

Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Pitchford, Ruckley & Langley Parish Council

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Thursday 16 May 2024 at 7.30pm
Pitchford Village Hall

MINUTES

1. Welcome

Councillor Paul Harrison, Chairman of the Parish Council, welcomed all to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

2. Minutes of the Previous Parish Meeting:

- a. The minutes of the meeting on 3 May 2023 were accepted as an accurate record.
- b. The Parish Clerk reported that all actions from the previous meeting had been actioned.

3. Parish Charity - Godolphin Edwards Trust

Nikki Winmill, Program Officer for the Community Foundation, which now administers the Trust, explained the grants available to residents of the parish. The Trust is an endowment fund with the annual interest made available for grants. Community Groups may apply for up to £2,500 and individuals up to £500. There are two windows during the year to apply for funds; but emergency funds may be requested year round.

4. West Mercia Police Report

PCSO Stuart Roberts and PC Richard Walters presented the report. The Parish is a very low crime area. Since January there have been 8 incidents: 1 report of a suspicious vehicle, 2 damage-only road traffic accidents, and 5 other incidents (such as assault/harassment/concern for safety). The local policing team is regularly present in the parish.

Recently 7 men were arrested following an 8-month investigation into rural crime. The police stressed the importance of reporting suspicious activity such as vehicles and drones which can aid this type of investigation. There is an intelligence unit in Shrewsbury which works to link incidents and build cases.

The police encourage members of the public to sign up to Neighbourhood Matters, which is the best place to receive direct messages on local policing from the police.

5. Report of Parish Council Accounts

Cllr Harrison outlined the Parish Council's accounts for April 2023 – March 2024. These are presented in the attached report. In addition, Cllr Harrison explained that the Council is holding Community Benefit Funds in order to be able to help to support Pitchford Village Hall and/or the village shop in the future, when needed.

6. Chairman's Annual Report

Cllr Harrison reported on the work of the Parish Council during 2023/24. The Council held 6 ordinary and 3 extraordinary meetings (to discuss planning applications and Local Government boundary review for which the deadline for consultation was before the next scheduled meeting).

The Council's regular work includes commenting on planning applications; reporting local highway issues and following up rights of way issues.

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The Council has also been preparing a number of projects:

- Replacement of Frodesley bus shelter
- Repairs to Pitchford bus shelter
- Traffic calming to be undertaken by Shropshire Council – 30mph speed limit at Frodesley. 30mph roundels on roads through all villages where the limit applies.
- Village gateways for all villages – presentation attached.

Parish Council elections take place in May 2025, the Parish Council would be happy to hear from any residents who are interested in becoming a Councillor at the next election.

7. Shropshire Councillor's Report

Cllr Dan Morris's full report is attached. He stressed the financial and budgetary issues that Shropshire Council is facing with the increased demand and costs of social care services. This will lead to visible changes to services and increases to fees and Council tax.

Changes to democratic boundaries mean that the parish will move to South Shropshire at the next General Election. The Shropshire Council ward boundaries have also been redrawn, as a result Burnell ward will gain the parishes of Church Pulverbatch, Church Preen, Hughley and Kenley and lose Cardington, All Stretton, Smethcott and Woolstaston.

Cllr Morris thanked the Parish Councillors for their hard work over the year.

Action: Cllr Morris to chase removal of loose branch in tree on road between Longnor and Frodesley.

8. Concord College Report

Michael Truss, the Principal, and Matthew Hodge, the Bursar, attended to report on Concord College. The College continues to be very successful having been awarded Independent School of the Year for International Experience and named one of the world's best 100 schools. The college is not seeking to increase student numbers above the current DfE limit of 630 and may face a significant challenge with the likely introduction of VAT on tuition fees in the near future. The College has an outreach programme with local primary schools.

The College recently submitted two planning applications for major new buildings, a new boarding house and a sports hall. These are necessary as the College site has grown organically over the past 50 years and a number of its buildings are no longer fit for purpose. Work is planned for September 2024-early 2026. The College also intends to submit two further planning applications for another boarding house and a dining hall. These will be built at the heart of the campus, replacing existing buildings. However, the building of these structures is dependant on College funds and any effects of introduction of VAT on fees. Once a contractor is appointed they will work with Shropshire Council's Highways team on a mitigation plan for construction traffic.

Concerns were raised about the speed of vehicles on the Pitchford Road commuting to/from the college.

Action: College to circulate memo to staff to drive considerately.

9. Pitchford Village Hall Report

Mike Price, Chairman of the Village Hall Committee highlighted the success of the Village Hall's monthly pub nights. He encouraged people to come and use the hall and its facilities. The village hall committee is small and would welcome new members.

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CLlr Harrison thanked the committee for all its hard work in keeping the hall going.

10. 'Village Views' Report

The newsletter publishes 4 times a year and the directory once a year. Chris Harrison thanked the Parish Council for its ongoing financial support. In 2023/24 they were able to reduce the funding requested from the Parish Council and use surplus advertising revenue to part fund the Village Views in addition to fully funding the Village Directory. Chris Harrison thanked all the volunteers who work on and deliver the newsletter. Suggestions for content and articles are welcome.

11. Any Other Business

None

12. Date & Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held in May 2025. The date will be published nearer the time, dependant on local council elections. Ideas for speakers and topics are welcome.

DRAFT