

Billinge Chapel End Parish Council

DRAFT V2 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 16 October 2023

Present: Councillor Fiona Gill (Chair) Councillor B Bates (Vice Chair)
Councillors J Barnes, C Betts, B Bradbury, M Webster
H Broatch (Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)

PUBLIC SESSION

12 Members of the Public were in attendance.

Merseyside Police were not present but had shared crime statistics which had been circulated to Parish Councillors.

Borough Councillor P Peers updated the Parish Council about his discussions with The Eddleston Trust's representative about the car parking issues at the Playing Fields on Rainford Road. He had made a number of suggestions about how a car parking facility could be developed at the Playing Fields on land owned by The Eddleston Trust but without success. Borough Cllr P Peers advised that his request for a meeting on-site had not been agreed.

Borough Councillor C Betts supported Borough Cllr P Peers saying he knew how difficult it was to get to talk with someone from The Eddleston Trust and to get them to make decisions. He appreciated that the Sports Fields (which they had gifted to the community) were an invaluable resource for Billinge but the consequence of increased car ownership meant that the car parking was inadequate. He went on to say that he was monitoring planning applications and to-date there were none for Birchley Hall.

The Public Session was opened.

A majority of those in attendance had come to raise their concerns about the planning application for a change of use of the property at 52 Garswood Road from a residential dwelling (Class C3) to a Childrens Home (Class 2) for the care of up to 4No Children. Their concerns were significantly about the impact this change of use would have on their amenity as householders.. They explained that they understood that there had been 39 objections submitted to the Planning Authority. They went on to say that this was a well-established residential area with an average age in the 70s for residents. There were very few children. Residents felt that this change of use would be disruptive if for no other reason than because of the significant increase in traffic movements due to vehicle movements to and from the proposed Childrens Home; the impact on mental health of residents and on their wellbeing; the close proximity to reservoir, lake, train tracks, green fields which all

posed dangers to children; and overall a significant reduction in the amenity they currently had from their properties.

Two local residents advised that they were back to a position where they had significant concerns about the service being provided by the Billinge Doctors Surgery. The concerns were about appointment making, service levels and conflicting advice/information.

Two local residents advised that communication about progress with improvements works from St Helens Borough Council and Nugent Care had not improved. They still felt completely in the dark about what progress and action was being taken. Borough Councillor C Betts agreed to take this back to St Helens Borough Council as it was a matter for them as Lead Local Flood Authority.

The Public Session closed at 8.05pm.

No 54

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs S Gardner, Frank Gill and S Murphy and the reasons for absence were approved.

No 55

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr B Bradbury declared an interest as a Governor at Chapel End Primary School and Nugent House School.

No 56

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2023

Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 September 2023 were approved.
Noted the verbal report on progress on the Action Log from the Clerk.

No 57

FOOTPATH LINKING MYRTLE GROVE AND CLIFTON ROAD/ELLIS ROAD

Resolved that in light of the concerns raised by the public about access to this Public Right of Way (PROW) for those in wheelchairs and/or pushing prams that the Clerk contact St Helens Council to ask them to review this PROW with the aim to make it accessible to all in accordance with the

Equality Act.

No 58

PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR CHANGE OF USE FROM RESIDENTIAL DWELLING TO A CHILDRENS HOME AT 52 GARSWOOD ROAD

Noted the concerns raised by local residents about the impact the above change of use would have on the amenity they currently enjoyed and noted the evidence presented in the public session that the majority of residents are elderly.

Resolved to object to the planning application having heard from a significant number of local residents who had made representations about the impact the proposed change would have on the amenity of their properties.

No 59

CROSSING MAIN STREET (IN THE VICINITY OF PINGOT ROAD)

Noted that Cllr S Gardner met with St Helens Highway Engineers on site at least a couple of times. They explained that they have a clearly stated strategy including criteria for them installing a pedestrian crossing on a highway. St Helens Highway Engineers concluded that this stretch of road did not meet the criteria. They advised that to install a crossing would cost in the region of £30,000. Cllr Gardner subsequently raised the question as to whether the 20mph speed limit could be extended up Main Street to include this stretch of road where people with limited sight and mobility cross to go to the doctors. Again the Highways Engineer advised that this stretch of road did not meet the criteria for 20mph speed limit. The Clerk was asked to advise the local residents who had raised these concerns about the above response from St Helens Council.

Noted the Clerk has asked PCSO to look at this stretch of road as part of his work on reinforcing speed limits.

No 60

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT 2023/24

60.1 Flood Resilience: Noted that Flood Resilience Working Group would meet on 30 October 2023 and report back to the next Parish Council meeting.

60.2 Dam Slacks: Noted that the Dam Slacks Working Group were proposing that the bottom half of the field beyond the play area be turned into a wildflower meadow providing shelter and food for important pollinators including bees. The latter play an important role in supporting the ecosystem. The Council were supportive subject to a further report from the Working Group on how this could be progressed.

60.3 Flagpole: Noted that the flagpole had been delivered to The Public Hall and that Parish Councillor C Betts would (in consultation with the Clerk) arrange for it to be installed. The Clerk would action the purchase of a Union Jack flag.

60.4 Defibrillator: Noted that application had been submitted to DHSC for funding for a defibrillator to be installed on the exterior of The Billinge Arms (so it can be accessed 24/7/365). The Billinge Arms had agreed to this and to pay for the trickle of electricity that would be required by the defibrillator. If successful the grant would either pay in part or in full for the cost of the defibrillator and installation.

60.5 Book Cycle: Noted that a Parish Councillor was attending the Eddleston Trust Meeting on 17 October 2023 and the request from Book Cycle to hire space for a voluntary led book service was on the agenda.

60.6 Food Pantry: Noted that the Food Pantry at St Aidans Church was still on track to open in November 2023.

60.7 Community Events

Childrens Remembrance Service Friday 10 November 2023 would be held at the Remembrance Garden, Main Street from 1045 to 1130.

Noted this is a joint event with Seneley Green Schools and Borough Cllr S Murphy has led on the invitations and organisation for this event. The Chair of the Parish Council (Cllr Fiona Gill) will represent the Parish Council at the event and lay a wreath of its behalf. The Chair of the Residents Association has applied to the Eddleston Trust for a grant to cover the cost of the temporary road closure in the vicinity of the

Service. If this application is not successful the Parish Council **resolved** that it would pay the cost of the temporary closure from its reserves. **Noted** that school staff are responsible for the safety of school children and school children and staff would be invited to The Public Hall for refreshments after the Service.

Noted that the Clerk was looking for volunteers to act as stewards for the public who would stand on the road and view the service.

Remembrance Service at St Aidans Church Sunday 12 November 2023

Resolved that the Chair (Cllr Fiona Gill) would represent and participate in the Service on behalf of the Parish Council.

Resolved that the Parish Council would not invite attendance for refreshments after the service. It would instead vire the budget towards the costs of the 2023 Christmas Tree. Funding needed to be found to pay for the Christmas Tree (see below) following St Helens Council withdrawal of the Community Improvement Fund 2023/24. This fund had historically paid for the Christmas Tree and associated works in full as well as the temporary road closure for the Childrens Remembrance Service. The Parish Council had not known about this withdrawal of funding until after it had set its budget 2023/24.

Resolved that the Parish Council would take the funds needed from reserves to ensure these valued community events continued.

Lamppost Poppies

Noted that Cllr M Webster and the Clerk had volunteered to put up and remove lamppost poppies. Other interested volunteers asked to contact The Clerk.

Christmas Tree Lighting Friday 8 December 2023

Noted that a tree had been donated but that it would need to be felled, transported to the Millennium Garden, installed and made safe. The Clerk would keep the Council informed on progress and costs.

Noted that the Clerk was getting a quote from St Helens Council to supply and fit lighting including an electricity supply and would also report to next meeting.

Annual Schools Christmas Poster Competition 2023

Resolved that the Clerk in consultation with the Chair organise this annual competition and that the Chair present the winners with their prizes at the School Assembly's. The Clerk would liaise with the Residents Association who along with representatives of the Parish Council judge the entries.

No 61

BILLINGE IN BLOOM

Resolved to give permission to Billinge in Bloom to put 14 planters inside the Millennium Garden on land owned by the Parish Council.

No 62

EDDLESTON TRUST MEETING 17 OCTOBER 2023

Noted that Cllr Frank Gill (who represents Parish Council on the Eddleston Trust) was unable to attend this meeting but that the Eddleston Trust had given permission for the Parish Council to send a substitute, They advised that the substitute would not have voting rights.

Resolved that Cllr M Webster would attend. He would follow up on whether or not Book Cycle were to be given a lease for the John Eddleston Centre (subject to agreeing terms and conditions) and find out what had been agreed (or not) about proposals for improving car parking facilities at the Playing Fields.

No 63

PLANNING

Noted no observations submitted on P/2023/0524/HHFB 56 Clifton Road under delegated authority.

Resolved to submit no observations on the following:

P/2023/0575/FUL Little Houghwood Farm, Red Barn Rd
Extension to existing storage unit

P/2023/0582/HHFP 55 Claremont Road

Part 2 Storey part single storey and rear wraparound extension

P/2023/0587/HHFP 14 Carr Mill Crescent, Billinge

To convert property to a dormer bungalow by raising the ridge and dormers to front and rear elevations new porch feature and conversion of the existing garage

Noted following decision made by St Helens Borough Council

P/2023/0398/CLP 6 Rose Close Refused Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed rear dormer extension.

No 64

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Resolved to authorise the payments listed on the attached Schedule of Payments VN64-78 totalling £6779.39 for October 2023.