

MERE PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MERE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 8TH JULY, 2019
AT 7:45PM, THE MERE

PRESENT

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

APOLOGIES

Cllr J McGuire

ACTIONS

1 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 13th May were proposed by Cllr Norcott and seconded by Cllr Reynolds to be a true and correct record. All agreed.

2 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

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 **POLICE REPORT**

PCSO Emma Darroch had been invited to attend this meeting but she was not present and no apologies received.

Cllr Walker has spoken with her during the last week on the telephone regarding the issue of the speed limit on the B5569 and A50 within Mere.

PCSO Darroch response being that it is not the responsibility of the police to set the speed limit on either of these roads. It is the responsibility of Cheshire East Council. She has offered to train people to use a speed camera if we have access to one.

Cllr Walker will contact PCSO Darroch again and ask that if she is not able to attend the council meetings can she ensure she sends a report.

DW

Cllr Newnes represented Mere PC at a recent meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner on the 27th June. He reported that it was a very interesting and informative meeting.

5 **HS2**

Cllr Norcott and Cllr Wright attended the Implementation Advisory Group meeting held on the 17th June and also a Traffic and Highways meeting on the 5th July.

On the 6th June Mere PC received a notice from Andrew Potter stating that the Government has announced the launch of a consultation on eleven proposed changes to the design of Phase 2b. The closing date to respond is the 6th September.

Cllr Newnes proposed that Mere PC respond. Seconded by Cllr Finch.

KJW

6 **B5569**

A letter had been sent to the Leader of Cheshire East Council and copied to Esther McVey, MP. An acknowledgement has been received dated the 18th July stating as follows:

“Ref 5364865 – Thank you for your correspondence to Councillor Sam Corcoran, Leader Of the council. The Leader is looking into the matters you have raised and will provide a full response as soon as possible. Yours faithfully, Nikki Bishop, Leaders Office.”

Esther McVey has asked to be kept informed of any further response we receive.

Cllr Newnes stated that he raised several points at the recent meeting with the Crime Commissioner, David Keane. Such as there being a 30mph signs on the B5569 when in fact the police monitor it as a 50mph speed limit.

The Crime Commissioner has asked Mere PC to write to him with all the details and history regarding the issue of setting the speed limit on the B5569.

Cllr Newnes proposed and Cllr Duncalf seconded that Mere PC write to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

KJW

Cllr Reynolds stated that the hedge on the B5569 Chester Road has not been cut for the last three years and it is now considered to be a road traffic issue. Cllr Reynolds will send photographs to the Clerk. Also the bund is in an awfully untidy mess and covered in weeds. At a previous meeting Mere PC was informed by Mr Simon Skates that the B5569 will be changed to an urban cut meaning that it will receive three cuts a year. However this has not happened.

Cllr Finch proposed that Mere PC write to Cheshire East Council raising the above issues. Seconded by Cllr Reynolds.

KJW

7 **A50**

Mere PC has received a reply from Cllr Gardiner stating as follows:

“I am looking at this matter in my capacity as a Cheshire East Councillor for Knutsford and Cllr Dean and I did raise the matter on the 14th March. The matter is being re-visited by officers and now we have been re-elected Cllr Dean and I will be pushing for a timely resolution, but please note that even if a Traffic Order is agreed to, there are strict rules regarding their introduction and we will be looking at months not weeks.”

A response has also been received from Cllr Kate Parkinson in which she states that a device to record vehicle speeds can be obtained via Knutsford Town Council.

Cllr Duncalf proposed and Cllr Newnes seconded that we write to Cllr Parkinson asking what happened to the three pots of money set aside once the A556 by-pass was complete?

One of which was to be issued to help resolve issues within the parish as a result of the A5569 by-pass on surrounding roads.

KJW

8 **A556 BY-PASS**

Cllr Norcott stated that the fencing broken when a car went through it in February/March on the A50 roundabout south side of Belt Wood has not been repaired. Cllr Norcott proposed that Mere PC write to Highways England requesting it be repaired and also ask for a contact number to be used in the future. Seconded by Cllr Reynolds.

KJW

Chapel Lane £800,000 flood fix – a letter from Chris Burrows, Costains which has been circulated to residents around Chapel Lane. It states that work will start on the 22nd July to begin improvement work to fix historic flooding issues. A new drain will be installed running along Chapel Lane from the houses just south of the A556 bridge to the junction with Chester Road.

This item to be included on the agenda at the next Mere PC meeting as there are concerns As to whether the “Fix” will actually work.

9 **MANCHESTER AIRPORT**

Nothing to report.

10 FENCING AT THE END OF THE MERE

The Clerk has written to Mr Johnson, Manager at The Mere stating that Mere PC supports him with regards to looking into who owns the land and fencing at the end of the Mere. We have not heard anything from Mr Johnson since so the Clerk will enquire to see if he has found anything out.

KJW

11 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT THE MERE

In response to Mere Parish Council's letter no reply has been received from Mr Johnson, Manager at The Mere and an out of office reply has been received from Louisa Fielden, Avison-Young-UK e-mail account stating she is out of the office until the 12th July. An e-mail has been received from residents Mr and Mrs Meehan, Gai-Logis, Chester Road, Mere voicing their concerns about the proposed development at The Mere. A copy of the submitted plans have been handed to Cllr Reynolds and Cllr Duncalf (Mere Parish Council Planning Officers) to look through and respond on behalf of Mere Parish Council and the residents of Mere. It was agreed that the main issues of concern are insufficient car parking and increased function noise to local residents.

12 REMEMBERING A PAST COUNCILLOR

The Clerk to look at plaques and wording for the plaque in remembrance of Cllr Walter Wright.

KJW

13 RHS FLOWER SHOW – TATTON PARK

Cllr Duncalf attended a meeting on the 29th May at Tatton Park and has forwarded a report to all Mere Parish Councillors. Residents of Mere, especially Mereside Road had previously voiced concern about traffic congestion along Mereside Road. The RHS response to this is unfortunately there is nothing to be done to ease this at busy times but the traffic controllers will be doing their best. The new by-pass has slightly increased the flow of traffic. The RHS has forwarded six complimentary tickets to the council which were handed out to Cllr Norcott, Cllr Duncalf and Cllr Walker.

14 BOAT HOUSE

A reply has been received from Mr Earlin Smith, Planning and Building Control Customer Co-ordination Officer, Cheshire East Council. He states that planning permission is necessary to build a boat house. If the council suspects a breach of planning then we can report it using the link he provided. The Clerk has searched the Cheshire East Council planning website pages and cannot see a planning application for a boat house at the property called Waterways, Mereside Road. Cllr Reynolds proposed and Cllr Norcott seconded that Mere PC report the issue to Cheshire East Council. All agreed.

KJW

15 MERE END COTTAGE, MERESIDE ROAD, MERE

A reply from Cheshire East Council Planning Department stating there does not appear to have been any recent application submitted for this property. If we think there has been a breach of planning then we can report it using the link Cheshire East Council has provided. The Clerk provided the following information about past planning applications for Mere End Cottage.

Application No: **08/2749P**

Proposal: ***Replacement Dwelling and Detached Garage.
Cheshire East Council Approved with Conditions – 27/03/09
Mere Parish Council – No Objection.***

Application No: **09/2837M**

Proposal: **Amendments to approved planning application 08/2749P**
- **Adjustments to height and floor plans to existing dwelling (retrospective).**
Cheshire East Council – Not decided as of 06/04/14
Mere Parish Council – No Objection

It was agreed that no further action is necessary by Mere Parish Council.

16 PLANNING APPLICATION DETAILS

There have been six new planning applications and four Decision Notices received since the last Mere Parish Council meeting. Details are recorded in the Planning Book.

17 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICERS REPORT

- i *The sum total in the cheque account at the beginning of this meeting is £3997.85
Of which £170.43 belongs to the Archive Fund.*
- ii *Paid into the account on the 22nd May the sum of £704.24
This is VAT claimed back for the financial year ending 31st March 2019.*
- iii *The Mere Parish Council accounts have been returned from the Internal Auditor (JDH Business Services Ltd) for the financial year ending 31st March 2019.
Their conclusion is as follows:
“On the basis of the internal audit work carried out, which is limited to the tests indicated above, in our view the councils system of internal controls is in place. Adequate for the purpose intended and effective, subject to the recommendations reported in the action plan.”
There are three issues and they are as follows:*

ISSUE 1

The bank reconciliation and accounts are incorrect as an un-presented cheque for £25.50 has been treated incorrectly.

Recommendation

Cash and bank balances (Box 8) need to be reduced by £25.50 in the AGAR annual return and in the bank reconciliation.

Clerks Response

Box 8 has now been reduced by £25.50 and the reconciliation amended accordingly.

ISSUE 2

The payments included in staff costs in the AGAR annual return include administration costs. No analysis was provided to show how staff costs in the AGAR had been calculated.

Recommendation

The staff costs in the AGAR should be corrected to only show payroll costs, i.e; the clerk's net pay plus HMRC payments.

Clerks Response

Never been asked for a breakdown before of how the figure was calculated but will do so for future audits!

The Clerks end of year expenses and payroll fees have now been deducted from Box 4 and added to Box 6 in AGAR.

ISSUE 3

Money insurance cover is in place and depending on the category of insurance the cover is £350 or £2500. The gross cash received from the Bonfire Event was £2111.

Recommendation

The council should ensure that the money insurance covers maximum cash that could be held after the bonfire event.

Clerks Response

I have checked the council insurance schedule and it states as follows:

Money Insured

Crossed cheques and other non-negotiable money **£250,000**

In transit or in the Insured premises during business hours, or in a bank night safe **£2,500**

In a locked safe at the Insured's premises out of business hours **£2,500**

Out of a safe at the Insured's premises out of business hours **£350**

In the private dwelling houses of any councillors or clerk **£350**

Whilst at exhibitions and/or fetes **£350**

The Clerk asked the council if they wished the insured figure of £350 for money held at a councillor or Clerks house to be increased or keep it as it is?

The council agreed to keep it as it is.

18 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------------------|
| i | The Clerk for hours worked during April, May and June 2019
Cheque made payable to
"Kathryn J Whitlow"
Cheque No: 100788 | £918.09 Agreed |
| ii | PAYE – in relation to Clerk's salary
Cheque made payable to
"HM Revenue and Customs Only – 120PD00337552"
Cheque No: 100789 | £374.41 Agreed |
| iii | Invoice from JDH Business Services Ltd for the internal audit of accounts for year ending 31 st March 2019.
Cheque made payable to
"JDH Business Services Ltd"
Cheque No: 100790 | £205.68 Agreed |

Cllr Norcott proposed and Cllr Duncalf seconded that payment be made for the above.
All agreed.

19 NEW BUSINESS

None.

20 The date of the next meeting is 16th September 2019 at The Mere, Chester Road starting at 7:45pm.

21 ITEMS INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLORS

- i Cllr Finch voiced concern about the many advertising posters on display around the Parish. Particularly referring to events in the past!*
- ii Cllr Reynolds recently mentioned to Esther McVey about the Mere Parish Council Bonfire Event to which Esther replied she looks forward to attending again this year,*
- iii Cllr Wright asked that the issue of Chapel Lane flooding be included on the next meetings agenda.*
- iv Cllr Reynolds asked as to where we are up to with regards the air quality in Mere?*
- v Cllr Duncalf stated that the area by the AA Box in Mere and also along the fencing behind is covered in weeds. Can Dominic Fenton be asked to strim this area?*
- vi Cllr Walker raised an issue regarding the lack of accessibility along the footpaths in Mere.*

The meeting closed at approximately 9:30pm.

Signed: Date: