



17 March 2022 Full Council meeting minutes

Minutes from 17 March 2022 meeting held at **The Carpenter Centre, Overdale, Telford TF3 5BT.**

In attendance

Members

- Cllr Amrik Jhawar (Central Ward)
- Cllr Rob Parker (West Ward)
- Cllr Lee Vidor (Central Ward)
- Cllr John Yorke (Dawley Bank Ward) - Chairman
- Cllr Shaun Davies (Central Ward)
- Cllr Raj Mehta (Lawley Ward)
- Cllr Cathy Salter (Lawley Ward) – arrived at 18:05 due to personal commitments

Clerk

- Sharon George

Staff

- Simon Bailey (Project, Events & Engagements Officer)
- Jill Holland (Deputy Clerk)
- Matt Lever (Administration Assistant)

2021/139 – Chair's welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting at 18:00.

2021/140 - Apologies and absences

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.

Apologies received and accepted from:

Cllr Jayne Greenaway (Personal Reasons)

Departures: none

2021/141 – Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.



2021/142 – Public participation

A member of the public, Mr D Webb, was in attendance and was welcomed by Cllr John Yorke. He wished to find out about the fencing near the area by Marlborough Way. He noted that they were “sorting the paths” but wondered what was happening to the fences.

The Clerk asked for clarification as to whether he was talking about the area around the pitches, or Phase 5. The member of the public said that he meant the area around the pitches site. The gentleman asked what was happening at the end. The Clerk said that “to be brutally honest” she didn’t know, though there had been no notification of any works around there. The Clerk took the gentleman’s details and took a photograph of the documents he had brought, promising to contact him with answers.

The gentleman reiterated that the area needed proper fencing. The Clerk said that she wasn’t sure who was responsible for that section and that she wouldn’t like to say, but she was “more than happy to check it out”, promising once more to email him.

2021/143 – Minutes of the last meeting

Cllr Yorke asked members if they were happy with the minutes of the last meeting. Cllr Lee Vidor highlighted that there was a typo on one of the headings – “precent” had been written instead of “precept”.

Cllr Yorke then asked members if they were happy with the minutes of the confidential addendum.

The minutes from the **Full Council Meeting** held on **17 February 2022** were **APPROVED**. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be signed and **ADOPTED** as a true record. This was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Amrik Jhawar and **SECONDED** by Cllr Lee Vidor.

2021/144 – Finance

2021/144/A – Invoices for payment

Cllr Rob Parker said that the first thing he wanted to do was to make sure that the Community Action Team (CAT) bill was “what we were expecting”. The Clerk said that it was less, and Cllr Parker asked why. The Clerk said that there had been a provision for an apprentice under the CAT contract, but the apprentice had only been in situ for two weeks, so the Parish Council had negotiated a bill reduction.

Moving on, Cllr Parker said that he had a couple of questions about payments to staff. He asked whether they had enough money in the budget for the payments this month, and if they didn’t, “how much are we short”. Cllr Parker said that “given what we spoke about last month” he was “concerned there [was] not enough money in the payroll budget”. He added that “one employee was earning twice as much this month as normal”.

The Clerk asked if it was a specific member of staff to whom he was referring, and he said yes. The Clerk explained that this was residual leave being paid to the member of staff, who had seven days untaken leave because of having ‘time off in lieu’ (TOIL). Cllr Parker said that they had to establish if that was how it normally had to happen. The Clerk said that the alternative was, when they knew a member of staff was going to leave, she would ask them to use up their annual leave, however, the Council had decided they wanted a handover period with the new member of staff. Cllr Parker said that given pressures on the personnel budget, he was not sure if that was



the right thing to do. The Clerk said that was the decision the Council had made, so untaken holiday had to be paid.

Cllr Mehta expressed his concerns about the financial situation.

Cllr Parker said that he was just raising it as a question to ask. He said he was concerned there was not enough money in the budget to pay it; they might have to arrange to move the money from one place to another. He said they couldn't pay from budget headings that hadn't got finance in them. It would be too late by the next Full Council meeting, he added, so they might have to make additional arrangements.

The Clerk said that she appreciated there was not a Finance Committee meeting until the end of April, and they knew the new financial year would have started by then but they "don't actually have to close it down on the system", so they could "address it when looking at carry-forward and do that as final figures for year-end".

Cllr Parker again asked if they were overspending on a budget this year. The Clerk said it was determined at the last meeting that there was overspend on this year's budget. Cllr Parker said they needed to find money to pay people this month, but that they couldn't pay from the budget if they haven't got finance.

Cllr Yorke said that it was in the budget from 2021/22, so they were overspending on the salaries budget, but they had the ability to "take money from X and put it into Y". Cllr Parker said "actually, we have to do that". He added that there had to be a resolution to do that, or they would be in breach of their own financial regulations.

Cllr Vidor asked if the Clerk knew what the difference was, to which the Clerk replied, "to be honest, not exact figures at this time". Cllr Vidor said they couldn't "just move money if we don't know how much". The Clerk said that they wouldn't know until they did bank reconciliations and financial figures at the end of March.

Cllr Shaun Davies asked if they had only now identified the issue; the Clerk said they had identified there was overspend at the end of January.

Cllr Davies then asked about TOIL, and whether there was an agreement about paying holidays as cash. The Clerk said that in the statement of terms, upon termination of employment residual holiday would be paid. Cllr Davies said when a member of staff leaves, there is a notice period, "this is your TOIL, we want you to do X, Y, Z before you leave", and asked if there was a resolution regarding turning holidays into cash and if that was that budgeted for, or if it would come from overspend. The Clerk said that it was from overspend; when the staff member in question's role was discussed, Council said they wanted a handover. The staff member in question was "here as [they've] taken two weeks off, [they] could have taken the seven days after that but [they're] coming back for the handover period". Cllr Davies said that he thought there should be a policy around that. The Clerk said that normally she would have said to staff to try and take remaining holiday, "almost like garden leave", but on this occasion she did not because the Council decided they wanted a handover.

Cllr Davies asked whether "that additional cost for that arrangement was made clear". He added that they "may decide we don't want to have that handover". The Clerk said, "it was remiss of [her] not to make Council aware of [the staff member] having outstanding holiday, however under the terms of contract, the only time that annual leave can be paid is upon termination of contract."

Cllr Parker asked what they were going to do that month – if they were going to pay people and resolve it next month, then Council needed to minute that that was what they were prepared to do, or they could find out the amounts and resolve it by email. Either way, he said they needed to have a resolution. His aim, he said, was "to make sure we can pay people, whatever we have to do then fine".



Cllr Yorke asked if members were saying the resolution “could include something like the staff get paid everything they are due this month, we have to make some transfer of money”. Cllr Parker said that they might, but they needed to know how much it was.

Cllr Davies said that they had to pay staff, and that he was “not trying to be awkward” but highlighted that there was “not an item on the agenda to make a resolution about that today”.

The Clerk said that she “had not had a resolution put to the table where notice was given beforehand”. The Clerk says if there was a resolution, Cllr Davies was right that it couldn’t be put on the table.

Cllr Parker said, “we pay the bills”. The Clerk said they could look at it at the end of meeting. Cllr Parker suggested they “get all information and bring it to the very next meeting and resolve it”. He added that they had “got the funds, but we shouldn’t be overspending, and we shouldn’t be able to”.

Cllr Mehta said that because it was about money, they “should get into a position where we don’t get into a position”.

Cllr Yorke summarised by saying they bring the issue to the 7 April Full Council meeting.

The invoices for payment were approved.

2021/144/B – Bank reconciliations

Approved.

2021/144/C – Grant application and compilation table

Cllr Yorke informed members that there had been an application from Lawley Rainbows, asking for £300. The Clerk added that this was a new group, which was why she had indicated on the compilation table that they would normally give £500 as a ‘start-up’ grant. There were no financials as it was a new group, she added.

Cllr Yorke said, “we are a nice parish council, with new groups we can offer up to £500”, and asked members if they wished to give the £300 requested or if they wished to give the £500 as usual.

Cllr Vidor asked if this was the last chance for applications; Cllr Yorke said yes. Cllr Vidor said they had £500 left, so he **PROPOSED** giving Lawley Rainbows £500. Cllr Davies **SECONDED**. Cllrs Salter, Jhawar, and Mehta voted in favour.

 **DECISION: Lawley Rainbows to be offered a £500 grant from Lawley and Overdale Parish Council.**

2021/144/D – Appointment of internal auditor

Jill Holland said they had contacted the preferred auditor but was advised that they were no longer able to assist as they were too busy. She sourced an alternative from the recommended list from the Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC) and found Bernard Townsend, previously a bank manager, and had previously done accounts for several parish councils for several years. The cost was slightly cheaper than the other auditor at £250 plus 25p per mile mileage; at an estimated 60-mile round trip, she said, it would be circa £265. She added that she had checked if he was available in May, and he was. Ms Holland asked the Council to decide whether to appoint.

Cllr Yorke summarised what Ms Holland had just explained and asked members for comments.

Cllr Davies **PROPOSED**, though he then asked about the duration the auditor would be used. The Clerk said that they usually asked for a year, but sometimes it was up to three years.

Cllr Mehta **SECONDED**.



All in favour.

2021/144/E – Investment opportunities

Cllr Yorke said that they had “set [the Clerk] a task at the last meeting”. The Clerk said that the working group had met, and the outcome of that meeting was that she was asked to go away to consider fuller options to inform members regarding investments with Insignis at various ranges (£100k to £300k).

She had also been asked to consider property opportunities; she had an appointment with Fodens on Tuesday that week, explained what the Council wanted to do, and they were going to put something together in writing for members to consider, but they also raised issues they “hadn’t thought about as potential landlords”. She said they did express that demand was far exceeding supply, and people “can’t get a house quick enough”. However, she said that there were also various forms of legislation which are changing in relation to landlords and registration, adding that it was “a fluid situation” – even stamp duty was changing, she said. Whatever advice Fodens offer would be “a snapshot in time, but they are going to pull something together”, which she would bring to the April Full Council meeting.

The third option, the Clerk continued, was gilts. Ms Holland said she had “nothing particularly detailed to add yet”. The Clerk said that “the action was to report back, these are the options we’ve come up with, a fuller presentation can be made in the next meeting”.

Cllr Davies asked if the working group had “discounted commercial property”. Cllr Parker responded that they hadn’t discounted them. The Clerk said that they knew what the market was, but they needed to compare yields; when they pull the papers together, they would try to include commercial options too.

Cllr Davies asked if that information would be circulated in writing for members to have the opportunity to read and understand it before the meeting. The Clerk said that it should all be available along with the meeting papers as an appendix.

2021/145 – Councillors’ session

Cllr Shaun Davies reported that:

- There had been “quite a bit of work up in Dawley Bank” on various issues regarding parking around the school. It seemed that, “as [he] predicted”, works on Old Office Road had “displaced traffic onto other roads”, adding that they were “always going to have issues with cars”. They had pushed it out a bit more, however, and his view parking on Concord is better than on Old Office Road but “still not ideal”, and they were “looking to mitigate that”.

Cllr Yorke asked Cllr Davies about residents parking possibilities on Concord. Cllr Davies said they were exploring a permit scheme, but that the “difficulty with that stretch is there are a relatively small number of parking spaces”. He thought that residents wouldn’t want to pay for a permit, so it was “still being explored”. “Anecdotally”, he said, “the school has done a bit of communication with parents about parking spaces”, which he thought was “one of contributing factors why cars now parked further up”.

- There had been quite a bit of work regarding turning the area around Dawley Bank into a ‘Zone 1’ area, with the coffee shop, church, Wrekin View, and the Co-op becoming “a bit of a mini-centre now”. He added that he might come back to the Parish Council for funding for lighting and CCTV.
- Upon being asked by Ms Holland about whether CAT Enforcement officers were doing patrols, Cllr Davies said that there had been a number of high-vis, zero-tolerance patrols, and they did a high-vis operation



with local police, which would continue. He said that it would likely be a problem “for as long as parents drive their kids to school”, though it was a problem they were trying to address.

Cllr Amrik Jhawar reported that:

- He had been on a “ward walk” around Overdale, and seen no major problems, “apart from minor things”.
- The drop curb for pushchairs and wheelchairs on Cedar Close had been put in, which he thought was positive.

Cllr Cathy Salter reported that:

- A resident had reported some road repair was needed at the bottom of Station Road; he had first asked in February 2021, and on Monday he asked for an update. Cllr Salter contacted the Clerk to say that it didn’t seem to be getting done, then on Tuesday evening Cllr Salter received an email saying it had been done. “Very impressive of Telford & Wrekin Council”, she said.
- A resident had contacted her via Facebook about buses for schools and would be very supportive of it.
- Residents on the Hunters Drive estate were having difficulty getting out of the estate; they had West Centre Way and Morrisons and no filter lane. They would prefer traffic lights like a filter lane to be able to get out easier. More houses had been built opposite, so it was getting congested in the morning. The Clerk said they had asked for the four-way “time and again”, but the data “didn’t support the need for a filter lane”, though she could “bring it to the fore again at the next Highways meeting”. Cllr Salter questioned that, because “more traffic was coming out now”. Cllr Yorke said that, as an ex-traffic engineer, the problem was that it would decrease the capacity of the junction – as soon as extra stages were introduced it would need extra safety, which affected reserve capacity. “Just as an aside”, he added.

Cllr Lee Vidor reported that:

- He had been contacted by a resident on High Fields about them having issues pulling out onto Glendale as it was “really congested”, between Highways and Enforcement he wanted to show they were “doing something”. The Clerk said she would take it to the next Highways meeting.

- **ACTION 058: Clerk to raise the High Fields/Glendale congestion issue at the next Highways meeting.**

Cllr John Yorke reported that:

- Regarding Phase 11, he and the Clerk had a meeting with the Lawley Village Developer Group and advised them of issues that the Ladygrove Residents Association had raised. There were various problems there still regarding ownership, which the Land Registry confirmed. Residents had taken legal advice and were told they had right-of-way across the site as part of their deeds, which could affect houses on the estate. They had also written to the Secretary of State about it, which could result in a public enquiry. He added that he had seen the paperwork that shows what they were saying was correct.

Clerk, Sharon George, reported that:

- Although she was not a councillor, she had an important update – there had been a very large instance of fly-tipping reported on Phase 11, so not on council land, however police were informed as residents on Martingale Way had video footage of the whole incident. She had contacted police earlier that day. It was builders’ rubble being tipped on the site, but it was not by the development group working on there. It was done early evening so quite light. She said that one of the residents on Hunters Rise had also got video footage as well, which was very good quality. Homes England was getting the rubble moved, she added.



2021/146 – Ward members' session

Cllr Jacqui Seymour reported (via email, read by Jill Holland and reproduced below) that:

- *"The only thing I have to report are updates on the Solar Farms. The Steeraway application is still due to go to the Planning Board, hopefully, on 6th April.*

The New Works application, which has been appealed, is now expected to be determined at a four-day Public Enquiry starting on the 21st of June. The Planning Officer is hoping to be able to hold a briefing session prior to that date for interested parties, especially those who are likely to want to make comment at The Enquiry such as Ward Members and Parish Councils.

The only other bit of information the Parish Council may be interested in is that the Planning Application for a Car Park at the Donkey Field at The Wrekin has now been approved. I am hoping to get some completion time scales before too long."

2021/147 – Community affairs

2021/147/A – Newdale Park

The Clerk said that all councillors were aware of the proposed Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP). They had met and considered the options, but the Parish Council felt strongly that the consultation was flawed; it had received lots of comments from residents saying it was only giving options, not a box for comment and no box for "none of the above, leave it as it is".

She said that they were quite aware of the outcome of the consultation; there was an option put out for approval "and they are ploughing ahead with it". The freedom of information (FOI) request she had submitted was done not only to question figures put forward to the Partnership Board regarding funding for Newdale park, but also to look at projects that hadn't been delivered and check where they were. The Clerk had "kindly been furnished with that information", although expenditures pre-2012 were not available. She said that Newdale park was discussed at the Steering Group, where questions were asked regarding delivery options. She had spoken with Kerry Woodhouse earlier in the week, and there would be a subcommittee group where they would meet again to look at options. Comments were noted, she said, but there was going to be an option that was "going to have to be chosen, when it goes to planning". She said "that "might be our opportunity to state our case as per requests from residents".

On the monetary side, she had put in a query, and it had arisen out of the existing play area which was not a NEAP but a local equipped area for play (LEAP). She said that Section 106 states that the money is for a NEAP, although refurbishment of a NEAP can be undertaken, which she thought was a "play on words" but she put in a question. There may be a shortfall as £45,000 had been spent already, she said, adding "watch this space moving forward".

2021/147/B – LOPC and Community Action Team (CAT)

The Clerk said that she had met with Leah Wallage-Coyne who had updated the March plans. From the Clerk's perspective, she knew councillors had asked if they were getting value for the CAT, she had been reiterated that it was "imperative for this to work with councillors", so she said to members "don't hold back if you want things raising, we can get Enforcement on it to nip things in the bud", adding that she thought it was important to do so.

Cllr Vidor said that at Lawley Primary School, one of the parents had said they were worried their cars were being repeatedly photographed, and they were worried they were going to get a fine just for dropping off. He said he



didn't know what the purpose of taking photos was or what came of them, but that it happened quite often. He added that the had been dropping off in a bus stop, albeit an inactive one, which the Clerk pointed out could have been a contravention in the eyes of an Enforcement officer. Ms Holland advised that she would raise this with the CAT to obtain further information of why photographs were being taken.

Cllr Davies said that the first picture was the start of a ten-minute observation time, while the second picture was for if the vehicle went over ten minutes. Cllr Vidor said that there was no public bus. The Clerk said they needed clarification.

Ms Holland raised dog fouling – there was a persistent offender by the war memorial, she said, although she declined to give specific details of the offence. The camera the Parish Council had there didn't pick up what they needed, but they had been and checked it and were working with the CAT team, and a covert camera would be installed to try and catch the perpetrator.

Cllr Vidor said that he had noticed an increased amount of dog fouling across the village. Ms Holland said it had been noted that week.

The Clerk said that the camera overlooking the war memorial was an old one, and somebody had to stand under it and download the footage. The signal there was "awful", however, and they were "really struggling"; they had asked for a specific time period of footage. So, they "had very kindly they put in a covert camera". Cllr Davies pointed out that if this was minuted, it wouldn't be covert anymore. Ms Holland replied that could be the case, but it may also stop the offender if they are aware that such a camera is there.

Cllr Davies said that a speed indicator device (SID) on Milners Lane was not working, wondering if it was "the battery or something". He asked that if it wasn't going to be used, could they just take it down. The Clerk said that they had new SIDs to replace it with. Cllr Davies said that it had "been sitting there for six years and never worked". The Clerk said that they had data from it dating within the last three years, but it couldn't be taken down at that time as their PET operative was on holiday. As soon as he returned, he would take it down and get the new ones up. The Clerk suggested Cllr Parker help due to his technical knowledge.

2021/147/C – CAT/Parish Environmental Team (PET)

The Clerk said that it was all in the report, though highlighted to members that they did now have an apprentice, and it was all "working very well".

2021/147/D – Safer Stronger Communities

Ms Holland said they had met with Cllr Eileen Callear, Simon Hayden, and some of the CAT Enforcement team; they highlighted a few fly-tip areas, but the PET operative was already aware of those and reported them whenever he could.

Ms Holland said the "main thing" was "getting the Carpenter Centre back up for community use", and they were still waiting for information on quotes for works to the kitchen and redecorating the hall. She had chased those, she said, but received no answers yet. The Clerk said that the launch date had been put off until the end of April, though she had chased it that week and found that they hadn't had quotes yet, so it perhaps may be later than that. "Being realistic", she thought, "why not aim for the works to be done at the start of the six weeks break?"

2021/147/E – Upgrade to Google Workplace subscription

Cllr Yorke asked members for any comments, adding that it seemed "to be a choice of do we stay where we are, or go to Microsoft", and that he thought it was "financial really".



Cllr Vidor thought they should stick with the Gmail. He said that the only thing he didn't understand was Microsoft Teams. He said that he had found out that day that the office BT package had an app or system similar to Teams/Zoom, which might even save on the current software the Council used. They might benefit from that, he said, but he was happy to stay with Gmail.

Cllr Parker said, "fine by me, someone will have to be the administrator for that though". The Clerk recommended Matt Lever.

Cllr Yorke thought they should go with Google and take the benefit of the offer.

Cllr Parker suggested that they "keep an eye out for alternatives to Teams".

2021/147 – Correspondence

2021/147/A – West Mercia 'Don't Buy Crime' Initiative

The Clerk explained that this was the Smart Water initiative. The police were offering a price of £8.90 per kit instead of £25, which she thought was a good deal. Cllr Davies asked, "times by", and the Clerk nodded, and said "until you multiply it by however many households". Simon Bailey said that the cost would be £49,000.

The Clerk said that she knew police were promoting Neighbourhood Watch, and there was a new one in the "top half of Lawley". When she asked for more information from Nicholas Hall, he said they could do small sections at a time, but the Clerk asked, "where do you start?" It "may very well be cost prohibitive", she said.

Cllr Davies proposed they "adjourn the question of this until the setting of next year's budget". If they had got no budget next year, he said, they could consider in the following year.

Cllr Yorke asked if that £8.90 only applied for "a total take-up", or if they could just get a small number. The Clerk said they could do 1000 and it would still be £8.90.

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.

2021/148 – Confidential items

Items were noted.

2021/149 – Agenda items for the next meeting

- Councillors to email any agenda items for the next meeting to the Clerk.



2021/150 – Date of next meeting

It was **noted** that the **Full Council** parish meeting would take place on **Thursday 7 April 2022 at 6pm**, at **The Carpenter Centre, Overdale.**

The meeting closed at 8.37pm

Signed by Chairman:

Date:



Action record

Ref #	Minute #	Open date	Description	Assigned to	Target date	Date closed	Comments
001	2020/158	15/04/2021	Councillors to approve invoices for payment before Cllr Parker/Vidor/Greenaway authorises them at the bank.	All councillors	Ongoing	N/A	
006	2020/160	15/04/2021	Councillors to respond in a timely manner to all emails marked as 'response required.'	All councillors	Ongoing	N/A	"Hopefully, we will become better boys and girls!" – Cllr John Yorke, 17/06/2021. Reiterated December 2021
034	2021/047	26/07/2021	Clerk to insist that TWC respond to their questions about PROW.	SG/JH	Ongoing	N/A	JH Ongoing dialogue with TWC
047	2021/085	11/11/2021	Clerk to chase up Highways regarding the promised works on Dawley Road.	SG	ONGOING		Highways chased on 2 sep. occasions
048	2021/086	11/11/2021	Clerk to contact Chris Pearson to find out Lawley and Overdale Parish Council's position on the TRO waiting list.	SG	ONGOING		Still awaiting answers
055	2021/125/A		The Clerk to cease the current BT contract, obtain the refund and seek an alternative supplier	SG	22.2.22		Obtain refund, complete VOIP and cancel 2 nd b/band contract
056	2021/126		The Clerk to check if Sanctuary is responsible for the block paving	SG	17.03.22		Contact to verify ownership
057	2021/128/C		The Clerk to issue a reminder regarding the wildflower project	SG	17.03.22		Organise meeting with JG/CH and verify funds
058	2021/145	17/03/2022	Clerk to raise the High Fields/Glendale congestion issue at the next Highways meeting.	SG	07/04/2022		

n.b. "Target date" defaults to the date of the next Full Council meeting when no specific timeframe is set, to enable progress to be reviewed.