

Billinge Chapel End Parish Council

DRAFT

Minutes of Council Meeting on 16 January 2023

Present: Councillor S Gardner (Chair) J Barnes (Vice Chair)
Councillors A Armstrong, C Betts, B Bradbury, Fiona Gill, Frank Gill,
and S Murphy
H Broatch (Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to the Council)

PUBLIC SESSION

10 Members of the Public were in attendance.

The PCSO provided an explanation of the recent crime statistics. He outlined the actions taken to date. He advised that the speed watch training would now be completed by the end of February and that he was arranging to provide some sessions on anti-social behaviour at the local schools. He was asked about his responsibilities for cars parking and he advised that if a car was obstructing a footpath then the Police would be responsible but if it was parking on yellow lines then it was the responsibility of Highways at St Helens Council.

He then advised the Parish Council that he was being moved to Fingerpost/Parr in the near future and that PCSO James Harrison would be replacing him. PCSO Harrison would cover Rainford, Seneley Green and Billinge. Borough Cllr S Murphy advised that she would be writing to object to this change. The Chair of the Parish Council also said he would write to express concerns about the increase in the area that the PCSO would cover and the impact this would have on policing in the Parish. PCSO J Mitchell-Chard was thanked for his service in Billinge and Seneley Green Ward.

Borough Cllr S Murphy updated on her meeting with residents about car parking on Carr Mill Road. She advised that she had been joined by Highways Officers from St Helens Council. Cars were currently not parking illegally. She had been advised by the residents that they did not want double yellow lines. Yellow lines would need restrictions on parking to be clearly defined. Discussions between residents, local authorities and the schools needed to continue to reach a resolution that improved the situation, as far as possible, for all stakeholders.

The meeting was opened to the public. Lynn Smith (who has recently joined Voluntary and Community Action) introduced herself and outlined the work of VCA and her role. It was proposed that when looking at events for this year that the Parish Council should consider celebrating the fact that it was 770 years since Billinge was founded. The Clerk was asked to look into this and bring a report to the next meeting. The risk of more flooding continues to cause local residents a great deal of distress and anxiety. It was noted that discussions with St Helens Council who are the Lead Local Flood Authority were ongoing. The expectation

was that the Section 19 Report would be completed by end of March and after it had been through the legal department at St Helens Council a meeting would be held with the public and other key stakeholders. It was noted that neither the resident who had submitted a formal complaint to St Helens Council nor the Parish Council who had done the same had received a reply.

A presentation was made to Sue Murphy in recognition of the award of the MBE in this year's January Honours List for her services to the public. The Parish Council congratulated her on the award.

The public session closed at 8.03pm

No 110

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr B Bates and the reasons for absence were approved. Cllr Bates has been absent for the last six months and his reason for absence approved at each meeting he has had to miss.

No 111

Declarations of Interest

Cllr B Bradbury declared interests as a Governor of Nugent House School and Chapel End School.

Cllr F Gill declared a non-pecuniary interest as she is related to one of the candidates standing for co-option to the Parish Council.

Cllr S Murphy declared an interest as a Borough Councillor in the item on flooding.

No 112

Minutes of Last Meeting

Resolved that the Minutes of the Meeting on 19 December 2022 were confirmed as a true record and the Chair was authorized to sign them.

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

No 113

Parish Council Co-Option

Noted that two qualified people had submitted applications to be co-opted to the casual vacancy onto the Parish Council. Each gave a short presentation about what they felt they would bring to the Parish Council.

Noted that F Gill received 4 votes and the other applicant received 2 votes.

Noted that F Gill signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was countersigned by the Clerk/RFO. He then joined the Meeting as a Parish Councillor.

No114

Car Parking on Carr Mill Road

Noted that the Chair had written to Headteachers but had not yet received replies; Highways Officers and Borough Councillor S Murphy had met with local residents for a site meeting.

Resolved that meetings be set up with Headteachers and other key stakeholders to identify a solution that would benefit the village.

No 115

Community Led Library Service

Noted that representatives of the community volunteer group had met with the community led childrens library service. This had been a useful and informative meeting. The representatives were next going to meet with Book Cycle who have a different model which also depends on volunteers and has three locations in Wigan.

Resolved to set up another public meeting with the community led library service group on Monday 6 February 2023 at 7.30pm in The Hall.

No 116

Flooding

Noted verbal report from Chair advising that the Parish Council had not received a reply to its formal complaint to St Helens Council about their failure to comply with their policy on Section 19 Reports. Resolved to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman.

No 117

Financial Matters

Noted the consultation by St Helens Council on its budget proposals for 2023/24 which required a response by 2359 on 16 January 2023.

Resolved to feedback on the three key matters that would impact on the Parish – the proposed removal of the Community Improvement Fund; reductions in road safety measures and support; and the proposal to further reduce the budget for library services.

Noted the recommendations from the Estimates Committee Meeting on 9 January 2023.

Resolved to approve the proposed budget for 2023/24; to not increase the charges for Hall hire; to not increase the Precept and to keep it at £52,276 for 2023/24; and that the list of projects be explored and worked up into proposals that can come back to the Parish Council for consideration and resolution.

Resolved that the Clerk approach Billinge in Bloom to ask if they would maintain the barrier baskets with support from the Parish Council if needed.

Resolved to authorize the payments listed on the Schedule of Payments for January 2023 (VN104-111 totalling £4112.70)

No 118

Planning

Resolved to not submit any observations on planning application **P/2022/0869/FUL** Belvedere Barn Estate, Crank Road, Kings Moss - Extension to existing storage building to create additional storage space.