

PRESENT: Councillor R Dixon, Chairman
Councillor C Novak, Vice-Chairman
Councillor C Buckley
Councillor S Bullock
Councillor P Highfield
Councillor H Moss

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor D Stockton, CEC
Members of the public

1 APOLOGIES: Councillor Gray

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

2.1 Declarations Of Interest

None

2.2 Dispensations

None

3 MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Council meeting held on 2nd August 2021 Proposed by Councillor Novak, seconded by Councillor Dixon. RESOLVED: The minutes were accepted as a true record.

4 NEW COUNCILLOR

Councillor Dixon formally welcomed Helen Moss to the team and hoped she would be happy in her role as a Councillor. Helen signed and returned the Acceptance of Office form to the Clerk.

5 POLICE REPORT

No report from the police was available. As there have been no reports for some time it was suggested that the Clerk get in touch with the PCSO.

6 NATIONAL TRUST REPORT

Neither Jen Birch nor Jo Hudson was available to attend

Jo emailed a report for tonight's meeting but, unfortunately, it didn't arrive in time for the Clerk to deal with it.

7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (10 MINUTES)

Residents raised the following issues and comments:

- **Lights on the Christmas Tree**

Can the lights be on all the time?

Councillor Buckley explained that this was due for discussion at Items 12.4.1 and 12.4.2

- **"20's Plenty" Campaign**

Councillor Stockton stated that Cheshire East is considering replacing 30mph speed limits with 20mph limits. No doubt a Highways and Transport committee will consider the proposed scheme '20's Plenty'.

He added that his inbox had been inundated with people supporting the scheme. However, he found it perverse that we are trying to get a speed limit imposed to 30mph from 60mph on Station Road but it does not meet Cheshire East's. Don contacted Highways again to try to establish what criteria was used in the assessment.

However, Councillor Stockton stated that he mentioned the 20's plenty proposal in order to conduct a straw poll (with the Chairman's permission) of those present to hear reactions. He stressed that this was purely a reduction of 30mph to 20mph and does not affect other speeds.

- Councillor Novak was in favour of reducing speed limits but was sceptical about the motives for the proposal because of the Council's experience on Station Road where there have been two formal requests to reduce the speed limit but each failed based on misleading information. The last assessment was reliant on a speed sensor being placed on a bend where, by definition, traffic had to slow down. Councillor Novak added that he considered Altrincham Road from its junction at Hollin Lane to Lode Hill should be 20mph.
- Councillor Highfield considered that the proposal could be advantageous in parts but speed limits are not finely tuned and a blanket reduction to 20mph is probably not appropriate.
- Councillor Bullock also thought a blanket reduction in speed would be a mistake.
- Councillor Buckley was in agreement with the views already expressed.

- Councillor Moss believed she was in a minority but she thought a blanket reduction in speed would be a good idea. Her background as a doctor meant that she saw the difference in results of a collision at 20mph and those at higher speeds which are almost always more severe.
- A resident commented that the slower a vehicle travels, the greater the amount of CO2 that is produced from the exhaust and how this would sit with the obsession with being 'green'.

8 PLANNING MATTERS

8.1 Planning Applications to be Considered

To discuss current planning applications

8.1.1 21/4523M Land At Holly Lane, Styal

21/4523M	Land At Holly Lane, Styal Demolition of stables and the construction of a detached bungalow with garden and parking	07/10/2021
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Councillors had neither objections or comments on the application which is just within the conservation area

8.2 Other Planning Matters

A resident contacted the Council reiterating his concerns about the demountable garage at the Hayloft Barn on Altrincham Road. The application remains unassigned so Council will consider it again at the next meeting.

9 HIGHWAYS MATTERS

9.1 General Highways Matters

Councillor Bullock reported that he and Councillor Novak went on a walk round of Styal with an official from Cheshire East Highways.

They started at Earlams and potholes, overgrown hedges and pathways were pointed out. In parts only a foot of pavement was visible. Some of the larger potholes that had been pointed out were repaired the next day.

Councillor Novak added that the Highways officer was very honest and explained that the major problem was one of funding. However, Councillor Novak found this somewhat bizarre in that a road in Alderley Edge, which did not appear to have any significant potholes was completely resurfaced. He added that a large pothole on Moss Lane had been filled in but not levelled resulting a hump in the road.

Councillor Bullock explained that he was disappointed that Highways did not have a list of the problems identified on the walk round and that Highways have requested a list of the specific sites where problems exist along with images if possible.

A resident was invited to speak about the horseshoe on Hollin Lane. He explained that there were some serious issues in the area such as potholes in the road and holes in the pavement. He had reported the problems approximately 18 months ago, the report was acknowledged but never actioned. Councillor Bullock said they looked at the entrances but did not go round the back of the horseshoe. The resident was advised to report the issue again with photographs and also to send the same information to the Clerk who will also report the matter to Highways.

The Clerk stated that if Councillors (and members of the public) sent her details of any Highways issues she would report them to Cheshire East. She stressed that if individual complaints were also reported, there would be a higher possibility of something being actioned

A question was raised about overgrown hedges and whose responsibility it was for cutting back. Councillor Dixon explained that it depended upon who owned the hedges, i.e. whether they were Highways owned or privately owned. If Highways then the Council would report the problem direct. If privately owned then a Councillor would call on the homeowner and politely ask if they would cut back the foliage. This would be followed by a letter if there is no result from the visit, ultimately reporting it to Highways if nothing is done. Highways would then warn the owner that if nothing is done, Highways do it and charge the homeowner.

Councillors Dixon volunteered to look at Altrincham Road for highways issues and Councillor Bullock would look at Moss Lane and Holly Lane. Both will send the results to the Clerk.

9.2 Flooding on Moss Lane, Wilkins Lane and the Closed Part of Altrincham Road

Councillor Bullock stated that the airport had been conducting some surveys into the problems but, due to Covid and the resultant unavailability of personnel, a lot of the activities had all but stopped.

As far as Cheshire East is concerned we were contacted by an officer who was part of the flood response team. He issued a statement as follows:

"Cheshire East has been conducted extensive investigation into the flooding and some problem fields and other areas have been identified which may well need attention. As soon as these investigations have been concluded, it is Cheshire East Council's intention to meet with the affected residents"

Councillor Bullock believes that once it is determined where all the water is going the residents will be informed and a remedial plan will be drawn up in conjunction with the airport.

The Clerk received an email from Manchester Airport to state that the airport and Cheshire East would be meeting in the very near future, which is a definite step forward.

9.3 Ownership of the Closed part of Altrincham Road

Unfortunately there is no progress on this issue because one of the main players from Cheshire East is also a main player in the flooding issue on Moss Lane. Cheshire East determined that the flooding took precedence.

9.4 Station Road Speed Limit

Councillor Dixon believed that the main points on this issue had already been covered in Item 7 Public Participation.

Councillor Novak expressed disappointment that he had had no response from Laura Crane the head of Highways. Sadly, since the election, it seems that all direct dialogue between Cheshire East and Styal Parish Council seems to have ceased.

Councillor Stockton pointed out that Laura was no longer head of Highways and, since the Council adopted a committee system, there are no longer any portfolio holders to take charge of the various departments in Cheshire East. The Highways committee is headed up by Councillor Craig Brown who is also the deputy leader of Cheshire East Council. The Clerk was asked to contact Councillor Brown.

9.5 Other Highways Matters

- **ANPR cameras**

The Clerk sent Councillors details about joining a scheme to install ANPR cameras in various towns and villages. Unfortunately it comes with a considerable cost - in the region of £5,000 per year.

Councillor Novak remarked that the question is whether or not Styal PC would be prepared to spend around £5,000 a year for this facility. The answer has to be yes, at least for the pilot scheme. This is an opportunity to get something positive done for the village.

It was pointed out that the residents would have to be consulted before such a scheme was implemented.

Councillor Dixon invited John Novak to speak who said that he was of the opinion that Earlams could possibly help towards costs.

The Clerk will obtain further information about the scheme.

- **Zebra Crossing**

Although the posts are lit, the crossing is not lit and it is difficult, at night, for drivers to see anyone crossing the road until they are very close to the crossing.

Councillors agreed that something needed to be done as some of them had experienced similar problems which has been exacerbated by trees obscuring the street light. The Clerk will contact Highways.

- **30 MPH Sign**

There is an estate agent's sign partially obscuring the 30mph sign on the approach to Styal from the Airport. A resident attending the meeting stated that the sign was advertising his house. Councillor Dixon asked, and the resident agreed, to contact the estate agent.

10 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Councillor Highfield provided the following report:

The survey of residents had been completed and there were about 100 responses from residents and 70 responses from non-residents. This is roughly estimated as being a response by 20% of residents.

A brief analysis of the resident responses resulted in a majority stating their like for living in Styal because it is a nice place to live and go for walks in the countryside.

The majority of residents responded that the things they disliked about Styal were speeding, parking problems and dog excrement.

Some items can be included as policies in the Neighbourhood Plan but some specific items, should as dealing with speeding and the lack of buses, will remain the responsibility of the Council.

Councillor Highfield went on to say that he would like to provide some key messages from the survey at the next meeting, but this would require more meeting time than normal.

Councillor Highfield was asked if the sports facilities in Styal were mentioned in the survey. He responded by saying there was nothing specific or named in the survey although it did include what additional facilities would be desirable and the most popular response was a bowling green.

11 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE CONSULTATION

Councillor Dixon stated that Cheshire East is consulting on constituency and boundary changes as well as the number of Councillors on Parish Councils.

The proposal for Styal is that the number of Councillors on Styal Parish Council be increased by from 7 to 8 and that the area around Sagars Road/Clay Lane be moved into Handforth Parish.

The rationale behind it is purely mathematical and does not take into account the special circumstances of Styal. For example Styal has no services such as doctors, dentists and parkland to look after so the duties of Councillors are straightforward. Adding an extra Councillor would therefore have no benefit and would lead to adding to the numbers for no reason.

As far as the change of boundary is concerned the proposal states that Clay Lane/Sagars Road does not adjoin Styal which is incorrect. The new development on this land would greatly benefit Styal in terms of an increased precept which would enable Styal to do many more projects for the good of residents but for Handforth and/or Wilmslow, it is a drop in the ocean.

The proposal includes a suggestion that Wilmslow, Handforth and Chorley are combined into one parish but Styal Parish Council will remain steadfast in any fight to retain its independence.

The Clerk will respond on the Council's behalf

12 VILLAGE MATTERS

12.1 Village Signs

The cheque for the village informational posters was cashed on 22nd September although no delivery date had been provided to date

12.2 Notice Boards

The new notice board would be delivered to Councillor Buckley c/o Quarry Bank and the company has stated that delivery of the notice board would be in the near future.

Councillor Buckley had offered to install the notice board along with help from other Councillors.

12.3 Field Behind the Horseshoe

The Clerk was advised that the field was managed by estate agents Main and Main in Heald Green but on contacting them the Clerk was told that had nothing to do with the field.

Councillor Buckley was of the opinion that an overgrown field was far better for nature conservation unless it has bad weeds such as Japanese knotweed. Unfortunately there is a footpath running through the field and therefore some maintenance is necessary.

A nearby resident provided the name and new address of the owner of the field and the Clerk will contact her.

12.4 Christmas Tree

Councillor Dixon stated that he had had an email from Styal Village Association wanting to do something around the Christmas tree and have asked for the Council's help.

12.4.1 Replacement of Electricity Supply

The Clerk had contacted Cheshire east to ask them to go ahead with the replacement for the damaged existing electricity feeder for the tree lights. The new unit will enable the lights to be on for 24 hours rather than being restricted to 6 hours.

Ideally the new unit should be placed underground to prevent potential future damage.

12.4.2 Additional Lights

Ideally one more set of lights should be purchased but there was a question on how many lights. The current configuration is 2 sets of 8 linked sets of lights. To get an extra set of lights with the same configuration would possibly be excessive.

It was unanimously agreed that there should be a star at the top of the tree. John Novak stated that he would provide the star.

12.4.3 Lights Switch on Event

Councillor Dixon asked if there should be a lights switch on event to which Councillor Novak said he thought it was a good idea.

John Novak explained that the SVA event included getting all the villagers to switch on the lights in all their houses at a certain time on a certain day and when the lights on the tree are switched on.

The Clerk added that the Christmas tree lights were normally switched on in the first weekend in December which, this year, is the 4th and 5th.

Councillor Dixon stated that the lights switch on will be on Saturday 4th December at 17.00 and requested that a resident connected with the SVA event take the information back to them, which he agreed to do.

12.5 Village Newsletter

12.5.1 Production Costs

The SVA is producing a newsletter and asked the Council if it would be prepared to sponsor one issue. The Council was happy to do so but would need to see a quote for the costs before it could be authorised.

It is intended that the newsletter would be quarterly and would contain information of interest to residents. Earlams has also volunteered to sponsor an issue.

12.5.2 Contributions to the Content

The Council will provide information such as Council meeting dates to the SVA for inclusion in the newsletter

12.6 Other Village Matters

- **Remembrance Sunday**

Fortunately Remembrance Sunday this year will be largely back to normal post Covid.

The SVA will be arranging a service at the Cenotaph and the children from Styal school will be contributing.

Councillor Buckley always volunteers to tidy up around the area but he stated that the suckers from the lime trees need removing - this is normally done by Highways. The Clerk will contact Highways and request that they cut back the extra growth on the lime trees.

13 FINANCIAL MATTERS**13.1 Donation**

The Council agreed that it would donate £150.00 towards the design and issue of new maps for Cycle Wilmslow. This will be authorised for payment at Item 13.3 below. Proposed by Councillor Novak, seconded by Councillor Highfield.

13.2 Payments Already Issued

Overdue payments which were unanimously agreed to by email. Proposed by Councillor Dixon, seconded by Councillor Bullock.

£ 136.80	Creation Design Solutions	Banner for the Neighbourhood Plan
£ 21.06	Peter Fuller	Flyers for the Neighbourhood Plan

13.3 Authorisation of Payments

Proposed by Councillor Dixon, seconded by Councillor Novak

£ 180.00	HRMC	PAYE Q3
£ 150.00	Cycle Wilmslow	Donation towards new maps
£ 20.00	CCA	Annual Subscription

13.4 Additional Signatory

To record that Councillor Buckley is now a signatory for the Council's bank account

13.5 Other Financial Matters

- **Lost Cheques**

The Clerk sent three cheques (payable to her) to Lloyds for processing but they got lost in the system. They have not been processed and therefore need stopping and a replacement cheque for the total amount re-issued if the Council agrees. The sums are: Proposed by Councillor Novak seconded by Councillor Dixon

£ 164.39	S B McDonald	Annual Styal Administration + Zoom	cheque no: 000225
£ 180.00	S B McDonald	Reimbursement for PAYE Q4	cheque no: 000226
£ 43.88	S B McDonald	Zoom, Petty Cash Box, Land Reg. fee	cheque no: 000227
Total: £388.27			

14 BUS SERVICE IN STYAL

The Clerk submitted a Freedom of Information (FOI) request regarding the 130 bus but it yielded absolutely nothing of relevance because it was stated that there was no information recorded.

Councillor Novak was somewhat taken aback in that he believed the new 130 bus would have had to have the permission of CEC to operate and the deputy Leader of CEC, was leading the initiative to arrange for financial contributions to the amended route thus enabling other parishes to be able to use the bus. It is hard to believe that there is no supporting documentation in existence, even if it is only an audit trail.

Councillor Stockton is of the opinion that this initiative may not have gone via Cheshire East which seems strange. Councillor Stockton has contacted the Member Enquiry Service (MES) to contact Richard Hibbert in an attempt to get information from a source other than the deputy Leader. No response has been received to date.

There is a new initiative called the Cheshire East Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) which sets out proposals to work with local communities, public transport users and local bus operators to boost services and develop transformational change across the network.

Councillor Stockton was requested to ask the MES about the plan and Styal PC could be contacted with additional information regarding this plan. No response has been received so far.

Councillor Novak pointed out that it was overall public transport in Styal, not just buses.

When the bus service in Styal ceased, Styal PC Councillors negotiated with Manchester Airport who kindly made some free train passes available to Styal residents for one year. Sadly this scheme is now at an end.

It is understood that the free train passes for schoolchildren travelling from Styal to and from Wilmslow have ceased and some parents are now having to foot the bill. This was only reported recently so little more is known at present.

The Clerk was asked to contact Cheshire East for clarification on these matters.

15 SHARED ITEMS

None

16 CORRESPONDENCE

Emails: forwarded to Councillors

Post:

CEC	Letter regarding the Council vacancy
Commercial	Mail shots

17 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (10 MINUTES)

Nothing was raised

18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 22nd November 2021 at 7.30pm in Earlams Log Cabin

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting

Signed: _____ Chairman 22nd November 2021