

MERE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON

MONDAY 4TH DECEMBER, 2023, at 7.45PM

VENUE: THE MERE AND TABLEY COMMUNITY CLUB

1 **PRESENT**

Cllr V Bennett, Cllr N Ineson, Cllr R Nassab, Cllr A Newbold, Cllr A Newnes, Cllr A Richards and Cllr J Wright (In The Chair)

2 **APOLOGIES**

Cllr C Hough (Resignation Submitted)

3 **MINUTES**

- i. *The minutes of the Mere Parish Council meeting held on the 16th October were **proposed** by Cllr Wright and **seconded** by Cllr Newnes to be a true record. **All Agreed.***

4 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

*Cllr Wright declared a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** regarding **Dobb Lane**.*

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

*Cllr Richards declared a **Personal Interest** regarding **HS2***

*Cllr Bennett declared a **Personal Interest** regarding **HS2***

*Cllr Ineson declared a **Personal Interest** regarding **HS2***

5 **CASUAL VACANCIES**

*Mr Andrew Newbold was **proposed** by Cllr Ineson to be co-opted onto the council. **Seconded** by Cllr Richards. **All agreed.***

The Acceptance Of Office form was signed by Cllr Newbold allowing him to participate in the meeting.

*A letter of resignation has been received from Cllr Hough. He explains due to work commitments he finds it impossible to attend meetings regularly. The Clerk to send a letter thanking him for the six months he has been on the council and especially for his contribution towards the controversial issue of HS2. **ACTION: KJ Whitlow (Clerk)***

6 **POLICE REPORT**

A report has been received from PC Milman containing the following:

- He is not going to be joined by another PC as originally stated and he is still without a PCSO.*
- Speed enforcement has been conducted on Mereside Road and results have been forwarded to the ticket officer for progression.*
- Main source of calls for police have been issues on the A556. This has generated over 30 incidents.*
- There has been a burglary in the area this month with a large amount of expensive property stolen.*

*Cllr Newnes **proposed** Mere Parish Council write again to the Chief Police Commissioner pointing out that Mere residents are paying via their rates for a PCSO and yet, once again it has been informed by our local PC that we do not have a PCSO. **Seconded** by Cllr Wright. **All agreed.***

ACTION: KJ Whitlow (Clerk).

The Clerk has received an e-mail from the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner stating the next engagement meeting with Cheshire East Borough and Town and Parish Councils will take place on the 7th December, 7:30pm, Victoria Hall, Middlewich. If any one wishes to attend then they are to let the Clerk know by the end of this meeting.

7 **MANCHESTER AIRPORT**

Cllr Newnes gave a report from the Technical Advisory Group meeting he had attended.

8 **HS2**

Mr Nigel Hennerley had been invited to attend this evenings meeting but unfortunately is not available. However, he hopes to attend the Mere Parish Council meeting on the 15th January. In the meantime he has submitted the following report:

- It is difficult to provide any sort of conclusive report at the moment other than to say HS2 has been scrapped and will not be going through Mere.
- It is more about what happens regarding Northern Powerhouse Rail from Liverpool to Manchester and how that may affect the situation in High Legh and Ashley.
- The Hybrid Bill for Phase 2b is still going ahead in parliament and there is still talk from Andy Burnham and Transport For The North to not release Safeguarding in the hope of resurrecting Birmingham to Manchester options.
- The government has committed the budget of the scrapped phase 2b on lots of other projects from road repairs to bus capped pricing plus other schemes.

9 **B5569**

Esther McVey's office has confirmed that once they know recess dates they will assess which of our council meetings she can attend.

30th November Esther McVey's office received a response from Cheshire East Council Highways to Mere Parish Council queries/concerns. It states that the list of mitigation works has been commissioned for delivery with Cheshire East Highways with a **required completion date by the end of the financial year, March 2024. The response goes on to say that the Commission brief has requested monthly progress meetings to be set up to monitor the delivery programme in order to maintain focus on completion within the committed timeframe. There is also a requirement for Cheshire East Highways to engage with the parish on the more sensitive elements of the works. Especially around the locations of the desired gateway features.**

The response from Cheshire East Highways continues by confirming that the 30mph speed limit does exist on the B5569 between Mere traffic lights and what was the Swan Inn. Whilst Cheshire East Council is not in a position to change the limit to 40mph, Cheshire East Council does feel that it should progress the installation of the 30mph flashing signs.

Cheshire East Council has been informed that there are new products available which allow the displays of these flashing signs to be changed between speed limits. This additional feature, if permissible within the Highway authority's material approval would allow the signs to be changed from 30mph to 40mph if the speed limit is changed sometime in the future

10 **DOBB LANE**

Application for the lane to be made a restricted by-way.

Cllr Newnes **proposed** this item be carried over to the next meeting. **Seconded by Cllr Richards. All agreed.**

11 **FIREWORKS EVENT – 4TH NOVEMBER**

The receipts and payment table show a deficit of £1285.71 once VAT is claimed back. Had The Mere Residents Association not paid for the tickets and posters to be printed the deficit would have been a great deal more.

Tabley Parish Council has previously agreed to pay half of any loss. Therefore we will be asking for the sum of £642.85

Cllr Andy Newbold very kindly took photographs on the night. Some of which were published in the Knutsford Guardian along with a report stating how everyone enjoyed the event.

*An e-mail has been received from the Mere and Tabley Community Club secretary expressing disappointment in the effort given by Mere Parish Councillors in preparing for the event. The council agreed that the Clerk will respond stating that Mere Parish Council is very grateful to Mere and Tabley Community Club and Tabley Parish Council for all their hard work to make the event so enjoyable for those that attended. **ACTION: KJ Whitlow (Clerk).***

***Cricket Ground** – Mr Tony Warm has forwarded to the Clerk photographs of the damaged cricket ground caused on the night of the Fireworks display. The council agreed for the Chairman to speak with the grounds man and come to an arrangement to fix the damage at Mere Parish Council's cost. Once the Chairman has spoken with the grounds man the Clerk will inform Mr Warm of our plans to repair the ground.*

***Lightech Sound and Light Ltd** have asked if we wish to book them again for next year? If we do then we need to do it as soon as possible in order to secure our chosen date. It was agreed to let them know after our January meeting as by that time we will have spoken with Tabley Parish Council to discuss if we hold the event again in 2024.*

12 **KINGS CORONATION**

The Clerk confirmed that Mr Greenway, Chairman of Mere and Tabley Community Club have agreed for Mere Parish Council to place a bench on the area surrounding the bowling green.

*Cllr Richards **proposed** that Mere Parish Council purchase a bench. **Seconded by** Cllr Wright. **All agreed. ACTION: The Clerk will purchase a three seat bench.***

13 **THE KILTON INN**

*Mr Nick Bone had informed Mere Parish Council that a public consultation will take place on Thursday 16th November at The Kilton. The owners of the Kilton had published that Mere Parish Council supports their idea of 50 high quality holiday lodges. In fact Mere Parish Council had stated that it reserves judgement until the feelings of Mere residents are known. Cllr Wright **proposed** the Clerk write to Mr Bone asking him to correct this statement. All agreed. **ACTION: KJ Whitlow (Clerk)***

Any future plans received concerning the Kilton are to be discussed at a council meeting before our comments are submitted to Cheshire East Council Planning Department.

The meeting was closed at approximately 8:45pm and reopened at 8:55pm

14 **THE SWAN DEVELOPMENT**

An e-mail has been received from a Mere resident expressing concern that the milestone situated within the surrounding wall of the Swan development should be preserved.

*Cllr Newnes **proposed** that the Clerk write to PNH Holdings asking for the milestone to be preserved as an historical item and to have a plaque explaining what it is. Also to ask them that the work men currently working on the site do not park on the surrounding pavements and grass verges and to remind them of their permitted working hours. **Seconded by** Cllr Wright. **All agreed. ACTION: KJ Whitlow (Clerk)***

15 MERE PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT

The Risk Assessment was reviewed. Cllr Newnes **proposed** that it be adopted by the council with no amendments for another twelve months. **Seconded by Cllr Nassab. All agreed**

16 CLERK'S SALARY

Information has been received from Cheshire Association Of Local Council about the National Association of Local Councils new pay rates which employers are encouraged to implement as soon as possible and are applicable from the 1st April 2023. This mean a £1 per hour increase which the Clerk is happy to take effect from the 1st October 2023. Cllr Wright **proposed** the £1 increase as of the 1st October, **seconded by Cllr Newnes. All agreed.**

17 PLANNING APPLICATION DETAILS

- i. There have been three **new planning applications** since the last Mere Parish Council meeting. Details are recorded in the Planning Book.
- ii. **White Cottage, Moss Lane, Mere** – A Moss Lane resident is very concerned about recent developments at White Cottage. A wire mesh fence approximately 1.8m tall has been erected around the perimeter of the land plus heavy duty gates and aggregate have replaced the original farm gates. Two lodge style buildings have been erected. No planning applications have been submitted for the lodges.
Cllr Newnes **proposed** that Mere Parish Council forward the resident's concerns to the Cheshire East Council Planning Enforcement Officer as it is a matter for Cheshire East Council. **Seconded by Cllr Wright. All agreed. ACTION: KJ Whitlow (Clerk)**

18 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICERS REPORT

- i. Paid into the account on the 8th November £1285.00
From Mere and Tabley Community Club. This is money for the tickets sold on the night of the Fireworks event and paid for via their card machine.
- ii. Paid into the account on the 20th November £9010.89
From Cheshire East Council – CIL money
- iii. To be paid into account (once the bank opens again after a fire) £0904.00
This money is from the Fireworks Event (Gate money = £505, Raffle = £291 and Wands sold = £108)
- iv. The total in the cheque account at the beginning of this meeting is £19873.41
of which £170.43 belongs to the Archive Fund and £12922.26 is the CIL money

19 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

- | | | |
|------|---|----------|
| i. | Poppy Wreath from The British Legion
Clerk paid for on collection
Cheque made payable to
"Kathryn J Whitlow"
Cheque No: 100909 | £0025.00 |
| ii. | Raffle ticket books
Bought by the Clerk for the Fireworks Event
Cheque made payable to
"Kathryn J Whitlow"
Cheque No: 100910 | £0014.95 |
| iii. | Hire of Mere Cricket Ground and Pavilion
Already paid for by the Clerk
Cheque made payable to
"Kathryn J Whitlow"
Cheque No: 100911 | £0070.00 |
| iv. | Raffle Prizes bought for the Fireworks event by the Clerk
Cheque made payable to
"Kathryn J Whitlow"
Cheque No: 100912 | £0053.29 |
| v. | Lightech Sound and Light Ltd
The remaining balance of the fireworks display
Cheque made payable to
"Lightech Sound and Light Ltd"
Cheque No: 100913 | £1755.00 |

Cllr Newnes **proposed** that the above cheques be paid. **Seconded** by Cllr Nassab.
All agreed.

20 BUDGET AND PRECEPT REQUEST FOR 2024/25

- | | | |
|-----|--|------------------------|
| i. | Once the above payments have been made it will leave £17955.24 in the cheque account. | |
| ii. | Expected payments to be made by the end of March 2024 are as follows: | |
| | Clerk | £1000.00 |
| | HMRC | £0300.00 |
| | Ground Maintenance | £2000.00 |
| | TOTAL | <u>£3300.00</u> |

This means we will have approximately **£14655.24** in the cheque account by the 31st March 24.
Of which £12922.26 is CIL money and £170.43 is archive money. Therefore leaving £1562.55
to spend on other items

iii. Precept for 2024-25

**MERE PARISH COUNCIL -
BUDGET FOR 2024/25 PRECEPT**

Precept is paid in two parts, half in April and half in September

<u>ITEM PAID OUT</u>		<u>COST IN PREVIOUS FINANCE YEAR</u>	<u>BUDGET FOR FINANCE YEAR April 2024 - APRIL 2025</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
Clerk		£4,619.00	£4,800.00	
HMRC		£964.00	£1,000.00	
Clerk Expenses		£458.86	£500.00	
Insurance cover		£436.60	£445.00	
External/Internal Audits		£288.00	£300.00	
Parish Maintenance		£2,156.40	£2,000.00	
Tabley Church		£0.00	£0.00	
Wreaths		£25.00	£25.00	
Seminars training		£90.00	£100.00	
CHALC Subs		£206.09	£210.00	
Website		£420.00	£430.00	
Pay Roll		£212.40	£220.00	
ICO		£40.00	£40.00	
TOTAL REQUIRED		£9,916.35	£10,070.00	

<u>NOTES</u>		<u>End of March 2024 we will have in account</u>	
After Cheques paid tonight will have this sum in account	£17,955.24	CIL Money	£12,922.26
Money to be paid out at Jan and Mar 2024 meeting		Archive money	£170.43
Clerk	£1,000.00	In account to spend on anything	£1,562.55
HMRC	£300.00	TOTAL	£14,655.24
Ground Maintenance	£2,000.00	If we had precept of	£9,000.00
TOTAL	£3,300.00	Will mean in account	£23,655.24
Estimated money in account at end of March 24	£14,655.24	£10562.55 we can spend on anything	
CIL money to be spent on parish maintenance, i.e. grass cutting		Suggest precept of	£6,000.00
		Will mean in account	£20,655.24
		£7562.55 we can spend on anything	

Cllr Ineson proposed that a precept of £9000 be requested. Seconded by Cllr Nassab. Majority agreed. ACTION: KJ Whitlow (Clerk) to place request with Cheshire East Council before the deadline of the 12th January 2024.

21 NEW BUSINESS

- i. *Cheshire Fire Authority 2024-2028: Noted by the council.*
- ii. *The Mayor of Knutsford's annual quiz night, 1st February 2024: Noted by the council*
- iii. *Cheshire East Strategic Leisure Review – consultation launch: Noted by the council.*

22 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

*Monday 15th January, 2024 starting at 7:45pm. Venue The Mere and Tabley Community Club.
The proposed dates for the remainder of 2024 are as follows: March 18th, May 13th, July 22nd,
September 16th, October 21st and December 2nd.*

23 **ITEMS INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLORS**

- i. Cllr Newbold to look at the council's website and bring ideas to the next meeting about how it can be improved.*

The meeting closed at approximately 9.45pm

Signed: Date: