

**Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council at 7.30 pm on Friday 5th January 2018 in Parbold Women's Institute Hall.**

Present: Cllr Bithell (Vice Chairman), Cllr Bailey, Cllr Blake, Cllr Butts, Cllr Holland, Cllr Schaffel.

**1. To record apologies for absence**

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Arnold, Cllr Stewart, Cllr Carruthers.

**2. To receive declarations of interest**

None declared.

**3. To sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held 1st December 2017**

The Minutes were accepted as a correct record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chairman.

**4. Public Participation:**

The meeting will be adjourned for an appropriate time (four minutes maximum per speech) for members of the public to raise matters of concern or interest as notified to the Chairman.

Items 5 & 6 were swapped over to allow members of the public to contribute.

**5. To apprise Councillors of Network Rail proposals regarding level crossings at Parbold Village and Chapel Lane**

The Chairman explained that we are at the start of a long process which will include a period of wider consultation and invited parish councillors initially to give their views.

Cllr Blake - not terribly happy with what a they are saying, suggested we get professional advice and commission a feasibility study - we ought to protect the car park and biological heritage site; a great deal of time and money has been spent here.

The Clerk was asked to request that Network Rail clarify their fundamental presumptions - this would appear to be a very safe crossing area with a clear view over a long distance in either direction. The death being relied upon is known locally to have been a suicide that might never have been prevented so this should not score points from a risk perspective.

The ideal development from the parish councils viewpoint would be to update the crossing to an automated system with object detection.

Also, why was Bradshaw Lane discounted so quickly as this is on the right side of the canal for the homes requiring access? The understanding was that the topography included culverts and that the land is in several different ownerships. However, installing a road through muddy fields does not seem insurmountable.

There is concern about a footbridge at the site because it appears to be intrusive on the biological heritage site and land on the other side that is currently field. Also a footbridge is not good access for disabled, those with prams, wheelchairs, children, dogs, or those who are infirm on their feet. This ground-level crossing is in frequent use and is fully accessible at the moment. The Parish Council has worked hard to keep the area full public open access, even installing a disabled-friendly footway around the BHS site and a footbridge would restrict the accessibility at this point.

The Parish Council are not aware of what powers Network Rail have? If Network Rail insist they must create a road, we need to know the procedure this follows and the full impact of such a road. The Clerk was asked to investigate this.

Currently, this is a tranquil area where the public can walk out of the village and relax with no roads in sight. To install a road alongside the canal and biological heritage site this tranquillity is immediately destroyed. The ability to relax, allow dogs a free rein without risk of traffic is gone completely. Any encroachment onto the biological heritage site is resisted; the route over the top of the landfill cap is not permitted and any road alongside the biological heritage site spoils the nature of the open, public area.

Discussion took place around the proposals A,B,C. Any road will disrupt the newly constructed car park at the end of Bramble Way and car parking places will be lost. There will be a tendency for drivers to park along a road near the canal, particularly the fishermen who will find it easier than carrying their fishing equipment along the road from the car park. The car park is already inadequate for the number of vehicles, particularly at weekends, losing spaces will be a problem and it will be too tempting to park along any road installed. There are children leaving the changing rooms to play on the fields and they would have to cross a road which is far from ideal. There is a risk of footballs being kicked into the road. The rugby pitch requires a run-off or over-enthusiastic players and cannot be positioned directly alongside a road without this run-off area. Currently, we have a safe area for children to change and play, far from traffic. Installing a road inevitably introduces traffic. It is thought that a road cannot be constructed over the landfill cap.

If there has to be a road here, the primary aim is to protect and maintain this tranquillity whilst walking of the valley away from the busy village. There is a need to protect the ambience of the footpath.

Network Rail will have to undertake an Environmental Impact assessment but the Parish Council would be best advised to do the same.

Dr Simons from Parbold Wildlife Group will support the Parish Council stance that automated barrier is the preferred option, though if a road is forced upon us, Route C would be the only option. There is concern also that wherever the road is put in the contractors will not understand the delicate nature of the biological heritage site and surrounds and untold damage could be done during construction. Even constructing the footpath around the site caused irreparable damage to the site. Indeed installing a road along here is the worse option to take, whichever route you take. The Wildlife Group and Parish Council agreed to coordinate closely to ensure that a joint response is achieved on behalf of the village. We do, as a group, possess an enormous wealth of information about the meadow. We have been surveying and recording results with the Lancashire Environmental Records Network for many years. There are a number of organisations who work at the meadow and will be in a

position to make a very strong case to defend the site itself. The construction of a road will require heavy machinery to bring stone in; this will inevitable impact on the biological heritage site.

Does anyone know what the long term maintenance to the old canal bridge will be?

If trying to create a wildlife non damage at what point do pounds work more than wildlife?

We need to understand the legal position if money talks over the wildlife.

The Canal and Rivers Trust may need to assess impact on towpath and the canal bridge. The routes suggested are crudely drawn but out C is clearly seen to be in the reed bed which obviously can't be done and it allows no turning area for those exiting to turn onto the canal bridge. If the road is alongside the canal, people will begin to moor there.

There are any number of footpaths crossing the railway, some just a short walk through the woods further along the track. There is one that leads to a single house at Burscough.

A resident of Chapel Lane explained that the closure of the level crossing is essential for improving access for us, as residents. There have been many problems maintaining an obsolete crossing and since 1959 there has been talk of putting a road in instead. A road extending Bradshaw Lane would be resisted because it is over farm land, through stables and over the fields and then across my land which I will never give permission for. Traffic would drive in past our farmhouse, our yard would have to be given up for a thoroughfare - though Network Rail say twelve vehicle per day it will be far more than that. We don't want a road through our yard. Vehicles will be coming in from the other side of the canal, from the mooring on Chapel Lane. As a member of the Wildlife Group I would oppose any disruption of the wildlife so an upgraded crossing is an obvious answer. With regard to the roads whichever route is taken there should be fencing to protect the heritage site as we have had motor vehicles, quads and bikes driving around in the past, a road would allow access so it should be fenced to protect it.

Dr Simons was asked if there is an alternative route that could minimised the damage? No one likes the straight line drawings provided as they clearly don't have sufficient detail and the end of the roads do not allow for turning space. The first position is that we don't want any road, if there is a solution that avoids a road near the heritage site that should be taken. If it got to the point that Network Rail insist, we would think very seriously - none of these routes have been drawn with any consideration biological richness of the area. As a last ditch position we could help to minimise the still very serious damage. The hardest part is regulating the contractors - it is frankly too awful to contemplate what would be left after the road ground-workers have been in. The impact will not be confined to the narrow road area.

Subsequent ownership of the road and duty to maintain it is also in question. Adoption by LCC Highways is the most likely but cannot be assumed as LCC are reluctant, with decreasing budget, to take on maintenance of new roads. Rural roads are often adopted by the residents who benefit from them. Chapel Lane residents do not wish the responsibility of taking it as a private road for Chapel Lane residents use only. So the road would be related to the railway but not actually connected to the railway. Network Rail may install it but then would have little to do with it afterwards. Network Rail are already difficult to engage in local issues, they ignored all attempts to deal with the flooding from the line and Himalayan

balsam and Japanese knotweed encroaching on land adjacent to the railway. Property they own in the centre of the village has been left to rot and they would not engage on flooding of the Burnside estate, when water came off the track. There is no confidence that there would be any assistance with maintenance of this road once installed.

The road needs to be large enough for emergency vehicles, Fire engines, removal vans, delivery vans etc.

The Chairman brought discussion to a close, having aired lots of views there was a general consensus.

Plan -

- create a response for Network rail based on their presentation and route options. Circulate this and comment via email.
- Try and get some facts as to the legal position and process needing to be followed so that we can take an active part in it.

Do they actually have to General Permitted Development Order?

The least disruption to residents and area in general is to replace the crossing.

Is it worth trying to establish long term plan?

As regards Network Rail's request to consider which road option is acceptable, this is not possible. The drawings are simplistic and such an unsophisticated proposal with fundamental principles we do not feel have been addressed in the right manner, it really would need to be started from scratch. Only real alternative to what is there is an automatic crossing. Our own planning consultant to look into this.

#### **6. To ratify accounts and authorise payment of accounts presented**

|        |               |   |      |           |
|--------|---------------|---|------|-----------|
| 061217 | Smart Heating | village hall boiler service                             | 2719 | £216.00   |
| 201217 | B Rawsthorne  | grass cutting contract                                  | 2720 | £1,004.00 |
| 211217 | RBS           | Bank charges  | d.d  | £5.00     |
| 311217 | E A Broad     | Salary for December 2017                                | s.o. | £695.71   |
| 301217 | NEST          | pension (£7.44 Parish contribution)                     | d.d. | £61.05    |
| 301217 | NEST          | Lump sum payment attributed to former service 2003-2017 | d.d  | £500.00*  |
| 050218 | Parbold WI    | Room hire for 5th January 2018                          | 2721 | £32.50    |

The accounts were ratified and authorised for payment.

**7. To discuss co-option of a new member to fill the council vacancy**

The meeting noted the vacancy and that one enquiry had been received to date. The Clerk was asked to include the vacancy in the PCA newsletter. The Council will continue with the vacancy for the time-being.

**8. To discuss promotion of Parbold Library following the reopening**

Cllr Blake reported to the meeting that County Councillor Peter Buckley was keen to encourage the formation of Friend-of-the-library groups and LCC staff were asking Parish Councils to display notices or include articles in their newsletters to increase the footfall at the Library.

Joanne Cast is attempting to gather volunteers to assist. The Parish Council wish to offer help in promoting the library and the Clerk was asked to enquire what help she may need and remind her that there is some parish funding available for this.

**9. Village Hall Issues:-**

- **To apprise councillors of abandoned vehicle on the car park**

WLBC responded that they had no legal authority to move the car or treat it as an abandoned vehicle because it was on parish-council-owned land. The Clerk was instructed to contact DVLA to ask for details of the registered owner so that they can be requested to move the vehicle and in the meantime to continue to liaise with police

- **To confirm date to meet with PCA members to discuss heating and possibility of installing cctv**

A date after 18th January will be set administratively.

**10. Alder Lane Issues:-**

- **Consider cctv at the Bramble Way car park**

The meeting heard that there had been vandalism at the shipping containers on Bramble Way car park and Up Holland footballer who had hired the field for casual use had effected emergency repairs. The clerk was asked to convey thanks to him from the Council.

There remains concern however about installing cctv at a site where children are changing and playing football and rugby.

**11. To note Planning and Planning Applications**

There was discussion about the progress of enforcement action at 9-13Tan House Lane, noting that compromises had been met between the planning authority and the applicant.

It was noted that Parbold Douglas Academy had been granted permission for the high fencing but requested to mitigate the appearance with hedging.

The appeals at Chapel Moorings had been upheld and costs awarded against the Borough council.

Application Number 2017/1300/FUL  
35 Lindley Drive, WN8 7ED

First floor and single storey extensions at the rear: extension to garage at the rear; single storey extensions at the front and side: pitched roof to front dormers.

Parish Council Response: No comment.

## **12. To agree signage for Burnside Play Area gate**

The following wording was agreed:

### **PARBOLD PARISH COUNCIL**

**Play area suitable for ages 7 - 14 years**

**Please respect the play area and dispose of litter responsibly**

**NO DOGS by Order of WLBC - Offenders will be fined.**

**See website: <http://www.parbold-pc.gov.uk>**

## **13. To agree notes for inclusion in PCA Newsletter (February 2018)**

The following wording was agreed:

Residents on The Green are struggling with drivers leaving cars outside their homes whilst visiting the village hall and doctor's surgery. Can you please be mindful where you park so as not to upset residents.

Initial feedback from the speed indicator devices reveals that they are very effective in reducing speed and we are grateful to those driving carefully through the village. However, the highest speed reached on Station Road near the canal bridge was over 60 mph, which is clearly dangerous on such a busy stretch of road with poor sight lines for drivers. Please be aware that the devices are capable of recording data and keep within the legal speed limit.

There is currently a vacancy for a Parish Councillor. If you would like to volunteer your time in this way, please contact the Clerk for more details.

The Council will shortly be inviting tenders for the grass cutting and playing field maintenance contract. Please email the Clerk if you wish further information.

The Parish Council is also looking for volunteers to litter-pick a designated area. If you feel able to cover a particular area once a month for a twelve month commitment, please email the Clerk. Thank you so much to all the volunteers who already do this on an informal basis.

Finally a reminder about the odour problems at Hoscar. New staff onsite are not aware of the history of problems, so please continue to report each and every disturbance you notice on:-

<http://unitedutilities.odour.sgizmo.com/s3/>

A link can also be found on the parish council website at: <http://www.parbold-pc.gov.uk>

#### **14. Councillors' agenda items for future meetings**

Cllr Bailey - apologies for next meeting.

Cllr Butts - Can consideration be given to installing two more recycled benches on the Chapel Meadow? Also the dog bin at the end of Chapel Lane is difficult to reach due to mud at the base of it.

The WLBC Capital Grant Scheme was discussed and the clerk asked to check with the Flood Group if any capital items can be purchased to support their work. The bench on The Common near the notice board is in a poor state of repair and requires replacement. Consideration will be given to obtaining a grant for a David Ogden World War 1 commemorative bench for this site. The current bench has a dedication brass plaque but it is thought that the family no longer resides in the village.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meetings at 10 pm.

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*Chairman - Cllr Brian Arnold*

*2nd February 2018*