

**UTKINTON AND COTEBROOK  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
Cotebrook Village Hall on  
Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 7pm**



**MINUTES**

<b>08.10.01</b>	<p><b>Public Open Forum</b> There were three members of the public present and the following issues were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the residents thanked CWaC Cllr Hardy for his response to her email to the Clerk regarding the road surface at the bend on Rowley Lane and looks forward to seeing the outcome of his efforts with CWaC Officers.</li> <li>• A resident asked if it would be possible for the parish council to provide two grit bins – one at the top of the Crescent and one in Quarry Bank. There was also a discussion about one on Knights Lane. The matter will be on the agenda for the November meeting.</li> <li>• A resident complained about the poor state of Heath Lane from Tirely Lane to the bottom, there are 33 potholes of differing sizes and depths. Hollins Hill is also very poor. Councillors were asked to note that there are 14.2 miles of roads within the parish and many of them are in very poor condition.</li> </ul>												
<b>08.10.02</b>	<p><b>Present:</b> Cllr Marian Atkinson, Cllr Sami Kastenieni, Cllr Andrew Needham, Cllr Graham Spencer (Chair), Cllr Ed Stubbs, Cllr Caroline Stubbs <b>Apologies:</b> Accepted from Cllr Matthew Grant and Cllr Graham Stewart <b>In attendance:</b> CWaC Ward Cllr Charles Hardy and the Clerk, Kath Lloyd.</p>												
<b>08.10.03</b>	<p><b>Declarations of Interest:</b> There were no new declarations of interest.</p>												
<b>08.10.04</b>	<p><b>Minutes of Parish Council meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024:</b> The Council approved the minutes of the previous council meeting as accurate and which were duly signed by the Chair. Proposed by Cllr Atkinson and seconded by Cllr Needham.</p>												
<b>08.10.05</b>	<p><b>Councillor Vacancy:</b> the vacancy will be advertised in the forthcoming Parish Times to ensure the widest possible audience and will be revisited at a future meeting.</p>												
<b>08.10.06</b>	<p><b>Cheshire West &amp; Chester Council Matters:</b> Cllr Hardy reported that he had been able to confirm a date for parish councils to meet with Officers from the CWaC Highways team and that this meeting will now take place on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October at 6pm at the Jessie Hughes Centre in Eaton. Cllr Atkinson and Cllr C. Stubbs will attend on behalf of Utkinton and Cotebrook Parish Council and Cllr Grant will also try to attend for at least part of the meeting. Representatives from Eaton and Rushworth, Little Budworth and Tarporley parish councils have also been invited. Cllr Hardy has been told by the Highways team that more investment is planned for gully cleaning but stressed that the Officers would not wish to address detailed issues about each parish area but would be keen to discuss how wider issues could be addressed most effectively.</p>												
<b>08.10.07</b>	<p><b>Planning Applications:</b> <b>08.10.07.1</b> Councillors noted the applications received and agreed the following responses:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Ref No</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Site Address</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Proposal</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Response</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>24/01552/FUL</td> <td>Sidebottom Farm, Stable Lane</td> <td>Retrospective demolition and reconstruction of former barns. Change of use of former barns to four dwellings.</td> <td>No comment</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24/02844/FUL</td> <td>Southley, Quarry Bank</td> <td>Two storey side extension and single storey side extension.</td> <td>Councillors to send comments to Clerk by 14<sup>th</sup></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Ref No	Site Address	Proposal	Response	24/01552/FUL	Sidebottom Farm, Stable Lane	Retrospective demolition and reconstruction of former barns. Change of use of former barns to four dwellings.	No comment	24/02844/FUL	Southley, Quarry Bank	Two storey side extension and single storey side extension.	Councillors to send comments to Clerk by 14 <sup>th</sup>
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			October
	<b>08.10.07.2</b> There were no decisions received		
<b>08.10.08</b>	<p><b>Work Programme:</b> Councillors received updates on the following:</p> <p><b>08.10.08.1</b> Northgate Steps – the Chair reported that CWaC have now confirmed that the Northgate Steps are not part of the footpath network but that Highways are responsible for them. After a discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk will contact CWaC Streetscene Team and ask that the steps be cleared and made safe. Cllr Atkinson proposed that in principle, the parish council agree to adopt the maintenance of the Steps after CWaC have restored them, seconded by Cllr E. Stubbs, motion passed.</p> <p><b>08.10.08.2</b> Work at Cotebrook Community Orchard – Cllr C Stubbs reported that a site visit had taken place with Cllr Spencer and a contractor from Tarporley Trees and Garden Service who has offered to crown the trees, trim the hedge back and rotavate the lower end of the orchard for wild flower planting at a total cost of £100. Cllr C Stubbs proposed that the parish council accept this offer, seconded by Cllr Atkinson and approved unanimously. The metal fence at the bottom of the orchard belongs to United Utilities and the brook behind it needs clearing and dredging – the Clerk will contact United Utilities and ask for a site meeting.</p> <p><b>08.10.08.3</b> Bus stops – Cotebrook roof and community notice boards – no progress made to date.</p> <p><b>08.10.08.4</b> Community bat boxes, photo competition and calendar – these items are part of the Wildlife Project outlined in 08.10.08.2 above. Bat and bird boxes will also be installed at Quarry Wood and there is a coffee morning planned at Rose Farm Coffee House in order to raise funds for the project.</p>		
<b>08.10.09</b>	<p><b>Spring Planting:</b> Cllr Kastenemi proposed that the parish council purchase English bluebell and daffodil bulbs for planting during the autumn at a cost of no more than £250, seconded by Cllr C. Stubbs, motion carried. Volunteers will be sought to help with planting.</p>		
<b>08.10.10</b>	<p><b>Remembrance Events:</b> Cllr Spencer gave a verbal update based on the Briefing Paper circulated by Cllr Grant prior to the meeting. Cllr Atkinson passed the five wreaths to Cllr Spencer and Mr F. Tunney and the large poppies will be placed by Cllr Spencer and Grant at the end of October. The Council noted the guidance given by CWaC in a recent email and that a second Marshall is needed for the event on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November – Cllr Kastenemi will identify a suitable person asap. The Risk Assessment is complete and the Clerk has written to the bugler player, the Horse Master and the local resident for use of his garden. The Clerk has also confirmed the booking with the Village Hall in case of unsuitable weather.</p>		
<b>08.10.11</b>	<p><b>Finance Matters</b></p> <p><b>08.10.11.1</b> Councillors approved accounts for payment and note accounts paid since 10<sup>th</sup> Sept</p> <p><b>08.10.11.2</b> Councillors noted the Clerk’s Report including the bank balance and cash book at the end of Sept 2024 – see Appendix A</p> <p><b>08.10.11.3</b> Councillors noted the receipt of the External Audit Report</p>		
<b>08.10.12</b>	<p><b>Parish Times:</b> The latest edition of the Parish Times is now due out at the end of November and Councillors are asked to contact Cllr Grant asap if they have items for inclusion.</p>		
<b>08.10.13</b>	<p><b>Christmas meal:</b> It was agreed that the December Parish Council meeting will be in the Out of Hours Room at Rose Farm Coffee House from 7pm – 8pm when Councillors and guests will adjourn to the restaurant for their Christmas meal.</p>		
<b>08.10.14</b>	<p><b>Councillor’s reports and items for future agenda:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Clerk reported that Utkinton Village Hall is not available until after 7.15pm on Tuesday evenings – agenda item for next meeting to agree where and when council meetings can be held.</li> <li>2. Cllr Atkinson asked the Clerk to send a Grant Application form to the Church.</li> </ol>		
<b>08.10.15</b>	<p><b>Date of future meetings</b> Tuesday November 12th                      Cotebrook Village Hall – 7pm</p>		

	Tuesday December 10th	Rose Farm Out of Hours Room – starts at 7pm for one hour only
	Tuesday 14th January 2025	Cotebrook Village Hall – 7pm
	Tuesday 11th February 2025	To be confirmed

## APPENDIX A

### CLERK'S REPORT - 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024

#### 1. ACCOUNTS FOR APPROVAL

NAME	DETAILS	VAT	TOTAL
Kathryn Lloyd	Clerk's salary October 2024		362

#### 2. Accounts Paid

NAME	DETAILS	VAT	TOTAL
Kathryn Lloyd	Clerk's salary August and Sept 2024		724
James Newman Gardens	Work on PC sites – see attached photos		562.50
PKF Littlejohn	Government Audit		252
Cllr Marian Atkinson	Reimbursement for 5 x wreaths		125
Royal British Legion	Wooden Crosses		40
Dr Helen Jones	Inscriptions on crosses		72.50

#### 3. Cashbook Reconciliation

Council should note that the precept left at 1<sup>st</sup> October is £4647.38, the remaining amount has been raised by the community led by the Jubilee Funding Group. This compares with £6898 this time last year so there is a need for caution when planning expenditure over the next few months.

##### Bank Reconciliation at 1st October 2024

Cash Book	Balance b/fwd	£25,084.24
Plus	Receipts	£5,422.07
Less	Payments	£20,094.27
		<b>£10,412.04</b>

##### JUBILEE/CORONATION FUND

##### Bank Reconciliation at 31st August 2024

Bank	Current a/c	£0.00	Cash Book	Balance b/fwd	£7,968.20
	Deposit a/c	£10,412.04	Plus	Receipts	£2,600.00
Less unrepresented cheques			Less	Payments	£4,803.54
		<b>£10,412.04</b>			<b>£5,764.66</b>

#### TO NOTE:

- Cllr Stewart raised the following queries at the Sept 2024 Parish Council meeting which were not on the agenda but are addressed as follows:

- I. The monies remaining from the restoration of The Shrine War Memorial in 2018.  
How much is ring fenced for a future need?

*There is currently £854 ring fenced for the war memorial*

- II. The annual donation of good will to each village hall . Where are we with this.  
To produce the minute when it was decided to discontinue this gesture.

*As explained in email of 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024, no decision needed by the parish council to stop annual goodwill payments - it was an illegal practice. Every government organisation, including local councils have to be able to produce an audit trail to show how and why they are spending public money, I'm afraid that "goodwill" payments are not accepted by auditors and as such, we introduced the very simple Grant Application process in early 2022.*

- III. The cutting of problem spots on the hedge along John street. Where is the council on this.

*Letter posted to farmer asking for permission to cut his hedge.*

- IV. The council's protocols and policies on the web site not all open up.

*Review has been carried out and all documents should now open. Councillors are asked to alert Clerk via email if unable to open any.*

- The parish council has a new phone number – 07754565708
- The unemptied and damaged bin at Cotebrook orchard has been replaced by CWaC as requested
- Clerk received report from resident that there is a large branch of a tree obstructing the highway along Utkinton Lane – reported to CWaC SS651611069
- All Parish Councillors are invited to a meeting with CWaC Highways team on Tuesday 15th at 6pm in Eaton. Please let the Clerk know if you are able to attend.