

Billinge Chapel End Parish Council

Minutes of Council Meeting held on 20 November 2023

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

PUBLIC SESSION

4 Members of the Public were in attendance.

Merseyside Police were not present but had shared crime statistics which had been circulated to Parish Councillors. It was noted that PCSO Harrison had resigned. The Parish Council asked that he be thanked for the good work he had done in the village in trying to improve road safety issues caused by vehicles breaking the speed limits.

Borough Councillor S Murphy advised that issues caused by the changes to the bin and recycling systems were being dealt with and would be resolved soon; evaluation of the flooding actions/improvements was ongoing; the appeal for toys had been launched but was slower this year; the Christmas Sleigh would be in Billinge as normal; St Aidans Church Food Pantry was due to open early December and she reminded everyone that it was about the environment and stopping food going to landfill; updates on what was happening at The Stork could be found on Facebook etc and she confirmed that the work on the roof was complete.

Parish Cllr S Gardner was given assurances that the actions agreed in Section 19 Report of Flooding were being actioned and St Helens Borough Council (LLFA) were monitoring and liaising with landowners. Borough Cllr S Murphy added that St Helens Borough Council were pleased to note that there had been no flood incidents following the recent heavy rainfall.

Borough Councillor P Peers reported the actions being undertaken by The Stork Working Group. He understood there would be further updates in the next week or so. Drone pictures had been taken of the roof and would be shared online. He went on to talk about the S19 Report and to read out an email from Nugent Care. It advised that access to the telemetry would be given by Nugent Care to all the affected residents and that the funding of this development was in-hand. Borough Councillor P Peers said he would continue to follow up on these two issues and keep the Parish Council informed.

The Public Session was opened.

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 the Billinge Medical Practice continued to provide a poor/failing service to local residents but particularly the elderly who had not access to ICT. They gave examples of it taking over a month to secure an appointment and appointments being cancelled without their knowledge.

The Public Session closed at 8.05pm.

No 65

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received however it was noted that Cllr C Betts had advised that he might be late as he had a previous meeting at St Helens Borough Council.

No 66

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

No 67

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 OCTOBER 2023

Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 October 2023 were approved.
Noted the verbal report on progress on the Action Log from the Clerk.

No 68

BILLINGE MEDICAL PRACTICE

Noted that the Care Quality Commission (CQC) had done the follow-up inspection of the practice but had yet to publish their report. When it is published it will be in the public domain and accessible via their website.

Noted that the Parish Council had been asked that Patients raise any concerns/complaints directly with the Practice Manager at Billinge Surgery or made formal complaints to:

cmichprimarycarecomplaints@cheshiremerseyside.nhs.uk

Resolved that the Parish Council would write to The Practice Manager at Billinge Medical Practice on behalf of the local residents who had raised the concerns expressing disappointment about the concerns raised by local residents particularly highlighting their view that they were being disadvantaged because they were elderly and did not have access to ICT.

No 69

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS 2023/24

RESOLVED to set up a follow up meeting as soon as possible with the Community Flood Resilience Working Group ensuring that householders were able to attend to discuss and progress the information received at the meeting with representatives of The Flood Hub.

DAM SLACKS

RESOLVED to invite Billinge in Bloom to join a meeting with the Dam Slacks Working Group to explore the setting up of a wildflower garden in the grassed area beyond the play area.

NOTED that any budgetary implications would need to be discussed at the Estimates Committee Meeting on 15 January 2024 at 1700.

DEFIBRILLATOR

Noted that Parish Council not successful with application for 100% funding.

Resolved that the Parish Council accept the invitation to apply for 50% grant in the knowledge that the balance would be covered by the monies raised by the community led activities.

COMMUNITY LED BOOK SERVICE

Noted that The Eddleston Trust had agreed that their Agent talk with Book Cycle about a lease to use the Eddleston Centre to provide a Book Cycle Service for Billinge. Book Cycle are keeping the Clerk updated on progress.

FOOD PANTRY ST AIDANS CHURCH BILLINGE

Noted that the aim is to open the Food Pantry by the first week in December. The Food Pantry would play a role ensure that food was not

going to landfill which would be beneficial to the environment. Cllr B Bates advised the Parish Council about the significant work that had been done.

Resolved to talk with St Aidans Church and include an article in the Billinge Beacon (January 2024 edition of Local Life) about the Food Pantry.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Christmas Tree Lighting Friday 8 December 2023 – Assemble at 1800 in The Public Hall Lights to Turned on at 1830 in the Millennium Garden.

Noted that quote from St Helens Borough Council for works related to lighting the tree and installing safety fencing had been received and was for £1016.40 plus VAT and would be funded from Parish Council Reserves.

Noted that local residents had kindly donated a Christmas Tree.

Resolved that the Clerk write and invite them to thank them (on behalf of the Parish Council) to invite them to attend the event.

Noted that the Clerk (in consultation) with the residents was progressing arrangements for qualified persons to fell the tree and then install it in the Millennium Garden.

Annual School Childrens Christmas Poster Competition 2023

Noted that the Clerk would contact each school and invite them to ask their pupils to take part. The competition will be judged by The Billinge Residents Association (which includes Cllrs Bates and Webster as representatives of the Parish Council). The winning posters (seven from each school) will be on display in The Public Hall on Friday 8 December 2023.

The Chair (Cllr Fiona Gill) will attend December School Assemblies to present the winners with their gift vouchers on behalf of the Parish Council.

BILLINGE IN BLOOM

Noted the report updating on the significant achievements of Billinge in Bloom. The Parish Council awarded them a grant of Six Hundred and Fifty Pounds on 19 June 2023. The Councillors felt the volunteers (who ran Billinge In Bloom) should be very pleased with what they had achieved in such a short period of time. It had made a difference to Billinge.

No 70

ROAD SAFETY

Noted the latest road safety concerns that residents had raised about the junction of Windsor Road/Newton Road. The Parish Council had discussed concerns about road safety over the past months – crossing Main Street near Pingot Road; speeds on Main Street; speed and access onto and off Birchley Road amongst others.

Noted the discussions Cllr S Gardner and others had had with Highways Officers from St Helens Borough Council. The responses all stated (that in a climate of reduced resources) the issues raised did not meet St Helens Borough Council’s criteria for interventions by St Helens Borough Council.

Noted that Cllr B Bradbury had been advised that the Highways Authority were looking for expressions of interest to site temporary Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) in the Borough.

Resolved that the Chair would write to the Head of Highways and Infrastructure to explore arranging intelligence gathering/engagement events with the local community in line with St Helens Borough Council’s latest strategic intent to engage with local communities. As part of this process locations for the temporary SIDs would be agreed.

No 71

REGISTERING COMMUNITY ASSETS

Noted that the Parish Council can register assets which are important to the community such as historic landmarks and buildings, local parks, community centres, libraries etc as community assets. Commonly local people would say “we particularly value this place and what it means for us”. This is not a one-off and can be added to/amended over time.

Resolved that the Clerk register the following as community assets with St Helens Borough Council:

Birchley Hall	Bankes Park
Nugent House	Dam Slacks Play Area
The John Eddleston Centre	The Millennium Garden
The Public Hall	The Remembrance Garden
The Stork	The Eagle and Child
Masons Arms	Billinge Arms

No 72

LATEST HEALTH AND SAFETY REVIEW

Noted the report and that the Clerk will bring a report to the next meeting.

No 73

PLANNING

Noted the decisions made by St Helens Borough Council:

5 Delph Meadow Gardens	P/2023/0499/TPO	Refused
37 London Fields	P/2023/0507/HHFP	Granted
37 Royden Road	P/2023/0504/HHFP	Granted
39 Douglas Road	P/2023/0494/HHFP	Granted
56 Clifton Road	P/2023/0525/CLP	Granted

No 74

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Noted the second quarter Budget Monitoring Report (April – Sept 2023)

Noted the grant application received from Billinge Residents Association of a grant towards the 2023 Childrens Xmas Party to be held at The Labour Club.

Resolved to award the grant (£200.00) to the Billinge Residents Association.

Resolved to make a donation of £40.00 to St Aidans Church for the Christmas Tree Festival.

Noted that a National Agreement had been reached on salary increases for Clerks/RFOs for 2023/24. For all spinal points up to 43 the agreed award was a total flat rate payment of £1925. The Clerk/RFO is on spinal point 28. The Clerk/RFOs contracted hours are 18 hours per week. The increase is backdated to 1 April 2023.

Resolved to make a payment of £300.00 to the Clerk/RFO to enable her to purchase gift vouchers for winners of poster competition.

Resolved to authorise the payments listed on the Schedule of Payments VN79-91 totalling £4029.61 for November 2023.

Noted that The Estimates Committee Meeting is at 1900 on 8 January 2024. The Estimates Committee will decide on what recommendations to make to the Full Council Meeting on 15 January 2024 regarding the Budget for 2024/25 and the implications of that budget for the Precept 2024/25.

No 75

IMPROVEMENTS TO ICT SECURITY

Noted the Clerk would email all Councillors for their input on any issues they were experiencing.