

Billinge Chapel End Parish Council

DRAFT Minutes of Council Meeting on 20 March 2023

Present: Councillors S Gardner (Chair) J Barnes (Vice Chair)
Councillors B Bates, B Bradbury, Fiona Gill and Frank Gill
H Broatch (Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to the Council)

PUBLIC SESSION

7 Members of the Public were in attendance.

The Clerk/RFO advised that PCSO James Harrison was now in post but unfortunately not able to attend. The Clerk has advised him of the dates of the next two meetings.

Borough Councillors Betts, Murphy and Peers gave their apologies.

The meeting was opened to the public. A resident advised that objections had been submitted to the application for alcohol and music licenses from The Varini because of concerns about noise and disturbance. Borough Councillors are understood to have reported the concerns to St Helens Council (The Licensing Authority) on behalf of the residents. The Clerk was asked to investigate if in future the Parish Council could be copied in by The Licensing Authority on applications from within the Parish boundary.

A resident spoke about the issues he had raised with the Clerk/RFO about his concerns for himself and others crossing Main Street (on the Agenda) due to the volume and the speed of vehicles. He argued there was a strong need for an assisted means to enable pedestrians to cross safely. His concerns were noted.

A resident spoke about his ongoing concerns about the impact on road safety because of Nugent School staff parking their cars on Carr Mill Road. He referred to correspondence dating back to 2014 about this problem which had still to be resolved. It was on the agenda to note a verbal report from the Chair on this matter. The Chair outlined that his report would say that the Parish Council would need to continue to talk with the Headteacher about how staff could be persuaded to park on the School's car park instead of the street. The Headteacher had advised him that he does, regularly, remind staff to park on-site in the School car park. He had given the Chair a commitment that he would continue to do so. St Helens Council had advised that they did not have the resources to enforce parking offences and therefore were not installing single yellow lines.

A resident advised that there was a contradiction in St Helens latest waste and recycling policy and their policies on equality, diversity, and inclusion. This was noted and the Clerk/RFO was asked to invite the relevant St Helens Officers to the next Parish Council Meeting.

Residents expressed their continued frustration about St Helens Council's failure to publish the Section 19 Flooding Investigation Report. This had now been put back to 24 May 2023. Ironically St Helens Council website continued to say that Section 19 Investigation Reports would be produced within two months of flooding incidents. Residents continued to be frustrated and to feel disadvantaged because of this further delay in reporting the findings of the investigation.

The Public Session closed at 8.35pm. All the members of the Public left and no members of the Press were present.

No 136

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs C Betts and S Murphy and the reasons for absence were approved.

No 137**Resignation**

Noted that Cllr A Armstrong had resigned and the Clerk/RFO had advised St Helens Council of her resignation.

No 138**Declarations of Interest**

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

No 139**Minutes of Last Meeting**

Resolved that the Minutes of the Meeting on 20 February 2023 were confirmed as a true record and the Chair was authorised to sign them.

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

No 140

Resolved in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 that members of the public and press be excluded whilst agenda items 16 and 17 were discussed because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Para 1 and 2 of Schedule 124 of the Act.

No 141**Crossing Main Street**

Noted the concerns raised by resident on his own behalf and that of others. The dangers of crossing Main Street were known and it was for this reason that the Parish Council had historically agreed to pay 50% of the cost of a school crossing patrol. The Clerk/RFO was advised that this had been agreed on the understanding that St Helens Council would install a pelican crossing. The Clerk/RFO was advised that this had been recorded in the relevant Minutes.

Resolved that the Clerk/RFO research the Minutes for this decision and then (in consultation with the Chair) follow up with St Helens Council.

No 142**Flooding**

Noted the report from the Chair.

No 143**Carr Mill Road Car Parking**

Noted the report from the Chair and that he would continue to progress the case with the Headteacher about staff parking on the school site car park to improve road safety and reduce the potential risks to children, elderly and others.

No 144**Community Led Library Service**

Noted that Book Cycle (a registered charity) had been asked to provide a book service run by community volunteers at the Eddleston Centre (subject to a satisfactory outcome from negotiations with the Eddleston Trust for a Lease). Book Cycle had experience of doing this both in the UK and abroad and were already doing so locally in Orrell and elsewhere in Wigan.

No 145**Events****Billinge Walking Day**

Noted the concerns about safety when the Walk went down Main Street and onto Birchley Road. The volume of traffic has significantly increased since the early days of the traditional Walking Day. Resolved that the Clerk/RFO would talk further with the Churches and others about alternative routes which might enable a Billinge Walking Day to take place in June 2024 in a way that was as safe as it was possible for all. She will report back to the next meeting.

Big Help Out Day in Celebration of King's Coronation Monday 8 May 2023

Noted Cllr Fiona Gill's and Cllr Frank Gill's joint report on the proposals for the above event. Resolved that the event was an excellent way to celebrate the King's Coronation and was in line with the national proposals for the Big Help Out Day. It would also complement the Picnic in the Park being organised by the Billinge Residents Association for Sunday 7 May 2023.

No 146**Review of Policies for 2023/24**

Noted that Cllrs Barnes and Gardner would report to the next meeting.

No 147**Appointments**

Noted that Cllr C Betts had resigned as Parish Council representative on the Eddleston Trust Board. Resolved that Cllr Frank Gill be appointed to the Eddleston Trust Board. Resolved that Cllr C Betts would join the Food Bank/Pantry Working Group.

No 148**Dam Slacks Play Area**

Noted that the repairs to the swing frame were due to start on 3 April 2023. The Clerk/RFO would advise if this was to change.

Noted that the safety matting under the slide (which the playground inspector had identified was in need of repair) would be repaired at the same time as the swing frame.

Noted that the Clerk/RFO was seeking quotes for the repairs needed to the stone wall at the entrance to the play area.

No 149**Millennium Garden**

Resolved to thank the specialist contractor who had cleaned the granite bench free of charge and to thank Cllr C Betts for organising this work in consultation with the Clerk/RFO. Unfortunately graffiti on the bench had prompted the need to do this work.

No 150**Financial Matters**

Resolved to authorise the payments listed on the Schedule of Payments for March 2023 (Voucher Nos 125- 139 totalling £5780.48).

No 151**Clerk/RFO Appraisal 2023**

Resolved to approve the notes of the appraisal of the Clerk/RFO undertaken by the Chair (in consultation with Parish Councillors).

No 151

Award of Contracts

Resolved to award the Contract for Grounds Maintenance 2023/24 at the Millennium Garden and Dam Slacks Play Area to the lowest tenderer who is experienced in grounds maintenance.

Resolved to award the maintenance works needed in the Hall (replacing indoor roof tiles whilst improving insulation as required; installing safety lighting; replacing lights with LEDs; and painting the Hall) to the lowest tenderer and to have the works done in the Easter Break to minimise impact on hall users.

Only one quote was received for installing the fire alarm. The Clerk/RFO was asked to get additional quotes and to report back to the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

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