

MERE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON

MONDAY 12TH JULY, 2021, at 8:00PM

VENUE: THE MERE GOLF RESORT AND SPA

1 PRESENT

*Cllr R Finch, Cllr D Norcott, Cllr L Reynolds, Cllr P Sands, Cllr J Wright (In the Chair)
Cllr K Parkinson (Ward Councillor), left the meeting at 8:30pm.*

2 APOLOGIES

Cllr J Duncalf, Cllr A Newnes and Cllr D Walker

3 MINUTES

- i The minutes of the **Annual General Meeting** held on Monday 17th May, 2021 were proposed by Cllr Reynolds and seconded by Cllr Finch, to be a true record. **All agreed.***
- ii The minutes of the **Mere Parish Council meeting** which followed the Annual General Meeting on 17th May 2021 were proposed by Cllr Finch and seconded by Cllr Wright to be a true record. **All agreed.***

4 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

*Cllr Wright declared a **Personal Interest** for **Hoo Green Lane**.*

*Cllr Wright declared a **Disclosable Pecuniary** interest regarding **HS2**.*

*Cllr Norcott declared a **Personal Interest** regarding **Winterbottom Lane** and **Hoo Green Lane**.*

*Cllr Norcott declared a **Disclosable Pecuniary** interest regarding **HS2**.*

5 MATTERS ARISING

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

6 POLICE REPORT

Both PCSO Emma Darroch and PC Lawrence Price had been invited to attend this meeting or, if not able to attend to forward a report. No response has been received from either.

7 HS2

- An e-mail has been received from Ahmed Nawaz referring to: “**Update: HS2 Phase 2b- Western Leg. In October last year, the Minister of State for Transport announced a consultation of four proposed changes to the design of the Western leg of Phase 2b. The consultation closed on the 11th December 2020 and the Minister of State will publish his decision on whether to include the proposed refinements shortly.**”*
- A second e-mail has been received from Ahmed Nawaz stating that a face to face Route Wide Update event will take place on Saturday 24th July at High Legh Village Hall. 12 noon to 17:00hrs*
- The Clerk has been contacted by Bruce Martin in relation to holding material electronically relating to the High Speed Two (HS2) Phase 2b Crewe-Manchester route for the public to access.*
- Cllr Norcott reported that it had been brought to his attention that residents have been arranging meetings with HS2 without including the parish council. Cllr Norcott highlighted that if the parish council are not invited to such meetings then we do not know what it is the parishioners of Mere want to see happen. Also the parish council and the residents’ voice together is much stronger than individually.*

8 **B5569**

The Clerk wrote to Esther McVey MP on the 24th May asking if she will request (on our behalf) the schedule of works for grass mowing and also to ask how often the road is swept?

*The latest update is that Esther McVey MP is still awaiting a response from Cheshire East Council.
Action: The Clerk to follow this up with Esther McVey MP*

Cllr Parkinson had stated (before she left the meeting at 8:30pm) that the road is swept once a year. Cllr Parkinson also suggested we contact the Clerk of Tabley Parish Council to find out the name of the person Tabley Parish Council is dealing with at J19 current works, in order to get the kerbs replaced.

Action: The Clerk

9 **MANCHESTER AIRPORT**

Cllr Reynolds is to attend a meeting at the airport this coming Friday. After the meeting she will forward a report to the Clerk who in turn will forward it to all the Mere Parish Councillors.

Action: Cllr Reynolds and the Clerk

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

Cllr Norcott suggested as many councillors as possible meet this coming Sunday morning 10am at the end of the Mere to tidy the area.

Action: All Mere Parish Councillors

11 **WINTERBOTTOM LANE AND HOO GREEN LANE**

Before Cllr Parkinson left the meeting she reported that she continues to look into the issue of a weeping willow tree roots in the drain.

12 **FLOODING – CHAPEL LANE**

Reference 3426147 – the reference number we were given when we reported to Cheshire East Council that the culverts needed to be checked. When the Clerk checked on the Cheshire East Council website against this reference it stated: “12.5.21 – A member of our team has been in touch via your preferred method of contact to let you know the outcome of your enquiry.”

As the Clerk had never received any update she reported this fact and was allocated the reference number 3434492.

13 **LITTLER BINS**

Cllr Parkinson commented earlier in the meeting that she is still looking into who will be responsible for emptying littler bins, if Mere Parish Council were to provide them.

Cllr Parkinson stated that Cheshire East Council has funding to provide littler bins but she will continue to look into this.

14 **LITTLE MERE SLUICE GATE**

The Clerk reported the issue of a blocked sluice gate with Cheshire East Council and was given the reference number 3426571.

When the Clerk looked up the progress of this reference number on the Cheshire East Council website it stated: “13.5.21 – Thank you for your enquiry. A member of our team has been in touch via your preferred method of contact to let you know the outcome of your enquiry”.

As the Clerk had not heard anything she reported it again and was given the reference number 3434490.

15 **SPEEDING**

Cllr Parkinson earlier in the meeting stated that after having spoken with PCSO Emma Darroch it would appear that the council has to buy their own speed gun. Alternatively we could share with a neighbouring parish,

The purchasing of the speed gun and arranging training to be carried over to the September council meeting.

E-mail received from ChALC on the 9th June stating that following their survey of local councils follow-up meetings to ascertain how important an issue speeding vehicles are, they have now opened a very constructive dialogue with John Dwyer (Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire).

If Mere Parish Council wishes to contribute further we have been asked to contact Cllr Steve Jones via ChALC who will be happy to discuss our thought and ideas.

Cllr Norcott proposed, Cllr Finch seconded and all present agreed that Mere Parish Council respond to Cllr Jones stating that if it was an easier process to submit our speeding concerns and more visible to see action being taken, the council would be more confident that improvement can be made.

Action: The Clerk

16 **TOP-UP SERVICE FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT, CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Cllr Sands gave a report after having attended a meeting on the 27th May. He stated he didn't feel he achieved anything from the meeting. No precise answers were given to any questions asked.

An e-mail has been received from ChALC reminding us that councils have been invited to directly feedback comments and any concerns we may have to the relevant individuals as follows:

For Cheshire East Highway:

Rebecca (Rebecca.marshall@cheshireeasthighways.org) or

Lee (Lee.glover@Cheshireeasthighways.org). Highways maintenance and improvement work – who will act as single points of contact for applications and delivery of our proposed top-up.

For Transport Service Solutions:

Glen Bubb (Glen.Bubb@transportervicesolutions.co.uk) Transport Service – who will act as the single point of contact for questions, developing ideas, implementation and management.

ChALC have also asked us to copy in a member of the ChALC Administration Team (Sharonangus-crawshawe@chalc.org.uk or Nikkihewitt@chalc.org.uk) into any response we sent.

17 **BONFIRE EVENT 2021**

Considering that Lightech Sound and Light have informed us that the costs will be going up by at least 10% this year plus the uncertain future of Covid restrictions, it was agreed not to hold this event in 2021.

Proposed by Cllr Wright and seconded by Cllr Finch. All present agreed.

Action: Clerk to inform Lightech

18 **PLANNING APPLICATION DETAILS**

- i. *Cllr Sands read through the **three new planning applications, three decision notices** and one application withdrawal notice received since the last Mere Parish Council meeting. Details are recorded in the Planning Book.*

19 **RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICERS REPORT**

- | | | |
|------|---|----------|
| i. | <i>The total in the cheque account at the beginning of this meeting is of which £170.43 belongs to the Archive Fund.</i> | £3689.67 |
| ii. | <i>Paid into the cheque account on the 25th May the VAT claimed back.</i> | £310.39 |
| iii. | <i>Paid into the account on the 8th June the Neighbourhood Portion CIL Payment. This relates to the development of Highfield, Mereside Road.</i> | £0220.86 |
| iv | <i>The accounts for the year ending 31st March 2021 have been returned from the Internal Auditor, JDH Business Services Ltd. Their conclusion is as follows:
“On the basis of the internal audit work carried out, which was limited to the tests indicated above in our view the council’s system of internal control is in place, adequate for the purpose intended and effective, subject to the recommendations reported in the action plan.
As part of the internal audit work for the next financial year we will follow up all recommendation included in the action plan.”</i> | |

ISSUE 1 (2020/21)

The council has adopted standing orders during 2020/21 that state the level at which contracts will be procured on the basis of a formal tender process as £60,000. This differed from the financial regulations that states for contracts exceeding £2000, the clerk shall invite tenders from at least three firms. The use of the word tender implies a formal tender process to be undertaken.

Recommendation

The level at which a formal tender process will be undertaken should be consistent in both the standing orders and the financial regulations. The financial regulations should be updated to include a level at which three quotations will be invited.

Clerk’s Response

I will amend the standing orders and financial regulations accordingly and then put to the council for approval at the next meeting.

ISSUE 2 (2017/18)

Data Protection Law changed significantly on May 25th 2018 due to the 2016 EU Directive General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) taking effect.

Recommendation

The impact of GDPR on the council should be identified through review of ICO guidance and the Data Protection policy, risk assessment and internal controls should be updated accordingly.

Follow-up

Outstanding – no evidence the council has registered with the ICO.

Clerk’s Response

Clerk thought this had been addressed in 2018.

The Clerk will look at this again.

*The **Internal Audit Report** states that all other **ISSUES** raised over the last four years have been implemented.*

20 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

- i Council Insurance – this was paid last month but unfortunately the insurance Premium Tax was omitted from the total. £039.12
Cheque made payable to
“BHIB Ltd”
Cheque No: 100841 which was sent on the 29th May.
- ii Clerk for the hours worked during April, May and June 2021 £864.75
Cheque made payable to
“Kathryn J Whitlow”
Cheque No: 100843
- iii PAYE £320.66
Cheque made payable to
“HM Revenue and Customs Only – 120PD00337552”
Cheque No: 100843
- iv Invoice from Shires Pay Services Limited £065.40
This is for the payroll service first quarter and to act as Pension Delegate
Cheque made payable to
“Shires Pay Services Limited”
Cheque No: 100844
- v Invoice from JDH Business Services LTD for carrying out the Internal Audit £232.20
for the financial year ending 31st March 2021.
Cheque made payable to
“JDH Business Services LTD”
Cheque No: 100845

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

21 BUDGET UPDATE

- After the cheques have been paid this evening there will be £2427.52 in the cheque account.
- There are no expected payments to be made at the next council meeting in September.
- The second precept payment is due to be placed into the Mere Parish Council's account on the 1st September (£4500.00). This will bring the total in the cheque account on the 1st September to £6927.52.

22 NEW BUSINESS

- i **Gully Information** – An e-mail has been received from Cllr Parkinson stating, she is currently in discussion with Cheshire East Council regarding the state of the gullies in her Ward. If we have any issues within Mere, to report them to Cllr Parkinson who, will then put a case to Cheshire East Council.
- ii **The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacons – 2nd June 2022** – An e-mail has been received from ChALC encouraging us to take part in the lighting of Beacons on the 2nd June 2022, in celebration of The Queen's Platinum Jubilee. We have also been sent the following information:
- A covering letter from Bruno Peek LVO OBE OPR, Pageantmaster, The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacons-out lining the event, and how councils can take part on the 2nd June 2022.
 - The first edition of the Guide to Taking Part which will be updated monthly.
 - The recent Buckingham Palace Press Release outlining the Jubilee weekend of the 2nd to 5th June next year.

The general opinion of the council was yes we wish to take part but, a final decision and how we wish to take part to be agreed at the next Mere Parish Council meeting in September.

- iii **Highways Infrastructure Winter Service Consultation** – Information from Cheshire East Council giving updates on the outcome of the additional consultation the council undertook on the proposed changes to the highway winter service.

23 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Monday 13th September starting at 7:45pm. Venue The Mere Golf Resort and Spa, Mere.

24 **ITEMS INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLORS**

- i Cllr Finch commented he had been approached by a resident from Steadings Rise, asking who is responsible for cutting a patch of grass on the A50 by Steadings Rise?
Cllr Finch suggested the resident contact Cheshire East Council as the area in question falls under their care.

The meeting closed at approximately 9:30pm.

Signed: Date: