

## **CROSTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES** of the Meeting held on 7 June 2023 at 7.30 pm in The Old School, Croston.

Present Councillors P Strachan (Chairman), K Almond, M Cahill, P Fenemore, S Moulton, P Sloan, C Titherington-Teale and C Turner.

### 64.23 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Worthington

### 65.23 Declarations of Interest

None declared.

### 66.23 Councillor Vacancies

Applications for co-option to fill the four vacancies arising due to insufficient nominations were considered.

Resolved: Martin Cahill, Sarah Moulton, Paul Sloan and Caroline Turner were co-opted. Declarations of Acceptance of Office were signed and accepted.

### 67.23 Other Appointments

Resolved: the following were appointed:

Chorley Liaison: Cllr Turner

Western Parishes Neighbourhood Area Meeting - Cllr Sloan

Croston United Charities - Cllr Fenemore

### 68.23 Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 10 May 2023

Resolved: the Minutes (as circulated) were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Resolved: Standing Orders were suspended.

### 69.23 Public Participation

Representatives from the Ulnes Walton Action Group provided further information regarding the Public Inquiry into the appeal against the refusal of the planning application for the new prison at the Wymott/Garth site. The Inquiry will consider only evidence relating to highway safety and capacity issues.

Residents of School Close advised the site was now owned by management company set up by the residents. The residents would prefer pedestrian access via the path to the side of the Former Methodist School rather than the existing Public Right of Way.

The poor condition of the garages on Pear Tree Road was mentioned.

Standing Orders were restored.

### 70.23 Planning Matters

23/00398/TCON Notification of proposed works to trees within a conservation area including the crown lift and reduction of 1no. oak, limb removal of 1no. oak and cut back 1no. sycamore and 1 no. Oak at Croston Park Nursing Home, Town Road

23/00416/ Single storey rear extension (following demolition of existing conservatory) at 3 Pear Tree Road

23/00429/FULHH Part single storey/part two storey front/side extension and single storey rear extension (following demolition of existing single storey side extension and rear conservatory at 6 Meadowside

There were no objections to these applications.

#### 71.23 Financial Matters

Receipt of the Precept was confirmed.

i) The monthly financial monitoring statement was presented.

Resolved: the monitoring statement was received and accepted.

ii) A request from the Ulnes Walton Action Group for a contribution towards the employment of a Transport Expert was considered.

Councillors agreed to make a contribution, with the amount to be decided at a future meeting.

Due to the imminent date for renewal of the policy, the following item was allowed to be considered as an urgent item.

Cllr Strachan, as a member of the Keep Croston Tidy Group, declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item.

iii) A request from Keep Croston Tidy for a grant of £134.40 to cover the cost of an annual insurance premium was considered.

Resolved: A grant of £134.40 was awarded.

iv) Resolved: the following payments were approved:

£ 24.00	Croston Old School	Room hire
£ 424.80	Countrywide Grounds Maintenance	Grounds maintenance
£ 5195.77	Playdale Playgrounds	Play equipment
£ 1272.00	RHF Landscape Supplies	Play bark
£ 1719.46	Staff costs	Salaries, deductions and reimbursements

#### 72.23 Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2023 was considered in accordance with guidance within the publication Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners' Guide 2023.

i) The Internal Auditor's report was noted.

ii) A response to the statement 'We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there were no matters of actual non-compliance with laws, regulations and proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its affairs was considered. It was recommended that a negative response, on the grounds that employee contracts are not in place, was provided.

Resolved: with a negative response to Question 3 the Annual Governance Statement was approved and signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

An explanation to the external auditor for this response is to be submitted.

iii) Resolved: the Accounting Statements, having been signed by the Responsible Financial Officer prior to the meeting, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### 73.23 Recreation Park

Anti-social behaviour, including fireworks aimed towards properties, drinking of alcohol and electric bikes being ridden on the Park was discussed. Anti-social behaviour had been reported to the Police, CCTV footage viewed by local Officers and a meeting with the PCSO

arranged. Local schools had been contacted and Councillors had patrolled the Park at peak times. A suggestion to set up a Youth Council was made. Local businesses had been contacted regarding the sale of alcohol and had confirmed identification is required for anyone appearing to be under 25.

A new, larger sign detailing conditions of use of the park was agreed, with the final wording to be confirmed by Councillors.

#### 74.23 Working Groups

The setting up of working groups for Finance and Strategy, Communications and Community Engagement was considered. The Chairman and Vice Chairman are to be ex-officio members and Councillors are to confirm their preferences to join the working groups to the Chairman.

#### 75.23 Communications

As it was felt the existing website cannot meet the requirements going forward an alternative website is to be investigated.

#### 76.23 Newsletter Update

Details of content for the forthcoming newsletter were provided. The provision of an electronic version is to be looked into.

#### 77.23 NALC Quality Gold Award

Councillors agreed to use the content of the National Association of Local Councils Quality Gold Award Scheme as a framework for future operation of the Council.

#### 78.23 Neighbourhood Plan

Background information regarding the implementation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the village was discussed. A summary of requirements is to be provided at the next meeting.

#### 79.23 Parish Meeting

A Public Meeting has been arranged for Tuesday 20 June 2023. This will take the form of a Youth Meeting, followed by an open meeting attended by residents. Councillors are to confirm their availability to the Chairman.

#### 80.23 Wymott and Garth Prisons Planning Inquiry

The Ulnes Walton Action Group requested a member of the Parish Council to speak at the Planning Inquiry on 19 September 2023. Cllr Fenemore is to attend.

#### 81.23 Chorley Council Housing Assistance Policy

A consultation on changes to the policy was considered. Councillors are to provide any comments they may wish to make to the Chairman.

#### 82.23 Reports from Outside Bodies

Information received from the Douglas Catchment Area Group is to be forwarded to Councillors.

#### 83.23 Dates of Future Meeting

A suggestion to review the days on which future meetings are held was considered. Councillors agreed to continue with the second Wednesday of the month, with the next meeting taking place on 12 July 2023.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed.