

# Billinge Chapel End Parish Council

## DRAFT Minutes of Council Meeting held on 21 November 2022

Present: Councillor S Gardner (Chair)

Councillors A Armstrong, J Barnes, C Betts, B Bradbury, F Gill,  
S Murphy

H Broatch (Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to the Council)

### PUBLIC SESSION

*9 Members of the Public were in attendance*

*The PCSO gave his apologies. The latest crime statistics had been circulated to all Parish Councillors and are attached to the Minutes.*

*Borough Cllr P Peers updated the meeting about progress with his discussions with Eddleston Field Society about parking issues on Rainford Road in the vicinity of the Playing Fields and advised that they had responded but wanted to consult with field users before agreeing a meeting date.*

*Borough Cllr C Betts advised that he was taking advice about enforcement regarding the untidy site next to the Billinge Arms. He also advised that he was looking into the fact that large vans were parking on the footpath in the Holt Avenue and Holt Crescent areas which were obstructing the footpaths.*

*Borough Cllr S Murphy thanked all the local people who had supported the annual Christmas Toy Appeal and all those who had helped organise the Appeal. Borough Cllr P Peers thanked Borough Cllr S Murphy for the work she put into this appeal each year.*

*The meeting was opened up to the public. Two key issues were raised. The first was about staff parking in the vicinity of Nugent House School on roadsides rather than parking in the car park available at the school. The member of the public who raised this supplied the Clerk with "photographic evidence". It was recalled that at the Parish Council Meeting on 3 October 2022 it had been resolved that the Clerk write to St Helens Borough Council requesting drop-off lines be installed in vicinity of the school. The Clerk reported that no*

reply had been received. Borough Cllr S Murphy said that she would go back to St Helens Council and, in light, of the request from the resident ask that single yellow lines be installed. The second issue raised was the continued delay with the Section 19 Investigation into the flooding that had happened last December. The householders (who had had to leave their homes due to internal flooding) once again raised their fears that because the investigation has not been done they would be liable to internal flooding again this winter. They advised the Parish Council that they were going to raise formal complaints about this matter with St Helens Borough Council in line with the Council's Complaints Procedure. They had looked at the St Helens Flood Strategy 2019-25 which clearly stated that any S19 Investigation Report would be available within 2 months of any internal flooding incident. It was now 11 months since the internal flooding incident.

8.30pm Public Session Closed.

## **No 77**

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr B Bates and the reasons for absence were approved.

Cllr S Gardner advised that Cllr S Wainwright had resigned and it was agreed to thank him for all his hard work.

## **No 78**

**Declarations of Interest:** Cllr A Armstrong declared an interest as a member of Billinge in Bloom; Cllr B Bradbury declared interests as a Governor of Nugent House School and of Chapel End School; Borough Cllrs Betts and Murphy declared interests in the flooding item as Members of St Helens Borough Council.

## **No 79**

### **Minutes of Last Meeting**

Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2022 were confirmed as a true record and the Chair was authorised to sign them. The Clerk advised of an error in Minute 57.2 which should have read VN45- 59 instead of VN45-50 and it was resolved that Minute 57.2 be amended.

Noted the update from the Clerk/RFO on the Action Log.

## **No 80**

### **Exclusion of Public and Press**

Resolved that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, members of the public and press be excluded whilst Agenda Items 17.1 and 17.2 were discussed (likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Para 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of the Act).

## **No 81**

### **Library Service**

81.1 Noted that the current understanding is that St Helens Council will consult again in the future about library closures. The Parish Council is committed to fighting against the closure of the library in Billinge. It understands that the people of Billinge are passionate about having a library service. However the Parish Council has resolved to do a consultation exercise about whether people would be as passionate if the end result was that the only way to have a library service would be for it to be a community led library service. As part of that process the Parish Council will also hold a meeting which is open to all the public in Billinge on Monday 5 December 2022 at 7.30pm in The Public Hall.

81.2 Noted that the Chair has talked with specialist solicitors firm about the implications of getting advice if it is decided to take legal action.

## **No 82**

### **Flooding**

Noted the letter from St Helens Council about Section 19 Investigation in response to the letter to the Chief Executive Officer of St Helens Council from the Chair asking a range of questions about the lack of progress.

Resolved that the Parish Council make a formal complaint to St Helens Council (Lead Local Flood Authority) about the length of time it has taken to do the Section 19 Investigation. This is not in compliance with St Helens Council's Flood Strategy 2019-25. The Parish Council will also explore the implications of taking legal action.

Resolved that the Clerk explore potential for flood resistance measures and report back.

## **No 83**

### **Billinge Medical Practice**

Noted the report given by the Chair following the meeting with the Integrated Care Board. The meeting focussed on the recommendations made in the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) Inspection Report and the actions being taken by The Practice. The CQC would return in around six months' time to do a follow up report.

Noted that the Medical Practice is planning to have a patient engagement event at the end of November.

## **No 84**

### **Planning**

Resolved to get further information from the Planning Authority about the potential implications of planning application P/2022/0758/FUL and in particular any views submitted by the Highways Authority.

Resolved to be advised by the Tree Officer on application P/2022/0776/TPO.

Resolved to submit no observations on application P/2022/0789/HHFP.

## **No 85**

### **Community Governance Review**

Noted that St Helens Council are undertaking a Community Governance Review of their existing Parish Councils and that the review is to help them consider if any changes are needed to Parish Council arrangements, whilst ensuring the Parish Councils continue to reflect the identity and interests of local communities. The review will consider changes to parish areas – changing parish boundaries, creating or merging parishes and changes to the number of parish councillors and introducing or changing parish warding

arrangements. Resolved that Parish Councillors would respond as individuals to the consultation.

## **No 86**

### **Food Bank Working Group**

Noted that Parish Councillor F Gill had resigned from the Working Group.

Noted that St Aidans Church has approached the Parish Council about working together to set up a Food Pantry in Billinge. The Church proposes identifying a venue, putting in place necessary systems and procedures to ensure compliance and identifying a team of volunteers. The Church advised that the churches had set up a number of Food Pantry's and that any development in Billinge would benefit from this experience.

Resolved that the Working Group should progress this idea with the Church and report back to the Parish Council

## **No 87**

### **Events**

Resolved to thank Borough Councillor P Peer and Parish Councillor S Wainwright for putting up the poppies in the village; Nugent House School for the poppy display in the Millennium Garden; and G Norris (Billinge Residents Association) for the poppy display at the Remembrance Garden.

Noted that the Christmas Window Competition and the Christmas Poster Competition (for schoolchildren in primary schools in Billinge) have both been launched.

Noted that the lighting of the Christmas Tree Lights by the Mayor of the Borough Council at the Millennium Garden will take place on Friday 9 December 2022 at 6pm with refreshments, Christmas stalls and entertainment organised by the Billinge Residents Association in The Public Hall.

Noted that the Clerk will be uploading a page on the Website with information on events and activities provided in The Public Hall. Some of these will be free

community events and others will be specialist activities provided by hirers of The Public Hall who make a charge to users for the activities they provide.

## **No 88**

### **Parish Council Health & Safety Report**

Noted the report and that the Clerk would bring back a report with proposals for implementation of recommendations identifying any implications.

## **No 89**

### **Financial Matters**

Noted that the Local Government Services Pay Agreement for 2022/23 has been agreed by the National Joint Council. The increase is backdated to 1 April 2022. The new rates are uprated by 4.04 per cent. In addition, from 1 April 2023 it has been agreed that all employees will receive an increase of one day (pro rata for part-time employees) to their annual holiday leave entitlement.

Resolved to authorise the payments on the Schedule of Payment for November 2022 (VN72 – VN86 totalling £4363.11 )

Resolved to approve Section 137 expenditure/grant application for £300.00 from Billinge Residents Association.

Resolved to hold the Estimates Committee Meeting on 9 January 2023 at 7.30pm. This meeting cannot make decisions and is not open to the public. It will make recommendations for discussion and resolution at the Parish Council Meeting on 16 January 2023.

Noted that St Helens Council have advised the Clerk that their information about Dam Slacks was incorrect. They do not lease it to the Parish Council. Dam Slacks belongs to the Parish Council.

## **No 90**

### **Personnel Matters**

Noted the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer is due an appraisal having been employed by the Parish Council since 1 August 2021 and resolved that the Chair (in accordance with Standing Order 19) “conduct a review of the performance of the work of Clerk to the Council” . The Chair would consult with other Parish Councillors recognising that the Clerk/RFO is employed by the Full Parish Council. Her job description was noted for information.

## **No 91**

### **Clerks Report**

Noted for information only.

## **No 92**

### **Green Spaces**

Noted that St Helens Council (who inspect Dam Slacks Play Area for safety) has advised that the swing set is not safe and it has been taken out of use. Resolved that the Clerk get quotes for supplying and installing replacements and report back.

### **Millennium Garden**

Noted that the Parish Council thanked Billinge in Bloom who have planted a tree and bulbs.

Resolved that all Parish Councillors be reminded that there are processes that need to be followed and that approval for any works on Parish Council owned land/buildings should have be sought from the Parish Council in advance.

**Members of the Public and Press were asked to leave the meeting as agreed in Minute No 80 for the reasons outlined therein.**

## **No 93**

### **Tree Works at the Millennium Garden**

Resolved to award the contract to B & A Tree Services which represented the best value for money and to action the works as soon as possible.

### **Renewal of Insurance Policy for 2023/24**

Noted that the policy is due for renewal on 17 January 2023 and resolved to award the contract for 2023-2028 to Zurich Insurance at a fixed price for five years which represented the best value for money.

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