

Shocklach Oviatt and District Parish Council

Village Meeting 25 May 2017

Chairman's Report 2017

The Parish Council welcomed the 16 members of the public/residents in attendance and introduced;

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

HANNAH CARRICK, REGIONAL MANAGER FOR THE NORTH WEST, THE BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY

Cllrs J White, M Wilson, Cllr G Bowles and the Clerk Mrs C Taylor

Due to rail travel disruption Cllr M Chaloner joined the meeting slightly delayed.

A warm welcome was extended to all to stay for a drink and chat at the end of the meeting.

The agenda for the evening comprised;

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- A short Chairman's report
- A report from SHOCKLACH School Council
- A presentation from HANNAH CARRICK, REGIONAL MANAGER FOR THE NORTH WEST, THE BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY

Questions and discussion followed by refreshments

Cllr Bowles explained that it was a requirement of the meeting that a brief report be given by the Chairman of the activity of the Parish Council over the past twelve months and in his absence read out the following:

“This year I think we have had a much greater sense of stability in the Parish Council. This is largely thanks to the work of Claire Taylor our clerk. We have been incredibly lucky to have Claire take on the role of Parish Clerk with us, as she already acts as Clerk to a number of other Parish Councils locally and she therefore brings with her knowledge of the role and awareness of what is going on outside of our Parish, but also enthusiasm to the role which we all greatly appreciate.

The role of the Parish Council is to act as the local level of local government, providing a link between the community and the Cheshire West and Chester Council. A primary part of this role is providing a response to Planning Policy Documents (such as the local plan) and also responding to specific planning applications in the Parish Area, to ensure that local context and local issues are considered through the planning process. The parish council considers all applications it receives collectively to ensure a balanced response, and if any members of

the public are interested in a particular application they are welcome to make written comments to the Parish Council or attend the Parish Council Meetings to air their views. We are grateful for the time Chris Grey has given this year to attend Parish Council meetings, his local knowledge and passion for the local area has been very helpful in discussions. This year we have had a relatively quiet year in terms of planning applications with only 5 full applications to respond to, and one pre application consultation. With members of the community from Castletown we have continued to monitor the potential application for a solar farm, but so far there has been no further activity, and we are hopeful that the sense has prevailed and less sensitive sites are now being looked at for such schemes. The major works to Shocklach Hall which we have had presentations on at previous village meetings continue. The realigned highway is now almost complete, and the Van Cutsem family hope to be able to move in by Christmas this year.

The Parish Council also continues to undertake traffic speed surveys through the village, with the findings being sent to Cheshire Police who then contact offenders. This survey relies upon volunteers, to man the speed gun. We believe the presence of speed gun survey is in itself a reminder that there is a speed limit in the village, and helps to identify persistent offenders. Cllr Mike Wilson coordinates the speed gun, and we are very grateful to him for all his efforts in doing this. Mike needs more volunteers to sustain the speed survey, if you are willing to give up one hour a year, please let any of any of the councillors know and we can include you in the survey programme. We are one of the only parish councils in the local area with a speed gun, and next year we will be sharing this resource with neighbouring Parish Councils, in return we will ask for a small contribution that will help with the annual calibration etc. of the speed gun.

This year we have also supported Cheshire Police in rolling out operation shield across all homes within our Parish Area. The provision of the Operation Shield Kits has been funded by the Parish Council with a generous contribution from our Ward Councillor, Cllr Howard Greenwood, of £300. The total cost of the covering the Parish through Operation Shield has been £1265. The Operation Shield project has been driven by PC Ged Gigg, along with PCSO John Hurst and other colleagues. With his colleagues he has distributed the kits to every home. Please do ensure you all put a sticker in your window to show we are all covered as a community.

The Parish Council have continued to support the Tattenhall 1st Responders.

We continue to try and share with the community the issues and activity of the Parish Council. This is achieved through the Village Meeting; we also have a Parish Council Web Site WWW.shocklachparishcouncil.co.uk. Cllr John White produces a regular Parish Council report for the "Yellow Pages" that get distributed around the Parish, and John has also done a great job procuring and erecting a much needed new notice board (located outside the school), produced by a local craftsman. We are grateful to Cllr Howard Greenwood who has supported the purchase of the notice board, with a £250 contribution.

The Parish Council continue to monitor and report on the condition of highways, bridleways and footpaths in the Parish. Cllr Greg Bowles, in his first full year as a councillor along with Cllr John White, have been successful in securing much needed improvement works to the Bridle Path between Castletown and Caldecott. We have responded to a CwAC call for problem lengths of highway and are hopeful that we will see some highway repair work undertaken around the village, along Pursa Lane, and along Soughans Lane. CwAC highways have, at the request of the Parish Council, reviewed the provision of signage between Caldecott and Castletown Lane, Shocklach and have agreed that there could be some minor

improvement on the bends to help manage speeds. If you see any potholes or similar, it is easy to report on the CwAC website, alternatively if you are not able to do that let Claire or parish Cllr know the issue and we can report on your behalf.

This year we have also commenced the process of applying for The Bull to be designated as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). Ashley and his team's work has re-established The Bull as a great village pub that acts as an important place for the community to come together. However, we need to look to the future and the pressure on village pubs is well known. Securing ACV status on The Bull would simply mean that should the worst happen sometime in the future and the pub be threatening closure, then the community will be given the opportunity to purchase it, if there is the appetite and funds available.

In IT news; the improvements of a roll out of "faster broadband" we were promised last year, have not been felt. Parts of the village (particularly around Little Green) are still only struggling to get anything over 1MB data speed, although parts of the Parish (such as Horton have seen significant improvements). With changing ways of working and changing approaches to education data speed will increasingly becoming an issue. The Parish Council are continuing to press for the village to appropriately connected to a fibre network.

Sadly, this year Cllr Gemma Davies has stepped down from the parish council, as a result of her moving away. We are hugely grateful for all the work and energy Gemma has put into the Parish Council, joining at a time when we were at risk of being unable to continue due to lack of councillors. Gemma then rose to the challenge of sustaining the Council and left it in a much better state than she found it. We have vacancies for Councillors and really need to increase the size of the council to be sustainable. We typically meet less than 6 times a year, and if you think you could find the time to support your community you would be very welcome. Please speak to any one of the councillors.

The Parish Council is here to try and serve the community so if you have any ideas or concerns please do speak to one of us, either this evening or you can get our contact details from our website WWW.shocklachparishcouncil.co.uk."

Cllr Bowles thanked everyone for attending and introduced the first of the guest speakers.

HANNAH CARRICK, REGIONAL MANAGER FOR THE NORTH WEST, THE BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY

Hannah gave a very interesting talk about the British Horse Society in general and in more detail about the benefits to rural areas such as Shocklach. Their mission statement best sums up:

We represent the interests of the 3.5 million people in the UK who ride or who drive horse-drawn vehicles. With over 95,000 core BHS members, 34,000 members of affiliated Riding Clubs and the members of Affiliated Bridleways Associations, we have a powerful voice with Government.

As the foremost and most influential equestrian charity in the UK we can bring to the fore the full scope of our charitable objectives in education, welfare, access and safety.

We work tirelessly for every horse, rider and carriage driver, focusing on horse welfare, horse and rider safety, access and rights of way, qualifications and careers, and working with the proprietors of riding schools, livery yards and trekking centres to maintain the highest standards. We also work in partnership with many other organisations, not least the British Equestrian Federation, to promote the interests of all those who participate in equestrian activities.

Thanks were extended to Hannah for her attendance.

The next guest speakers were representatives of SHOCKLACH SCHOOL COUNCIL

The school council were in attendance and gave a very impressive overview of some initiatives they had been involved in over the last school year including the garden project, co-op funding and the finalising of a new school uniform which was on show at the meeting. Very smart indeed! They asked the Parish Council and residents for the following help;

- 1) They asked if it would be possible for the Parish Council to look into getting a flashing “slow down – school” sign on the main road by The Bull as school numbers were increasing.

Cllr Bowles thanked them for their very impressive input to the Village Meeting and said that the village should be proud of the school as a community resource.

With regards to the slow down sign Cllr Bowles told the children that the Parish Council had looked into solar powered speed management signage in the village and would explore further.

The formal meeting ended at 9pm and was followed by an invitation to stay and chat to visitors and members of the Parish Council whilst enjoying some welcome refreshments.

