

**MERE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MERE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON TUESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2020**  
**AT 7:45PM, THE MERE**

**PRESENT**

Cllr J Duncalf  
Cllr A Newnes  
Cllr D Norcott  
Cllr R Peterson  
Cllr L Reynolds  
Cllr D Walker (In The Chair)  
Cllr J Wright

**APOLOGIES**

Cllr K Parkinson (Cheshire East Council)  
One member of the public

**ACTIONS**

*Prior to the meeting starting, a risk assessment was carried out by the Clerk to assess that all measures were in place to protect the councillors from COVID 19 as much as possible.*

**1 MINUTES**

- i Due to the COVID 19 pandemic this year no AGM has taken place. Therefore the minutes of the 2019 AGM is to be accepted and signed this evening.  
Proposed by Cllr Duncalf and seconded by Cllr Reynolds. All agreed.*
- ii The minutes of the Mere PC meeting held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January were proposed by Cllr Duncalf and seconded by Cllr Reynolds to be a true and correct record.  
All agreed.*

**2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

*Cllr Norcott and Cllr Wright declared an interest regarding HS2 listed on the agenda.*

**3 MATTERS ARISING**

*It was agreed that all matters arising from the previous meetings minutes are covered under the agenda headings.*

**4 CO-OPTING ONTO THE COUNCIL**

*Regarding the casual vacancy on Mere PC, notification has been received from Cheshire East Council stating that no poll had been claimed therefore, we may co-opt someone onto the council this evening.*

*Cllr Reynolds proposed Raquel Peterson be co-opted, seconded by Cllr Newnes.*

*All agreed and the Chairman welcomed her onto the council.*

*The Declaration of Acceptance Of Office was signed and the Register of Members'*

*Interests form she will complete and post to the clerk after this meeting.*

*The Chairman informed the council that unfortunately due to having missed two council meetings since October 2019 and then the March 2020 meeting was cancelled due to COVID 19, Cllr Richard Finch has not attended a meeting for the last six months. According to the rules this means he is no longer a councillor.*

*The Clerk has informed Cheshire East Council and a notification of a casual vacancy has been placed on our web site and on the notice board. If by the 3<sup>rd</sup> August no poll has been claimed then Cheshire East Council will inform the clerk that Mere Parish Council may co-opt someone onto the council at the next meeting.*

*Mr Finch, present at the meeting expressed his wish to be co-opted back onto the council if a poll has not been claimed. The members of the council fully supported this.*

5 **POLICE REPORT**

Cllr Newnes gave a report from the meeting he attended on the 4<sup>th</sup> February with David Keane, Police and Crime Commissioner. Although he asked about the speed limit on the B5569 he did not receive a satisfactory answer. Cllr Newnes will be following this up.

AN

A Stakeholder Update has been received from David Keane dated 10<sup>th</sup> July which has been copied to all Mere Parish Councillors.

6 **M6 JUNCTION 19 IMPROVEMENTS AND M56 JUNCTION 5 AND 6**

The Project Manager, Ben Ringrow and the Stakeholder Manager, Tom Bennett for the M6 J19 improvement scheme to be invited to attend the next Mere Parish Council meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> September.

KJW

**M56**

Letter received from Rob Williams, Project Manager, Highways England dated the 2<sup>nd</sup> July stating they now have a full understanding of the repairs needed to the drainage systems underneath the M56 between Junctions 6 and 8. Advance work will start from the 13<sup>th</sup> July for approximately one week, Monday to Friday between 9pm and 5am. Once the work is complete the main construction work for the M56 junctions 6 to 8 Smart Motorway project will start.

7 **MANCHESTER AIRPORT**

Cllr Newnes gave a report from the meeting he had attended at the airport in March. However, since then the Covid 19 lockdown came into force and so all the plans discussed have had to be stopped.

Cllr Reynolds will be attending a meeting this Friday after which she will send a report out to the Mere Parish Councillors giving an update on what is currently planned for the future of the airport.

LR

8 **HS2**

Cllr Norcott who had attended the IAG North meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> March at Mere and Tabley Community Club reported that Covid 19 does not appear to have had any effect on HS2 work. He spoke to John Atkinson who stated they were carrying on as normal until they are told otherwise.

An e-mail from Andrew Potter, Engagement Advisor, HS2 Ltd dated 27<sup>th</sup> March.

**Subject: Rail Need Assessment For The Midlands And The North.**

The National Infrastructure Commission has invited business, passengers, transport experts and regional leaders to share their ideas for transforming the rail landscape of the North alongside the East and West Midlands and help create a lasting legacy from the construction of HS2.

The Rail Needs Assessment is independent from HS2.

9 **B5569**

The Clerk has written to Simon Skates on five occasions asking for an update on:

- Flooding in service road off the B5569
- Single lane carriageway signs
- Kerbs
- Road sweeping
- Speed limit
- Gateway features

No reply has been received.

Cllr Wright proposed that the council write to Chris Hodginson and Matt Rodway at Cheshire East Council and copy the letter to Esther McVey MP, stating we are getting no reply from Simon Skates on any of the above issues or in deed any general maintenance issues in the area. Seconded by Cllr Newnes. All agreed.

KJW

**SPEEDING**

*Cllr Parkinson stated that the road is still un-adopted and that Highways were supposed to be dealing with this. Cllr Parkinson said she will ask a senior planning officer for more information.*

**KP**

**10 FENCING AT THE END OF THE MERE**

*We are still trying to find out who owns the land. Forestry England say they do not manage any land in Mere.*

*Mr Randall, the Natural England Warden at Rostherne states they do not own the land.*

*Cllr Parkinson said she will ask Tatton Estate if they own it or if not who does?*

*It was agreed to carry this over to the next meeting but the general opinion was that if no one owns up to owning the land then the council will put together a working party to tidy the area and repair the fence.*

**KP**

**11 BONFIRE EVENT – 2020**

*Cllr Norcott proposed that the council cancel the bonfire event this year owing to the fact we do not know what the impact of COVID 19 will have on social distancing rules. Seconded by Cllr Reynolds. All agreed. The Clerk will inform Lighthouse Sound and Light the provider of the firework display.*

*It was agreed that nearer to the time when we would have held the bonfire event a notice will be placed on the council web site and also in Knutsford Guardian stating we have cancelled the event but hope to have an extra special bonfire event in 2021.*

**KJW**

**12 FIBRE OPTIC BROADBAND**

*Cllr Walker stated this item can be removed from future agendas as having spoken with BT they are going to install it in all areas anyway.*

**13 COMMUNITY EVENT – VE DAY – 8<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2020**

*Unfortunately the plans made to commemorate this event had to be cancelled due to the COVID 19 pandemic. However, whilst taking care to social distance the Chairman and councillors placed flowers at the cenotaph on the day.*

*Cllr Wright proposed that Mere PC celebrate VJ Day which is the 15<sup>th</sup> August 2020.*

*The Chairman and the council agreed this was a good idea. The Chairman will provide the flowers to be placed at the cenotaph on the 15<sup>th</sup> August at 11am.*

**DW**

**14 COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE REMEMBERING A COUNCILLOR**

*The Clerk has obtained a more reasonable quote from a shop in Northwich for a 8” by 12” brass plaque to the value of £96.40 which includes the inscription.*

*The council agreed for the Clerk to go ahead and arrange this. The council will then mount it on stone before placing it at the base of the cherry tree planted in remembrance of Cllr G W Wright.*

**KJW**

**15 THE TATTON ESTATE COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS FORUM**

*Cllr Reynolds reported that the meeting she attended on the 10<sup>th</sup> March was really only about the compound at junction 7 of the M56. The compound site will be leased to two different contractors. Part of the site was still under commercial discussion, but it was being considered as a location for the M56 smart motorway upgrade work. The other segment of the compound is to be leased to Balfour Beatty for their works on behalf of HS2.*

**16 MERE PARISH COUNCIL – WEB SITE**

*There is a new legislation that means Mere PC website needs to be accessible to users with disabilities by the 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2020.*

*We have been informed by our web site provider, Town and Parish Council Websites that in order for our website to be accessible, our website **Framework** will need to be made accessible. This includes area such as the design (colours, fonts etc.) and also the way our site is programmed so that it is accessible to all visitors. Including those using screen readers or visitors who need to navigate our site using the keyboard only for example.*

*It is also important that we publish our **Content** in an accessible way. This includes the pages on our site and also any files we add such as minutes etc.*

*The Clerk has requested a quote from Town and Parish Council Websites which is as follows:*

<b>Framework</b>	=	£160
<b>Content Audit</b>	=	£250

*The Clerk has looked at other providers all of which have been more expensive.*

*Cllr Newnes proposed that Mere PC pay for the **Framework** and **Content Audit** provided by Town and Parish Councils Websites, seconded by Cllr Duncalf.*

*All agreed.*

**KJW**

**17 PLANNING APPLICATION DETAILS**

*i There have been ten new planning applications, nine Decision Notices, one revised application and two applications withdrawn since the last Mere PC meeting. The details are recorded in the Planning Book.*

*ii **Mere Golf and Country Club: Planning Application No: 19/3036M***

*Cllr Wright proposed that it be recorded in the minutes that Mere Parish Council has an interest which was not declared when we submitted our comments regarding the planning application. The Cheshire East Planning Officer needs to be made aware of this. Seconded by the council.*

*The Clerk will write to Cheshire East Council Planning and also the Monitoring Officer.*

**KJW**

*iii **Meadow Lodge, Clamhunger Lane, Mere.***

***Application No: 20/0086M and 20/1173M***

*Both these applications have been refused by Cheshire East Council.*

*However, it was noted by Mere Parish Council that both the proposals have already been built! The Clerk will write to Cheshire East Planning highlighting this fact and asking what action will be taken?*

**KJW**

*iv **Complaints From Mere Residents***

*Complaints have been received from residents regarding out of hours working at properties within Mere. The Clerk has submitted a complaint to Cheshire East Council and has been allocated the following reference numbers for each:*

***Woodstock, Clamhunger Lane. Ref 20/00358E***

***Mereside House, Mereside Road. Ref: 20/00357E***

***Waterways, Mereside Road. Ref: 20/00356E***

*Mr Derek Ward has responded stating there are no hours of work specified for Woodstock. Mereside House and Waterways there are no planning conditions attached which would be a breach of planning control. There are directives which are part of the Environmental Protection team and not planning.*

*Mr Ward advised that Mere PC may wish to contact the Environmental Protection Team. This the Clerk did and received a response stating they cannot accept an e-mail from Mere PC as a complaint. They need the address details of those complaining and more information from the residents regarding the specific hours of working on the sites and what activities are taking place and the types of*

noise etc. This being so they suggested that the residents who are affected by the noise call the Environmental Protection Centre on 03001235015 and make a formal complaint.

Cllr Norcott proposed that the Environmental Protection centre number be placed on the Mere PC web site. Seconded by Cllr Wright. All agreed.

KJW

## **18 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICERS REPORT**

### **i End Of Year Accounts**

#### **Annual Governance Statement**

In preparation for the accounts to be sent to the auditors the Annual Governance Statement was agreed and signed.

Proposed by Cllr Newnes and seconded by Cllr Duncalf. All agreed.

#### **Section 2 Of The Annual Governance and Accountability Return**

**2019/20 Part 2** was proposed by Cllr Newnes and seconded by Cllr Duncalf to be correct and signed by the Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer. All agreed.

#### **Certificate of Exemption**

Cllr Newnes proposed and Cllr Duncalf seconded that as Mere PC expenditure does not exceed £25,000 then Mere PC certifies itself as exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015. All agreed.

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|-----|--|----------|
| ii  | <p>The sum total in the cheque account on the 13<sup>th</sup> July is<br/>Of which £170.43 belongs to the Archive Fund<br/>There is a cheque made out to HM Revenue and Customs for the value of £219.44 (Cheque No: 100813 dated 3/7/20) which has not been cashed yet.</p>   | £4566.95 |
| iii | <p>Paid into the account on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April the half yearly precept</p>   | £4000.00 |
| iv  | <p>Paid into the account on the 9<sup>th</sup> July – VAT reclaimed for financial year ending 31/3/20.</p>   | £0790.63 |
| v   | <p><b>Cheque Signatures</b> – This has still not been resolved. Currently the Chairman and the Clerk are authorised to sign. We are currently trying to remove John Patterson as the third signatory and replace with John Wright. The Chairman’s contact at Barclays Bank, Mr Matt Lewis is looking into it for us. It would appear that the document submitted by Cllr Wright at the Knutsford branch has gone astray. The clerk is waiting for an update.</p> |          |
| vi  | <p><b>Pay Roll</b> – Shires Accountants have been informed to continue acting as our Pay Roll partner for 2020/21. The charge remains the same as last year. They have also informed us that for the financial year 2020/21 Shires Pay Service Limited will be changing its trading name to “Payroll Champions”.</p>   |          |
| vii | <p><b>Pension Enrolment Date</b><br/>The Clerk has informed Shires Pay Services, who act as our pension delegate, that Mere PC only has one employee and she does not wish to be enrolled in the pension scheme.<br/>Our staging date was the 1/4/2020</p>   |          |

**19 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

*The RFO reported that as the previous two council meetings had been cancelled due to Covid 19 the first five invoices listed below have already been paid.*

- |      |  |                       |
|------|--|-----------------------|
| i    | <i>The Clerk for hours worked in January, February and March 2020<br/>Cheque made payable to<br/>"Kathryn J Whitlow"<br/>Cheque No: 100810 - PAID</i>  | <b>£739.04 Agreed</b> |
| ii   | <i>PAYE – Cheque made payable to<br/>"HM Revenue and Customs Only – 120PD00337552"<br/>Cheque No: 100809 – PAID</i>  | <b>£254.16 Agreed</b> |
| iii  | <i>Council Insurance renewal date being 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020<br/>Cheque made payable to<br/>"BHIB Ltd"<br/>Cheque No: 100811 – PAID</i>  | <b>£361.27 Agreed</b> |
| iv   | <i>Invoice from Shires Pay Services for 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter payroll cost and GDPR software<br/>Cheque made payable to<br/>"Shires Pay Services Limited"<br/>Cheque No: 100812 – PAID</i>                | <b>£041.40 Agreed</b> |
| v    | <i>PAYE – Cheque made payable to<br/>"HM Revenue and Customs Only – 120PD00337552"<br/>Cheque No: 100813 – PAID</i>  | <b>£219.44 Agreed</b> |
| vi   | <i>The Clerk for hours worked in April, May and June 2020<br/>Cheque made payable to<br/>"Kathryn J Whitlow"<br/>Cheque No: 100814</i>   | <b>£712.11 Agreed</b> |
| vii  | <i>End of Year Expenses for the Clerk – Year ending 31/03/20<br/>Cheque made payable to<br/>"Kathryn J Whitlow"<br/>Cheque No: 100815</i>  | <b>£502.09 Agreed</b> |
| viii | <i>Invoice from Andy Blackburn for two grass cuts at Tabley Church<br/>which is an historical arrangement carried out yearly.<br/>Cheque made payable to<br/>"A and G Blackburn"<br/>Cheque No: 100816</i> | <b>£116.00 Agreed</b> |
| ix   | <i>ChALC Affiliation Fee 2020-21<br/>Cheque made payable to<br/>"Cheshire Association Of Local Councils"<br/>Cheque No: 100817</i>   | <b>£191.52 Agreed</b> |

*Cllr Wright proposed that the above invoices be paid. Seconded by Cllr Duncalf.  
All agreed,*

**20 NEW BUSINESS**

**i Winterbottom and Hoo Green Lane, Mere**

An e-mail from Neil Stott, resident of Winterbottom Lane, bringing to the councils attention the on going issue and very dangerous state of Winterbottom Lane and Hoo Green Lane due to being used by articulated lorries.  
Cllr Walker proposed that Mere PC write to Laura Crane, Highways Portfolio Holder at Cheshire East Council and send a copy to Neil Stott. Seconded by Cllr Reynolds. All agreed.

**KJW**

**ii KPLUS – Community Mobile App**

Email from Sassan Baghai stating they have developed a community mobile app for Knutsford and the neighbouring parishes. The aim of the app is to become a ‘one step’ app for everything local including parish council news, local news and listings for local events.  
Noted by the council

**iii Derelict Property – Moss View Farm, Warrington Road.**

The Chairman has spoken to Paul Basford, Housing Technical Assistant at Cheshire East Council and the derelict condition the property is in. Also mentioned is the brick wall which is falling into the public footpath.  
He has commented that he will get back to the Chairman once he has had time to look into this.

**Malber, Chester Road** – At the end of April it was reported to the police that there may be squatters in the property. We received an e-mail from PCSO Emma Darroch on the 1<sup>st</sup> May stating she had attended the property and assisted with boarding it up so no one can get inside. In the meantime she is trying to locate the owners.  
Cllr Newnes reported that last Sunday he thinks someone else has gained access to the property. He contacted the police and is waiting to hear back from them.  
Cllr Parkinson stated that she is still trying to find out who the owner of the property is. This item to be carried over to next meeting.

**iv Dead Tree At The End Of Clamhunger Lane.** – The Chairman is concerned about the safety of a dead tree at the end of Clamhunger Lane where it joins Mereside Road.  
The Chairman has reported it to Cheshire East Council.

**21 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next Mere Parish Council meeting is Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2020 starting At 7:45pm and to be held at The Mere Golf Resort and Spa.

**22 ITEMS INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLORS**

**i** Cllr Duncalf asked if anyone else has heard the very loud music at 9am coming from the first house on the left past the Mere Traffic lights travel towards Knutsford?  
Answer: no

The meeting closed at approximately 10:20pm

Signed: ..... Date: .....