

## MOLLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on Tuesday 7 July 2020 using Zoom Video Conferencing

**PRESENT:** Councillors Roger Jones (in the Chair), Sally Atkin, Brian Crowe, John Fielding and Christine Jones

In attendance: Mrs Pauline English (Parish Clerk), Cheshire West & Chester Ward Councillor Simon Eardley and one member of the public

### **20.42 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies were received from Councillor Angus MacSween

Councillor Fielding declared an interest in issues relating to the Village Hall as he was a member of the Committee and in Planning Application No. 20/01980/FUL (The Walled Garden) as he was the agent for the application.

Councillor Mike Jones declared an interest in issues relating to the Village Hall as he was the Parish Council's representative on the Village Hall Committee

### **20.43 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME**

No issues raised

### **20.44 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **20.45 FINANCIAL YEAR END**

The Parish Council considered the AGAR documents and supporting information relating to the financial year end 2019-20, including the report of the Internal Auditor which confirmed that the Council had complied with all the requirements of good governance in the public sector. The Annual Governance Statement was read item by item and each item was approved separately. There were no issues to raise

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the Annual Governance Statement be approved and signed;
- (2) Mollington Parish Council be registered as an Exempt Authority;
- (3) the Receipts and Payments account for the year ended 31 March 2020 be approved and signed;
- (4) the Accounting Statements for 2019-20 be approved and signed;
- (5) the Internal Audit Report on the 2019-20 audit prepared by John Edwards be received;
- (6) the Year End documents for 2019-20 be published on the Parish Council's website

### **20.46 UPDATE REPORTS**

**(1) Five Villages Project:** *Councillor John Fielding declared an interest in this item as he was a member of the Village Hall Committee. Councillor Mike Jones declared an interest as he was the Parish Council's representative on the Village Hall Committee*  
A value engineering and cost reduction exercise carried out in March/April did not result in a satisfactory outcome. Following discussions with the National Lottery team, a decision had been made to seek further expressions of interest from alternative contractors. Seven contractors were contacted, six of whom had expressed firm interest. The Five Villages Project Team were awaiting returns of a firm price from these six contractors, due by 17 July 2020. The returns from each contractor would then be reviewed and a preferred contractor selected with the aim of progressing to contract by the end of August 2020

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

It was reported that 131 voucher applications had now been received. Another 100 would trigger the start of duct installation to the school from Capenhurst. This phase was likely to involve the construction of at least the cabinet base at the school. Further details of the timing of installation of ducts for the five core routes away from the school would be available later. Routes 1 to 4 spread around Mollington and into Saughall; route 5 would feed Lea, Backford, Chorlton, Croughton and Little Stanney. Wayleaves were being negotiated for the main core routes and further wayleaves would shortly be invited from individual householders, particularly in central Mollington, to facilitate the

connections to their immediate neighbours. The next phase would involve further voucher applications to facilitate “blowing” fibre and making house connections. To enable this, a further 154 voucher applications would be needed together with a further £92,000 of investment in B4RN shares. This investment had a twofold benefit to residential customers. As well as the 5% interest that would be earned, if a residential customer invested at least £1,500 for a minimum of three years, the £150 connection fee would be waived.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

### **(3) Speed Limits**

Following on from discussions at the last meeting (Minute20.37[3]) the Parish Council discussed whether or not to proceed with a 40mph speed limit on Grove Road. The first stage would be for a letter to be sent to all the residents along Grove Road who would be affected, to ascertain whether or not they would like the speed limit reduced to 40mph. The project could only proceed if a minimum of 51% confirmed they would like to see the speed reduction enacted. Concern had been expressed that reducing the limit to 40mph was insufficient, but the Cheshire West & Chester Council Principal Highways Engineer had confirmed that, using the currently agreed criteria, a reduction to 30mph was not possible. The cost to the Parish Councils of proceeding with the 40mph speed limit are set out below

50% of total cost to be met by Parish Councils	£1,650
Grant from Councillor Eardley’s Members’ budget	£500
Contribution by St Oswald’s Primary School PTE	£500
Balance to be met by Parish Councils	£650

Lea-by-Backford Parish Council had agreed to meet half of the balance (£325).

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Mollington Parish Council agrees to proceed with a speed limit reduction scheme on Grove Road, Mollington and Lea-by-Backford;
- (2) Cheshire West & Chester Council Highways be requested to start the proceedings by producing a letter for delivery to all affected residents on Grove Road;
- (3) the letter be delivered, and the responses collected by Mollington Parish Council;
- (4) the contribution of £325 to be made by Lea-by-Backford Parish Council be noted;
- (5) Mollington Parish Council should meet the remaining half of the balance (£325);
- (6) an application be made to Cheshire West & Chester Council for a grant of £500 from Councillor Eardley’s Members’ budget;
- (7) the Headteacher of St Oswald’s Primary School be requested to confirm the contribution of £500 to be made by the School towards the project.

### **(4) Village Gateways**

No further action was to be taken in relation to Village Gateways

### **(5) Tree Survey**

Nothing further to report at this time.

### **(6) Grove Road Ditches**

Cheshire West & Chester Council Network Steward, Tony Jones, had been approached regarding a leak from the ditches in Grove Road. He had explained that the leak appeared to be coming from a BT manhole and that CWaC could not access the Open Reach systems. In his opinion the only way to determine where the problem lay would be to send a camera up from the BT manhole. The Chairman had met a BT Open Reach engineer who had agreed that they would rebuild the manhole, but they could not address the flooding issue until it happened again. There were two BT manholes, one by the green outside the school and the one by the old post office. Both were clear, and there was no indication of where the water could be coming from.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted

## **(7) Website**

More work was required on the Community page following which the website could go live.

### **20.47 FORMER GOLF COURSE, TOWNFIELD LANE**

There had been ongoing issues with this site including drives being blocked by vehicles parking outside the main gates and parking across the road on the pavement on Townfield Lane, as well as parking in the layby on the Parkgate Road. The site owners had been made aware of these concerns and had agreed to erect suitable fencing to prevent people jumping over the wall, and to produce “tasteful” “no parking” signs at the entrance. Litter/BBQs was a continuing issue and a permanent on-site security presence had been suggested. A meeting was to be held with the site owners on 9 July to discuss their current plans. Representations had been made by the cycling community, the angling community, the Wetland Project and walkers regarding use of the site.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

### **20.48 CHESTER WETLAND PROJECT**

It was reported that the Chester Wetland project covered some 10 acres in the vicinity of the Countess of Chester Country Park. The land would be flooded to create a habitat for flora and fauna. The wetland would be supplied with water from a Reed Bed sited on adjacent land owned by Cheshire West & Chester Council (CWaC). Annual conservation grazing would be used to keep the site tidy. The aspiration of the Wetland Project team and their partner organisations was to create a Green Corridor stretching from Chester all the way up the Wirral Peninsular. Interest was gathering from Chester Zoo, the Wildlife Trust, Natural England, the Environment Agency and CWaC. More information was available on the Chester Wetland Project on the Chester Blog website

<https://thechesterblog.com/2020/02/05/wetland-centre-project-launched/>

RESOLVED: That the report be noted

### **20.49 COMMUNITY/NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Following on from a presentation on Community and Neighbourhood planning by John Heselwood of Cheshire Community Action, Mollington Parish Council had set up a Working Group comprising Councillors Sally Atkin, John Fielding, Christine Jones and Angus MacSween to look into the options available to them (Minute 19.95 refers). Lea-by-Backford and Backford Parish Councils had subsequently agreed to meet Mollington Parish Council to assess the feasibility of working together on a joint plan. Community/Neighbourhood planning guidance documents had been shared with all three councils and the Village Hall Committee would provide the results of their survey to help inform discussions. Further advice had been sought from John Heselwood (Cheshire Community Action) who had advised looking at a Community Plan rather than a Neighbourhood Plan. It was proposed to convene a Feasibility Working Party comprising representatives from each parish and including one resident from each parish. Dave Wells had volunteered to be the Mollington resident and the Clerk to Lea-by-Backford and Backford Parish Councils was currently seeking representatives from those parishes.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the establishment of a Feasibility Working Party comprising representatives from Mollington, Lea-by-Backford and Backford Parish Councils with a resident from each of the parishes be approved;
- (2) Councillor Christine Jones would be Mollington Parish Council’s representative, with Mr Dave Wells as the community representative.

## 20.50 PLANNING

### (1) Applications received for comment

Application No.	Application details	Deadline for response
20/01801/LDC	Use of adjoining land as part of garden at Grovehurst, Grove Road, Lea-by-Backford, Chester CH1 6LG. No comments to be made	10 July 2020
20/01980/FUL	<i>Councillor Fielding declared an interest as he was the agent for this application. He remained in the meeting but did not take part in the decision</i> Part first floor extension, part two storey extension to side including new dormer windows & replacement dormer window at The Walled Garden, Well Lane, Mollington, Chester CH1 6LD. No comments to be made	15 July 2020

### (2) Decisions taken by Cheshire West & Chester Council (CWaC)

20/01156/FUL	Part single storey, part two storey extension to side at 29 William Wild Drive, Mollington Grange, Mollington, Chester CH1 6PP - APPROVED
20/00988/FUL	Erection of a part two-storey, part single-storey side extension, front open porch, side pergola and side canopy, elevational changes and remodelling to house and garage, widening of existing vehicular access and erection of gates to entrance, and other alterations including rendering the property at Taquaral, Well Lane, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6LD – APPROVED
20/00096/NMA	Alterations to external landscaping including cycle stores and parking for residential units approved under 17/04033/PDO at Mollington Grange Business Park, Parkgate Road, Mollington, Chester CH1 6NP - APPROVED
20/01411/FUL	Two storey rear and side and single storey rear and side extensions and porch at Willow Brook House, Well Lane, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6LD – APPROVED
20/01333/HHE	Single storey rear extension to include demolition of existing rear extension at 4 Elms Cottages Townfield Lane Mollington Chester Cheshire CH1 6NS – DECIDED

### (3) Decisions awaited

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
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- (4) **The Willows:** CWaC Planning had informed Councillor Eardley that they were unable to find any reason to refuse this application. Councillor Eardley would ask that stringent conditions are imposed with regard to the quality of materials to be used in this development and that ownership of the land be confirmed. The Parish Council would also put forward recommendations as to the conditions to be imposed.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Fielding should prepare a list of conditions for approval by the Parish Council and submission to Catherine Reay, CWaC Planning Officer, by the end of the week

## 20.51 NEW MODEL MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT – CONSULTATION

The Local Government Association (LGA) had produced a new Member Code of Conduct and was consulting Local Councils on the content. The role of councillor in all tiers of local government was a vital part of the UK system of democracy. It was important that councillors could be held accountable and all adopt the behaviours and responsibilities associated with the role. The conduct of an individual councillor affected the reputation of all councillors. All Councils were required to have a local Member Code of Conduct. This Model Member Code of Conduct had been developed in consultation with the sector and provided a template for councils to adopt in whole and/or with local amendments. The LGA would undertake an annual review of the Code to ensure it continued to be fit-for-purpose,

particularly with respect to advances in technology, social media and any relevant changes in legislation. The LGA could also offer support, training and mediation to councils and councillors on the application of the Code, whilst the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the county associations (ChALC) would offer advice and support. The consultation was open until 17 August 2020.

RESOLVED: That the consultation be noted and no comments be offered

## 20.52 FINANCE

### (1) 5 Villages Project - Confirmation of Urgent Payment

The Parish Council had been approached to unlock Landfill Communities Fund monies by depositing with FCC Communities Foundation the sum of £907.65. This would be held with the intention that it be used as match funding to provide the shortfall under the Landfill Communities Fund for the project. This deposit had been made on the understanding that the full amount without deductions would be repaid should LCF monies not be allocated to the project. The money was required to be paid before the next meeting of the Parish Council. In accordance with Minute 20.35[1] the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and one other Councillor who both approved the payment, paid this sum to FCC Environment on 24 June 2020.

### (2) Payments made since the last meeting:

27.05.20	BACS	HMRC – Income Tax	251.78
27.05.20	BACS	Came & Co – Insurance	218.00
28.05.20	DD	Amenity Cleaner – wages May	193.44
28.05.20	DD	Parish Clerk – salary May	142.27
28.05.20	BACS	ChALC – Affiliation fee	229.68
01.06.20	BACS	Village Hall – Grant (see Minute 20/14[1])	3,355.00
02.06.20	DD	1&1 Ionos – website hosting	7.19
24.06.20	BACS	FCC Environment – Village Hall emergency payment	907.65
28.06.20	DD	Amenity Cleaner – wages June	193.44
28.06.20	DD	Parish Clerk – salary June	142.27
29.06.20	BACS	Experior Systems Accounts Ltd – Internal Audit fee	240.00
30.06.20	BACS	Cheshire Community Action Membership fee	20.00

### (3) Receipts: None

### (4) Balance as at 30 June 2020 £9,870.46

RESOLVED: That

(1) the emergency payment to FCC Environment be approved;

(2) expenditure and the balance for the period ending 30 June 2020 be noted

## 20.53 NEXT MEETING

1 September 2020 at 7.30pm – venue to be confirmed

## 20.54 CONSULTATION

Councillor Eardley reminded the Parish Council that CWaC were currently conducting a public consultation about the review of the delivery of Highways services across the Borough. The consultation would close on 30 August 2020 and was available at [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/highwaysconsultation](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/highwaysconsultation). It was agreed that Councillors should complete the on line questionnaire as individuals rather than as a Parish Council.