

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 7<sup>th</sup> JULY 2025**  
**AT WESTON LULLINGFIELDS VILLAGE HALL**

42

**Present:** Councillors A Woodthorpe (Chairman)

M Feline  
Mrs G Tomlins  
R Thomas  
Mrs A P R Budgen  
R Jones  
Mrs C Weller  
S Hey  
N Hancock  
F Purell  
N Bardsley  
Mrs W Lowdon

Mrs A Howls Clerk.  
Cllr R Jones Shropshire Council

Sixty members of the public  
The Parish Council Meeting commenced at 7.30pm

Cllr Simon Hey signed his declaration as a Councillor.

106/2025 Apologies – Cllr J H Lloyd

107/2025 **DECLARATION OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST IN A MATTER TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING AND WHICH IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE REGISTER OF INTERESTS.** [Members are reminded that they are required to leave the meeting during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the register of members' interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer]

There were no declarations made.

108/2025 **COMMUNITY REPORT & PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There was no report.

109/2025 **REPORT FROM SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL**

Cllr Jones gave the following report:

**Adcote Mill Bridge**

The footbridge across the River Perry at Adcote Mill collapsed in 2014. Shropshire Council have been and remain committed to building a replacement bridge and restoring full access to the public rights of way, as per its statutory duty. Over the years, the issue has been repeatedly raised and pursued by parish and unitary councillors, including my predecessor, by interested organisations, and local residents. In the past few weeks, following television, radio and online media coverage of the issue, I have received many communications from residents raising the issue, and I have tried to respond to all of them individually.

The overwhelming majority have been in support of restoring the bridge. There have been substantial delays in carrying out the work and this has, at least in part, been the result of residents near the bridge who have obstructed access to the site and evented works from beginning. This is therefore a complex and difficult legal process. Shropshire Council is currently applying for a new injunction which would strengthen its legal position and authority to access the site.

I have been assured that the original funds allocated for the bridge are still held by the Council, and can be deployed when the project advances. Applications were made in 2024 to extinguish a number of rights of way in the area. I do not believe that this includes the footpath, FP54, or the bridge itself.

Officers are currently deciding whether these applications should proceed to a public consultation, at which point, members of the public and parish councils will be able to comment. These comments can be very important in contributing to the final decision. I welcome the significant public interest and engagement in this issue recently, and I hope this can continue. But I also urge members of the public to refrain from speculation, sharing misleading information, or from taking any actions which could put themselves or others at risk.

#### **North West Relief Road**

Councillors may be aware that Shropshire Council has paused work on the proposed North West Relief Road. Permanent decisions are to be taken by Cabinet and then by full Council later this month, which will most likely result in the cancellation of the project. This decision is not being taken lightly, but is necessary due to the financial position of the Council and the project's substantial funding gap of £176m. The Department for Transport have confirmed that the project was not formally considered for funding beyond the £54.4m already allocated, and no further funds will be available in the future.

This decision will be deeply frustrating for many residents in communities impacted by through-traffic, such as ours. The NWRR had the potential to help address some traffic issues, but also to improve connectivity between our area and Shrewsbury. In order to address these issues and improve the safety and utility of our roads for local residents, I will seek to work with the Parish Council and Shropshire Council to identify and advance projects that can achieve these goals.

#### **Parish and Town Partnership Consultation**

Shropshire Council has launched its Call for Information to Parish and Town Councils that I referred to in my report to the previous meeting in May. I encourage the Parish Council to engage in the consultation which can be completed on the Council's website or using a form which can be downloaded and printed. The form needs to be returned by 18 August 2025.

#### **Neighbourhood Plan Funding**

I am disappointed to report that the government's recent Spending Review has resulted in funding to support groups developing Neighbourhood Plans. Baschurch, and a number of other parishes and areas around Shropshire have rightly embarked on the path to develop a Neighbourhood Plan and I encourage residents to continue to pursue this, despite the lack of funding support from central government, if at all possible. In response to a written question by Helen Morgan MP, a government minister stated that: "Parish and Town Councils have access to their own resources which they can choose to use for neighbourhood planning if they wish."

Project Gigabit and Freedom Fibre

Freedom Fibre were contracted by the government to roll out fibre optic internet connectivity across North Shropshire, including throughout the parish, as part of the Project Gigabit program. In June, Freedom Fibre withdrew from the contract, citing barriers to investment due to international market conditions. I was briefed on Friday by the responsible officer of the government agency Building Digital UK, who confirmed the current status and reasons for the situation, and that the government is entering negotiations with BT Openreach to continue the rollout for the remaining 8,500 households. Whilst Openreach will be expected to use poles already installed but as yet unused by Freedom Fibre, there may be some which remain redundant. These will eventually need to be removed.

110/2025 MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> JUNE 2025

Cllr N Bardsley proposed and Cllr M Feline seconded that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025 This was confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

111/2025 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> JUNE 2025 NOT ITEMISED ON THE AGENDA

There were none.

112/2025 ADCOTE MILL BRIDGE

The Chairman thanked residents for their attendance and stated the Parish Council had recently written to Shropshire Council requesting an update on when the bridge would be repaired. A letter was received from The Council had received a reply back from Mr. Peter Banford, Culture and Communities Manager of Shropshire who stated that on two occasions Shropshire Council they had had to take the difficult decision to suspend work to replace Adcote Mill Bridge, over the River Perry, due to ongoing site access issues beyond its control. Shropshire Council's Outdoor partnership was seeking to obtain an injunction but unfortunately this would take some time and it was expected that work would not now start until June 2026 at the earliest. A copy of the letter had been placed on the Parish Council web site.

At 8.10pm he proposed standing orders be suspended to allow member of the public to speak which was seconded by Cllr M Feline.

Four members of the public spoke and put forward concerns and thoughts on how the bridge could be repaired in the near future. The Chairman advised them to organise a group and to have one voice to make a valid argument. Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council to be copied in to any letters to be sent to Shropshire Council.

8.50pm Cllr M Feline proposed to re instate Standing Orders this was seconded by Cllr N Hancocks. Councillors then discussed the problems and concerns with the bridge and it was decided to send a letter to Mr Bamford, Tim Collard and James Owen stating the following information:

The Parish Council reminded Shropshire Council that The Highways Act 1980 includes a provision, section 130(6) [1], which enables Parish Councils to make a representation to the highways authority to act to remove an obstruction from a public right of way. In this case this would relate to the collapsed bridge FP 54 at Adcote Mill as an unlawful obstruction that is materially detrimental to the public's use and enjoyment of the right of way.

Although the Council are already committed to doing so (by installing a new bridge) the act of making the representation has legal force and could have the effect of making the issue a higher priority for Shropshire Council. This then cannot lawfully be ignored, and may also strengthen the legal position of the Shropshire Council either when arguing for an injunction, or even in acting directly without the need for an injunction. The action should place no risk or responsibility on the Parish Council.

Councillors and members of the public were in full agreement that the bridge should be repaired as soon as possible and made the following comments to the Parish Council requesting them to put these comments to Shropshire Council for immediate action.

Other comments made by the public were:

1. Why does the bridge have to be replaced with another stone bridge other types should be considered?
2. The bridge must be designed for horses to be able to use as this was part of its purpose.
3. There is no reason why the bridleway and footpath could be made good so they can be open to all for use.
4. The bridge repaired or otherwise is not going to affect the valuation of properties in its vicinity.
5. It has been stated by Shropshire Council that no work at the bridge will be commenced this year and have already closed the bridleway in order to carry out repairs. If the bridge is not being repaired this year, why cannot the bridleway be opened immediately?
6. The resident on the Baschurch side of the bridge publicly stated that her issue previously was the lack of health and safety procedures being used by the contractors. What attempts have been made to resolve that?

#### 113/2025 FLANDERS FORD

The Chairman stated that a number of e mails and letters had been received from the members of the public in relation to Flanders Ford which is along a public road which is unsuitable for modern vehicles due to lack of maintenance over the years. It has recently suffered from obstructions, solid fencing and notices that have been erected in the last couple of weeks by a resident whose properties adjoin the area with Flanders Ford and Little Ness Parish. This Flanders Ford ancient road was well used by horse riders until this recent obstruction by fencing put across at the river crossing and Bunny Lane ends.

The Highways Act 1980 includes a provision, section 130(6) [1], which enables Parish Councils to make a representation to the highways authority to act to remove an obstruction from a public right of way. In this case this would relate to solid fencing etc as an unlawful obstruction that is materially detrimental to the public's use and enjoyment of the right of way. The Parish Council have requested this matter be looked into as a matter of urgency.

#### 114/2025 LOCKED BRIDLEWAY GATE- (OS Map 126 h25v41)

Cllr Mrs G Tomlins reported she had received a complaint of a locked bridleway gate which starts from near Boreaton Park. (w3w) down past Three Farthings, over Limpet Hill out onto the Stanwardine to Bagley Road at the thatched house. She had walked the bridleway herself and found that the gate was not locked but did have a chain and lock on the gate suggesting it could be/has been locked at some point. It is believed that this is a green road /country lane. Shropshire Council to be contacted to remove the lock and chain and a bridle way sign put in place as there is one at the other end.

9.20pm The Chairman handed over the meeting to Cllr M Feline, the Vice Chair to deal with planning.

115/2025 PLANNING RECEIVED SINCE 28<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2025

- a) 25/023000/FUL- Erection of two agricultural sheds comprising of one general purpose agricultural storage building and one livestock building and associated works at Proposed agricultural building to the east of Fenemere Baschurch, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

Cllr M Feline outlined the application to Councillors and he proposed to support the application as below:

Baschurch Parish Council is broadly supportive of the proposed erection of two agricultural buildings east of Fenemere, recognising the importance of supporting local farming infrastructure. However, Baschurch Parish Council requests that Shropshire Council give careful consideration to the following:

Design & Visual Impact: Buildings should use appropriate materials and be visually sympathetic to the rural setting. Landscaping or screening may be necessary.

Access & Highways: Existing field access must be safe and suitable for agricultural vehicles, with no adverse impact on local traffic.

Drainage: Adequate surface water management must be demonstrated to avoid flood risk or run-off affecting neighbouring land or watercourses.

Cllr F Purell seconded the proposal and it was agreed by all. Shropshire Council to be informed.

**Planning Permission Granted**

- 25//01471/FUL- Installation of prescription dispenser and associated works at Prescott Surgery, Prescott Road, Baschurch, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

**Planning Permission Refused**

- 25//01537/FUL- Garage extension and drop kerb at Laureston Station Road, Baschurch, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

**Planning Withdrawn**

- 25//01778/VAR – Variation of conditions 1 and 2 attached to application reference number 24/03573/PAAFC at proposed conversion of agricultural building north of B4397, Buildings Bank, Baschurch, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

9.40pm The Vice Chairman handed back the meeting to the Chairman

116/2025 HIGHWAYS AND STREET LIGHTING

- Temporary Road Closure-Unnamed Road Stanwardine Jubilee Bridge from Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> August until Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2025 for work undertaken by Shropshire Council.
- Temporary Road Closure- Nobold Baschurch from Monday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 until Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2025 for work by SP Energy Networks.

117/2025 PGL -BOREATTON PARK

Cllr Mrs A P R Budgen reported that a meeting had been held at Weston Lulligfields Village Hall on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 6.30pm with Councillors and residents and representatives from PGL. Concerns were again raised with PGL with regards to traffic problems involving their visiting coaches. Further enquiries were being continued.

**118/2025 CRIME/ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE PARISH**

The Ellesmere and Oswestry newsletter had been sent from PCSO 40305 Kerry Hogg and had been circulated to all Councillors. Baschurch Village had suffered a couple of break ins this last month. The Chairman reminded parishioners to report any thefts or anti-social behaviour as if none is reported and it is going ahead crime statistics will show there is no crime in our area and therefore, we will not have the police attention that is needed.

**119/2025 BADGERS WAY PLAY /WHEATLANDS PLAY AREA**

Repairs to equipment at both sites had been completed and were due for payment this month.

**120/2025 ANY COUNCILLORS REPORTS**

There were no reports from Councillors.

**121/2025 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING**

The attendance at the Church Fete on the village green had proved a success and the next meeting would take place on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025 at 7.30pm at Weston Lullingfields Village Hall. A zoom meeting had taken place between Pontesbury Parish Council Neighbourhood Planning group and Baschurch Neighbourhood Group which was a very valuable meeting.

Cllr N Bardsley stated the Parish Council must now register with Shropshire Council to take the Baschurch Neighbourhood group forward. This was agreed by all.

**122/2025 COUNCILLORS REPOSNSIBILITIES**

The Chairman stated this item would be deferred until the next Meeting.

**123/2025 FINANCES**

- (a) **Bacs Payments for Approval** – The following payments totalling £7,496.82 (which includes VAT) were to be paid over the month of July. These were proposed by Cllr Mrs G Tomlins and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Weller and agreed by all.

|         |                                                   |          |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------|----------|
| BACSI02 | P. Birch Contracting Ltd (General Maintenance)    | 1320.50  |
| BACSI02 | P. Birch Contracting Ltd (Cemetery)               | 347.86   |
| BACSI03 | A Howls Salary- June                              | 1533.20  |
| BACSI04 | Inland Revenue-June                               | 638.15   |
| BACSI05 | P G Skips                                         | 55.24    |
| BASCI06 | Weston Lullingfield V Hall -P C Meeting 7/.7/2025 | 70.00    |
| BASCI07 | Neighbourhood Planning Meeting                    | 26.25    |
| BACSI08 | Derwen College – Planting in Cemetery             | 280.45   |
| BACSI09 | Ray Parry- Playground Inspections x2              | 192.00   |
| BACSI10 | Fencetree – Fencing Football Field                | 2,325.98 |
| BACSI11 | Scottish Power                                    | 306.79   |
| BACSI12 | J Easter- N H Planning -Printing                  | 8.00     |
| BACSI13 | Ray Parry, Repair to Playground- Kings Drive.     | 392.40   |

***Resolved:*** Payment of the BACS were approved.

b) Other items of expenditure for consideration

Work on Football Field in Eyton Lane. - The Vice Chairman explained work was to be started on the car park in the near future as agreed at the last Parish Council meeting. He stated that since that meeting there had been more detail in the type of fence they needed which would cost approx. £1,400.00 more. After some discussion Cllr A Woodthorpe proposed to increase the monies needed to £1,400.00 as reported and this was seconded by Cllr R Thomas. All were in agreement.

**Electricity for the Village Green** – Cllr M Feline stated he was still progressing with how to bring the electricity to the Village Green for a Christmas Tree to be placed on the village green. He had received a quote from Highline Electrics Ltd. and asked the Parish Council if they could donate more funding for the project. Cllr R Thomas proposed up to £7,000.00 from Neighbourhood Monies be allocated. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs W Lowdon and agreed by all.

124/2025 CORRESPONDENCE

Spar Shop- The Clerk stated she had contacted Blakemore's re the removal of the bin outside the shop and the amount of rubbish it was causing. She had now been informed that the Spar at Baschurch would be provided with another bin and a recycling bin. Not all Spar shops were having these bins and the reason for its removal was due to Government legislation.

All other correspondence was dealt with under the agenda headings.

125/2025 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

There was no other business and the meeting closed at 10.30pm. The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 at Baschurch Village Hall.

Signed.....

Dated 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025