

## SOUND & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes

Meeting of the above Council, Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022  
at Broomhall Chapel at 7.00 p.m.

**Councillors:** D. Tomlinson (Chairman), L. Wright (Vice Chairman), A.G. Lawrence (Clerk), F. Wright, M. Hartland, Ms N. Watson, Ms H. Paterson, M. Wright, P. Griffiths, I. Blakeman, R. Brassington, Mrs E. Hollinshead, Cllr R. Bailey and 1 member of the public

1. **Apologies:** Mrs R. Ruscoe, R. Blackburn,
2. **Declaration of Interest** – if a member is present at a meeting of the authority, and they have a disclosable pecuniary in any matter to be considered or being considered at the meeting, they cannot take part in any discussion of the matter at the meeting or vote on it. They should disclose the interest to the meeting and follow the Council's Code of Conduct.
3. **Minutes** of last Parish Council Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021 were unanimously confirmed as a true and correct record on the prop., R. Brassington, sec., Mrs E. Hollinshead
4. **Matters arising:-**
  - a. Gritting Routes – Coole Lane. Clerk reported he has received the following reply re this matter from Cllr Craig Browne Deputy Leader of Cheshire East Council

Date: 18 January 2022 Our Reference: 14265329

Dear Mr Lawrence RE: Winter gritting routes

Thank you for your email dated 5 th January 2022 regarding the removal of Coole Lane from the council's winter gritting route. I am sorry to hear you are dissatisfied with the service provided by Cheshire East Council in relation to changes to the gritting route. The council has developed and approved a new Winter Service Policy and Adverse Weather Plan which align with the recommendations contained in 'Well Managed Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice 2016' (WMHI) (The Code). The Code recommends a move from prescriptive levels of service to a risk based approach in order to allocate resources. Consultation on both the process and the adoption of the principles of The Code was carried out between 2nd July and 27th August 2018. The process involves each road being scored and ranked in accordance with a methodology and scoring matrix. This was developed to assess a wide variety of risk factors including road hierarchy, location, use, gradient, inclusion on bus routes, proximity to shops, emergency services, transport hubs and employment centres. Following the original decision to adopt the proposals at the then Cabinet meeting on 4th February 2020, the policy changes were considered by the then Scrutiny Committee on 16th March 2020. This resulted in a subsequent Cabinet decision on 5 May 2020, 'To undertake a further round of streamlined consultation on the winter service element only as part of the annual review of the Well Managed Highways Infrastructure annual review process'. This consultation included all council members, the former Area Highway Group chairs, all schools, cycling groups, town and parish councils and emergency services between 11th September 2020 and 20th November 2020. 129 responses were OFFICIAL received and considered in the production of the finalised winter treatment network of roads to be gritted. I understand your concerns regarding the removal of Coole Lane from the route however, it is important to note that simply gritting a road does not guarantee that snow and ice will not be present. During poor winter weather where snow and ice can form on the highway motorists are expected to drive safely in line with the prevailing conditions regardless of whether or not a road is included on the gritting route. In order for gritting to be effective regular vehicle movement is essential to break down the salt granules to form a saline solution which lowers the freezing point of water. Gritting a road does not instantly remove snow and ice and it does not stop ice from forming during particularly low temperatures therefore motorists must drive carefully at all times. I understand you wish for Coole Lane to be added back on to the route however, the current routes have been finalised therefore no changes will be made during the 2021/22 winter season. We will consider any comments or requests for roads to be included in the 2022/23 period as part of the annual review at the end of the season in May 2022. I have noted your question asking where £2m from the highway budget has been allocated. It is my understanding that this comment may be in reference to the information I supplied within a press release dated 24th June 2021 when talking about the winter gritting review. I have not stated that £2m has been taken out of the current highways budget. I did explain that, "This review was essential to ensure the council does not lose future incentive funding (around £2m) from the DfT, thereby placing an even bigger strain on the borough's crumbling road network." The full press release is available on our website through the link below: [https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/council\\_information/media\\_hub/media\\_releases/council-to-change-winter-gritting-routes.aspx](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/council_information/media_hub/media_releases/council-to-change-winter-gritting-routes.aspx)

With regards to safety standards on Coole Lane and all other adopted roads across Cheshire East, it is the obligation of Cheshire East Council to ensure they remain in a safe condition for all highway users. To do this we

regularly inspect all roads to identify and repair safety hazards that are considered to pose a danger. The inspection frequency depends mainly on the type of road and usage and ad-hoc inspections are also undertaken in response to member and resident enquiries. All inspections are conducted in line with the Code of Practice for Highway Safety Inspections which is available on our website via the link below: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/highways/highway-asset-management/cehighway-safety-inspection-cop-2021.pdf> I understand that you wish for Coole Lane to be removed from any potential future diversion routes until it is added back on to the winter gritting route. Please see the information on the web page below which explains how diversion routes are selected: OFFICIAL [https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/highways\\_and\\_roads/roadworks/latestroadworks.aspx](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/highways_and_roads/roadworks/latestroadworks.aspx) If Coole Lane is considered to be an appropriate diversion route during any potential future roadworks it will continue to be used as necessary. If you have any specific questions or concerns regarding roadworks or diversions please use the contact information provided on the web page. I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely Cllr Craig Browne Deputy Leader of Cheshire East Council

### **Further**

From Cllr Bailey

At the recent Highways Committee both Andrew Ross and Chris Hindle confirmed that a CE Highways representative would be willing to attend a site meeting on Coole Lane with myself, blue light services and affected Parish Councils; Austerson, Baddington, Newhall, Sound and Audlem (whilst the parish of Audlem doesn't cover Coole Lane residents of Audlem are equally concerned about this change of policy by CE).

I am grateful for the increased attention by CE Highways to Coole Lane in the last couple of weeks in terms of maintenance, but the removal of the Lane from winter gritting continues to understandably cause grave concern.

I would also like to understand also how a route on Mow Cop has been reinstated to the gritting programme after Cllr Craig Browne announced at council in December that, 'whilst a route can be assessed at any time it wouldn't be reinstated until the planned review in March 2022.

### **5. Highway matters:** reported that with regards to the Parish Highway Group, **a.** Informal Meeting of Audlem Ward Parish Representatives : 15/11/2021

There was a consensus on the following points:

In its current form concern that the highways top pilot poses more questions than solutions and 'is not fit for purpose':

How can we be assured CE Highways have sufficient resource/will procure contractors to deliver a good standard of works.

No criteria/assurance as to what 'maintenance' CE Highways will provide to inform of potential cost to Parishes.

A non refundable administration charge is unacceptable.

Is liability transferred to Parish Councils via their involvement in maintaining the highway.

How would Parishes manage resident's expectations?

Does this fit with Parish Council procurement requirements, eg, Value for Money?

#### **General Reflections:**

The Pilot was launched by CEC in June 2022, after the Parish Precept was set for the year.

This double taxation requires full consultation with residents via a budget setting process.

Parishes would need to liaise/possibly Cluster, particularly regarding any works to avoid cross parish issues.

Would a Service Level Agreement with CE Highways available.

Chairman further reported:-

that regrettably the main contact for the Highways Group is leaving CE, and others from the Dept too which doesn't help future communication.

A review of Coole Lane Highway has been undertaken and some remediable work undertaken including repair to bridge.

Grit boxes which have been placed on several roads in the Parish are there to be used as and when necessary by public.

**6. Correspondence:** Noted to members for their inspection and interest as follows:-

**a. Cheshire East:**

**1. Tom Evans - Neighbourhood Planning Manager - Cheshire East planning policy notification**

Cheshire East Council has long supported and lobbied for HS2 to arrive at and operate from Crewe Station. The Council remains fully committed to ensuring Crewe can achieve its full potential and continues to work with Government, Network Rail and key stakeholders to secure improvements and investment at Crewe Station.

Since the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic the original vision for the HS2 Hub at Crewe Station has been under review. This, alongside Government's refinement of the route and programme timetable for HS2 mean that the Council's plans as set out in the publication version of the Crewe Hub Area Action Plan (March 2020), must be reviewed to reflect both significant changes in circumstances, and new opportunities presented through the Councils on-going regeneration work which has secured £37million of public sector investment on a range of projects across the town.

Accordingly on 4th November the Councils Corporate Policy Committee resolved to withdraw the Crewe Hub Area Action Plan and the preferred route of the Southern Link Road Bridge, and embark upon the production of a Supplementary Planning Document that will set out a revised vision for the central part of Crewe. Information related to this decision can be found via the 'Councillors and Committees' section on the Council's website.

For further information on this matter please contact the Councils Strategic Planning Team.

**2. Neighbourhood Planning | Cheshire East Council**

This year we would like to invite you and your parish councillors, or members of your neighbourhood plan steering groups, to come and talk to us at our new neighbourhood planning 'digital drop-ins'. Every fortnight we will be hosting a question and answer discussion on all things neighbourhood planning, no matter where you're up to in the process, whether that be just starting out or modifying a completed plan.

If you have any questions at all on neighbourhood planning then do drop in to say hello, any time between 1pm and 2pm this Thursday, and we'll see how we can help.

Thank you to all those who attended the last drop-in session, which involved discussions around getting started with publicising draft plans for their first round of consultation, as well as how plans can address climate change.

Our discussion will always be held on Microsoft Teams and we'll send out a regular email reminder on a Monday.

For more information on neighbourhood planning please see our pages on the Cheshire East Council website or contact us directly via [neighbourhoods@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoods@cheshireeast.gov.uk).

**b. Councillors:** none

**c. Parishioners:-** none

**d. Other**

- i. Clerks and Councils Direct
- ii. ChALC's e-bulletin

**7. Accounts**

**I. Income since last meeting:-** none

**II. Accounts paid since last meeting –** none

**III. Accounts to pay at this meeting**

**PARISH COUNCIL**

- |    |                                                |                   |        |
|----|------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------|
| 1. | Chq No 500264                                  | Purchase Order 52 |        |
|    | Broomhall & Sound Methodist Church – Room Hire |                   | £15.00 |
| 2. | Chq No 500265                                  | Purchase Order 53 |        |
|    | ICO – Data Protection                          |                   | £40.00 |

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

- |    |                                                |                   |         |
|----|------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------|
| 3. | Chq No 500266                                  | Purchase Order 54 |         |
|    | Cheshire Community Action                      |                   | £684.00 |
| 4. | Chq No 500267                                  | Purchase Order 55 |         |
|    | Broomhall & Sound Methodist Church – Room Hire |                   | £15.00  |

The above account(s) were unanimously approved for payment on the prop., D. Tomlinson sec., M. Hartland

**8. Planning Applications:**

**I. Applications received since last meeting:-**

Application No: **21/6074N**

Proposal: **Retrospective planning permission for the erection of young stock shed (livestock housing) at Fields Farm.**

Location: **Fields Farm, SOUND LANE, SOUND, CW5 8BE**

National Grid Ref: **362318 349542**

No representation

**II. Results of previous applications:**

<b>a.</b>
21/4498N
Barn at Holly Bank, HEATLEY LANE, BROOMHALL, CW5 8BA
Conversion and extension of existing building
approved with conditions

**III. Applications/Planning Matters before this meeting:**

Reported no reply from CE re

Hedge/Fence line in Slaughterhouse Lane – however it we generally felt that this isn't an issue and the fence is where the hedge was

Hall O'Coole Cottage – use of garage

M. Hartland has seen resident re complaint Oak Farm, and explained the way of approaching any future issues they may have.

**IV. Neighbourhood Plan:** reported:- Meeting next week

**9. Sound Common:** Reported bramble removal has taken place and bat boxes installed

**10. Police Report:** Reported – no meeting held

**11. Next Meeting:** - proposed date of next Parish Council Meeting – 15<sup>th</sup> March

Meeting closed.