



Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 29 September 2022 in the Five Villages Hall, Station Road, Backford

PRESENT: Cllrs Dave Wells (in the Chair), Kate Brassington, Jack Jones, Mike Jones, Roger Jones and Rob Skupski

In Attendance: Cllr Simon Eardley (Cheshire West & Chester Ward Cllr) and Cllr Sue Pownall, Lea-by-Backford Parish Council

22.73 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / RESIGNATION

There were no apologies for absence.

The Chairman had received the resignation of Cllr McKeagney due to pressure of work. The Clerk had initiated the process of finding a replacement.

22.74 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

22.75 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME

Cllr Sue Pownall, Lea-by-Backford Parish Council, was present at the meeting to ask about the Parish Council's proposals for planting on the Village Green and whether Lea's request for Mollington to pay half of the cost of the additional cut of the grass on the Village Green prior to the Jubilee was agreed. There was some discussion about these issues and it was agreed that the Parish Council would pay half the cost of the additional cut on this occasion, but that any such request in the future should come before the work was done. Cllr Pownall was also told that Mollington had engaged the services of a gardener to work around the verges in Mollington and that he had also agreed to do additional cuts on the Village Green when required. With regard to the proposals for planting on the Village Green, these were tenuous at present as there had been no consultation undertaken within the village.

Cllr Pownall also updated the Parish Council on the War Memorial Trust where it appeared that no grants had been given for at least three years. The Parish Council knew nothing about this Trust as Mollington's representative for several years had not been a parish councillor. Cllr Brassington expressed an interest in becoming a Trustee representing Mollington.

The Chairman invited Members to observe a minute's silence in memory of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

22.76 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 August 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

22.77 UPDATE REPORTS

Planters: The Clerk had contacted Elton Gardeners Association regarding the provision of planters for Mollington village but had not received any reply. Ward Cllr Eardley said he would be happy to fund two planters from his Members' budget.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk should put in an application for funding from Cllr Eardley's Members' budget once a decision had been made whether or not to go ahead with this scheme.

22.78 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

RESOLVED: That the following responsibilities be noted and added to the Parish Council's website:

Finance and Audit	Cllr Roger Jones
Five Villages Hall	Cllr Jack Jones
Highways & Rights of Way	Cllr Dave Wells
Planning	Cllr Dave Wells
Police Liaison	Cllr Kate Brassington
School	Cllr Mike Jones
Website and Social Media	Cllr Rob Skupski

22.79 FINANCE

RESOLVED: That the following receipts and payments be noted.

(1) **Receipts:** None

(2) **Payments**

10.08.22	BACS	Parish Clerk – expenses	68.36
16.08.22	BACS	Five Villages Hall – Room Hire	20.00
30.08.22	SO	Amenity Cleaner – wages August	205.92
30.08.22	SO	Parish Clerk – salary August	203.42
30.08.22	BACS	John McDonald (Grasshopper Landscapes)	65.00
30.08.22	BACS	ChALC – Training fee	25.00
28.09.22	SO	Amenity Cleaner – wages September	205.92
28.09.22	SO	Parish Clerk – salary September	203.42
29.09.22	BACS	John McDonald (Grasshopper Landscapes)	<u>65.00</u>
		Total payments	<u>1,062.04</u>

Reconciliation	Brought forward	14,393.25
	Add: Receipts	0
	Less: Payments	<u>1,062.04</u>
	Carried forward	<u>13,331.21</u>

(3) **Community Infrastructure Levy:** The Parish Council had been awarded the sum of £3,601 from the Community Infrastructure Levy, which would be credited to the Council's bank account in October. The neighbourhood portion of CIL could be spent on the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or anything else concerned with addressing the demands that development placed on an area. Infrastructure was defined as:

- Social infrastructure: e.g. art and culture, sports halls, education, health, social care, emergency services, community centres, village halls
- Physical infrastructure: e.g. pavements, cycleways, flood defences, highways, transport links
- Green infrastructure: e.g. play areas, public open space, woodlands

The important thing to remember was that if it was scrutinised, could the spend be justified when taking into consideration the advice above.

RESOLVED: That the award of £3,601 Community Infrastructure Levy be noted and the Parish Council considers what it could be spent on.

22.80 EXTERNAL AUDIT

Every five years the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments (SAAA) was responsible for appointing external auditors to all opted-in smaller authorities. The next 5-year appointing period ran from 2022-23 until 2026-27. Smaller authorities were invited to remain in the SAAA sector led auditor appointment regime or to opt-out and make their own arrangements for external audit. If the Parish Council decided to opt-out and choose its own auditor for the next five years they must formally notify SAAA by 28 October 2022.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council remains opted-in to the SAAA sector led auditor appointment regime for the five years 2022-23 to 2026-27.

22.81 PLANNING

RESOLVED: That

(1) applications received by CWaC relating to Mollington since the last meeting be noted, as follows:

22/03138/FUL Creation of one pond on land adjacent Butler Green, Overwood Lane, Mollington, Chester

22/03189/FUL Creation of one pond on land rear of Butler Green, Townfield Lane, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6LB

(2) decisions taken by CWaC since the last meeting be noted, as follows: None

- (3) applications awaiting decision by CWaC be noted, as follows:
22/00873/OUT Conversion of an existing two storey barn into a residential dwelling and conversion of an existing detached barn into a residential dwelling at Rose Farm, Townfield Lane, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6NJ

22.82 CIVILITY AND RESPECT

There were growing concerns about the impact bullying, harassment and intimidation was having on councils, councillors and staff and the resulting effectiveness of local councils. The Civility and Respect Project had been founded by the Civility and Respect Working Group and was supported by representatives including the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), National Association of Local Councils (NALC), County Associations and One Voice Wales (OVW). To support this, Councils were being asked to sign up to the Civility and Respect pledge.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) The work of the Civility and Respect Project be supported; and
- (2) the Parish Council agrees to sign up to the Civility and Respect pledge

22.83 DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

Having agreed to sign up to the Civility and Respect pledge the Parish Council was invited to adopt the Dignity at Work policy as set out in the Appendix.

RESOLVED: That the Dignity at Work policy be adopted and be added to the Council's Policies and Procedures.

22.84 'ARE YOU OKAY'

Witnessing street harassment and not safely intervening sent the message to those experiencing it that it was okay and society normalised it. The Neighbourhood Watch Network were launching a campaign targeting **bystanders**. The campaign encouraged those who saw someone being harassed in public to ask the victim 'Are you Okay' when they felt safe doing so.

RESOLVED: That the above campaign be noted.

22.85 HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

It was reported that weeds were not being cleared from the gutters. This was particularly noticeable on Townfield Lane. It was noted that the brush had not been seen for some time. Cllr Eardley agreed to report this to Mark Brazil at CWaC.

22.86 ADDITIONAL GARDENING WORK

CWaC were responsible for cutting the grass on the Village Green when they cut the verges in the Village, which should be on a monthly basis. During the summer months additional cuts were needed to keep the green looking tidy. John McDonald (Grasshopper Landscapes), who looked after the verges on behalf of the Parish Council, had agreed to carry out this additional work at a cost of £17 an hour plus removal of waste.

RECOMMENDED: That John McDonald be asked to do additional cuts on the Village Green when they are necessary to ensure it is kept tidy.

22.88 FIVE VILLAGES HALL

RESOLVED: That Cllr Jack Jones should replace Cllr McKeagney as the Parish Council's representative on the Five Villages Hall Committee.

22.89 NEWSLETTER

The first Newsletter had been put together and was ready to be circulated.

RESOLVED: That the Newsletter be approved for distribution to residents of the five villages.

22.90 WEBSITES

- (1) The three Parish Councils had been asked to take over the maintenance of the Five Villages website. This website had been created by Christine Jones as an adjunct to the Interpretive Panels, situated opposite the School and at the Village Hall, and highlighted contact details for the school, church, hotels and village hall. It also gave a brief overview of the Five Villages' history and suggestions for activities which ran

through the village. Christine had been funding the hosting of the website from her own pocket but was now asking the Parish Council to take this on. Bob Hadfield, who currently hosted the Parish Council's website, had agreed to host the Five Villages e and the Five Villages Hall websites along with Mollington Parish Council's website. Ward Cllr Eardley would meet the cost of hosting the website this year from his Members' budget but had reminded the Parish Council that this may not always be an option. Christine's expenditure this year had already been refunded by Mollington Parish Council.

- (2) Cllr Skupski had been having a conversation with Bob Hadfield about the Parish Council's website. One of the recommendations he had made was that all the councillors and the Clerk should have a generic email address, e.g. Name@mollingtonparishcouncil.co.uk. Councillors were happy with this suggestion.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the arrangements with regard to the hosting of the Five Villages and the Five Villages Hall websites be approved; and
- (2) Councillors and the Clerk should be given generic email addresses.

22.91 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S COMMUNITY ACTION FUND

The PCC's Community Action Fund had reopened, with money available for projects across Cheshire that would prevent and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. The application window was open from 1 September until 30 November 2022. £100,000 was available for projects which improved the safety of individuals in the area. Individual bids of up to £5,000 could be submitted by applicants who were working with their local policing team to address their area's priorities. Applications were welcome from community, voluntary or third sector groups, including Parish Councils. Any bids to the Community Action Fund must be match-funded to provide the maximum benefit to the area, making the true value of the fund £200,000. Applicants were also asked to name a contact in their local policing team and Local Authority or volunteer centre when submitting their form. Projects supported by the Fund had included sports activities and youth engagement programmes to help prevent young people becoming involved in anti-social behaviour, the installation of CCTV at community premises, and engagement with Cheshire's rural communities.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council identifies any projects that might benefit from funding from the Community Action Fund and makes a bid for funding before 30 November 2022.

22.92 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NEXT MEETING

- (1) Parish Plan
- (2) Budget for 2023-24

22.93 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 15 November 2022* at 7.15pm in the Five Villages Hall, Station Road, Backford

*Date subsequently changed to 29 November 2022