

Billinge Chapel End Parish Council

Minutes of Council Meeting held on

20 May 2024

Present: Councillor Fiona Gill (Chair) Councillor J Barnes (Vice Chair)
Councillors B Bates, C Betts, S Gardner, Frank Gill, M Webster
(joined meeting at 8pm)

ANNUAL MEETING

No 1

Appointment of Chair

Resolved Cllr Fiona Gill appointed Chair for 2024/25 municipal year.

Cllr Fiona Gill signed the Declaration of Office.

No 2

Appointment of Vice Chair

Resolved Cllr J Barnes appointed as Vice Chair for 2024/25 municipal year.

No 3

Appointments

Resolved the following appointments:

Estimates Committee – 13 January 2025 – All Members

Personnel Committee – Cllrs Fiona Gill, Frank Gill, and S Gardner

Planning Advisory Group – Cllrs B Bradbury, S Gardner and M Webster

Billinge Beacon/Local Life – Cllrs Fiona Gill and Frank Gill

Press Advisor – Cllr J Barnes

Events Coordinators – Cllrs B Bradbury, Fiona Gill, Frank Gill and S Murphy

Social Media Advisor – vacant

Dam Slacks Play Area Inspection – Cllr C Betts

No 4

Delegation Arrangements for Urgent Decisions

Resolved that if the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer believes an urgent matter has arisen between Council Meetings that it shall be determined by the Clerk/RFO in consultation with the Chair and the Vice Chair. Any such matters would be reported to the next Parish Council Meeting.

No 5

Standing Order and Financial Regulations 2024/25

Resolved to approve the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for the Parish Council 2024/25.

No 6

Council Policies 2024/25

Resolved to approve the policies (Accessibility Charter, Code of Conduct, Complaints Procedure, Co-Option Procedures, Disciplinary Procedures, Environmental Policy, Filming Protocol, Grant Awarding Policy, Grievance Procedures, and Publication Scheme.

No 7

Internal Audit 2023/24

Noted the letter from the Internal Auditor following a review of the effectiveness of the systems of internal financial control stating that the processes were satisfactory.

No 8

Asset Register and Risk Assessment

Noted that report will be brought to next Meeting.

No 9

Annual Return for 2023/24

Resolved to approve the Internal Audit Report; Annual Governance Statement; and the Accounting Statement and authorised the Chair to sign.

No 10

Resolved to agree the proposed dates and times for ordinary meetings of the Council and Committee for 2024/25.

Ordinary Parish Council Meeting

Public Session

Two members of the public were present.

Merseyside Police were not present.

Borough Cllr S Murphy had given apologies. Borough Cllr C Betts reported on the progress being made by Highways with road repairs and planned works. He advised that Birchley Road was on the next schedule for work in June. He also advised that members of the public could find the programme of works on the St Helens Borough Council website. On flooding he advised that the Section 19 report would only be updated when and if there is a further flooding incident in the area affected. The Clerk advised that a local resident has told her that the cameras had been installed on Nugent Care land. The uncertainty about the future of the site (it is currently up for sale) was noted as a potential future concern and it was agreed that this be put on the agenda for the next meeting. The Chair would write to ask for an update about the future of the site so that it could be included in the report.

Two members of the public were present. They updated the meeting on the situation about BRSK proposals to install above ground poles with the aim to improve broadband speeds in Billinge. Since attending last meeting, they had undertaken a survey in the village. They were now waiting for an update on the proposals. They would chase up again at the end of the week and keep the Parish Council informed as they understood Members were equally concerned

about the potential impact of such a development on the village.

The Public Session closed at 8.30pm

No 11

Apologies for Absence

Noted apologies for absence were received from Cllr S Murphy and the reasons for absence were approved.

No 12

Declarations of Interest

No declarations were received.

No 13

Minutes of Last Meeting

Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting on 15 April 2024 were confirmed as a true record and the Chair was authorised to sign them.

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

No 14

Community Led Book Service

To note the update from the Clerk that recent discussions between Book Cycle and the Agent representing The Eddleston Trust had seen progress. The situation was that Book Cycle and the Agent were in process of negotiating terms for long-term agreement to locate a Book Cycle facility in the Eddleston Centre. These negotiations were going well. The next step is to set up as soon as possible a site visit. Cllr Frank Gill (who is also a Trustee of the Eddleston Trust) would attend the site visit. The Parish Council was delighted by this progress and continued to support the proposal that Book Cycle provide a book service located in the Eddleston Centre.

Resolved that the Clerk should advise the community group about this progress.

Noted that Cllr C Betts was in discussions with an architect as part of the process of accessing the implications of building an extension onto The Public Hall. The architect and he were also working on getting quotes that would enable an assessment of the financial implications.

No 15

Key Aims and Objectives 2024/25

Resolved that the Chair would consult with all the Councillors to seek their input into drafting the key aims and objectives for 2024/25. The aim is to bring a report to the next meeting.

No 16

Outstanding Matters

Noted that the Clerk will action the outstanding tasks to set up a community led climate change resilience group and to organise an event for the public to advise on their issues/concerns (particularly but not exclusively about highways issues).

Noted that the Clerk was going to action the purchase of two benches to be installed at Dam Slacks. The Clerk was also going to identify fencing contractors and invite them to quote for improving and repairing the fencing and get advice on improving access and security. The Clerk would report back to the next meeting.

Cllr C Betts asked that his objection to the installation of the benches at Dam Slacks be noted.

No 17

Civility and Respect Pledge

Resolved that the Clerk bring a report to the next meeting about the implications of aspiring to achieve the Foundation Level of the Local Council Award Scheme in 2024/25.

No 18

Financial Matters

Resolved to authorise the payments listed on the Schedule of Payments for May 2024 (VN13-VN19) totalling £2726.36.