**Minutes of the Great Budworth Parish Council Ordinary Meeting held at the Parish Hall on Monday, 6 March 2023.**

The meeting opened at 7 PM and Don Hammond, Chairman, welcomed everybody to the meeting.

**1 Present:**

Parish Councillors - Don Hammond, Bill Anderson, Anna Lee, Malcolm Torrance, Bob Wilkinson, Justin Culver, John Gill.

Members of the Public - Jennie Bowman, Karen Williams, Rod Bowman, Penny Kordel, Maggie Blower, Andrew Robins, Louise Tottle, Peter Davies, Steven Jennings, Rosalind Barclay, June Wilkinson, Karen Hammond, Hazel Forwood. Steve Lancaster.

**2 Apologies:** Janet Bennett (Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer) and Councillor Steve Coppell.

**3 Declarations of interest -** Don Hammond, Bill Anderson, Malcolm Torrance, and Bob Wilkinson declared themselves to be Trustees of the Parish Hall CIO in respect to item 13 on the agenda concerning a possible hearing aid loop installation in the Parish Hall.

**4 Representations from the public.**

* **School Field Planning Application -** Steve Lancaster, a director of LMM-Ltd, the architects responsible for the Planning Application made a few comments and answered some questions.
  + The School was prepared to make changes to the Planning Application which had been submitted.
  + He wanted to organise a meeting between the School and the Parish Council as soon as practical to see if it was possible to come up with a mutually acceptable proposal.
  + Public access would not be a problem out of school hours.

He was questioned about the several inaccuracies in the Planning Application which had been submitted by his company. He informed the meeting that he had only recently become actively involved and did not have all the details. He did not appear to be completely aware of the Government Regulations and Recommendations, he had no views on the risk assessments carried out by the School, he was questioned whether there was any necessity to have a fence round the entire field rather than merely the School Premises, as children utilising the field would be under supervision. It was suggested that a fence around the school field might endanger pupils in the event of some potential crises as they would not be able to “escape”. He was questioned about the implications for damage of tree roots of the Avenue and the information received from the Public Rights of Way asset manager concerning the limitations and risks of damage for the footpath, reduction of the width and limiting access. He was questioned about the necessity for a fence of this height in a rural environment, the implications of wasting public taxpayers’ money, and the failure to consult in any way prior to the application being submitted.

* **Autumnal leaf drop clearance -** members of the public questioned if the leaves in the horse trough by the lower pumphouse and along several pavements will likely to be cleared by Cheshire West & Chester local authority. The were no representatives from the Marbury Ward Councillors to respond.

**5 Update from Marbury Ward Councillors** - as no Councillors were present, this item was deferred.

**6 Minutes of the meeting held on Monday; 16 January 2023** were agreed unanimously.

**7 Matters arising -**

* + **Soot Hill Closure** - there appears to be no significant progress in the short term.
  + **Water testing by Cheshire West and Chester** - there appears to be no significant progress. However, water testing by the Parish Council continues periodically.

**8 Parish Clerk & Proper Officer**

The Chairman reported that Janet Bennett had been appointed the Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer of the Great Budworth Parish Council with effect from 1 February 2023. Some biographical details had been circulated in the Budworth Bulletin. The Parish Council welcomes this appointment.

**9 Budget 2022/2023.**

It was reported that the following payments had been made

* Scribe Accounting computerised system £543.60 inclusive of any applicable VAT.
* PKF Audit £48.
* A new computer for the Parish Clerk £529 inclusive of VAT.

A grant had been received from the Marbury Councillors as a contribution towards the Scribe Accounting package which was gratefully acknowledged.

**10 NatWest Bank Mandate.**

Since the last meeting the Parish Council signatures had been adjusted as had been agreed. The authorised signatures now comprised councillors Anna Lee, Malcolm Torrence and Don Hammond.

The meeting reviewed the standard NatWest documentation required to change bank mandates and approved Janet Bennett being added to the bank mandate to receive financial information, statements and the like.

**11 Coronation Celebrations 6 May 2023.**

An update was received from Councillor Lee and from some members of the public. There appears to be a growing list of activities to celebrate the Coronation. These include:

* a barbecue organised by the Budworth Big Boys presently scheduled for Saturday 6 May in the evening.
* A church service on the Sunday to celebrate the Coronation together with refreshments.
* An event on the Parish/School field with sporting activities to include tug-of-war, putting games, vintage cars, perhaps a wine tasting, and the like.

It was reported that modest grants might be available and Councillor Anna Lee volunteered to submit an application.

Further news would no doubt emerge.

**12 Local Elections May 2023.**

It was not clear how many candidates there would be for election to the Parish Council and whether an election would be required. If more than eight candidates seek election, there will be an election on Thursday 4 May. In any event there will be an election for Councillors to represent the Marbury Ward with Cheshire West & Chester.

The timescale is as follows:

* notice of election must be made by 27 March 2023.
* Candidates must submit nomination papers not later than 4 April 2023.
* If an election is required:
  + an election agent (if a candidate requires one) must be appointed by 4 April.
  + Cheshire West will publish a statement of the persons who have been nominated on the 5 April.
  + Postal and proxy vote applications must be made by Tuesday 18 April.
  + Polling date will be on the 4 May and candidates must submit any election expenses which have been incurred by around 8 June 2023.

**13 Parish Hall Hearing Aid Loop.**

It was reported that the Parish Hall CIO was looking at the possibility of installing a Hearing Aid Loop, which had been requested by several users of the Hall and was in line with good practice for public buildings. Quotes had been sought and the cost appeared to be somewhat under £2000.

As the Landlord, the Parish Council might be responsible for funding such an installation, although it was reported that funding was being sought by the CIO from third parties. Councillors who were not Trustees discussed the matter, and it was thought probable that as the Landlord, the Parish Council was ultimately responsible. No decision would be taken in the short term and it would be left to a future meeting of the Parish Council to consider the matter in greater detail.

**14 Asset of Community Value (School/Parish field)** - it was reported that this proposal had been rejected by Cheshire West & Chester.

**15 Planning.**

* **School Field** - the planning officer had not yet made a determination, but it seemed highly likely that an amended planning application would be required to correct the various errors, which included the ownership of the field, the failure to have a tree survey and the like. The Parish Council noted the offer made by a representative of the School earlier in the meeting to hold a consultative meeting with members of the Parish Council and others.
* **Spinneys Smithy Lane.** An application for a single-story extension to the front of the existing dwelling had been made. No adverse comments had yet been received.

**16 Time and place of next meeting –**

**17 There was no other business and the meeting closed at 8 PM.**