

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Astley Parish
Held at 7pm on Wednesday 24 May 2023, at Astley Village Hall

PRESENT: Astley Parish Councillors E Beddell, K Lloyd (Chairman), H Mardell (Vice Chairman) and D Williams
Also Present: D Dorrell, Clerk, Councillor L Picton (Shropshire Council) and 7 parishioners.

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs S Robinson, N Sherwood, and Flt Lt S Mason.

3. MINUTES OF THE PARISH MEETING HELD ON 4TH MAY 2022

The Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 4th May 2022 were agreed.

The Chairman took next Agenda Item 5, RAF Shawbury Report

4. RAF SHAWBURY REPORT

In the absence of Flt Lt Stu Mason, the Chairman read aloud the report that had been forwarded to the Parish Council, attached to the draft minutes at Appendix B.

The Chairman took next Agenda Item 6, Shropshire Council Report.

5. SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL REPORT

Cllr Picton delivered her annual report, attached to the draft minutes at Appendix C. The report included an update on Shropshire Council's divisional boundary review being conducted by the Local Government Boundary Commission. There were no changes planned for Astley Parish. The Community Governance Review of Shropshire Town and Parish Councils would commence in October with any changes taking effect before the elections in 2025.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Picton who then left the meeting.

6. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – Shropshire

This was covered by Cllr Picton in her report (Minute 5).

7. CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman delivered her annual report, attached to the draft minutes at Appendix A.

8. REPORTS FROM PARISH ORGANISATIONS

8a) ST Mary's Church, Astley

Cllr Beddell delivered a report on behalf of St Mary's Church. His report highlighted the Special Benefice family friendly service last month, covering Clive, Grinshill, Hadnall and Astley Churches. The Bishop of Lichfield delivered the service which took place in the woods behind Grinshill Village Hall with many children attending.

9. REPRESENTATIONS FROM PARISHIONERS

A Parishioner reported considerable overgrowth blocking the Shropshire Way where it crossed through a field near Beaconsfield. This would be reported to Shropshire Council.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.34 pm.

Signed:
Chairman

Appendix A

Annual Meeting of Astley Parish 24th May 2023 22/23 Chairman's Report

This year we are reviewing the Astley Parish Plan, which was first published in 2014, this is not the first time we have carried out a review to enable us to update our priorities for the Shropshire Council Place Plan. To ensure that every household is consulted the Parish Council decided to compile an information leaflet to let parishioners know some of what "You said" and "What we did/do". A working group of three councillors and the clerk was formed, and the hard work began. This will be delivered to every house with a survey pre-paid reply card for you to let us know your priorities.

To research the "We did/ do" I have read through the minutes of every meeting since 2014, at the start this seemed a very repetitive job, the same topics arising time and again, but then progress in the last few years began to show.

The roads, traffic, A53, A49, accidents safety road signs, all are issues included in our minutes this year but with positive responses from Shropshire Council. We may have been writing to make people aware of our roads for 8 years, but we do now have, if not immediate, their attention which can be seen in the consultation we are to receive on the Safety Design Scheme for the A53.

There was of course lots of Applications for "tree maintenance" which is good to see that we have a village that cares and maintains the tree population in accordance with our Conservation area. On planning matters, there have been some big applications to consider.

The main topics which repeatedly cropped up are covered in the leaflet, but my reading also showed that our relationship with the Police has improved and our good relationship with RAF Shawbury has continued and grown, thank you to both and we look forward to a continuing positive relationship.

After a prolonged period of having a Locum Clerk we were very pleased to employ Dianne Dorrell in July 2022 whom I must thank on behalf of us all for her support, advice, and enormous Council knowledge.

My thanks also to Lezley Picton our local Shropshire Councillor for her support and attendance at our meetings to provide her report.

Thank you finally to the Parish Councillors who have selflessly given up their own time over the last year for the benefit of the parish not only attending the scheduled by- monthly meeting but taking on the responsibility of checking our assets, the two defibrillators, noticeboards, sitting on and listening into committees and training. Being a parish councillor is volunteering which was one of the topics at the coronation of King Charles 111.

It is not always clear how much the parish council and the Clerk contributes to the Parish, take a look at the minutes for the last year it was a busy one.

We look forward to receiving all the survey replies and take this opportunity to thank you all.
Kate Lloyd

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Chairman
Astley Parish Council

Appendix B

To Astley Parish Council

Report from RAF Shawbury to the Annual Meeting of the Parish

Night Flying

The next night flying phase is planned to commence on Monday 30th May until Thursday 13th July, posts will be put on the RAF Shawbury Facebook/Twitter sites explaining the activity and we are grateful for tolerance of this essential training. There is also detail on the Stn webpage with contact details for complaints.

Hi-Viz for horse riders

We have received replacement stock and will be able to start taking orders again before the end of May hopefully.

Drones

If anyone flies a drone/model aircraft locally it is a good idea to view and understand the Drone Code, available on the CAA website and posts on our Facebook and Twitter.

Aries Magazine

The current Spring edition (2023 Edition 1) is available and links are also online at <https://www.rafmags.co.uk/>. Unfortunately, the publisher is limiting the number of hardcopies from this year so we will not be able to distribute as many in the future, but it will remain online and with links on our social media and website.

Course Community Projects

We are looking to refresh the course community projects list for out trainees, so grateful for any ideas. Courses would normally be available for a weekday and tools/equipment and supervision would need to be provided.

Regards

Stu Mason

Flt Lt

Air Ops (Systems) Officer (OF2) MSM QTLS | Flt Lt S D Mason

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Appendix C

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY REVIEW

Following agreement by Shropshire Council to undertake a community and Parish review suddenly the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) decided that there needed to be a divisional review of Shropshire. The first stage of the process was for Council to agree on the number of councillors required and the system of governance for the future. The council proposal received cross party agreement and we asked LGBC to consider 76 councillors (3,499 electors per councillor) and to stay with the Cabinet system. The LGBC came back to us to say they were minded to go with 74 (same as now, approximately 3,700 electors per councillor). The next stage was to look at how the new boundaries should be developed. A proposal, which again received cross party support, was drafted by the council but the LGBC may or may not take any notice of the suggestions made – they didn't!

The LGBC published their draft recommendations on 2nd May. We always knew there would be changes to the Tern Division as they regarded the current division as a "mop up" and they don't like these style divisions. In our own draft the parishes of Upton Magna, Withington, Uffington and Astley were separated from Bomere and Bicton, however, as suspected, the LGBC have had other ideas and have kept Tern largely as before, the change being Bicton Parish now goes to the Longden Division and the Tern Division gains the Parish of Hadnall. In the draft plan there are no changes for the Parish of Astley. However, it should be noted that the proposed division now straddles parliamentary boundaries!!

Further details can be found by following the link: <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/Shropshire>

THE BIG FOUR

The Redevelopment of the Riverside in Shrewsbury: The award of nearly £18.7M for the development of the Riverside area in Shrewsbury has enabled us to move the project forward in terms of time and over the summer there will be a number of public events being held to capture ideas from residents and the general public. We will also be publishing the Movement Strategy very soon. I have often said that the town centre plans are like giant Jenga, you have to get things in the right order and the Movement Strategy is a really important piece of work. Look out for this around the summer.

The Local Plan: The Inspectorate has agreed we have fulfilled our "Duty to Cooperate" which was the big hurdle we had to overcome. The inspection now continues. There is a significant amount of work still to be undertaken but we have recently had the public session which focused on waste and minerals. We have yet to receive dates for the site-specific examinations.

The Future of Shirehall: It was agreed at a meeting of Full Council that we would be leaving the Shirehall for a new home in the town centre. I have made no secret of the facts surrounding this building, which is expensive to run, no longer fit for purpose and will be very expensive to refurbish in a meaningful way.

The Northwest Relief Road: The final public consultation period has now concluded, and we move closer to getting the application to Committee. I am still expecting the meeting to be held in early summer.

LOCAL MATTERS

The usual minor highway repairs and speed of traffic issues have come across my desk this year alongside chasing up matters reported by the Clerk. However, on top of the usual highway matters of potholes etc there has been major concern over the speed of traffic and the road conditions on the A53. We still await the plans for the speed reduction proposals. I chase on a monthly basis (as does the Clerk) and I am promised the plans will be presented within the early part of this financial year. I try to

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keep my annual report fairly brief however, I have included (on the following page) a short report on all the things we are doing in terms of climate change etc. There is a lot of interesting stuff taking place so thought this would be a good opportunity to give you an update, but I won't read it out at the meeting!!

As always it has been a pleasure to work alongside Chair Kate, Clerk Dianne and all the Parish Councillors. If there is anything you need to know you only have to shout.

LEZLEY PICTON

Shropshire Councillor for the Tern Division May 2023

CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

1. Public EV charging infrastructure - Following on from our recent success in obtaining almost £1m of Government funding for EV chargers in our car parks and streets, Shropshire Council is now hoping to obtain additional Government grant money towards a new post to help develop and implement an EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy and bid for further funding, including installations at additional public car parks, park & ride sites and parish halls. We plan to publish a 'Public EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy' and supporting resources later this year, including a 'toolkit' to help the public and businesses with their understand of the technology. We may also be able to bid for funding to support the installation of a strategic network of more powerful 'rapid' chargers to provide faster top ups for both visitors and local communities alike. This is expected to help ensure that Shropshire towns remain attractive to visitors who may need to charge electric vehicles during their stay. We have recently asked Parish and Town Councils to identify potential locations for public EV chargers in their areas.

2. Community Benefits from Solar Farms – Shropshire Council is working with SALC to develop and distribute guidance to help Parish and Town Councils and Parish Meetings to engage with the prospective developers of new solar farms to help them to negotiate a package of community benefits if appropriate.

3. Roof-mounted solar and the Big Solar Co-op – Shropshire Council already has 27 roof-mounted solar arrays on its buildings and is currently reviewing its own estate to identify potential opportunities for additional arrays. Shropshire Council has also provided a grant to the not-for-profit Big Solar Co-op to provide free advice to businesses and community organisations (including parish councils) wishing to explore the installation of solar panels on appropriate roofs in Shropshire. The capital costs of the installation are also met by Big Solar Co-op and funded through crowd- funded investment, with cheap, renewable energy being supplied to the host organisation at 10-20% below market energy costs.

4. Business Energy Breakfast – Shropshire Council recently organised an event at Shrewsbury Town FC (which Ian attended) to provide local business with access to authoritative advice and practical information and guidance on sustainable energy solutions, funding sources and energy and environmental auditing. Additional value has been derived by filming the event and making the footage more widely available through the Council's Youtube channel.

<https://newsroom.shropshire.gov.uk/2023/03/energy-resilience-affordability-and-sustainability-top-of-the-agenda-for-business-leaders/>

5. Cool Shropshire - Shropshire Council has grant funded a local environmental consultancy, E4 Environment, to provide a free environmental support scheme for local micro businesses and SMEs looking to be a little greener and start their carbon reduction journey. Businesses registering with the scheme will receive tailored advice about how they can reduce overheads through increased efficiency, enhance their reputation, and connect with like-minded businesses to collectively make a difference.

6. Biochar plant – Shropshire Council is exploring the potential to develop a demonstrator project around the manufacture of biochar from natural woody materials from grounds and highway maintenance using a pyrolysis plant which cooks (rather than burning) the woody feedstock to reduce it to pure carbon. There is a rapidly expanding market for the resultant biochar, which as well as storing carbon which would otherwise be released to the atmosphere from burning or natural

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decomposition, can be used to improve soil quality and in the manufacture of low carbon building materials. The process can also generate internationally recognised 'carbon offset credits' for sale to organisations wishing to offset their carbon emissions.

7. Area-based Carbon Insetting – Shropshire Council has recently applied for Government funding to develop and test a mechanism which would provide a local alternative to the purchase of internationally validated carbon credits in rainforest countries, allowing them to invest in projects which reduce emissions or capture and store carbon in Shropshire (including through the manufacture of biochar above). This is called 'insetting' as opposed to 'offsetting'. If successful, this project has the potential to revolutionise how local climate action and carbon reduction measures could be funded.

8. Supply-chain emissions modelling – 94% of Shropshire Council's carbon footprint is generated by what it buys in from suppliers. The Council has commissioned detailed modelling of everything which it has purchased during the last 3 years to help it to identify the goods and services which generate the most carbon. The Council will then work with its suppliers to help them to improve their carbon performance and proposes to update its corporate procurement policy to identify carbon performance as key consideration in the procurement process.

9. Green hydrogen feasibility – It is widely recognised that current battery technology is unlikely to be suitable for heavy goods vehicles due to issues of range, weight and recharging infrastructure. This is relevant for council buses, gritters and refuse vehicles in particular, but is also crucial for the agriculture, construction and road freight sectors. The Council is therefore working with Kier and their technology partner Protium to explore the potential to establish a small-scale demonstrator hydrogen fuel manufacturing facility, co-located with renewable energy generation on Council owned land. This work may also identify a separate network of potential refuelling facilities in strategic locations. It is expected that, if proven, such a facility could then be replicated locally, for example at the scale of an individual farm business.

10. Battlefield heat network – Shropshire Council has commissioned consultants to develop proposals for a local heat network which would capture and distribute waste heat from the Battlefield Waste to Energy plant to nearby businesses. It may be possible in future to extend the network to include local community buildings and social housing. The study is expected to report later this year and if a business case is established, will inform a bid for Government funding towards the capital costs of the heat network.