



**CHURCH  
LAWTON**  
Parish Council

## **MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON**

**FRIDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> JUNE 2023, 6.30pm**

**Held at Lawton Memorial Hall**

8 residents of Church Lawton Parish were present.

Cheshire East Councillors Wardlaw and Redstone were also present.

The Clerk of the Parish Council was in attendance.

**1. The chairman to open the meeting and welcome everybody.**

Cllr G Mitchell opened the meeting at 6.30pm and welcomed all those present.

**2. To receive apologies for absence.**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Grimshaw, L Mackinnon, B Newton and K Newton.

**3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2022.**

The minutes on the meeting of the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2022 were approved by those present.

**4. To receive the Chairman's Report.**

Cllr G Mitchell gave his chairman's report (Appendix 1).

**5. To receive the draft Financial Statement for 2022/2023.**

The draft financial statement was presented by the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer. (Appendix 2)

**6. Your opportunity to raise issues relating to the Parish and for questions to be answered.**

The Chairman offered questions to the floor.

Resident A requested information regarding verge cutting and felt more frequent sprays were required. This triggered some discussion around the use of herbicides with differing views.

Resident B raised some issues around hedges reducing visibility and insufficient verge cutting on Brown Avenue and Woodgate Avenue. The Parish Council agreed to assess these and write to Cheshire East.

**7. To have opportunity to discuss the role of a councillor with current councillors and to hear about the current vacancies and how to apply if interested.**

The Chairman and Clerk explained the vacancies and role of Councillor. The application process for anyone interested was explained.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Chairman's Report**

It's been a huge year of change since our last annual parish meeting with the sad passing of her majesty Queen Elizabeth, and the coronation of his majesty King Charles III. I was hugely honoured to make the proclamation of the new sovereign in the churchyard of All Saints last year and it was wonderful to see such a large number of people attending that. And I enjoyed the recent coronation weekend, as I'm sure many of you did.

We have a newly elected council following the elections on the 4<sup>th</sup> May. The elections were uncontested so there was no need for voting but we now have 8 newly elected councillors who have been elected for 4 years. I will introduce them shortly. We have recently met for the annual meeting and I have been elected to remain as chairman for the next year.

Maybe the main highlight from the last year within the parish is that the Parish Council has become the sole trustee for Lawton Memorial Hall. During last year, LMH lost trustees and needed to find new ones otherwise it risked having to close because as a registered charity, it couldn't have continued without having the requisite number of trustees in place. Despite efforts to recruit new trustees, it was unable to and so at the end of last year, the Parish Council became the sole trustee for LMH.

It's fantastic that we have been able to secure the future for LMH and as you can see, it's a great asset for the local community so it's a really positive outcome. It has taken up a lot of time for the council though and will continue to do so whilst we ensure we have in place all the necessary constitution and policies, as well as the staff required to run LMH effectively and safely.

I would encourage everyone to consider booking the hall for parties, celebrations, weddings and the like because it's a lovely building, in great condition and the kitchen and bar facilities are great.

I reported last year that the council was meeting at Kidsgrove Town Hall but now we have been able to revert to Lawton Memorial Hall so it's another positive that we are using LMH and meeting within the parish boundaries again.

As I mentioned earlier, we have had elections recently and we now have 8 elected councillors and I would like to briefly introduce them:

- Patrick Redstone – ward councillor for Odd Rode and he joined CLPC recently
- Lorna Bowler – who along with me is the longest serving councillor, being elected in 2019 and now being elected for a 2<sup>nd</sup> term
- Ken Newton – who has been on the council for around 18 months
- Linda Grimshaw – who has also been a councillor for around 18 months
- Ellie Mitchell – who has been a councillor for coming up to a year
- Margaret Bleasebourne – newly elected
- Iain Johnson – also newly elected

I'd like to welcome each of them onto the council and to thank them for standing for election and offering to provide their help and support to the council. I think we have a very strong group of councillors now and we are starting to look at the plans for the coming year.

I would like to offer my thanks to 3 councillors who have stood down since the last annual parish meeting

- Amanda Armstrong and Ailee Woodhead-Coates both stood down last year and Bev Newton recently didn't stand for re-election. I'd like to thank them for their contributions to the council during their time as councillors.

I'd also like to offer thanks once again to Sue Davies, the clerk, who has been in the role for a number of years and does a great job for the council and also now is putting a huge amount of work into making sure that we have everything in place now that we have become the trustees for LMH. We have just appointed a new assistant clerk to support Sue and we hope to have them in place very soon to help carry the load required to support the parish council and also LMH.

What else have we been up to?

- In the last few months we had 2 new benches put in place near to Red Bull lights and they look fantastic. We are looking for other sites to replace or put in new benches.
- We've done some litter picks and I would remind you that we have litter picking equipment that we can share with anyone interested in doing any litter picking.
- We continue to use Streetscape, which is a service offered by Congleton Town Council, to help keep the parish tidy and to supplement the services provided by Cheshire East and they've done a number of jobs, cleaning signs and cutting back overgrowth.
- We continue to review planning applications and to represent the community as best we can with our comments to Cheshire East planning.

Plan for the future

- We are looking for sites for more benches.
- We are looking to restart the Neighbourhood Plan which we had to put on hold last year due to the council prioritising its time to take over as trustees of LMH
- We will carry out more litter picks.
- And as trustees, will be supporting the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of LMH.
- So lots of things that we are working on and as I've said, we would really appreciate more people getting involved to help us because we've got lots of plans for the coming months and it would be great to get some of you more closely involved.
- We would also appreciate any suggestions that you may have either regarding places for new benches or where we might plant seeds, we would love to hear from you.

**Gareth Mitchell (Chairman, Church Lawton Parish Council)**

## Appendix 2 Draft financial report

31st March 2023

### Church Lawton Parish Council Summary of Receipts and Payments Summary - Cost Centres Only

Cost Centre	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
2 - Administration General			0.00 (N/A)	6,155.00	4,243.24	1,911.76 (31%)	1,911.76
4 - Civic Costs and Councillor Expe			0.00 (N/A)	420.00	253.80	166.20 (39%)	166.20
71 - Environmental and Parish Mair			0.00 (N/A)	8,500.00	2,124.47	6,375.53 (75%)	6,375.53
72 - Parish Council Projects and Mi:			0.00 (N/A)	8,850.00	4,995.67	3,854.33 (43%)	3,854.33
6 - Grants and Donations			0.00 (N/A)	1,650.00	44.04	1,605.96 (97%)	1,605.96
8 - Neighbourhood Plan			0.00 (N/A)	500.00		500.00 (100%)	500.00
1 - Administration - Precept, VAT + i	21,451.00	21,474.20	23.20 (0%)			0.00 (N/A)	23.20
3 - Administration - Staff Costs			0.00 (N/A)	6,495.00	6,668.07	-173.07 (-2%)	-173.07
5. Council Equipment - admin and n			0.00 (N/A)			0.00 (N/A)	0.00
9 Community Infrastructure Levy		180.00	180.00 (18000%)			0.00 (N/A)	180.00
21 -Legal Costs			0.00 (N/A)			0.00 (N/A)	0.00
73 Community and Events			0.00 (N/A)	2,000.00		2,000.00 (100%)	2,000.00
<b>NET TOTAL</b>	<b>21,451.00</b>	<b>21,654.20</b>	<b>203.20 (0%)</b>	<b>34,570.00</b>	<b>18,329.29</b>	<b>16,240.71 (46%)</b>	<b>16,443.91</b>
<b>Total for ALL Cost Centres</b>		<b>21,654.20</b>			<b>18,329.29</b>		
<b>V.A.T.</b>		<b>1,902.82</b>			<b>1,740.87</b>		
<b>GROSS TOTAL</b>		<b>23,557.02</b>			<b>20,070.16</b>		