

## Gawsworth Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Adam Keppel-Green BSc FSLCC

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### Minutes

*of the council meeting held*

**Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023 in the Gawsworth Village Hall**

#### **23/099 PRESENT**

Cllrs Shepherd (*presiding*), Clarke, Dempsey, Hardy, Kinsey, Mitchell, Richards, Woods and Wright.

A Keppel-Green (Clerk)

#### **23/100 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

All members were present.

#### **23/101 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No member declared an interest in any item under discussion.

#### **23/102 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Cllr Shepherd explained that the public would be given opportunity to raise questions on the specific proposal for traffic signals which would be presented and that this participation session would be the opportunity for comments about the principle or other matters.

A resident questioned the process leading to the presentation of proposals, stating they had expected plans would be available to review in advance of a meeting.

A resident asked what options had been discarded/considered.

A resident stated they felt the decision had already been made and that the community was not being adequately consulted.

Jonathan Copnall of Cheshire East Highways presented on the proposed scheme of traffic signals at the crossroads. The scheme outlined involved the relocation of the bus stop south of Church Lane to near Forge Close, kerb realignment outside the Old Post Office, would operate on a 90s cycle and included early cycle release and stop boxes for cyclists as well as a pedestrian controlled crossing north of the crossroads. Mr Copnall stated vehicle tracking had been undertaken to track large vehicles and the stop lines were set back on Dark Lane and Church Lane to accommodate movements. It was confirmed the equipment was ordered in the spring and that works should commence in the first months of 2024.

Residents and councillors raised a number of comments/concerns, some speaking in support of the proposals, other comments summarised as:

- It is alarming that the proposals are going ahead without public consultation
- There is concern alternatives have not been given due consideration
- Has a risk assessment and cost benefit analysis been undertaken?
- Concern was expressed that the proposed crossing does not provide adequate safe access to the Methodist Church as pedestrians have little pavement and no safe crossing on Dark Lane
- It was queried how vehicles exiting the Methodist Church car park would be impacted by traffic queues and whether a 'keep clear' box could be installed
- It was queried if the north-bound bus stop be relocated outside the Methodist Church to enable a crossing to be installed south of the crossroads to provide safe access to both
- Whether there had been a review of traffic data post-COVID
- Whether consideration had been given to lowering the speed limit on the A536 instead
- Concern that the traffic waiting at lights will encourage drivers to seek to bypass the crossroads via Lowes Lane and Maggoty Lane/Church Lane
- Whether the signals would be 'smart' and manage queues
- What the construction programme would be and whether residents more directly affected would be consulted
- Whether the queue lengths and traffic flows through the lights had been modelled
- A request for the extension of the no overtaking lines
- What provision would be made for safe and convenient access/egress from driveways onto stretches of roads where queues may form from the traffic lights
- What provision would be made to ensure lights did not affect neighbouring properties
- Whether there would be any street lighting or double yellow lines installed

- Whether the proposal had been modelled with forecast traffic flows from strategic developments

Mr Copnall advised that:

- The original bid was submitted to the Safer Roads Fund in 2017 and the bid included information on the costs and accident data. A review in 2022 concluded the proposed scheme should proceed
- There had not been a re-count of traffic post-COVID but the observed traffic flows were similar and the collision data had been reviewed [Post-meeting note: it was clarified that a count was undertaken in 2021 and that DfT data suggests average daily flows on the A536 have returned to similar figures to pre-COVID)
- That Dark Lane was challenging as there was insufficient space to create additional footway
- That speed limits had been reviewed in line with guidance from the Department for Transport and Policing guidance as well as the Cheshire East Council Speed Management Strategy which all indicate that a 40mph limit is appropriate for the road and that a 30mph limit would not be supported
- The traffic signals would be 'smart' and monitor traffic queues. Algorithms would determine the appropriate light cycle based on observed traffic and normal traffic observations.
- That he would check the modelling data with regard to the number of vehicles which would pass through lights per cycle and that the previous temporary lights on the A536 involved lane closures
- There are no proposals for the installation of streetlights nor double yellow lines as part of the scheme
- The works would likely take 2-3 months with a mixture of traffic signals and road closures for excavations and resurfacing.
- When planning works consultation will take place with residents directly affected
- The lights would be shielded and positioned to minimise any light pollution to buildings to which they are adjacent
- No strategic models exist for the traffic expected from the strategic developments [Post-meeting note: it was clarified that a traffic model for the junction has been produced using data from 2021)

It was agreed that a summary of information would be published on the council website, noticeboards and social media and that the council consider its views at the next meeting.

#### **23/104          APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> September subject

to corrections to 23/091 to refer to dog poo bins, a typographical correction and clarification on the condition of the pavement.

**23/105            CHESHIRE EAST COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Cllr Smetham reported that leaflets had been distributed on the green bin charging scheme, that £2 bus fares had been extended by the government to December 2024 and that the council had received government funding for business grants.

**23/106            PARISH MATTERS**

Cllr Mitchell thanked the ranger for the speed at which he cleared the fallen branch on Maggoty Lane.

Cllr Woods highlighted the recent planting at Penningtons Lane.

Cllr Clarke noted the grit bin had been damaged, it was explained it was an accident during the hedge cutting. Cllr Clarke further highlighted parking on double yellow lines outside school hours, it was agreed to ask the PCSO/PC to attend at a future meeting to discuss parking issues.

Cllrs Shepherd and Dempsey reported contact from a resident who had experienced problems with a motorcyclist on the fields in South Macclesfield accessed from Congleton Road; it was noted the Clerk was looking to advise the resident on how the matter can be progressed.

**23/107            CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH ON**

it was noted that the switch on would take place at 5pm on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, following the children’s Christmas party and that an 18ft Christmas tree had been ordered for the Pleasance.

It was noted that no response had been received from CEC Highways on permissions to install a meter/feeder pillar on the Penningtons Lane green. It was agreed to look at alternative options this year.

**23/108            FINANCE**

The financial position year to date was noted.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following payments

Payee	Detail	Amount
Chris Garland Training	Community CPR/Defib Training	£299.99
F Morrey and Son	Planting for Penningtons Lane	£176.23

Northwich TC	August/September works	£1,935.00
Gort and March	Q2 Payroll	£45.36
B Allen Tree Services	Tree Works	£1,120.00
HMRC	Q2 PAYE	£467.56
A Keppel-Green	October Salary and Reimbursements	£686.38
ICO	Annual Registration	£35.00
NPower	Sept Street Lighting Costs	£35.52
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,801.04</b>

### **23/109 PARISH MAINTENANCE AND ACTIONS LOGS**

The logs were noted. It was noted that outstanding matters for Nancy's Wood were missing from the log. It was noted the Hub would be progressing the new footpaths leaflet with the Footpaths WG, and that a web version of the directory would be prepared. It was noted the siding out of the village hall hedge was being arranged.

### **23/110 QUESTIONS TO THE CLERK**

The Clerk responded a question advising the format of the public participation slots, that the public have opportunity to speak on any matter at the start of the meeting to bring matters to the council's attention, and a second opportunity at the end of the meeting to provide feedback on discussions, additional information following discussions or to raise other matters.

The Clerk further advised that an application had been submitted to the John Upton Charity towards the replacement defibrillator.

### **23/111 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

A resident thanked the council for its dynamic conversation on the traffic signals, but that they felt process had not been followed explaining they felt there had been poor communication and that it remained unclear how residents could provide further feedback on the scheme.

### **23/112 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November.