

## MOLLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19 January 2021 at 7.00pm by Zoom Video Conferencing

**PRESENT:** Councillors Roger Jones (in the Chair), Christine Jones, Mike Jones, John Fielding, Angus MacSween and Dave Wells

In attendance: Mrs P English (Parish Clerk) and Cheshire West & Chester Ward Councillor Simon Eardley

### **21.01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None

### **21.02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mike Jones declared an interest in matters to do with the Village Hall as he was the Parish Council's representative on the Village Hall Committee. He also declared an interest in Planning Application (20/04324/FUL) Warren Farm as it was his property. He was not present in the meeting during discussion of this item.

Councillor John Fielding declared an interest in matters to do with the Village Hall as he was a member of the Village Hall Committee. He also declared an interest in Planning Application (20/04612/FUL) as he was the agent for this application.

### **21.03 WARREN FARM**

The Chairman took this item early so that Councillor Mike Jones, who declared an interest in it as he was the owner of the property, could join the meeting.

The application related to the re-use of existing farm buildings and the replacement of existing buildings. It was proposed to convert the existing barn and outbuildings into six houses and build a new, larger barn to house the new farm equipment. Notice of the proposed development had been put on the Parish Council's notice boards, the website and Facebook. Councillors were generally not opposed to the development, although concern had been expressed by residents about it affecting the openness of the Green Belt and that the proposed new barn was too large. Councillor MacSween thought the proposed development was attractive and an improvement on the existing sheds and said that he would support it. It appeared that the proposals were in line with current policy and it was agreed that the Parish Council should support the application but that the landowner should be asked to ensure that the development met current environmental standards. Councillor Christine Jones said that the Parish Council should find out what residents' views were on development within the village. Councillor Wells agreed and suggested that the Parish Council reconsider adopting a Neighbourhood Plan which could deal with matters such as this.

Councillor Mike Jones joined the meeting.

### **21.04 COUNCILLOR BRIAN CROWE**

The Chairman handed the meeting over to Ward Councillor Simon Eardley who spoke about the late Councillor Crowe's dedication to Mollington village during more than 20 years of service to the Parish Council, Chester City Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council. He had the honour of being the first Lord Mayor of the City of Chester and on his retirement as a CWaC councillor became an Honorary Alderman in recognition of his civic work and commitment to many local organisations, as well as to the local authorities of which he was a member. He would be missed by his wife and children and by his colleagues and friends. Councillor Roger Jones added his condolences on behalf of the Parish Council and called for a minute's silence to enable those present to reflect on Brian's life.

### **21.05 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **21.06 UPDATE REPORTS**

#### **(1) Hyperfast B4RN Six Villages Project**

It was reported that many rural areas around Chester were targeted for fibre broadband rollout over the next three years, but there were no plans to include Mollington. This meant that broadband speeds would not be available to meet household and business

needs satisfactorily, and properties with slow broadband will increasingly be less attractive to the housing market. B4RN, the Community Broadband provider, had given a commitment that digging to receive fibre to the household and business premises could start once the target number of vouchers and investment had been reached. Although enough expressions of interest had been received, some 60 vouchers would be needed to reach the target.

Councillor Fielding had found another company, Gigaloch, who could supply all subscribers with a 1 Gb/s download speed equivalent to 1000 Mb/s. These speeds meant that rural households would not have to suffer digital poverty. Higher speeds of up to 10 Gb/s were available at an increased cost, which might be of interest to specialist business users. This was noted as being an alternative should B4RN not succeed in reaching their target.

Councillor Mike Jones would be attending a meeting with B4RN and Phil Crane and would report back on the outcome.

(2) **Community Newsletter:**

The initial newsletter had been well received and it was proposed that the Parish Council should budget for a quarterly print run. Prices had been obtained from three printers and the best was a local company, Tag. The annual cost for four print runs in colour would be £300. Lea-by-Backford Parish Council had expressed an interest in contributing to the content and the cost of producing the Newsletter. Councillor Eardley had indicated that he would be prepared to fund it from his Member's Budget. It was RESOLVED to accept this quotation. Councillor Christine Jones would produce the first Newsletter as soon as possible.

## 21.07 PLANNING

(1) **Applications Received:**

Application No.	Application
20/04324/FUL	Farm redevelopment including conversion of buildings to 6 dwellings, demolition of several existing buildings and the erection of new agricultural buildings at Warren Farm, Townfield Lane, Mollington, Chester Cheshire CH1 6LB – See Minute 21.04 above
20/04612/FUL	Replacement garage with new garage and workshop at  Willow Brook Meadow, Well Lane, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6LD – No comments to be made
20/04765/FUL	Erection of an entrance lobby with an access ramp and replacement of existing hardstanding and decking in front of the care home at Crabwall Hall Residential Home, Parkgate Road, Mollington, Chester CH1 6NE – No comments to be made

(2) **Decisions:**

Application No.	Application	Decision
20/01119/FUL	Gates, wall and fencing at the front of the property at Oakdene, Townfield Lane, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6LB	Approved
20/01980/FUL	Extension to side (Existing gable end extended and ridge line extended to meet existing main roof ridge line); Addition of new dormer windows & replacement dormer window at The Walled Garden, Well Lane, Mollington, Chester CH1 6LD	Approved
20/02289/FUL	Change of Use of existing Footgolf building and associated area to day care for dogs on land at Mollington Grange Business Park, Parkgate Road, Mollington, Chester	Approved
20/02597/FUL	Addition of chimney at Greenfield Cottage, Parkgate Road, Mollington, Chester Cheshire CH1 6NE	Approved

20/02651/FUL	Demolition of outbuilding and erection of two storey side extension at 4 Elms Cottages, Townfield Lane, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6NS	
20/02652/FUL	Demolition of existing front porch and rear single storey extension and erection of new front porch and single storey rear extension and outbuilding at 3 Elms Cottages, Townfield Lane, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6NS	Approved
20/03348/FUL	Demolition of existing garage; Erection of part single/part two storey side extension at Honey Pot Cottage, Parkgate Road, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6NE	Approved
20/03350/FUL	Erection of two storey detached dwelling and detached garage - amendment to 19/04597/FUL at The Willows, Well Lane, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6LD	Approved
20/03408/FUL	Conversion of existing garage, with elevation changes, to create annexe accommodation for the main dwelling house at Willow Brook House, Well Lane, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6LD	Approved

Concern was expressed about the work being undertaken at The Willows. A number of issues had been raised with CWaC Planning and Highways departments, but nothing had been done about them. Councillor Eardley was asked to take these issues up with Planning and Highways at CWaC. He suggested that the Parish Council write to the Chief Executive of CWaC expressing their dissatisfaction with these two departments.

(3) **Applications awaiting decision**

Application No.	Application
20/01430/FUL	Change of use of barns into hydro-therapy pool, gymnasium and annexe flat for use in connection with the new dwelling at Elm Farm, Townfield Lane, Mollington, Chester CH1 6NJ
20/03019/FUL	Demolition of the existing building and structures and the erection of 6no dwellings, creation of new public pedestrian and cycle path, and community car park, together with associated landscaping, ecology mitigation and infrastructure at former Mollington Grange Golf Club, Townfield Lane, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6NJ
20/04168/FUL	Two storey front and side extension and detached garage at Dilkhush, 3 Feilden Court, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6LS

**21.08 HIGHWAY MATTERS AND AMENITY CLEANING**

- (1) A suggestion had been received that speeds along Parkgate Road through the Mollington section were not appropriate given the number of drives and roads. This would be taken up with CWaC Highways.
- (2) Signage off Parkgate Road into the village was raised by a resident.
- (3) A suggestion had been made that a team might volunteer to clean village signage.
- (4) CWaC Officers had been to the site of the drainage ditch by the school in Mollington and put dye into the water in the ditch course. The pond by the school and the open water course to the side of the Post Office had also been checked. The dye did not appear in either. The manhole opposite the Old Post Office could not be lifted but it was thought most likely that the pipe coming into the manhole on the green was the most likely route taken by the drain coming from the ditch course by the school. A job would be raised with CWaC's contractor to carry out a trace of the line.

- (5) With regard to the proposed speed limit on Grove Road, it was confirmed that a project had been logged by Kay Parry at CWaC although no fixed timescale had been agreed. Information about the 40mph would be sent out to all households along Grove Road that would be affected. If 51% agreed with the proposal the speed limit would be enforced. The Parish Council had agreed to help distribute this letter. In response to a resident's query, signs giving the speed limit which would flash up if a car was travelling too fast would be possible if the site met CWaC's criteria for those to be provided. The cost would be £4,472 per sign of which CWaC could fund 50%. These were found to be more effective on main roads as local roads through villages tended to be used by the same traffic regularly.
- (6) The drains along Townfield Lane had been cleaned, the potholes along Townfield Lane had been repaired and road sweeping through the village had been carried out

#### **21.09 MOLLINGTON SCHOOL AND PLAYING FIELD**

The Parish Council had paid £300 for community use of the playing field at St Oswald's Primary School to commence on 1 April 2020, but with the commencement of Covid-19 restrictions in March 2020 use had been restricted or banned. Members were asked whether they thought the licence should be renewed in 2021. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should write to CWaC asking whether the payment made for 2020-21 would be refunded and whether it was intended to issue an invoice for 2021-22 while the Covid-19 restrictions still applied.

#### **21.10 VILLAGE HALL**

The contractors had started on site on 4 January and good progress was being made with the digging of foundations.

#### **21.11 DISTURBANCE/STRESS TO ANIMALS CAUSED BY FIREWORKS**

A number of residents had commented on the stress caused to both farm animals and pets by the use of loud fireworks. The Parish Council had received advice that if someone wished to set off fireworks in proximity to livestock, the duty was on the person setting off the fireworks to notify the local farmer in advance so that animals did not become distressed. For many types of livestock there was no practical solution to avoid distress, other than requesting that fireworks did not incorporate loud bangs. It was suggested that it was illegal for anyone to discharge fireworks in proximity to livestock which caused distress. If necessary, farmers could ask for a contact phone number to request a cessation of proceedings. The Animal Welfare Act 2006 provided information which was currently being checked. The Parish Council were considering the best way to take this forward. Possible actions were social media posts, leaflet drops, Parish Notices and personal contacts with neighbours and asking residents to limit the use of fireworks to specified times. 5 November and New Year's Eve were when problems were most likely to occur, although other times, such as private parties, might also be an issue.

#### **21.12 PLANTS FOR THE VILLAGE GREEN**

It was RESOLVED that £70 should be put in the budget to allow for planting on the Village Green.

#### **21.13 NUMBERING OF HOUSES ON TOWNFIELD LANE**

The Parish Council had been approached by residents of Townfield Lane asking for street numbering to be put on the agenda. CWaC were very keen on this project being taken forward as rural addresses were a nightmare for emergency workers, a problem that had been highlighted by Ambulance and care workers during the current pandemic.

CWaC's Street Naming and Numbering team had been asked for advice when a whole street was involved and the procedure for "one-offs" and new developments was as follows:

Step 1 Completion and submission to CWaC of an application form and numbering schedule

Step 2 CWaC checks the request against existing records in the gazetteer.

Step 3 CWaC consults the Royal Mail, Parish/Town Councils and other interested parties.

Step 4 The change is assessed and checked for duplication. Numbering of properties is decided by the Local Land and Property Custodian under delegated powers.

Step 5 A decision is issued to the applicant and notifications are sent to Royal Mail, Ordnance Survey, emergency services, utility companies and other Council departments through the NLPG Advance web site.

Step 6 Approved changes are added to the Local Land and Property Gazetteer.

Step 7 Changes are submitted regularly to the National Land and Property Gazetteer. Contact [snn@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:snn@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

Councillors unanimously agreed that this should be a residents' project and Councillor Christine Jones would approach residents who expressed interest and support them in taking this forward for discussion with Townfield Lane residents. 70 houses would be involved and the cost to each house would be approximately £4.00 plus the cost of a number plate. CWaC were very keen on this project being taken forward as rural addresses were a nightmare for emergency workers, a problem that had been highlighted by Ambulance and care workers during the current pandemic.

## 21.14 FINANCE

(1) The following income had been received since the last meeting of the Parish Council

Date	Description	Amount
17.12.20	Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) – Village Hall Loan	30,775.00
18.12.20	SLCC – Refund of overpayment for training	36.00

(2) The following expenditure since the last meeting of the Parish Council was noted

Date	Method	Description	Amount
30.11.20	SO	Amenity Cleaner – wages November	193.44
30.11.20	SO	Parish Clerk – salary November	142.27
02.12.20	BACS	Cheshire Community Action – subscription	20.00
02.12.20	BACS	HMRC – Income Tax	444.66
29.12.20	SO	Amenity Cleaner – wages December	193.44
29.12.20	SO	Parish Clerk – salary December	142.27
29.12.20	BACS	Village Hall – PWLB	20,000.00
30.12.20	BACS	Village Hall – PWLB	10,800.00
30.12.20	BACS	Parish Clerk – expenses	151.43
31.12.20	Bank	Service Charge	18.00
18.01.21	BACS	Flowers for Mrs Crowe / Stencils	52.78

(3) The balance in the bank as at 19 January 2021 was £6,378.35

(4) Councillors discussed the draft budget and agreed to add £120 for the purchase of unlimited Zoom access to enable meetings to run more smoothly. Provision was also made for the purchase of an additional notice board to be sited by the bus stop library. Councillor Roger Jones and Angus MacSween would find the most suitable location.

It was RESOLVED that:

- (1) the Clerk's hours from 1 April 2021 be increased from 3 per week to 4 per week, salary to remain at SCP22 (£14.05 per hour)
- (2) the monthly fixed payment of £10 to mitigate the costs of having the Parish Council's registered office at the Clerk's home be agreed for 2021-22;
- (3) the rate per mile for casual use of own transport by both employees and Councillors on Parish Council approved business should remain at 45p per mile;
- (4) the Amenity Cleaner's wage from 1 April 2021 be increased to the amount agreed by Cheshire West & Chester Council as the local living wage and his hours of work remain at six per week;
- (5) the budget for 2021/22, including an element for repayment of the PWLB, be agreed;

- (6) the precept be set at £12,000 (a Band D payment of £35.03 per annum) and CWaC be informed accordingly;

### **21.15 2021 CENSUS**

The Census for 2021 would take place on Sunday 21 March 2021. Mr Graham Povey had been appointed by the ONS as the Census Engagement Manager for Cheshire West and Chester. His role was centred on building relationships and engaging with local communities to ensure that everyone could participate in the census and be counted. He was trying to reach out to those in the community who might, for various reasons, have barriers to participation in the census, to help explain the purpose behind the census and to help them to take part. He had asked for the Parish Council's help in communicating positive and helpful census messaging via the usual channels of communication - website, newsletter etc - between now and the end of March.

### **21.16 FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

#### **2021 Aldi Chester 10K, Essar Chester Half Marathon and MBNA Chester Marathon**

These events had been put back to the end of the year. The Aldi Chester 10K would take place on Sunday 18 July 2021, the Essar Chester Half Marathon on 19 September 2021 and the MBNA Chester Marathon on 3 October 2021. The MBNA Chester Marathon should not directly affect Mollington Parish

### **21.17 CONSULTATIONS**

- (1) The Parish Council was reminded that Cheshire West & Chester Council had launched a consultation on its Environmental Management Strategy, which incorporated its proposed Wildflower and Grassland Strategy, Play Strategy and Parks and Greenspaces Strategy. The eight-week consultation period had started on 30 November 2020 and closed on 25 January 2021. It was agreed that Councillors should give their views individually.
- (2) Cheshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, PCC David Keane, had launched an online survey to obtain the views of Cheshire residents on priorities for policing and community safety. He would also like to know how safe residents felt and whether a £1.25 per month increase to the policing precept element of council tax would be supported to address increasing pressures on Cheshire Constabulary. Without this increase Cheshire Police would be unable to maintain its existing level of service and/or be able to continue investing in a visible, truly local policing service that also addresses complex issues and serious and organised crime. The online survey, which was supported by virtual public engagement sessions, was available on line. The consultation closed at midnight on Sunday 24 January 2021.

### **21.18 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND NEXT MEETING**

- (1) The work to repair the footpath caused by tree roots at the entrance to Mollington Court was now complete
- (2) A work order had been raised by CWaC's environment team with the council's contractor to crown/prune the trees on Well Lane. No date had been given as to when the work would be completed.

### **21.19 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 9 March 2021 at 7.00pm by Zoom Video Conferencing