SS310601440 the Clerk had received an email update on 13 th March 'Your report has now been investigated and action has been taken to resolve this issue'. On inspection by the Clerk on 23 rd March, the hedge appears to have been cut, although it is still tall and straggly.
Station Hill Fence	For report GS291248507 the report status on the website is still: 'Investigation completed, work scheduled to resolve the issue'. The Clerk will contact Darren Dean to see if there has been any further update further to his previous email. Action Mrs Robinson
Northwich Isolation Support & the Ark	The Clerk had been passed the contact details to both Northwich Isolation Support and the Ark, and had tried to contact both, leaving messages for them to return her call. Only the Ark had responded, and they estimated the amount they spent providing lunch to Acton Bridge residents was in the region of £540. After further discussion, the Parish Council wanted to have a response from Northwich Isolation Support before deciding on any donations. Action Mrs Robinson
Contingency plan	The Clerk confirmed the meeting delayed by CHALC to the 9 th March, due to the Flood webinar organised for 2 nd March did go ahead 9 th March. (<i>See separate item on Agenda for the Flood Response plan</i>).
Local Flooding	Cllr Williams expressed great disappointment he has not had any comments or formal response, to the substantial letter to DEFRA copying in many local MPs beseeching them to reconsider renewing the flood resilience grants to assist the residents. Cllr Ballantyne-Roberts sent the details of the bridge over the public footpath to Cllr Williams, it has been inspected and it should be scheduled for repair. Cllr Williams will follow up again. Action Cllr Williams Cllr Edwards is waiting for a response on the Police and Crime Commissioner's Grant. Action Cllr Edwards

Drains on Acton Lane	Cllr Williams has contacted Streetcare twice to look at all the drains. The top drains on Acton Lane still haven't been cleared.	Action Cllr Williams
Articulated Lorries delivering to Forresters Appointment of Internal Auditor	No update C/F David Frith has agreed to be the internal auditor again.	Action Cllr Forbes
Council Tax and Flooding	Cllr Edwards has circulated an email to affected residents saying that CW&C can only offer a discount on their Council Tax. But, if HMRC take the property off the register, after an inspection if the property is classed as 'uninhabitable', for the period it is classed as uninhabitable the residents will not pay any Council Tax.	
17 Hilltop Road	Cllr Fifield has reported the 'Shepherds Hut', which appears to be for available for renting as a holiday let. He will chase up for a response.	Action Cllr Fifield
Residents raising reports to CWAC	The Clerk had circulated a proposed response to residents on raising issues to CW&C such as potholes. Cllrs Holt and Ballantyne-Roberts had proposed some amendments that the Parish Council agreed to. The Clerk will use the amended version going forward.	
Correspondence on planning applications	The Clerk had circulated a proposed response to residents and agents who wanted to engage with the Parish Council on planning applications, Cllrs Holt and Ballantyne-Roberts had proposed some amendments that the Parish Council agreed to. The Clerk will use the amended version going forward.	
Garden Waste collections	The Clerk posted the information on the garden waste collections returning to normal, on the Parish Council website on 2 nd March	
Verge on Cliff Road	After a short discussion, Cllr Brocklebank agreed to have an informal chat with the residents causing the issues on the verge on Cliff Road. The verge needs to be filled and turfed to rectify the issues as soon as all the building work is all finished. Otherwise, Highways will need to be contacted.	Action Cllr Brocklebank
Village bins	Cllr Edwards has sent through information on the bin on the car park missing from the CW&C map, but whilst she has not heard anything it has been emptied. Cllr Ballantyne-Roberts has again noticed additional overflow rubbish being left by the bin in the triangle at the junction at Cliff Road and Hill Road, but it is being taken away. Cllr Edwards informed the Parish Council that this is a problem across CW&C.	Action Cllr Edwards
CW&C money set aside for flooding	Infrastructure projects. Cllr Edwards was putting the case for local areas. C/F	Action Cllr Edwards
7. Flood Response Plan	Cllr Charlton gave an update on the work so far towards a Flood Response Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He attended both the CW&C webinar on the flood and then the following week, the ChALC flood meeting, with the same presentation, but with a different tone and a better dialogue. • Communities are being encouraged to develop flood resilience plans • On behalf of the Parish Council, he has contacted Chris Samuel (the contact name given at the meeting), who forwarded to Rob Ruddock (Cheshire Shared Services, Emergency Planning). Cllr Charlton has subsequently had a lengthy telephone conversation with Rob. • Rob has sent a template and tool kit to use as a starting point. • From the conversation, Cllr Charlton felt it is unlikely that rural communities would be first priority for the emergency services, partly as they are viewed as 	

more resilient, partly due to the number of properties/residents likely to be affected. A resilience plan for rural communities was therefore key.

- It was also suggested that there might be other emergencies that a resilience plan would be useful. The list from the Parish Council discussion:
 - Flooding
 - Major traffic incident on the A49
 - Major Rail incident
 - Significant storm damage
 - Fire, particularly spreading e.g. through terraced houses
 - Aircraft disaster

However, most of this list would receive priority from the emergency services, except flooding, in particular. The Parish Council were asked to think about any other potential emergencies for the next meeting. **Action Parish Councillors**

- Whatever the emergency, there could be some common actions that could be enacted to help support the local community affected by the emergency. E.g.
 - Where to evacuate residents to, e.g. Parish Rooms (Cancel pre-school?) or the Church.
 - Short term accommodation options
- What funds/grants could be available for distribution? And how to distribute.

CLlr Charlton will circulate documents etc for review as and when they are available.

8. Planning Applications

- **21/00817/HHE** - 2 Orchard Avenue - Addition of single storey conservatory to rear – Consultation closing date: 8th April. The application could be slightly over the permitted development size at 4.2m and it goes right up to the boundary, which could mean it causes an obstruction and breaches the 45° rule. The Parish Council agreed to make the observations of the potential issues to the Planning Dept via the Planning Portal.
- **21/01185/S73**- Syringa, Chapel Lane – Replacement bungalow, Variation of condition 2 (plans) of planning permission ref: 19/00944/FUL - Consultation closing date 22nd April. The new plans for the replacement bungalow appear to be for much larger additional accommodation than previous permission had been granted for. Permitted development rules are not clear, and the Parish Council agreed to raise their observations and concerns to the Planning Dept. CLlr Edwards has asked for someone in the Planning dept to talk to her about the application once someone has been allocated. **Action CLlr Edwards**

9. Planning Decisions

No official decision notifications received since the last Parish Council meeting. CLlr Holt pointed out that No. 6 Cliff Road garden out house had position 'unknown' on the website. Some applications appear to be waiting months for a decision.

10. Financial Matters a. Authority for signing cheques

The Parish Council approved three cheques for signature:

- ChALC Affiliation fee invoice 2021-22 £ 186.48 (£186.48 2020-21)
- C Robinson Wages + expenses - Total Chq £388.78
Jan/Feb/Mar – 3 months net salary = £360.00
Zoom Jan/Feb/Mar (50% Jan/Feb JCC + 100% March) = £28.78
- HMRC – Clerk income tax Jan/Feb/Mar = £90.00

The Clerk will distribute the cheques to signatories.

The Clerk has also received notification of the payment of the Parish Council precept today.

Bank BalancesTotal Balances as at 12th March 2021

	<u>DR -ve</u>	<u>CR +ve</u>
Current A/c		4,917.63
National Savings A/c		919.62
Unpresented chqs as at 12/03	156.00	
		<u>5,681.25</u>
<u>Summary</u>		
Total Balance B/Fwd @ 13/02/2021		5,717.25
Plus total receipts (NS&I Interest)		
Less total payments		36.00
Total Balance C/fwd to 13/03/21		<u>5,681.25</u>

Now the Clerk has been in role for 18 months, Cllr Holt asked that the Parish Council review the Clerk's Salary and hours at the next Parish Council meeting.

The Clerk has also received an email from PK Littlejohn with information about the year-end audit process.

11. CW&C Ward Councillors

Cllr Edwards said she had already covered most items earlier in the meeting, with the exception of:

- Wildflowers – Cllr Edwards spoke to the Environmental team, but we have missed the wildflower trial for this year – so she has asked all her trial areas to be included next year.
- The Great British Spring Clean is taking place in May. Organised litter picks can start again.
- Dog fouling issues – Cllr Edwards is trying to implement the 'pink poo scheme' and will require volunteers to spray as soon as it is allowed, once sprayed pink StreetScene should remove it.
- Cllr Edwards has emailed Vicky for an update on the Friends Group, she is keeping a close eye on it.

Cllr Williams:

- Cllr Williams has 3 items to follow up on from the last meeting
- StreetCare have lots of equipment for litter picks, hoes, waste bags and arranging collection of waste bags. They are positively encouraging a community spirit for litter picking.

Cllr Fifield:

- Cllr Fifield spoke at the Cabinet on the Section 19 report on flooding, whilst no amendments were taken on the report, they heard the concerns and frustrations raised by Ward Councillors and residents. He stated they are currently awaiting the formal confirmation of the make-up of the Flood Risk Action Group, but it looks like Cllr Williams will be included. He hopes they can deal with the aftermath of the latest flood quicker than the 2019 flood.
- CW&C Waste Consultation – The Council received 14.5k responses to the Consultation, which is a huge response. The results are published as going to the full Council in July, hopefully there will be more information shortly.
- Highways and Wildflowers – Areas such as Chester, Frodsham and Ellesmere Port have lots of areas where wildflowers are being planted. Northwich and Winsford seem to be being left until next year, even though it was 2 of their Ward Councillors that raised the wildflower motion that went to Council.

12. Reports from other Meetings

The two meetings on the flood have already been mentioned in item 7 Flood Response Plan:

- CW&C webinar on the flood – there appeared to be a lot of back slapping and self-congratulating going on, which upset many people who didn't feel the response to the flood from CW&C and the Agencies warranted that reaction. Cllr Hayward also pointed out there was also a table showing the number of properties affected had been left blank for Acton Bridge, which seemed to reflect the priority of the village. It was filled in for the next meeting.
- ChALC flood meeting. The section 19 report on the 2019 flood was published on the day of the ChALC flood meeting and a lot was made of it in the meeting. Acton Bridge was alluded to in a number of the action points in the report. Cllr Charlton felt Acton Bridge Parish Council need to hold the CW&C and the relevant Agencies (Environment Agency, Canal & Rivers Trust) to account to ensure they complete these actions. Cllr Holt returned the proforma form requested (Cllrs Charlton and Hayward added comments) in a very short turn-around time. Cllr Williams felt that there had been a very fragmented approach in the aftermath of the flood and was concerned at the output of the disparate groups. There is Property Flood Resilience Grant money left over from the October 2019 floods, the deadline to claim is December 2021. There is a further Grant money from February 2020, available until July 2022? But nothing available for the January 2021 flood, as the severity of storm Christoph was not deemed enough to warrant the grant, by Central Government. Despite 31 flooded properties in Weaverham and Acton Bridge, which is above the previous criteria of a minimum of 21.
- ChALC Speeding Matters – Acton Bridge put speeding as its top priority when asked previously by ChALC. They had such a large response they had to split the meetings between Cheshire West and East. The intro given by ChALC showed how CW&C Highways go through almost a standard routine to try and fob people off. Acton Bridge Parish Councillors supplied information on TWM, the facilities in Acton Bridge. Cllr Forbes took a very active part in the meeting.

13. Correspondence

Email circulated 12th March - **Neighbourhood Planning Training**: Tuesday 30th March at 7.30pm or Tuesday 27th April at 7.30pm. Cost £25.00. One Parish Councillor has asked to attend 27th April, Cllr Hayward also asked to attend.

Email circulated 12th March - **HWRCs - temporary opening hours**, added to ABPC website 12th March.

Email circulated 15th March - **Help to complete the census form**. No desire expressed by Parish Councillors to take up the offer.

Email circulated 16th March - **Stakeholder update from the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner -MARCH 2021**

Email circulated 19th March – **ChALC information for towns and parishes on help with self-isolation** – The Parish Council agreed put on the PC website. **Action Mrs Robinson**

Email circulated 19th March - **Changes to Euston Train Station** – the Parish Council agreed not to put on the PC website.

Email circulated 23rd March – Request from ChALC for examples of **best practice for pubs** opening on 12th April.

14. Village Matters

None raised.

15. AOB

None raised.

16. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held via Zoom on Tuesday 4th May 2021 starting at 19:00. The AGM will be held at 19:30.

The discussion closed at 21:22

Signed (Chairman)

Date.....