



**Minutes of the REMOTE Full Council meeting held via GoToMeetings at Leonard Smith House, West Centre Way  
On Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

*Due to the current Covid-19 epidemic and the changes in legislation dated 7<sup>th</sup> April 2020, the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, allows for all local authority meetings to be held remotely, either by video or telephone conferencing, live streaming or web chat.*

**PRESENT:**

Cllr Shaun Davies, Cllr. Jayne Greenaway, Cllr Amrik Jhawar, Cllr Raj Mehta, Cllr. Rob Parker, Cllr Mike Tyler, Cllr Lee Vidor, Cllr John Yorke

**CLERK:**

Sharon George, Clerk

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Simon Baily (Project, Events, & Engagement Officer)  
Jill Holland (Deputy Clerk)  
Matt Lever (Admin Assistant)  
Judy Parker (Facilities & Community Liaison Officer)  
Jim Weir (Chairman of LVCA)  
Benedict Croft (Chairman of LMC)

**2020/76 CHAIR'S WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2020/77 APOLOGIES**

Apologies received from Cllr Jacqui Seymour.

**APOLOGIES RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED**

*It was noted that apologies should be given in advance to the Clerk where possible and that any apologies are formally agreed by a vote taken at the meeting.*

**2020/78 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor	Interest	Declaration	Minute no.
John Yorke	Community Facility	LVCA Member	2020/79 & 2020/87
Shaun Davies	Community Facility	Leader of Telford & Wrekin Council	2020/87

**2020/79 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Chairman greeted Jim Weir and Benedict Croft. The Clerk explained to the Council that Mr Weir and Mr Croft had contacted her asking to speak at the Full Council meeting after the agenda had already been set. She had informed them that if the Chair were happy for them to do so, and no members of the public were present, they could speak during the Public Participation session. As no members of the public were present, the Chair agreed to let them address the Council.

Mr Weir explained to the Council that November was the beginning of a new Management Committee for Lawley Village charge payers. New members had been elected to the board, it was entirely resident-led, and it began on 1 November, with its first meeting that month. Mr Weir explained the organisational structure of the Telford Estates Committee and the Lawley Village Management Committee and highlighted that spending decisions were made by residents – which, he said, raised opportunities for the Parish Council.

Mr Weir continued by saying that this was the second year of an agreed 'freeze' on the maintenance charge, which was presently £227.50. There had been a debate at their meeting as to whether to give residents an extra 50p a week refund in the next month's charge, or whether to set aside funds for future development – the latter was decided. He explained that the development fund currently sat at around £200,000, plus another £100,000 due to go into it from a surplus

projected for next year. He said that their purposes were to meet primary objectives – one of which is to have some sort of community centre they might be expected to make a contribution towards. Mr Weir pointed out that they couldn't keep collecting money for that purpose unless they were sure it was going to happen. He told the Council that they were moving into the third year of setting funds aside, and they were looking for some guidance on whether to stop collecting for that, or if there was a realistic probability of it happening.

Mr Weir said that BVT wanted to build an outdoor gym on some BVT land. They wanted to press ahead, but Telford & Wrekin Council (TWC) may be planning to do the same thing, and they didn't want to duplicate. He said that they also have money set aside to try and improve community organisations and help them get started. He said that there had been an extremely low take-up of that, despite setting aside £25,000 a year. He would like to see if there was anything they could do jointly with the Council to get the community to develop services, he said.

As a group of residents, their priorities included looking at staffing arrangements, he continued. They wished to have a dedicated Lawley Village manager post, and to eventually have staff dedicated to Lawley based within Lawley, so that residents would have a named, accountable person, and "get to know them".

Their budget this year was around £520,000, Mr Weir continued, of which a substantial part was taken up by salaries and estates. Mr Weir said that he thought that there were different ways to "divvy up that pie" to make it work better for Lawley, which would be their aim over the next couple of years.

Mr Weir explained that the new Lawley Management Committee was chaired by Benedict Croft. The committee's role was "essentially deciding how to spend budget within restrictions set out by contract". A lot went into head office costs, he said, as well as overheads for their Lightmoor offices. He said that a huge amount of money was in a sinking fund (circa £750k), which was reserved for future maintenance costs of the estate. Much less land had been transferred than should have been, he added.

Mr Weir finished by saying that he was keen for the Parish Council and LMC to share information, and to talk about their respective spending priorities.

Mr Croft said that he wanted to say "thank you" for the Council sending a representative to the new LMC, feeling that it built bridges and "helped us go forward". He reiterated what Mr Weir said about it being resident led and added that there was a lot of money to be invested. Developers had not kept land tidy and "had not been doing anything", he said, so BVT would be in contact with the Parish Council to try and "not step on toes with [its] role with managing of green spaces".

Cllr Mehta thanked Mr Weir and Mr Croft for their time.

## **2020/80 MINUTES**

The minutes from the **Full Council Meeting** held on **15<sup>th</sup> October 2020** were **APPROVED**. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be signed and **ADOPTED** as a true record. This was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Lee Vidor and **SECONDED** by Cllr Rob Parker.

## **2020/81 FINANCE**

- a) Invoices were authorised for payment at the bank – to be sent for authorisation for payment on 13 November.

## **2020/82 POLICIES**

- a) *Grant policy review*

Jill Holland, Deputy Clerk, explained that councillors had asked to review the extant Grants Policy at the previous Full Council meeting. Specifically, it had been requested that a cap of £500 be introduced, with a proviso that grant applications exceeding that amount be considered. It had also been requested that a clause be added which states that activities which are the responsibility of the education authority would not be considered. She added that the staff team had discussed changing the timeframe of grant reviews and thought it would be better if grants could be reviewed monthly instead of twice a year. Successful applicants would get their money sooner, and the time spent by councillors on reviews would be spread out over the year, giving more time for discussion.

Cllr Mehta asked councillors for their comments.

Cllr Shaun Davies thanked Jill Holland for her work on the policy. He said that he wanted to challenge whether the Council should have a bar on not supporting grants from education authorities or other statutory authorities. He said that this would rule out a number of schemes that, if it weren't for Parish Council contributions, wouldn't be viable. He suggested that the policy should instead state that it would be unlikely or unusual for such grants to be accepted, so that it wasn't an absolute bar to applications.

Cllr Mike Tyler said that he didn't attend the previous meeting but assumed that this change had been triggered by the grant application from Newdale Primary School. He said that he thought he was in agreement with Cllr Davies – he cited that the Parish Council had previously supported Newdale Primary School's annual open day – it'd had a stall there and donated prize money. He said that while he didn't think this was something that shouldn't be considered, he did not think it should be an 'absolute bar'.

Cllr Rob Parker said that he thought that an outdoor classroom should be provided by the education authority. Years ago the Parish Council had provided funding to school Christmas parties, he said, so he was not against supporting schools, but that if the responsibility for what they were asking for was that of another authority, that authority should fund it. He added that he was happy to remove the line that specified 'education authority', as the 'statutory authority' line covered it. Otherwise he was "really happy with it", he added.

Cllr Jayne Greenaway said that it would depend on the application. She thought that it could have a line in there that states 'serious consideration' but agreed to take out the 'education authority' line.

Cllr Amrik Jhawar said that last year the Parish Council had given money to Newdale Primary School to upgrade their playing fields. He said that it was "not something you should ignore if there's a need".

Cllr Parker said that his only other suggestion regarded where the policy mentioned "to qualify applicants must be sure that it will benefit the parish" – Cllr Parker felt that this needed to read "benefit the residents of the parish" instead.

Cllr Davies said that the bar to statutory authorities would also be an issue – for example, speeding is the responsibility of police, which is a statutory authority, and asked if this line would mean that the Parish Council would not support a community speed watch programme or neighbourhood watch scheme. He added that he felt it was about wording. He said that this line needed to be removed or he would not support the revised policy.

Cllr Greenaway said that there was nothing she could see in the policy that specifically identified start-up grants, and wondered if the wording could be changed, as the Parish Council had championed start-up grants in the past.

Cllr Lee Vidor said that he thought it was a good idea to consider grant applications throughout the year, but that they needed to be careful, and have some rules on how that is managed in practice. He asked how the Parish Council would effectively manage the money so that it was spread out over the year, rather than being a "free for all".

Cllr Mehta asked if the staff team could revise the Grants Policy to reflect the comments made by councillors.

**ACTION: Jill Holland to change the draft Grants Policy to reflect the comments made by councillors and submit a new draft to councillors via email in advance of the next Full Council meeting.**

*b) Social Media Policy review*

Cllr Parker raised concerns about the section of the draft Social Media policy which specified that the Council would respond to direct messages on social media platforms. The Clerk explained that while the staff team would respond to general enquiries on social media, any larger or more complicated issues would be resolved via more formal channels. Cllr Parker asked that the policy was changed to reflect that.

Cllr Greenaway raised questions about the section of the draft Social Media policy regarding the moderation of advertisement messages. Matt Lever, Administration Assistant, explained that it was sometimes permitted for local businesses to post messages about pressing issues – such as when they were permitted to inform residents of new opening times in the wake of the last coronavirus lockdown.

**ACTION: Matt Lever to change the draft Social Media policy to reflect the comments made by councillors and submit a new draft to councillors via email in advance of the next Full Council meeting.**

**2020/83 COUNCILLORS SESSION**

**Cllr Lee Vidor** – reported that:

- The Lawley Community Speed Watch, of which he is a member, had temporarily ceased its activities due to the ongoing coronavirus lockdown.

**Cllr Mike Tyler** – reported that:

- People had been contacting him about reopening community groups. He said that he wanted to know if there was a way for information about Parish Council grants to be easily provided to such groups. He wondered if there was a PDF file with the Grants Policy and the grant application process that he could send out to people. Jill Holland

explained to Cllr Tyler that the staff team had already been looking at better ways for grants information to be put out, but pointed out that there was a Grants section of the website to which people could be linked, where all of that information was present. She said that she would send some copies to Cllr Tyler.

**ACTION: Jill Holland to email the Grants Policy and application form to Cllr Tyler.**

**Cllr Amrik Jhawar** – reported that:

- Parking on Birchfield Way was “atrocious”, which was causing problems and people were complaining. The Clerk explained to Cllr Jhawar that remedial work was ongoing on Phases Two, Three, and Four; this would hopefully be completed by the end of November or early December. The area would then be handed over to TWC Highways to manage. They are fully aware of the issue and will hopefully begin dialogue to alleviate the problems.

## **2020/84 WARD MEMBERS SESSION**

**Cllr Jayne Greenaway** – reported that:

- Quite a few people had been contacting her with questions about COVID-19 regulations.
- She had put in a submission regarding the variation of conditions application for Phase 11 and its affordable housing element, but because affordable housing is part of the legal S106 agreements, it will need to go to Planning Committee for determination.

**Cllr Raj Mehta** – reported that:

- He has had a few elderly residents, who haven’t got Internet access, asking him about COVID-19 regulations.
- In his capacity as Chair of the Interfaith Council, he had been supporting Telford food bank.

## **2020/85 COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**

### *a) Remembrance Service*

The Clerk began by thanking the staff team for doing a “cracking job”, and for the praise given by all members of the Council in relation to the video. She added “mega thanks” to Simon [Bailey]. As of 11 November, the video had 322 views on YouTube, which she pointed out was good compared to previous videos’ stats. The Remembrance video had also been included in TWC’s round-up montage video, which was also “very good”, and she thanked Cllr Davies for including it in that. The Clerk explained that the video had been very well received. Comments and messages received from residents had been amazing, and the number of residents who had turned-up at the memorial for Remembrance/Armistice day had also been touching. She said that they hoped to “top that” with a live service next year

On a negative note, the Clerk said, the roll of honour at the war memorial had been defaced. The Shropshire Star had been in contact with Cllr Mehta to cover the issue and published a “very good” article in the paper the previous Saturday. There was still no news about ‘olly’ [the apparent name that had been scratched into the roll of honour plate], the Clerk said. She had contacted the fabricators, who said they would come over after 11 November. The fabricators would have to remove the panel before a costing could be obtained; the Clerk reassured councillors that it would be put back within a couple of weeks.

Cllr Mehta thanked Simon Bailey for his hard work on the video and said that the Council was very grateful.

Cllr Davies said that it might be worth exploring security measures for the war memorial; even though there had only been one incident, he said, it might be worth looking into installing CCTV cameras. The Clerk told Cllr Davies that the staff team had discussed that previously, and that there is a power line to the war memorial, so a camera shouldn’t be a major problem.

**ACTION: Clerk to obtain quotes for the installation of a CCTV camera at the war memorial.**

Cllr Vidor agreed; though councillors might not like the installation of “imposing” CCTV, he said, the war memorial needed to be protected. He felt that it was great that the memorial had attracted people to sit around it but wanted to take measures to avoid it becoming a “hangout”.

Cllr John Yorke asked if there was any way to have an area around the memorial for people to plant Royal British Legion-style wooden crosses in the soil. He added that he knew of a couple of residents who had visited the memorial to do so but were unsure of where to place them. The Clerk explained that at the dedication ceremony, the Council had purchased a number of crosses and gave them out to school children and residents, and they stayed in-situ by the roll of honour for a year. She added that as the Council was looking to extend the hard-standing area, a Remembrance patch for crosses could also be incorporated.

b) Newsletter

Simon Bailey, Project, Events, & Engagement Officer, explained that the draft newsletter had been sent out to councillors at the end of the previous week, and he had asked for comments to be sent to him by Monday [9 November]. He thanked the councillors who had responded. There were no amendments from anyone, so the staff team was in the process of performing a final proof-read, with a view to it being sent to printers the following day [13 November]. The printers would provide a proof copy and would arrange for delivery.

**2020/86 CORRESPONDENCE**

- The Clerk explained that the Community Action Team had a couple of actions on it – one of which was regarding parish councils buying in services from Idverde; the Clerk pointed out that the Parish Council pays for the Parish Environmental Team (PET), so it was already buying into it. The other service is civil enforcement, she said, and Dean Sergeant had offered to attend a Full Council meeting and speak to councillors about what they were offering, and about getting bespoke civil enforcement in the parish area if the Council did buy into it. She added that a lot of troublesome roads had not yet been adopted, and asked councillors for their views.

Cllr Davies proposed asking Dean Sergeant, and relevant cabinet members, to attend the next Full Council meeting. He said that he thought it was worth talking to them – not least because the Community Action Team model was much more generous, so even if the Council kept the PET it be under the new model. He highlighted that the model was not just about parking enforcement, but also CCTV provision, which linked into the earlier war memorial discussion. He finished by saying that it was certainly worth asking an officer to “come and chat” at the next Full Council meeting.

**ACTION: Clerk to ask Dean Sergeant to attend the 10 December Full Council meeting to discuss the Community Action Plan.**

- The Clerk informed councillors that information about the council tax base for next year had been received. Papers had to be submitted no later than 1 February 2021.

*Jim Weir and Benedict Croft departed the meeting at 18:53.*

***Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960  
In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted it is requested that the public and press should not be present***

**2020/87 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

Items were noted

*Cllr Shaun Davies departed the meeting at 19:11.*

**2020/88 AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

- COUNCILLORS TO EMAIL ANY AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING TO THE CLERK
- RATIFICATION OF REVISED GRANT AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES
- DEAN SERGEANT TO SPEAK TO COUNCIL ABOUT COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM

**2020/89 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was **NOTED** that the **FULL COUNCIL** parish meeting would take place on **THURSDAY 10<sup>h</sup> DECEMBER at 6pm. Due to the uncertainties created by COVID-19, the venue is likely to be virtual.**

The meeting closed at 7.48pm.

Signed..... Chair

Date.....