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|  | **Billinge Chapel End Parish Council**  The Public Hall, 216 Main Street, Billinge WN5 7PE  mob: 07483 325064  e-mail:clerk@billingeparishcouncil.gov.uk  09 January 2024 |

**Members are summoned to attend a Parish Council Meeting of the Billinge Chapel End Parish Council, on Monday 15 January 2024 at 7.30pm.**

**This will be held in The Public Hall, 216 Main Street, Billinge WN5 7PE.**

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Hazel Broatch Clerk to the Council

**PUBLIC SESSION**

1. Statement (if any) from Merseyside Police
2. Statements (if any) from Borough Councillors Betts, Murphy and Peers
3. The public may speak of any matters of concern, but the Council may not make any lawful decision during the public session. The public cannot take part at any other time in the meeting.

***Please note that Council Meetings are filmed.***

***Please note that The Clerk is publishing any reports attached on the website along with Agenda unless they are of an exempt nature (Local Government Act 1972).***

**AGENDA**

1. **To receive** any apologies for absence and approve reasons for absence.
2. **To receive** any declarations of interests from Members.
3. **To approve** the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2023 as correct record.  
   **To note** the verbal report from the Clerk on progress with the Action Log.
4. **Footpath – to note** resident has raised concerns that no action has been taken since she reported her concerns (which were passed on to St Helens BC) on state of footpath at Myrtle Grove and Clifton Road. The resident has also raised concerns about overgrown shrubbery near the Rainford Road Flats which is encroaching onto pavement creating a danger to pedestrians. This has also been reported in the past to St Helens BC. The pavement is their responsibility, but the bush is not growing on their property.

**To resolve** next steps and **to note** that the Clerk/RFO is going to renew her efforts to set up a meeting between Highways Authority, Parish Council and local residents about various road safety issues. Bushes at Rainford Road Flats could be added to that list.

1. **Flooding – to note** verbal report on meeting with residents about setting up community flooding resilience group and **to resolve** next steps.
2. **Billinge Medical Practice**

**To note** that the latest Inspection Report has been published and the Practice has been found to still be failing. Another inspection will take place in six months’ time.

**To note** that the Chair is attending a meeting at the Practice and will report to the meeting.

1. **Community Improvements**
   1. **Defibrillator - to note** that grant was approved. The defibrillator has been installed on exterior wall at Billinge Arms. Clerk has advised the Billinge Arms and Borough Cllr S Murphy that they will need to register the defibrillator with the Ambulance Service. The Parish Council notes that the match-funding and the cost of installation came from the community fund raising activities. The Parish Council has been pleased to be able to help the community by providing administrative support with application for grant and managing payment of match-funding to the grant body.
   2. **Food Pantry – to note** this is proving to be a valued and popular facility.
   3. **Dam Slacks – to note** the Parish Council has been advised by the Chair of the Residents Association that there are restrictions on what can and cannot be done. The proposal is to change the bottom half (which is currently grassed) into a Wildflower Garden is on-hold. To date the Clerk/RFO has only identified that school playing fields must be registered and are protected from change/development. She will bring a report to the next meeting. As she cannot find any restrictions relating to land owned by Parish Councils she has asked the Chair of the Residents Association to share the evidence he has that forbids change of use. She will also continue her own investigations. She will update on any progress at the meeting.
   4. **Community Events – to note** that work is ongoing by the Parish Council’s Events Coordinators to hold a “Best In Billinge” event in May 2024. The emphasis will be on recognising good citizenship amongst the residents of Billinge.
   5. **Community Led Library Service – to note** Eddleston Trust has not been in touch with Book Cycle about a lease. Book Cycle has suggested re-examining what other options might exist as they still want to provide a Book Cycle book service in Billinge. A report will be brought to the next meeting.
2. **Planning**  
   **To note** that the following application was granted approval by St Helens Borough Council (The Planning Authority):

P/2023/0498/FUL 52 Garswood Road Change of use of property from residential dwelling (Class C3) to a Childrens Home (Class C2) for care of up to 4 children.

**9. Financial Matters**

**9.1 Budget and Precept 2024/25  
To note** the recommendations (attached) from the Estimates Committee Meeting on 8 January 2024. The Parish Council has prepared its budget for 2024/25 against the background of inflation increasing year on year whilst the Parish Council has not increased the Precept since 2019. This financial pressure has been significantly compounded by the unforeseen withdrawal in 2023 by St Helens Borough Council of the CIF funding which historically had paid for (amongst other things) road closure for Childrens Remembrance Service and Millennium Garden Christmas Tree (purchase of tree, sourcing, lighting, installation etc). Grants and goodwill from local residents ensured these occasions continued as normal in 2023.   
  
The proposed budget for 2024/25 assumes an increase in annual spending of 4%. For a Band D property in Billinge it is estimated this will mean they pay £27.00 for the year as a Precept for the Parish Council in 2024/25. The Precept is collected by St Helens Borough Council.

**To resolve** whether to approve the proposed budget for 2024/25; the level of hall hire charges for 2024/25; and the Precept for 2024/25.

**9.2 To resolve** whether to authorise the payments listed on the attached Schedule of Payments VN102 – 113 totalling £4,900.59 for January 2024.

**9.3 To resolve** whether to authorise the Clerk/RFO (in consultation with the Chair) to order repairs to stone wall and concrete fence at lower car park at The Public Hall and to stone wall at Dam Slacks. The Clerk/RFO has had one quote from a qualified stonework expert which if for £1670.00. She will enquire with Parish Council Insurers about making a claim and report what they say at the meeting. No-one has admitted they are liable for the damage at any of these sites.   
  
This will potentially be the second insurance claim for damage to stone walls, The last one was at the Millennium Garden and again no-one accepted liability.

**To resolve** that the Clerk/RFO bring back a report to the next meeting of implications/costs/etc of installing surveillance cameras that would record such damage as it occurred and also potentially enable the Parish Council to improve safety for hall users and employees. The cameras would need to be compliant with legislative requirements.