



**Lapley, Stretton
& Wheaton Aston
Parish Council**

You are here by summoned to attend a meeting of Lapley, Stretton and Wheaton Aston Parish Council, which will be held on Thursday 18th April 2024 at 7.00pm at Lapley and Wheaton Aston Village Hall.

The Council, members of the public and the press may record/film/photograph or broadcast this meeting when the public and the press are not lawfully excluded. Any member of the public who attends a meeting and objects to being filmed should advise the Parish Council Manager (in advance) who will instruct that they are not included in the filming.

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018, all persons attending this meeting are hereby notified that this meeting will be recorded by the Parish Council. The purpose of taping is that recordings act as an aide-memoire to assist the Parish Council Clerk in the compilation of minutes. The recording will be deleted once the minutes have been approved

Please ensure that all mobile phones are switched to silent during the Parish Council meeting.

Public Forum

- Democratic thirty minute period/public discussion time: From 7.00pm residents are invited to give their views to the Parish Council on items on this agenda or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the Chairman. Members of the public may not take part in the Parish Council meeting itself. (standing order 3 f)
No member of the public may speak for more than five minutes (standing order 3g)

154.To consider apologies **-Decision**
155.Declaration of Interests **-Information**

To declare any interests any on agenda items

156. Approval of minutes **-Decision**
 To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Meeting of Lapley, Stretton and Wheaton Aston Parish Council held on 7th March 2024

157.To receive report from Parish Council Clerk (Appendix 1) **-Information**

158. To receive report from Staffordshire County Council **-information**

159. To receive report from South Staffordshire Council **-information**

160. To receive report from Staffordshire Police **-information**

161.Financial matters **-decision**

To consider financial matters including: **(appendix 2)**

- a) To approve the expenditure and income for February and March 2024
- b) To approve the reconciled statements the unity trust main account, unity trust reserve account, Barclays saving account, equals card account to 31st March 2024
- c) To approve the financial cashbook for year end 2023-24
- d) To approve the year end2023-24 bank reconciliation
- e) To note payments/decisions made under delegated powers

162. Planning recommendations **-decision**

To consider planning matters including

- a) planning applications received:
- b) Planning applications received after the agenda papers distributed

163. Policy update (appendix 3) -
decision

To update the following policies:

- Grievance policy
- Pension statement
- Mobile phone policy
- Snow Clearance Emergency Plan

164. Airfield marker

-information

To receive an update on the project

165. Best Kept Village Competition

-information

- To receive an update

166. Signage purchase

-decision

To consider purchasing awareness signs for horse riders –

[Traffic Signs - Ridden Horse Ahead | Seton](#)

[JAF Graphics. Horse Triangle Warning Sign](#)

167. Allotment project

-information/decision

- To receive an update
- To approve the lease

168. Items for future - Each councillor may use this opportunity to report on matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda to raise items for future agendas. **Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision making.**

169. Date of next meeting: Thursday 23rd May 2024, this is the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, at 7pm at Lapley and Wheaton Aston Village Hall. The Annual Parish Meeting will take place at 6.30pm

This is subject to change due to the ongoing Coronavirus situation

Mrs A Watson Parish Council Clerk

11.4.24

Crime and Disorder Implications

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities to consider the crime and disorder implications when exercising its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions and to do all that is reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. Where relevant any decisions made at the Parish Council meeting have taken this duty of Care into consideration

Appendix 1

**Lapley, Stretton and Wheaton Aston Parish Council
Clerks Report**

Information

4.3.24 informed of glass in the bus shelter Stretton, Also state of disrepair, clerk to contact landowner to advise

5.3.24 Met potential contractor at Marston Field to discuss potential equipment for outdoor gym and the play equipment

5.3.24 Survey created for Marston Field Gym Equipment and Play Equipment. Shared on website, social media and News and Views. Posters with QR codes created for display at M.F to reach potential users.

6.3.24 Social media updated with rolling posters for the Community Sharepoint, and information on Voter ID.

20.3.24 Reported the discovery of 2 x empty Nitrous Oxide gas canisters at Marston Field to the Police. reference is: BCA-19538-24-2121-03.

26.3.24 Scheduled social media posts ahead of the Register to Vote deadline of April 16th 2024. Also on website.

26.3.24 Scheduled post on social media and website information about places offering free or very cheap meals for children over the Easter holidays.

05.04.24 Created an 'event' on Facebook for the Annual Parish Meeting.

9.4.24 Staff appraisals have been conducted with the relevant line managers and confirmed that requirements have been met

10.04.24 The year end process has been completed without any issues. Clerk requires finance meeting to prepare for the new year. pension returns have been submitted

Clerk attended the partnership meeting

Consultations

Outstanding items update

- Allotments- waiting for lease
- Defib at Ivetsey Rd- Planning are waiting for the site to be handed over. Once this has been completed an officer will assess the site for installation. SSC are to be landowners and are aware LSWA PC wish to install on site.
- Lapley Green registration-. Awaiting update from Tedstone Solicitors
- Gated alley Broadholes/Pinfold-. No update on the proposal to reopen the alley from SSC.
- Post office – no premises found., this has now been taken on at district level

Meetings/Events

Training/CPD/ SPCA Upcoming courses

Date	Course
Course: Councillor Fundamentals 2.5hrs. by Zoom (provided by our experienced colleague Kim Bedford)	
February 13 th 2024 Tuesday.	6.30 pm – 9.00 pm
May 8 th .	Wednesday. 6.30 pm – 9.00 pm
June 13 th	Thursday. 9.30 am – 12.00 noon
Course: Chairmanship skills. 2 sessions x 3.5 hrs by Zoom. (provided by our experienced colleague Kim Bedford)	
July 9 th and 16 th .	Tuesday 9.30 am – 1.00 pm
Course; Clerks the knowledge. 2 sessions x 3.5hrs by Zoom. (provided by our experienced colleague Kim Bedford)	
February 13 th Feb and 5 th March.	Tuesday 9.30 am to 1.00 pm
Course: CiLCA. 8 sessions monthly	
New Clerks Introduction	
2hrs by Zoom all 10 am – 12 noon	
2hrs by Zoom all 10 am – 12 noon (other dates by arrangement)	
14	
February	Wednesday 17 th
January	Wednesday 12 th
March	Tuesday 15 th
February	Thursday 11 th
April	Thursday 13 th
March	Wednesday 16 th
May	Thursday 16 th
April	Tuesday 12 th
June	Wednesday 14 th
May	Tuesday 17 th
July	Wednesday 13 th
June	Thursday

13 th		
August	Tuesday	16 th
July	Tuesday	
		8 th
August	Thursday	
		3 rd
September	Tuesday	
		9 th
October	Wednesday	
		7 th
November	Thursday	
		10 th
December	Thursday	

Annual internal audit booked April 30th

28.2.24 WMI community meeting

22.2.24 Support Staffordshire volunteering event Codsall Community Hub 6-8pm

15.3.24 COP Conference taking place on the 15 March at The Catalyst Building at Staffordshire University

10.4.24 Funding opportunities at SSC

Items emailed to councillors

25.3.24 SSC planning application 24/00271/TREE

10.4.24 SSC planning information on land being used at Whiston

Use of devolved powers

28.3.24 £14+60.00 vired from savings to UT main to cover costs for kerb drop

31.03.24 edge virement from general funds to precept contingency to match end of year statement, budget 24/25 amended

Response to planning comments:

SSC Planning Decision

Planning application 20/01143/***FUL The Bell- REFUSED***

Planning applications at Longnor Hall Farm Wheaton Aston Road Longnor Staffordshire ST19 5QN have been **withdrawn** as follows:

- 22/00911/LBC Conversion of traditional buildings to 9no. dwellings with associated amenity space and car parking
- 22/00902/FUL Conversion of Longnor Hall from 1no. dwelling into 2no. dwellings with associated amenity space and car parking
- 22/00903/LBC Conversion of Longnor Hall from 1no. dwelling into 2no. dwellings with associated amenity space and car parking
- 22/00910/FUL Conversion of traditional buildings to 9no. dwellings with associated amenity space and car parking

Planning Application 24/00029/FULHH First Floor Extension, Harwood Pinfold Lane Wheaton Aston ST19 9PD – Approve subject to conditions.

Annual Play Area Inspections:

Annual inspections were undertaken at Marston Field play area and skate park, as well as the Primrose Road Play Area. The results have been analysed and divided up between our contractors. For Marston Field, the zip wire has been closed and seat and line removed for safety reasons. Consultation for replacement play equipment, as well as an outdoor gym, widened footpath and pump track is underway. Grant funding is being investigated.

Appendix 2

Lapley Stretton & Wheaton Aston Parish Council
Paid Expenditure Transactions

Start of year 01/04/23

paid between 01/02/24 and 31/03/24, for the Parish Council

Payment

	Paid date		Gross	Vat	Net	Details
	29/02/24	268	£127.99	£21.33	£106.66	WaterPlus
	130/2/4					
	29/02/24	269	£8.49	£0.00	£8.49	FairFx Pre Paid
Card	Cable Ties	170				
	29/02/24	270	£16.44	£0.00	£16.44	FairFx Pre Paid
Card	Pens	170				
						Superannuation
Fund						
		271/3	£751.35	£0.00	£751.35	Staffordshire
County			110/1/3			Superannuation
Fund						
	29/02/24	271	£912.53	£0.00	£912.53	Staffordshire
County						Superannuation
Fund						
	29/02/24	272	£935.30	£0.00	£935.30	HMRC
	110/1/2					
	29/02/24	277	£113.52	£18.92	£94.60	Espo
	Paper and Envelopes	100/9				
	29/02/24	278	£57.22	£9.54	£47.68	British Telecom
	100/10					
	29/02/24	279	£4,129.20	£688.20	£3,441.00	Turnock Limited
	Christmas Lights Contract	160/1/1				
	29/02/24	280	£1,291.99	£215.33	£1,076.66	Ditton Services
	120/1/1					
214288371	29/02/24	281	£239.09	£39.85	£199.24	Cloudy It
100/19/4						
	29/02/24	282	£320.00	£53.33	£266.67	South
Staffordshire District Monthly Rental			100/2			Council
59576568	29/02/24	283	£20.70	£0.00	£20.70	Mr. Malcolm
Bissell	Mileage	100/18/1				
	29/02/24	284	£19.35	£0.00	£19.35	Mrs Amy Watson
	Mileage	100/18/1				
	29/02/24	285	£25.00	£0.00	£25.00	Support
Staffordshire	Membership	150/7				
29/02/24	286	£160.80	£26.80	£134.00	Edge IT Systems Ltd	100/19/4
	29/02/24	287	£161.06	£26.84	£134.22	Ricoh U K Limited
	Print Cartridges	100/9				

	29/02/24	288	£52.78	£8.80	£43.98	EE
	monthly costs	100/10				
870592888	31/03/24	289	£36.45	£6.08	£30.37	Parish Online by
GeoXphere	Parish maps	150/6				
	31/03/24	291	£57.22	£9.54	£47.68	BT
	Monthly Bill	100/10				
769117557	31/03/24	292	£1,291.99	£215.33	£1,076.66	Ditton Services
	Grounds Maintenance	120/1/1				
968223152	31/03/24	293	£320.00	£53.33	£266.67	South
Staffordshire District	Monthly Office Rental	100/2				Council
608401919	31/03/24	294	£60.00	£10.00	£50.00	National
Association Of Local	Local Councils Awards Scheme	100/25/1				Councils
852880205	31/03/24	295	£1,300.00	£0.00	£1,300.00	Churches of
Wheaton Aston Wellbeing	Wednesday	100/26				and Lapley
366711624	31/03/24	296	£150.00	£0.00	£150.00	Staffordshire
County Council	Miscellaneous Sales	100/9				
44949736	31/03/24	297	£127.52	£21.26	£106.26	Ricoh U K Limited
	Printer/Copying	100/12				
347037022	31/03/24	298	£28.80	£0.00	£28.80	Mrs Amy Watson
	Vehicle Mileage	100/18/1				
	31/03/24	300	£50.94	£8.49	£42.45	WaterPlus
	130/2/4					
	31/03/24	305	£336.00	£56.00	£280.00	J Whittingham
and Son	Remove Hanging Branches	120/1/3				
	March salaries	110/1/2				
250324jw	31/03/24	307	£1,584.00	£264.00	£1,320.00	J Whittingham
and Son	bench installation x 3	130/2/3				
250324mb	31/03/24	308	£8.55	£0.00	£8.55	Mr. Malcolm
Bissell	February expenses	100/18/1				
250324sbp	31/03/24	309	£98.75	£0.00	£98.75	Stamps By
Post.Com	first class stamp order	100/13				
310324ut	31/03/24	311	£27.45	£0.00	£27.45	Unity Trust
	service charge	100/21				
dd17.324ee	31/03/24	312	£52.78	£8.80	£43.98	EE
	monthly charge	100/10				
150324	31/03/24	313	£3.30	£0.00	£3.30	FairFx Pre Paid
Card	postage for BKV entry from clerks debit card	170				

Lapley Stretton & Wheaton Aston Parish Council

Income transactions - receipts approval list

Start of year 01/04/23

Tn no	Ref.	Gross Heading	Cttee Invoice date	Details	Ref. Total
13	£21,189.54	40/3	PC 01/02/24	South Staffordshire District Council - section 106 monies received for allotment project	

14 £1,000.00 20/5 PC 02/02/24 Staffordshire County Council - climate change grant for allotment project

Total £22,189.54

Lapley Stretton & Wheaton Aston Parish Council

Income transactions - receipts approval list

Start of year 01/04/23

Tn no	Ref.	Gross	Heading	Cttee Invoice date	Details	Ref. Total
16bacs4324n bar		£196.53	50	PC 04/03/24	Barclays Bank - interest on barclays saving account	£196.53
Total		£196.53				

Signature

Bank Account Reconciled Statement

Unity trust working reserves	20419150	60-83-01
Statement Number	27	Bank Statement No. 27
Statement Opening Balance	£54,584.80	Opening Date 01/02/24
Statement Closing Balance	£76,774.34	Closing Date 29/02/24
True/ Cashbook Closing Balance	£76,774.34	

Date	Cheque/ Ref.	Supplier/ Customer	Debit (£)	Credit (£)	Balance (£)
06/02/24	Transfer		0.00	22,189.54	76,774.34

Uncleared and unrepresented effects

Total uncleared and unrepresented	0.00	0.00
Total debits / credits	0	22189.54

Reconciled by Amy Watson

Bank Account Reconciled Statement

Unity Trust - Current Account	1111559/2035784	30-98-00
Statement Number	35	Bank Statement No. 35
Statement Opening Balance	£29,668.86	Opening Date 01/02/24
Statement Closing Balance	£18,087.86	Closing Date 29/02/24
True/ Cashbook Closing Balance	£18,087.86	

Date	Cheque/ Ref.	Supplier/ Customer	Debit (£)	Credit (£)	Balance (£)
31/01/24	310124jw	J Whittingham and Son	288.00	0.00	29,380.86
31/01/24	310124ssc	South Staffordshire District Council	20.00	0.00	29,360.86
06/02/24	Transfer		22,189.54	0.00	7,171.32
29/02/24		Ricoh U K Limited	161.06	0.00	7,010.26
29/02/24		Mr. Malcolm Bissell			
29/02/24		Mrs. Josie Morris			

29/02/24	Jessica Shulman				
29/02/24	Mrs Amy Watson				
29/02/24	Espo	113.52	0.00		4,190.27
29/02/24	British Telecom	57.22	0.00		4,133.05
29/02/24	Turnock Limited	4,129.20	0.00		3.85
29/02/24	Ditton Services	1,291.99	0.00		-1,288.14
29/02/24	South Staffordshire District Council	320.00	0.00		-1,608.14
29/02/24	Mrs Amy Watson	19.35	0.00		-1,627.49
29/02/24	WaterPlus	127.99	0.00		-1,755.48
29/02/24	Edge IT Systems Ltd	160.80	0.00		-1,916.28
29/02/24	EE	52.78	0.00		-1,969.06
29/02/24	South Staffordshire District Council	0.00	21,189.54		19,220.48
29/02/24	Staffordshire County Council	0.00	1,000.00		20,220.48
29/02/24	Staffordshire County Council		Superannuation Fund		
29/02/24	HMRC				
29/02/24	Support Staffordshire	25.00	0.00		18,347.65

Lapley Stretton & Wheaton Aston Parish Council

Income transactions - receipts approval list

Start of year 01/04/23

Tn no	Ref.	Gross Heading	Cttee Invoice date	Details	Ref. Total
15		£465.75 33	PC 31/03/24	Unity Trust Bank - interest on reserve account	

Total £465.75

Bank Account Reconciled Statement

Unity Trust - Current Account

1111559/2035784 30-98-00

Statement Number	36	Bank Statement No.	36
Statement Opening Balance	£18,087.86	Opening Date	01/03/24
Statement Closing Balance	£9,452.56	Closing Date	31/03/24
True/ Cashbook Closing Balance	£9,401.62		

Date	Cheque/ Ref.	Supplier/ Customer	Debit (£)	Credit (£)	Balance (£)
14/03/24	Transfer		50.00	0.00	18,037.86
28/03/24	Transfer		0.00	1,460.00	19,497.86
31/03/24		J Whittingham and Son	336.00	0.00	19,161.86
31/03/24		HMRC	23.20	0.00	19,138.66
31/03/24		HMRC	20.00	0.00	19,118.66
31/03/24		HMRC	240.69	0.00	18,877.97

31/03/24		HMRC	83.20	0.00	18,794.77
31/03/24		HMRC	101.20	0.00	18,693.57
31/03/24		HMRC	60.00	0.00	18,633.57
31/03/24		HMRC	407.01	0.00	18,226.56
31/03/24		BT	57.22	0.00	18,169.34
31/03/24	250324jw	J Whittingham and Son	1,584.00	0.00	16,585.34
31/03/24	250324mb	Mr. Malcolm Bissell	8.55	0.00	16,576.79
31/03/24	250324sbp	Stamps By Post.Com	98.75	0.00	16,478.04
31/03/24	310324ut	Unity Trust	27.45	0.00	16,450.59
31/03/24	347037022	Mrs Amy Watson	28.80	0.00	16,421.79
31/03/24	366711624	Staffordshire County Council	150.00	0.00	16,271.79
31/03/24	385269846	Staffordshire County Council Superannuation Fund	921.82	0.00	15,349.97
31/03/24	44949736	Ricoh U K Limited	127.52	0.00	15,222.45
31/03/24	511691073	Mrs. Josie Morris			
31/03/24	560048647	Mrs Amy Watson			
31/03/24	608401919	National Association Of Local Councils	60.00	0.00	13,191.75
31/03/24	769117557	Ditton Services	1,291.99	0.00	11,899.76
31/03/24	852880205	Churches of Wheaton Aston and Lapley	1,300.00	0.00	10,599.76
31/03/24	870592888	Parish Online by GeoXphere Ltd	36.45	0.00	10,563.31
31/03/24	920282223	Mr. Malcolm Bissell			
31/03/24	968223152	South Staffordshire District Council	320.00	0.00	9,910.16
31/03/24	98773320	Jessica Shulman			
31/03/24	dd17.324ee	EE	52.78	0.00	9,452.56
Uncleared and unrepresented effects					
31/03/24		WaterPlus	50.94		9,401.62
		Total uncleared and unrepresented	50.94	0.00	
		Total debits / credits	10146.24	1460	

Reconciled by Amy Watson
Bank Account Reconciled Statement

Unity trust working reserves	20419150	60-83-01	
Statement Number	28	Bank Statement No.	28
Statement Opening Balance	£76,774.34	Opening Date	01/03/24
Statement Closing Balance	£75,780.09	Closing Date	31/03/24
True/ Cashbook Closing Balance	£75,780.09		

Date	Cheque/ Ref.	Supplier/ Customer	Debit (£)	Credit (£)	Balance (£)
28/03/24	Transfer		1,460.00	0.00	75,314.34
31/03/24		Unity Trust Bank	0.00	465.75	75,780.09

Uncleared and unrepresented effects

Total uncleared and unrepresented	0.00	0.00
Total debits / credits	1460	465.75

Bank Account Reconciled Statement

Fair FX prepaid card - Clerk

5116561022250691

Statement Number	16	Bank Statement No.	16
Statement Opening Balance	£30.04	Opening Date	01/03/24
Statement Closing Balance	£26.74	Closing Date	31/03/24
True/ Cashbook Closing Balance	£26.74		

Date	Cheque/ Ref.	Supplier/ Customer	Debit (£)	Credit (£)	Balance (£)
09/01/24		Transfer from Unity Trust - Current Account	0.00	50.00	80.04
26/03/24	Transfer		50.00	0.00	30.04
31/03/24	150324	FairFx Pre Paid Card	3.30	0.00	26.74

Uncleared and unrepresented effects

Total uncleared and unrepresented	0.00	0.00
Total debits / credits	53.3	50

Reconciled by Amy Watson

Bank Account Reconciled Statement

Barclays savings account

73219496

20-08-64

Statement Number	36	Bank Statement No.	36
Statement Opening Balance	£52,552.60	Opening Date	01/01/24
Statement Closing Balance	£52,749.13	Closing Date	31/03/24
True/ Cashbook Closing Balance	£52,749.13		

Date	Cheque/ Ref.	Supplier/ Customer	Debit (£)	Credit (£)	Balance (£)
31/03/24	bacs4324nbar	Barclays Bank	0.00	196.53	52,749.13

Uncleared and unrepresented effects

Total uncleared and unrepresented	0.00	0.00
Total debits / credits	0	196.53

Reconciled by Amy Watson
 Bank Account Reconciled Statement

equals card VO

Statement Number	1	Bank Statement No.	1
Statement Opening Balance	£0.00	Opening Date	01/04/23
Statement Closing Balance	£100.00	Closing Date	31/03/24
True/ Cashbook Closing Balance	£100.00		

Date	Cheque/ Ref.	Supplier/ Customer	Debit (£)	Credit (£)	Balance (£)
14/03/24	Transfer		0.00	50.00	50.00
26/03/24	Transfer		0.00	50.00	100.00

Uncleared and unrepresented effects

Total uncleared and unrepresented	0.00	0.00
Total debits / credits	0	100

Financial Summary - Cashbook

Summary of receipts and payments between 01/04/23 and 31/03/24 inclusive. This may include transactions with ledger dates outside this period.

Balances at the start of the year

Ordinary Accounts

Barclays savings account	£52,121.62
equals card VO	£0.00
Fair FX prepaid card - Clerk	£21.11
Unity Trust - Current Account	£10,041.77
Unity trust working reserves	£53,814.62
Total	£115,999.12

RECEIPTS	Net	Vat	Gross
Parish Council	£165,932.08	£0.00	£165,932.08
Total Receipts	£165,932.08	£0.00	£165,932.08
PAYMENTS	Net	Vat	Gross
Parish Council	£132,234.83	£11,638.79	£143,873.62
Total Payments	£132,234.83	£11,638.79	£143,873.62

Closing Balances

Ordinary Accounts

Barclays savings account	£52,749.13
equals card VO	£100.00
Fair FX prepaid card - Clerk	£26.74
Unity Trust - Current Account	£9,401.62
Unity trust working reserves	£75,780.09
Total	£138,057.58

Uncleared and Unrepresented effects

Unity Trust - Current Account	-£50.94
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Statement Closing Balances

Ordinary Accounts

Barclays savings account	£52,749.13
equals card VO	£100.00
Fair FX prepaid card - Clerk	£26.74
Unity Trust - Current Account	£9,452.56
Unity trust working reserves	£75,780.09
Total	£138,108.52

Signed

Bank Reconciliation

This reconciliation should include all bank and building society accounts, including short term investment accounts. It must agree to Box 8 in the column headed "Year ending 31 March" in Section 2 of the AGAR – and will also agree to Box 7 where the accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis.

Name of smaller authority: Lapley Stretton & Wheaton Aston Parish Council
County area (local Councils and

Financial year ending 31/03/24

Prepared by (Name and role): Amy Watson
Date: 08/04/24

Balance per bank statements as at 31/03/24	£	£
Barclays savings account	£52,749.13	
equals card VO	£100.00	
Fair FX prepaid card - Clerk	£26.74	
Unity Trust - Current Account	£9,452.56	
Unity trust working reserves	£75,780.09	
		£138,108.52

Petty cash (no balance) £0.00
Less: any unrepresented cheques -£50.94

Add: any uncleared effects £0.00

Net balances as at 31/03/24 (Box 8) £138,057.58

08/04/24 11:57 AM Vs: 8.97.02

Lapley Stretton & Wheaton Aston Parish Council

Chair

Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer

Appendix 3

LSWA PC Grievance Policy

Introduction

1. This policy is based on and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2174>). It also takes account of the ACAS guide on discipline and grievances at work. (https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG_Guide_Feb_2019.pdf). It aims to encourage and maintain good relationships between the Council and its employees by treating grievances seriously and resolving them as quickly as possible. It sets out the arrangements for employees to raise their concerns, problems or complaints about their employment with the Council. The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
2. Many problems can be raised and settled during the course of everyday working relationships. Employees should aim to settle most grievances informally with their line manager.

This policy confirms:

- employees have the right to be accompanied or represented at a grievance meeting or appeal by a companion who can be a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official. This includes any meeting held with them to hear about, gather facts about, discuss, consider or resolve their grievance. The companion will be permitted to address the grievance/appeal meetings, to present the employee's case for his /her grievance/appeal and to confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case.
- the Council will give employees reasonable notice of the date of the grievance/appeal meetings. Employees and their companions must make all reasonable efforts to attend. If the companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date unless it is unreasonable not to propose a later date
- any changes to specified time limits must be agreed by the employee and the Council
- an employee has the right to appeal against the decision about his/her grievance. The appeal decision is final
- information about an employee's grievance will be restricted to those involved in the grievance process. A record of the reason for the grievance, its outcome and action taken is confidential to the employee. The employee's grievance records will be held by the Council in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- audio or video recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the grievance procedure are prohibited, unless agreed by all affected parties as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition
- if an employee who is already subject to a disciplinary process raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after completion of the disciplinary procedure
- if a grievance is not upheld, no disciplinary action will be taken against an employee if he/she raised the grievance in good faith
- the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the grievance procedure where appropriate, (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process which requires the consent of affected parties
- Employees can use all stages of the grievance procedure If the complaint is not a code of conduct complaint about a councillor. Employees can use the informal stage of the council's grievance procedure (paragraph 4) to deal with all grievance issues, including a complaint about a councillor Employees cannot use the formal stages of the council's grievance procedure for a code of conduct complaint about a councillor. If the complaint about the councillor is not resolved at the informal stage, the employee can contact the monitoring officer of South Staffordshire Council who will inform the employee whether or not the complaint can be dealt with under the code of conduct. If it does not concern the code of

conduct, the employee can make a formal complaint under the council's grievance procedure (see paragraph 5)

- If the grievance is a code of conduct complaint against a councillor, the employee cannot proceed with it beyond the informal stage of the council's grievance procedure. However, whatever the complaint, the council has a duty of care to its employees. It must take all reasonable steps to ensure employees have a safe working environment, for example by undertaking risk assessments, by ensuring staff and councillors are properly trained and by protecting staff from bullying, harassment and all forms of discrimination
- If an employee considers that the grievance concerns his or her safety within the working environment, whether or not it also concerns a complaint against a councillor, the employee should raise these safety concerns with his or her line manager at the informal stage of the grievance procedure. The council will consider whether it should take further action in this matter in accordance with any of its employment policies (for example its health and safety policy or its dignity at work policy) and in accordance with the code of conduct regime

Informal grievance procedure

3. The Council and its employees benefit if grievances are resolved informally and as quickly as possible. As soon as a problem arises, the employee should raise it with his/her manager to see if an informal solution is possible. Both should try to resolve the matter at this stage. If the employee does not want to discuss the grievance with his/her manager (for example, because it concerns the manager), the employee should contact the Chairman of the HR/HS committee or, if appropriate, another member of the staffing committee. If the employee's complaint is about a councillor, it may be appropriate to involve that councillor at the informal stage. This will require both the employee's and the councillor's consent.

Formal grievance procedure

4. If it is not possible to resolve the grievance informally and the employee's complaint is not one that should be dealt with as a code of conduct complaint (see above), the employee may submit a formal grievance. It should be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the HR/HS committee.
5. The staffing committee will appoint a sub-committee of three members to hear the grievance. The sub-committee will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee.

Investigation

6. If the sub-committee decides that it is appropriate, (e.g. if the grievance is complex), it may appoint an investigator to carry out an investigation before the grievance meeting to establish the facts of the case. The investigation may include interviews (e.g. the employee submitting the grievance, other employees, councillors or members of the public).
7. The investigator will summarise their findings (usually within an investigation report) and present their findings to the sub-committee.

Notification

8. Within 10 working days of the Council receiving the employee's grievance (this may be longer if there is an investigation), the employee will normally be asked, in writing, to attend a grievance meeting. The written notification will include the following:
 - the names of its Chairman and other members
 - the date, time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the meeting which will normally be within 25 working days of when the Council received the grievance
 - the employee's right to be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official
 - a copy of the Council's grievance policy

- confirmation that, if necessary, witnesses may attend (or submit witness statements) on the employee's behalf and that the employee should provide the names of his/her witnesses as soon as possible before the meeting
- confirmation that the employee will provide the Council with any supporting evidence in advance of the meeting, usually with at least two days' notice
- findings of the investigation if there has been an investigation
- an invitation for the employee to request any adjustments to be made for the hearing (for example where a person has a health condition).

The grievance meeting

9. At the grievance meeting:

- the Chairman will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee
- the employee (or companion) will set out the grievance and present the evidence
- the Chairman will ask the employee questions about the information presented and will want to understand what action does he/she wants the Council to take
- any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question any witness
- the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up the case
- a grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be investigated by the sub-committee.

10. The Chairman will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision, in writing, usually within five working days of the meeting. The letter will notify the employee of the action, if any, that the Council will take and of the employee's right to appeal.

The appeal

11. If an employee decides that his/her grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved by the sub-committee, he/she may submit a written appeal to the staffing committee. An appeal must be received by the Council within five working days of the employee receiving the sub-committee's decision and must specify the grounds of appeal.

12. Appeals may be raised on a number of grounds, e.g.:

- a failure by the Council to follow its grievance policy
- the decision was not supported by the evidence
- the action proposed by the sub-committee was inadequate/inappropriate
- new evidence has come to light since the grievance meeting.

13. The appeal will be heard by a panel of three members of the HR/HS committee who have not previously been involved in the case. There may be insufficient members of the HR/HS committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of three Council members who may include members of the staffing committee. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.

14. The employee will be notified, in writing, usually within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The meeting will normally take place within 25 working days of the Council's receipt of the appeal. The employee will be advised that he/she may be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.

15. At the appeal meeting, the Chairman will:

- introduce the panel members to the employee

- explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the decision of the staffing sub-committee
 - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
16. The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds of appeal.
 17. The Chairman will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, within five working days of the appeal meeting.
 18. The appeal panel may decide to uphold the decision of the HR/HS committee or substitute its own decision.
 19. The decision of the appeal panel is final.

Pension statement

1. An employee of Lapley, Stretton and Wheaton Aston Parish Council shall be eligible to be entered into the LGPS subject to meeting the relevant criteria as outlined by the Pension Regulator.
2. The Parish Council will if necessary, follow the LGPS Ill Health Procedure and select a Medical Practitioner from the approved list available at www.staffspf.org.uk.
3. The Parish Council will assess employee contribution rates at the point at which any salary increase or decrease occurs or when contribution rates or bands change.

Adopted 5th October 2017, Reviewed 5th Sept 2019, Apr 2022, April 2024

Next Review: April 2026

20.

: 1. Council Mobile Phones

A mobile phone has been issued by the council is intended for business use only and at all times will remain the property of the Council. The user(s) will be responsible for its safekeeping, proper use, condition and eventual return to the Council. The user will also be responsible for any cost of repair or replacement other than fair wear and tear. If a replacement is required, the Council will organise this.

A mobile phone is provided primarily to enable the user to do their job, i.e. to keep the Parish Council Manager informed at the earliest opportunity of matters which he/she needs to know about and to be similarly contactable. It is the user's responsibility to ensure that the mobile phone is kept charged and switched on whilst on duty.

Users should not sign up to text based information services, e.g. RAC traffic alerts, text voting. The use of the internet for personal use on Council mobile phones is strictly prohibited. Smartphone users should only use the internet to access their work emails (if appropriate) and for other essential Council business.

Unless agreed by the Parish Council Manager or Chairman, applications and other programmes may not be downloaded to any Council mobile phone under any circumstance.

The SIM card from a Council mobile phone should not be placed into any other mobile, unless to another Council issued mobile phone. The camera facility should only be used for work related needs, i.e. photographing potholes.

The Council recognises that users may, on occasion, have to make personal calls or send personal text messages during working hours, or outside normal working hours. Where it is deemed that an inordinate amount of personal calls/text messages have been made using the mobile phone, the Council reserves the right to recover these costs, either through deduction from pay, or otherwise. The Council may, after formal investigation, take action under the Disciplinary Procedure if such use is found to be excessive or unauthorised. Users will be expected to make payment for private calls made beyond what the Council deems to be reasonable usage.

If it is found, following investigation by the Council, that there has been excessive personal data use, then the user will be asked to reimburse the council for the cost of usage and action may be taken under the Disciplinary Procedure.

The user agrees that upon termination of employment they will return the allocated mobile phone. Should the mobile phone be returned in an unsatisfactory condition, the cost of replacement, or a proportional amount of this as determined by the Council, will be deducted from any final monies owing, or the user will be required to reimburse the Council.

1.1 Use of a Mobile Phone Whilst Driving

The user must ensure they have full control of any vehicle that they are driving at all times.

It is an offence to use hand held mobile phones whilst driving or whilst the engine is turned on. The user will be liable for prosecution if they are holding a mobile phone, or any other type of hand held device to send or receive any sort of data, voice, text or pictorial images. The user will be considered to be driving if they are in charge of a vehicle with its engine running on a public road, even if the vehicle is stationary. It is therefore strictly forbidden for the user to use a hand held mobile phone whilst driving.

A mobile phone may only be used to receive an in-coming call or an out-going voice activated call through a hands free device that is activated without a need to hold the phone at any time, in which case the call should be kept to the shortest possible time and only to effect essential communications. If the phone needs to be operated to make or respond to a call through the hands free device for anything other than receiving or giving a short communication, before doing so the user must stop and park the vehicle where it is safe and lawful to do so and with the engine switched off. Whilst driving they must not use the text message facility on the mobile phone, or, if available through the phone, an image facility or internet access.

Individuals are personally responsible for the payment of any fine or fixed penalty (including any externally raised admin charges) incurred whilst in charge of the vehicle. Any conviction for driving offences, any driving endorsements and any fines incurred must be reported immediately to line management as this may affect the Council's insurance.

It should be noted carefully that a breach of the Council's rules on the use of a mobile phone whilst driving may render the user liable to action under the Disciplinary Procedure.

1.2 Lost or Stolen Mobile Phones

The user is responsible at all times for the security of the mobile phone and it should never be left unattended.

If the mobile phone is lost or stolen, this must be reported to the Parish Council Manager (if during working hours), or if out of working hours they should phone EE direct to ensure that the account is stopped and there is no unauthorised usage.

In the event of theft of a mobile phone, the incident must also be reported to the police and an incident number obtained (please provide this number to the Parish Council Clerk) when reporting the loss).

The Council reserves the right to claim reimbursement for the cost of the mobile phone, or excess usage charges should the correct procedures (as detailed in this policy) not be followed, a user reports repeated loss of their mobile phone, it is deemed that the user has not taken appropriate measures to safeguard the equipment, or has failed to reported the loss thereof.

1.3 Support

Should there be any queries on the use of the council mobile phone, please contact the Parish Council Manager.

1.4 Monitoring of Usage and Costs

The Council receives itemised billing for all Council mobile phones and this is monitored on a monthly basis. The billing system identifies all calls, texts and data usage (if appropriate) and the costs related to this, by user, destination, duration, frequency, etc. High or clear personal usage will be reported to line management for investigation (high usage is defined as usage that falls outside of the normal usage pattern for the individual or outside of the usage pattern in comparison with other similar users).

Usage monitoring will allow the Council to identify any areas of potential misuse or training that may be required, or to negotiate with suppliers any changes in tariffs to ensure cost efficiency.

If it is found that the mobile phone has been misused, the Council may, after formal investigation, take action under its Disciplinary Procedure.

1.5 Mobile Phone Use Abroad

All Council mobile phones are barred from being used abroad unless the network provider has been specifically instructed by the Council.

It is particularly important on Smartphones to ensure that “data roaming” is switched off for any times other than checking Council emails. “Data roaming” charges from abroad (which includes the Isle of Man and Channel Islands) can result in very high level charges, and if it is found that these have been incurred due to personal use or negligence on the part of the user, then the charges may be passed on to the user.

2. Policy Review

Updates will be notified to all mobile phone users from time to time.

Adopted June 2017, Reviewed Sept 2019, Apr 2022, April 2024

Review April 2026

Snow Clearance Emergency Plan

1. SCOPE OF ARRANGEMENTS

The snow clearance activities set out in this plan will be carried out on a best endeavours basis, subject to resources being available. Activities will only be carried out if conditions allow people to work safely.

2. ROADS TREATED BY STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Staffordshire County Council is responsible for gritting the roads within the Parish. The duty of a highway authority under section 41 of that Act is ‘to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice’. The primary gritting network covers A and B roads only. Other roads will only be gritted in severe weather. The following roads are part of the primary gritting network:

- The A5
- Ivetsey Road
- High Street
- Long Street
- Lapley Road (From Long St to Roman Road)
- Marston Road,
- Roman Road
- Lapley Lane
- Congreve Road (From Roman Road to A5)

The following Roads are gritted in Severe Weather only (see Appendix A for Map):

- Congreve Road (From Roman Road to Congreve)
- Church Lane (Lapley)
- Bickford Road
- Lapley Road (From Bickford Road to Bickford)
- Wenlock Bank (Towards Church Eaton)

3. GRIT/SALT BINS

Staffordshire County Council provide the following advice on grit bins. The salt/sand mix in the yellow salt bins is to be used on roads and pavements only. They are not for private use. Careful consideration is given to where grit bins are placed so that they are present in places where additional gritting may be required. By using grit from the yellow bins on anything other than public highways you could potentially put road users at risk, should the bin run out of grit. If you wish to clear your driveway or footpaths, salt can be purchased from local building suppliers and DIY stores. Or alternatively, you can use table salt or dishwasher salt. There are grit bins in the following locations (see map in Appendix A):

- Pinfold Lane
- Yew Tree Drive

If a grit bin near you needs refilling, you can report this to Staffordshire County Council quickly by going to Report It. To log a refill request, select 'Report a new fault', 'Weather related' and 'Grit bin refill'. The grit bins will be replenished just as soon as the crews are back in the location.

If you do not have a grit bin near you, you can request to have one installed. You can do this by filling out the online form at Report It. To request a new grit bin, select 'Report a new fault', 'Weather related' and 'New grit bin'. Locations which qualify for grit bins have been risk assessed against a set of criteria that includes but is not limited to: Steep gradients, severe bends, junctions onto major roads.

4. ENCOURAGING OTHERS TO CLEAR SNOW

Every member of the community can play an important part in clearing snow and ice. Clearing snow and ice from the pavement outside your home or public spaces can help prevent slips and falls. Here's some handy advice issued by the Department for Transport.

Don't be put off clearing paths because you're afraid someone will get injured. Remember, people walking on snow and ice have a responsibility to be careful themselves. Follow the advice from the Department for Transport below to make sure you clear the pathway safely and effectively. And don't believe the myths - it's unlikely you'll be sued or held legally responsible for any injuries if you have cleared the path carefully.

Clear the snow and ice early in the day

It's easier to move fresh, loose snow rather than hard snow that has packed together from people walking on it. So if possible, start removing the snow and ice in the morning. If you remove the top layer of snow in the morning, any sunshine during the day will help melt any ice beneath. You can then cover the path with salt before nightfall to stop it refreezing overnight.

Clear and prevent slips

- Pay extra attention to clearing snow and ice from steps and steep pathways - you might need to use more salt on these areas.
- Use salt or sand - not water. If you use water to melt the snow, it may refreeze and turn to black ice. Black ice increases the risk of injuries as it is invisible and very slippery.
- You can melt snow or prevent black ice by spreading some salt on the area you have cleared. You can use ordinary table or dishwasher salt - a tablespoon for each square metre you clear should work. Don't use the salt found in salting bins - this will be needed to keep the roads clear unless your council advises otherwise. Please contact your local council for more advice.
- Be careful not to spread salt on plants or grass as it may damage them.
- If you don't have enough salt, you can also use sand or ash. These won't stop the path icing over as effectively as salt, but will provide good grip underfoot.

Take care where you move the snow

When you're shoveling snow, take care where you put it so it doesn't block people's paths or drains. Make sure you make a path down the middle of the area to be cleared first, so you have a clear surface to walk on. Then shovel the snow from the centre of the path to the sides.

Offer to clear your neighbours' paths

If your neighbour will have difficulty getting in and out of their home, offer to clear snow and ice around their property as well. Check that any elderly or disabled neighbours are alright in the cold weather. If you're worried about them, try contacting their relatives or friends, or if necessary the local council.

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