



Donnington & Muxton Parish Council

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FULL COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of an **Extraordinary Council Meeting** held at Donnington and Muxton Community Library, Donnington on **5th August 2024** commencing at 7pm.

Present: Councillors F Doran (Chairman), R Coates, L Dugmore, N Dugmore, J Gough, Z Harrison, T Hoof, R Overton, J Urey, L Vickers and O Vickers.

Also Present: R Morgan (Clerk to the Council), K Eshelby (Deputy Clerk to the Council) and C Furnival (Community Engagement and Events Officer to the Parish Council).

Absent: Councillor A Lawrence.

24/07/56 Apologies: Councillor I Alexander.

Resolved that the apology is noted.

24/07/57 Declaration of Interest: As per Registers of Interests. The Chair had concerns that all Councillors should declare an interest in this as any proposal to break up this Parish Council would affect them all. Councillors agreed that the concern should be noted.

24/07/58 Parish Council Boundary Review

Councillors discussed the recent communiqué from Telford & Wrekin Council regarding the Draft Proposals – Community Governance Review (CGR) and the effect that this will have on this Parish Council and other Parish and Town Councils within Telford. Councillors raised the following concerns:

- Whilst a CGR is welcomed, it must be kept in mind that Parish and Town Councils are the most local part of the democratic system and are closest to the public. However, the draft proposals would take them further away from the electorate. Lilleshall was given independence from Donnington and Muxton and now the proposals are to merge it with Muxton which Lilleshall doesn't want. This is completely against the democratic decision made in 2015. With the proposed increase in the number of houses north of the A518 contained within the Local Plan, Councillors felt that Muxton should become its own stand-alone Parish Council as well as Priorslee. Each Parish and Town Council in Telford must be considered on its own merit and community identity.
- There will have to be an increase in council tax to pay for all the changes required. Muxton has very few assets and would require a central base from which to operate. Lilleshall is asset heavy, and this is reflected in its precept. The financial impact to all Parish and Town Councils must be considered with regard to any changes proposed and must be part of the review.
- The proposed name of Central Parish Council does not reflect each individual community and should be changed to reflect the areas within.
- The proposals go against Government guidelines. Timelines were interrupted by the Police and Crime Commissioners elections as the meeting to approve these proposals was cancelled and no other meeting was arranged until the meeting to approve them on 19th July 2024.

- It was completely unfair that all Parish and Town Council staff should find out about this and the possibility of future job losses through local news and social media. The original timescale for responses was very short indeed requiring nearly all Councils to have to call extraordinary meetings in order to provide a response by 16th August 2024 as all Councils go into recess during August.
- The reason that only 76 responses were made to the first consultation is that no-one realised the scale of changes that would be proposed. The vast majority were only expecting minor alterations to any boundaries.
- Councillors were informed that both Lilleshall Parish Council and Wrockwardine Wood and Trench Parish Council had already held their extraordinary meetings. Lilleshall wants to remain independent. Wrockwardine Wood and Trench Parish Council also rejected the original proposal but if changes have to be made then it suggested that Wrockwardine Wood should merge with Oakengates Town Council.

Councillors welcomed the latest decision by Telford & Wrekin Council which stated that *“To that end, the period for responses to the proposal at stage two, to make no changes to the present boundaries of Town and Parish Councils for the time being, ends on 4th September 2024”*.

Councillors agreed that the following response should be made to the proposal at stage two:

- The Parish Council rejects the original proposals for this parish as they are not based on Government Guidelines.
- Parish and Town Councils should have representation during discussions about boundary changes whether it is the Chairs, Mayors or Clerks that attends these meetings.
- Consultation period should be longer, and consideration should be given to the staff of all Parish and Town Councils as they have a duty of care as employers.
- There should be better communication between Telford & Wrekin Council with its residents and consideration should also be given to those that do not have access to computers.
- There should be better communication between Telford & Wrekin Council and Town and Parish Councils in line with the Parish Charter.

Councillors were informed that the next Boundary Review Committee meeting will be held on 5th September 2024.

The Clerk was asked to include the CGR Draft Proposals as an item on the agenda for September's Parish Council meeting to allow councillors to make suggestions to the proposals.

The Chair informed Councillors that they should also submit their own responses to the CGR consultation.

24/07/59 Date of next meeting

The Chair reminded Councillors that the next Council meeting will be held on Monday 9th September 2024 at Turreff Hall, Donnington commencing at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 1950hrs.

Signed:

Date:

