



Minutes of Gnosall Parish Council Meeting

held via zoom on 8th February 2021 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr G Gregory (in the chair apart from where stated), Cllr P Alker, Cllr A Mills, Cllr G Payne, Cllr S Powell, Cllr M Booth, Cllr T Simkin, Cllr J Tomkinson, Cllr R Greatrex, Cllr J Archer, Cllr D Webb, Cllr S Bishop, Cllr J Lammin, Cllr K Ingram, Cllr C Emsley, Cllr G Symons, S Ridgewell Council Support Officer and Jayne Cooper Clerk

Prior to the meeting starting, the Chair informed everyone present that the council had been informed that the meeting would be filmed. Members of the public were asked to make it known if they did not wish to be filmed. There was no response from anyone present.

Public Open Forum

Six members of the public were present. One representative of the A518 Action Group (DRAG) read out a statement expressing frustration with the appalling state of the roads in Gnosall along with disappointment with the lack action by Staffordshire County Council and the absence of leadership and accountability by our Local Councillor Mark Winnington.

There were no other comments.

21/11 To receive apologies and record absences

Received from County Councillor M Winnington and Borough Councillors P Farrington and M Smith

21/012 To receive any Declarations of Interest

Cllr Archer declared an interest in any discussion about the Grosvenor Centre and Youth Club, Cllr Alker declared an interest in any discussion about the website, Cllr Emsley declared an interest in discussion about Rosebuds nursery and Cllr Simkin declared an interest as her mother is an employee at the Parish Council.

21/013 To receive and confirm minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2021

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

21/014 To consider any Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda

There were no matters arising.

21/015 To co-opt a new parish councillor

One application had been received for the position of councillor representing the Moreton ward. The applicant, Mr Martin Holmes, met all the essential criteria. All councillors had received a copy of the application and had no questions. It was therefore proposed that Mr Martin Holmes be co-opted to represent the ward of Moreton. This was seconded and unanimously agreed.

It was agreed that the Declaration of Acceptance of Office would be signed as soon as possible after the meeting (not possible during a virtual meeting). Mr Holmes joined the meeting as a parish councillor and thanked councillors for their support.

21/016 To welcome the Census Engagement Manager for the Office of National Statistics to talk about the next Census due to be carried out on 21st March 2021 (timed item 7.45pm)

This was deferred as the Census Engagement Manager did not join the meeting. It is hoped, if not too late, this could be rearranged for the March Council meeting.

21/017 To receive the following reports:

a) Clerk's Report

A report, previously received, gave a summary of the meetings held in the past month. Following social media interest to help local families with home schooling with donations of unwanted laptops, the Parish Council had offered to assist in having the parish office as a local drop off point. Virtual meetings had been held with two local IT proficient volunteers, an ex head teacher, a resident who works for an IT company that had offered to help as well as representatives from the Parish Council. Enthusiasm by all volunteers had been clearly evident however there were still one or two challenges that would need resolving prior to any laptops being donated to local school which included the need to PAT test. The Parish Council, if it is to be involved in this project, that being a public body, would have to be satisfied all necessary safety tests had been carried out. If this is not possible the parish council would have to cease any involvement. Further discussions and meetings are planned.

CSO Report

Councillors were informed that the new doors on the parish office had been fitted and the alarm system serviced and improved.

Councillors had been asked to report highway defects, with photographs if possible, using the online reporting system and it was made clear that this does not mean reports should not be made during council meetings but the necessity to report defects as soon as they are spotted could bring about quicker repairs and assist anyone who, after damaging their vehicle has to make a claim (if a vehicle is damaged and the county council have no knowledge of the defect, it is unlikely that any claim will be successful).

b) Borough and County Councillors Reports

In the absence of Borough Councillors there were no reports. Cllr Farrington had emailed the Clerk with details of possible grants that may be applicable for the Parish Council to apply for to compensate the loss of income with the Grosvenor Centre being close. Cllr Farrington had also

given advice on the laptops for schools initiative with useful contact details at Stafford Borough Council who may be able to assist with the Gnosall project.

County Councillor Report

In the absence of the County Councillor, the Chair read out a report received from Cllr Winnington that he had given permission could be shared to anyone who requested a copy. The report is attached as appendix A.

21/018 To receive reports from Committees and Working Groups:

a) Matters relating to the Planning Committee

To receive minutes of meetings held on 14th January and 4th February

Minutes of the meeting held on 14th January and a verbal report following the meeting held on 4th February were accepted

b) Matters relating to Open Spaces Committee

To receive minutes of the meeting held on 18th January

Minutes of the meeting were accepted. The Chair of Open Spaces confirmed the committee's decision to manage only essential maintenance during the next financial year which may, if budgets allow, include the repairs to the boardwalk. S106 funds would be used to revamp the play area on Brookhouse Road.

c) Matters relating to the Procedures Review Committee

To receive minutes of the meetings held on 14th December 2020 18th January 2021

Minutes of both meetings were accepted. It had not been possible to present amended Standing Orders to councillors for the February council meeting as they are still under review. Councillors would receive a copy prior to the March Council meeting.

d) Matters relating to the Grosvenor Committee

To receive minutes of the meeting held on 26th January

The minutes were accepted as read.

e) Matters relating to the Resources Committee

To receive minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February

The minutes were accepted as read.

f) Matters relating to GFest21 Working Group

To receive notes of the meeting held on 20th January

The notes were accepted. The Clerk explained that tentative plans are being made to have 4/5 weeks of events from mid June to mid to late July each weekend including a Village10K run, Village Carnival, GFest, CFest and fun fair subject to Covid restrictions being lifted.

21/019 To discuss anti social behaviour reports received from parishioners

Several reports received about anti social behaviour, littering and drug related matters evidenced on the grounds of The Royal Oak pub and the canal tow path had been reported to local PCSO's as well as the Borough Council partnership officer who deals directly with Staffordshire Police. Further PCSO patrols had been requested and the owners of the The Royal Oak pub had been approached to secure the site to prevent further incidents.

21/008 To discuss highway matters

The Chair sought council's approval to split this agenda item into two parts, normal reporting and a discussion about the concerns being raised by parishioners about the state of the roads. This was approved.

(a) The Clerk was asked to report:

Coton End Lane, flooding had worsened since first reported in November.

Ranton Road, just past Old Barn Close, deep pot hole filled with flood water.

Junction of Knightley Road and Audmore Road - road surface deterioration likely to form pot holes if not repaired.

Wilbrioughton Road (from A518 to the railway bridge) section of wall has collapsed; water now pours off the Millennium Way onto the road.

Wilbrioughton Road (near Wilbrioughton Hall), a hole had been fenced off causing traffic to drive on grass verge and into an adjacent pit.

Ranton Road (past Moorend Lane), passing bay has large pot hole that would damage smaller cars.

Audmore Loop - blocked gulley near to Audmore Villa that is causing recently laid tarmac to lift.

(b) Local concerns about the state of road across the parish

The Chair informed councillors that there are several issues of concern being voiced by local parishioners mainly via social media posts. It appears that parishioners do not feel their concerns are being heard by the local county councillor and in one or two messages the parish council has been asked to take action. The Chair raised her concerns (which other councillors shared), that the Parish Council reports the same issues time and time again which are either not addressed or poor quality repairs are made some of which collapse soon after repair. The backlog of inspections and repairs indicates that the system is unfit for purpose, for example the pot hole in the High Street is particularly serious and was first reported in July 2020. Recent communication received from Highways indicated there were 560+ other defects outstanding on the local inspectors list.

The general quality of the roads in the parish is considered very poor. Concern was expressed about the contract Staffordshire County Council has with AMEY, which the local County Councillor had expressed, in previous parish council meetings, his own dissatisfaction with. It was noted that Birmingham City Council removed the contract from AMEY due to poor quality work. Parish Councillors shared their discontent with the quality of the parish roads and felt that the system is clearly unfit for purpose, that money spent on the AMEY contract is not producing the quality of timely repairs that are needed and that value for money is poor.

It was noted that there had been a request, via the community Facebook site, for a public meeting to be arranged. Cllr Winnington in his report had agreed that a public meeting would be a good idea but not until physical meetings are permitted to allow those people unable to attend virtual meeting to attend safely. The Parish Council had sought advice from Staffordshire Parish Council's Association and had been informed that it is possible to hold a virtual public meeting. This was noted and if arranged methods of allowing people to submit comments, if they could not attend virtually, would be considered.

It was proposed that the Parish Council would arrange a virtual public meeting and invite the local County Councillor and/or a representative from Highways to attend.

This proposal was seconded and unanimously agreed. Clerk to action.

It was proposed that a freedom of information request is submitted to Staffordshire County Council requesting answers to the following questions:

1. What is the total budget that has been devoted by Staffordshire County Council to highway repairs within the parish of Gnosall (including the wards of Moreton & Knightley)?
2. What has that money been spent on thus far?
3. How many reported defects remain unresolved within Gnosall Parish (including the wards of Moreton & Knightley)?

This was seconded and unanimously agreed. Clerk to action.

It was further proposed that the County Councillor is informed of the council's dissatisfaction with his report. This was seconded and a vote taken with 6 voting in favour, 6 against and 3 abstentions (one cllr did not vote). Therefore the Chair had the casting vote and voted against this proposal.

Instead the Chair proposed that the County Councillor should be informed that the report received regrettably did not address the issues being raised by parishioners. This was seconded and a vote taken with 14 voting in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention. The proposal was carried. The Clerk to action.

21/021 To accept accounts for approval for the month of February 2021 and receive details of receipts for the month of January 2021

The accounts and receipts were approved as presented. The recent booking of the Grosvenor Centre by the County Council to administer COVID Lateral Flow Tests would be charged at the usual rate.

21/022 To agree the date and time of the next meeting

8th March 2021 at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 8.56pm

As we move towards a future whereby lockdown rules are slowly going to be relaxed and one day we as a nation return to a "new" normal, it is most important that we continue to adhere to the lockdown rules and comply with the hand-face-space ethos.

It is also imperative that we fight this awful pandemic with our greatest weapon and get everyone vaccinated. As of Friday afternoon, I am delighted to report that 206,000 vaccines have been delivered across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent. A tremendous effort! We must thank all the volunteers and our colleagues in the NHS for their hard work.

It is important that as a Community we continue to help and be kind to one another. If you hear of someone who cannot get to a vaccination centre or is unsure about the vaccination process, please feel free to contact me.

I will not be at the Parish meeting in person as I have like many others have offered to help get as many residents vaccinated as soon as is possible and am working as a volunteer at the evening shift at the Kingston centre. As of today, the team will have increased numbers of those vaccinated from 250 per day last week to 1000 people per day this week

Highways

As a direct result of the atrocious weather we have all been victims of this winter there are a lot of cases of road defects and flooding. This is not just in the Gnosall area but in surrounding villages and indeed across the whole region.

I have been asked specifically about the wider condition of the roads and about specific areas;

1. General road condition.

Almost 100% of Gnosall village had a preventative treatment in 2011 and this treatment is still within its expected life. In addition there have been structural treatments (High Street footways 2012/13, Old Barn Close carriageway 2014/15, The Horseshoe 2019/20), so the village is generally in a good state of repair.

isolated defects will continue to occur on the network. Highways continue to manage defects by undertaking highway inspections and arranging subsequent repairs as necessary.

Highways encourage the reporting of areas of concern via our 'Report It' pages on the website - www.staffordshire.gov.uk or via the MyStaffs App.

2. Specific defects

Potholes on Church Eaton Road and Befcote Road

I have spoken with the local highway officer (Diane Firkins) I did highlight the damage that was occurring to vehicles. As a result she contacted the reactive Inspector directly and they made a visit . I understand some emergency repair were done to the site

Other sites where potholes have been reported to me, or I have reported are;

The High Street,

Junction of Brookhouse way and the Knightley Road

Knightley Road/grange road

Ranton Road

Peartree Bank

Coton

There are also outstanding Gullies that need emptying, in particular, three outside of London Villas.

I am informed that inspector currently has a back log of over 500 enquiries on the network and that County Highways are doing all they can to manage the network as efficiently as possible.

3. Audmore Loop.

I have visited three times in the last two weeks. There is a problem with the highways pipe under the road, I understand that highways have had one failed attempt at unblocking this pipe. Sadly, a new pipe blockage has emerged on another road pipe. There is also a Severn Trent issue pipe issue and outline planning permission for new residences will also put pressure on the water system. I have asked highways and our Borough Councillors to help with this one.

4. Knightley Road.

The very poor state of Knightley road is a big concern to me. I have prioritised the small budget that local members are allocated each year towards improvements to this road. Can I thank local councillors and residents for their time and effort when we have walked the route looking at defects. Local knowledge is invaluable.

I am in constant dialog with highways asking for regular updates and what their plans are. The latest update is:

“With regards to Knightley Road the Engineer has informed me we still have some work to do on the north end near the large pond. To the south we cleared a lot of the gullies near to the smaller pond and also the significant flooding on the bend further south towards Gnosall. This runs to a ditch at the back of the hedge which the landowner would not allow us access to clear the first part but the water was getting away although a bit slow. There is a section in the middle where the polytunnels are where there are no road gullies at all. This area has been a problem for many years during significant rainfall. There is a suggestion that the Strawberry farm has recently installed a drainage pipe to assist with drainage of the polytunnel area. The plan is to approach them to see if there is any scope for us to do a connection into it and install some gullies. We have also removed silt from areas on the lane and have done some localised ditching.

Finally, on highways I have been asked how to report a pothole to Staffordshire county council. I have attached an appendix which should be a help.

Public Meeting

There has been suggestion that there should be a public meeting between Parish, Borough and County Council. This is an excellent idea and has worked well in the past.

Unfortunately, the limited capacity and availability to all residents excludes the virtual platforms available to us at present. Clearly it would be undemocratic to hold a public meeting that excludes

some residents. Not all people have digital access! As soon as it is legally possible and residents can attend safely, there will be a meeting arranged.

Please all, stay safe and help each other to get their vaccines.

Thank you,

Mark Winnington

Appendix 1

There is a very useful piece of information on our SCC website (as example below), if you type in “how do I report a pothole” in the search engine, it brings up a page with a link to “pothole review” if you click on this link it brings the below page up and it can provide members of the public with information on how many enquiries that have been received per week on a week by week basis and the locations and the carriageway repairs that have been carried out that particular week, putting into perspective the volume of work to be done. For example w/c 01/02/21 we had 241 enquiries in the week and we carried out 293 repairs. This can be useful for members of the public to go to and see the extent of enquiries and completions carried out each week. There is a link on this page where members of the public can report a pothole. The process is relatively easy and straight forwards and gives the repair crews an exact location of the problem, avoiding unnecessary travel.

Potholes overview

We prioritise all potholes so that the most dangerous ones are repaired either the next day or within 7 days.

The vast majority are given to specialist teams and will be repaired depending on location and road use, usually within 90 days however this may be extended depending on resources.

Report a pothole

If you would like to alert us to a pothole, please:

[Report a pothole online](#)

01 February 2021

- [Weekly carriageway repairs](#) (22 KB)
- [Enquiries generating works](#) (60 KB)

Gnosall Parish Council PAYMENTS LIST

Voucher Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
264	08/02/2021		Co-operative	BACS	Salary	GPC	E	634.92	0.00	634.92
273	08/02/2021		Co-operative	BACS	Parish hotline expenses	J Archer	E	20.00	0.00	20.00
265	08/02/2021		Co-operative	BACS	Salary	GPC	E	2,178.94	0.00	2,178.94
262	08/02/2021		Co-operative	BACS	covid safey items (gloves,	TFM	S	16.50	3.30	19.80
274	08/02/2021		Co-operative	BACS	parish alarm service and	Phoenix Security	S	130.00	26.00	156.00
271	08/02/2021		Co-operative	BACS	domain name renewal	R G Alker	S	137.00	27.40	164.40
266	08/02/2021		Co-operative	BACS	Salary	GPC	E	474.15	0.00	474.15
267	08/02/2021		Co-operative	BACS	NI&PAYE	GPC	E	1,210.11	0.00	1,210.11
268	08/02/2021		Co-operative	BACS	Pension	GPC	E	1,153.72	0.00	1,153.72
275	08/02/2021		Co-operative	BACS	refund to Gnosall United	GPC	E	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
269	08/02/2021		Co-operative	BACS	Handyman duties	P Prince	E	227.50	0.00	227.50
270	08/02/2021		Co-operative	BACS	Handyman duties	P Prince	E	32.50	0.00	32.50
263	08/02/2021		Co-operative	BACS	Grosvenor Architects fees	Etc design	S	4,248.80	849.76	5,098.56
272	08/02/2021		Co-operative	BACS	BKV materials	EFC	S	38.50	7.70	46.20
Total								11,502.64	914.16	12,416.80