



"Not for self"

Oswestry Rural Parish Council

Draft Minutes

of the Ordinary Meeting

held at 7.00 pm on Thursday 15 May 2025 at Rhydygroesau Village Hall

Present:

Cllr Peter Richardson, Cllr Martin Bennett, Cllr Bob Kimber, Cllr Martin Jones, Cllr Iain Campbell, Cllr Mike Weston, Cllr Richard Fowler, Cllr Jaz Singh, Cllr Andy Davis

Clerk to the Council:

Kathryn Lloyd

In attendance:

Eight members of the public

2231 Chairman's Welcome

Cllr Peter Richardson extended a warm welcome, offering his congratulations to those members returning unopposed.

He advised this was the first time an election had been called for a ward of the Parish Council. He noted members were unpaid volunteers and confirmed the membership of the wards and vacancies. Between 2014 – 2017 the motto of the Council as inscribed on the Chairman's Badge of Office "not for self" had disappeared. He emphasised the importance of its reinstatement and reminded members of their duty to represent the wards to which they have been elected.

At Parish level the Council is independent and he wished for it to remain so.

2232 Election of Chairman

In pursuance of the LGA 1972 S15(1)(2) nominations were sought for the election of the Chairman for the ensuing Council year.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that Cllr Martin Bennett be elected as Chairman. There was one abstention.

Cllr Martin Jones thanked Cllr Peter Richardson for his work as Chairman of the Council over the past year. Cllr Martin Bennett also gave a formal vote of thanks and for setting a standard to follow.

2233 Declaration of Acceptance of Office

- a) The newly elected Chairman, Cllr Martin Bennett signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
- b) Newly elected Councillors, signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office
- c) It was **AGREED** for Cllr Peter Davies to sign his Declaration of Acceptance of Office as soon as practical.

2234 Election of Deputy Chairman

In pursuance of the LGA 1972 S15(6) nominations were sought for the election of the Deputy Chairman for the ensuing Council year.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for Cllr Martin Jones be elected as Deputy (Vice) Chairman for the ensuing Council year. There were two abstention.

2235 Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The newly elected Deputy Chairman, Cllr Martin Jones signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2236 Co-option

Councillor Peter Richardson informed members that an application for co-option had been received from former Councillor William Jones. He noted that William Jones had previously served for over a year and proposed his co-option to represent the ward of Sychtyn.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and APPROVED for Cllr William Jones be appointed as Councillor of Sychtyn Ward. There was one abstention.

b) Cllr William Jones signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office before taking his seat.

c) Cllr Martin Bennett advised members the Council should advertise for the four vacancies . He suggested there should be an objective way to assess potential candidates and also suggested conducting a skills audit of current councillors to identify any gaps. He suggested applications be considered at the June meeting with a secret ballot should there be more applicants than available vacancies. Members **NOTED** several applications have been received and **AGREED** for these to be considered at the June meeting.

2237 Apologies

Apologies were received from :

Cllr Peter Davies - Family Commitments

Members **APPROVED** this.

2238 Police Report

a) Councillor Martin Jones highlighted the lack of Police presence. Councillor Ian Campbell remarked on three recent accidents, though their locations had not been specified. It was noted that the Police are expected to attend the Parish Council meetings at least once every four months; however, this seldom happens as officers are usually on duty. The Oswestry Town Council report is more comprehensive. Members expressed their dissatisfaction with the current information and **AGREED** to review the priorities at the June Meeting. Members **NOTED** the report.

b) Members **NOTED** the West Mercia Police Community Charter / Contract which is in place until 30 September 2025.

2239 Shropshire Council Election Result for St Oswald's Ward

a) The Chairman expressed a warm welcome and congratulations to Cllr Andy Davis , the newly elected Councillor for St Oswald's Division.

b) The Chairman expressed his thanks to Cllr Joyce Barrow who served as the St Oswald's Division since 2009. Members **AGREED** for a letter of thanks be sent for Cllr Joyce Barrow.

2240 Election Forms

a) Members **NOTED** that the election expense forms should be completed and returned directly to Shropshire Council.

b) Members were reminded to submit their Declaration of Interest Forms within 28 days of acceptance. The Clerk confirmed the implementation of the new electronic process by Shropshire Council and advised an email with a guidance note had already been circulated to members.

2241 Public Participation

In accordance with Standing Orders 3(e) members of the public may make representations, answer questions, and give evidence in respect of the business on the agenda.

This does not include matters relating to the council's administration. Should anyone wish to discuss business which is not included on the agenda please write to the Clerk who will make arrangements for appropriate action.

None

2242 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 27 April 2025 were considered for approval.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the minutes be APPROVED and ADOPTED as a true record. There was one abstention.

2243 Shropshire Council Report

None

2244 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

In accordance with Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 Members were informed they are personally responsible for deciding whether they should disclose an interest at this meeting. Members were also reminded they should not make decisions with a closed mind and must declare a bias and not vote on matters where their decision could be pre-determined.

2245 Dispensations

None received

2246 Declarations of Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality

None declared

2247 Appointment to Committees and Working Groups

The Chairman proposed that the existing members of the Personnel Committee and Finance Committee (a & e) be reappointed. The Clerk confirmed the memberships as:

Personnel Committee – Cllr Martin Bennett, Cllr Peter Richardson, Cllr Bob Kimber, Cllr Jas Singh

Finance Committee – Cllr Martin Bennett, Cllr Peter Richardson, Cllr Bob Kimber, Cllr William Jones, The Clerk.

RESOLVED: Members **AGREED** to the above proposal.

The Chairman proposed to surrender his place on the Road Safety Working Group and for Cllr Andy Davis to take his place. He proposed all other Working Groups continue and for these to be reviewed in June 2025 after the co-option process has been completed.

RESOLVED: Member **AGREED** to the above proposal.

2248 Representatives on Outside Bodies – Oswestry Area Committee

The Chairman advised members he is the current Chairman of the Oswestry Area Committee and happy to continue in this capacity.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for Cllr Martin Bennett to remain as the Parish Council representative on the Oswestry Area Committee.

The Chairman offered to continue in his role as the representative to Morda & Sweeney Village Hall Committee

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for Cllr Martin Bennett to remain as the Parish Council representative on the Morda & Sweeney Village Hall Committee.

The Chairman requested the Trefonen Village Hall Committee representative be added to the June agenda . Members **AGREED** to this.

2249 Policies/Terms of Reference

The Chairman advised members the Clerk had requested items a – h be deferred until the June 2025 Meeting. This is to allow the Finance Committee the opportunity to review the documents and propose any changes.

- a) Financial Regulations
- b) Standing Orders
- c) Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee
- d) Terms of Reference for the Road Safety Working Group
- e) Terms of Reference for the Cemetery Working Group
- f) Terms of Reference for the Environment Working Group

g) Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to defer items a – g until the June 2025 meeting.

2250 Asset Register

Members considered the inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment completed in April 2025 as part of the internal audit process. Morda and Village Hall has been removed as the Council is no longer the Custodian Trustees. Cllr Bob Kimber confirmed the Parish Council is the Custodian Trustee of Trefonen Village Hall and is correctly recorded on the Asset Register.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to approve the Asset Register as at 31 March 2025.

2251 SALC and SLCC Membership

Members considered the renewal memberships for SALC and SLCC. The Clerk confirmed the SALC fees for 2025/26.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for the annual Parish Council subscription to SALC at a cost of £2,158.09 be APPROVED. Members **AGREED** to the continued membership of SLCC although this is not payable until December 2025.

2252 Appointment of Internal Auditor

The Clerk requested this item be deferred to allow quotes / costings to be received. Members **AGREED** to defer this item until June 2025.

2253 Schedule of Future Meetings

Members considered a schedule of future dates of meetings and venues for 2025/26. Cllr Peter Richardson advised the Council had observed an August recess for the past two years. The November meeting is too close to the second week of December as it does not allow sufficient time for The Clerk to complete the work. He proposed combining the November and December meeting into one and for it to be held on the first Thursday in December 2025. The Clerk will check availability of the Village Hall.

There was a suggestion for some Parish Council meetings to be held in Morda, given that it is the largest ward. The Clerk had made inquiries at the beginning of the year regarding the use of Morda & Sweeney Village Hall (MSVH) and was informed there was no availability. Several Councillors expressed concerns that MSVH is unsuitable due to historical issues. Various alternatives were suggested, including the school and the Cricket Club. Councillor Andy Davies inquired about scope in Maesbury. Councillor Peter Richardson noted that the school had been used previously and that the Women's Institute hut was deemed unsuitable due to limited parking and the requirement that the hut remain attended, which posed a problem during private sessions. He also informed members that Councillor Iain Campbell had agreed to allow the Council to use Canal Central in Maesbury for the June meeting, free of charge.

Councillor Richard Fowler proposed that members accept the schedule as provisional to allow time to explore other venues in Morda. Should no alternative venues be proposed by members at the June meeting, the current schedule will stand. .

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to combine the November and December meeting into one with a revised date as the first Thursday of December. It was also AGREED for the schedule of future meetings to be provisional to allow time to explore other venues in Morda. Should no other venues be proposed at the June meeting, the current schedule with the amended December date will stand. Members APPROVED this.

2254 Planning Matters

Members **NOTED** the following applications.

Planning Application Details	Planning Proposals
25/00900/FUL Nantmawr Quarry, Nantmawr, Shropshire	Use of land for open storage of HGV trailers (use Class B8) Decision: Refuse

b Planning Applications

To CONSIDER and APPROVE a response to the following planning applications:

Planning Application Details	Planning Proposals
25/01448/FUL Holly Cottage , Aston Square, Aston, Oswestry, Shropshire	Proposed new single-storey side extension to link existing garage and main dwelling. It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to support this application. There was one abstention.
25/01474/FUL Hope House Hospice, Nant Lane, Morda, Oswestry, Shropshire	Refurbishment of an existing playground and creation of an accessible outdoor path network across the site It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to support this application. There was one abstention.

2255 Clerk's Report

Members reviewed a written report from the Clerk regarding actions taken after decisions made at previous council meetings.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to accept the report.

2256 Financial Matters

a) Members considered approval of income and expenditure to 30 April 2025.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the income and expenditure to 30 April 2025 of income received of £49,598.10 and gross expenditure of £2,953.95 be APPROVED.

b) Bank reconciliation

Members considered for approval the bank reconciliation at 30 April 2025.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the bank reconciliation statement at 30 April 2025 totalling £253,848.72 be APPROVED.

c) Provisional Payments for May 2025

Members considered the following provisional Payments for May 2025:

Supplier	Details	Gross £
Rhydycroesau Village Hall	Hire of Hall - AGM 15 May 2025	45.00
EE	Mobile charges	15.71
HSBC	Bank charges - 30/03/2025 - 29/04/2025	8.00
Mark Evans	Bus shelter Cleaning April 2025	60.00
Colin Turner	Bus shelter Cleaning April 2025	25.00
K Lloyd - The Clerk	Clerk's pay and allowances May 2025	1526.48
HMRC	PAYE / NI Clerk Pay May 2025	359.85
Shropshire Council	Pension Contributions May 2025 - Employees / Employers	487.04
A G Royce	Grounds Maintenance Works 21/03/2025 & 03/04/2025	602.00
SALC	ALC Affiliation Fees 2025/26	2158.09
RLT Auditing	Internal Audit Charge 2024/25	302.00
K Lloyd - The Clerk	Reimbursement - Postage for agendas and associated papers May and stationery	49.97
A G Royce	Grounds Maintenance Works 17/04/2025, 01/05/2025, 15/05/2025	903.00
Printerland co .uk	Xerox Capacity Toner Pack (Four coloured)	370.94
Zurich Municipal	Parish Insurance 1 June 2025 - 31 May 2026 (First year for 3 year LTA)	753.60
Llanyblodwel Parish Council	Contribution towards Moreton Cemetery Maintenance	581.00
		8,247.68

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the provisional payments for May 2025 be approved.

d) Members **APPROVED** the grant £581 to Llanyblodwel Parish Council as the contribution towards Moreton Cemetery.

2257 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25

a) The Clerk reported that the internal audit has been completed. The written report will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and any recommendations will be presented to Full Council.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to RECEIVE the Annual Internal Audit report for 2024/25

b) The Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 to be APPROVED

c) The Accounting Statement for 2024/25

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 to be APPROVED

d) The Clerk advised members the Exercise of Public Rights must include first ten working days of July 2025 and had to be announcement by the 30 June 2025 to comply with statutory deadline.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to set the Exercise of Public Rights date to include the first ten days of July, with the announcement being published on the website by the statutory deadline of 30 June 2025.

2258 Risk Management

The Chairman proposed deferring the annual risk assessment to the June 2025 meeting so inspections of the Council's assets can be incorporated. Members **AGREED** with this proposal.

2259 Consultation

None

2260 Correspondence

a) The Chairman advised there has been one nomination received for The Tonys' Community Service Award. The Clerk confirmed this was for the same person who received a letter of thanks from the Council in the year.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to approve this person as the winner subject to there being no further nominations received by 31 May 2025.

b) Members **NOTED** the CPRE Shropshire response on GGC Vyrnwy Frankton consultation, which had been circulated by Councillor Richard Fowler. A member observed that the response was very direct and highlighted CPRE's strong support for rural issues. It was suggested that the Parish Council consider joining CPRE at the June meeting, and a representative from CPRE be invited to present at the Annual Parish Meeting. Another councillor inquired about the number of members who were individually affiliated with CPRE.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to enquire about membership and to place it as an agenda item for the June meeting.

2261 Date for Next Meeting

Member **NOTED** the next meeting will place on Thursday 26 June 2025 at Canal Central Maesbury from 7.00pm. The Annual Parish Meeting (APM) will be held on Thursday 29 May at Trefonen Village Hall.

Councillor Martin Jones encouraged all members to make every effort to attend the APM meeting. Everyone was reminded it is an opportunity for members of the public to raise any issues or concerns. Several potential invitees were considered, and it was agreed to find a suitable guest speaker.

It was proposed, seconded, and agreed to invite a representative from CPRE to give a presentation and for the newly elected Councillor Andy Davis, representing St Oswald's Division, to provide an update.

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act and due to the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted it will be PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the public and press should not be present

2262 Insurance

The Clerk advised three quotes were received for the Parish Insurance Renewal due on the 1 June 2025. This included both one and three year agreements. A table summarising the quotes including Public and Personal Liability values had been circulated. Members considered the quotes and agreed with The Clerk's recommendation.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to APPROVE the three year long term agreement with the current provider Zurich Municipal at a cost £753.60.

2263 Cemetery Quotes

Cllr Mike Weston provided an update on the cemetery. He advised of the difficulties in obtaining quotes. Two have been received, both including the excavation, levelling and extensions of pathways and headstone plinths. One quote did not cover the removal of matter off site, whilst the other included opening up of the fallow land adjacent to the cemetery to spread the matter. The company also agreed to level plots. Members **NOTED** the significant difference in price.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to accept the quote from Muckshifters.

Members thanked Cllr Mike Weston for his work on this.

2264 Enforcement

Members **NOTED** the enforcement in the Maesbury Ashton Ward. Members also **NOTED** ongoing liaison with the Environmental Agency. Cllr Andy Davis advised that in speaking with residents and farmers, the message is for the public to report concerns with the Planning Department or via the Planning Portal. He advised of strong objections to the plans at Trefarclawdd and the need for these to be promoted.

Cllr Martin Jones advised members he had received a response from Upsewage Creek giving permission for the use of the Fergal Sharkey video and River Severn information. These will be forwarded to The Clerk to publish on the Parish Council website.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.10 pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____

The Chairman

DRAFT