



21<sup>st</sup> March 2024

Commenced: 7.30 pm

Terminated: 9.35 pm

Present: Councillor D Wells (Chair)  
Councillors K Brassington, C Crowe and J Jones

Councillor S Eardley – Cheshire West and Chester Council

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Jones and R Jones.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members of the Parish Council at this stage of the meeting.

**3. PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no Members of the Public present at this meeting.

**4. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**5. MOLLINGTON STANDING ORDERS 2024**

Members considered the Mollington Standing Orders 2024.

The Clerk clarified that all decisions must be made at meetings of the Parish Council, and not via email. There were provisions in the Standing Orders for making any urgent decisions, between meetings of the Parish Council.

**RESOLVED**

**That the Standing Orders, as circulated, be approved.**

**6. MOLLINGTON FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2024**

Members considered and discussed the Mollington Financial Regulations 2024.

The Clerk clarified that all payments, should be approved by the Parish Council before works or expenditure takes place. There were provisions in the Financial Regulations for making urgent payments, between meetings of the Parish Council.

**RESOLVED**

**That the Clerk ensures that the Financial Regulations (paragraph 4) clearly state that any decisions regarding expenditure, that cannot be taken at a meeting of the Parish Council, must be approved by the Clerk, the Chair and the Deputy Chair (not just the Clerk and the Chair as was the historic arrangement).**

## 7. RISK ASSESSMENT

Members considered the Risk Assessment for 2024-2025.

### RESOLVED

**That the 2024-2025 Risk Assessment, as circulated, be approved.**

## 8. ASSET REGISTER

Members considered the Asset Register for 2024-2025.

### RESOLVED

**That the 2024-2025 Asset Register, as circulated, be approved, with the addition of four planters at a value of £600.00 each (total value £2,400).**

## 9. FINANCE AND BUDGET 2023-2024

Members received a report of the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer:-

### 9.1 Approval of Payments and Transactions

#### RESOLVED

(i) **That the following payments and transactions in Schedule A be approved, retrospectively:-**

##### • Schedule A

Date	Payee/Payer	Purpose	Sum Paid £	Account Balance £
31/01/2024	TAGS	Leaflets	65.00	£13,940.12
29/02/2024	J Davies	Amenity Cleaner – Feb 2024	£113.36	£13,826.76
29/02/2024	M Clough	Clerk Feb 2024 (payslip is £210.92)	£210.91	£13,615.85
01/03/2024	R Jones	Reimbursement for Flags	£50.88	£13,564.97
01/03/2024	R Jones	Reimbursement for Flags	£48.86	£13,516.11
01/03/2024	R Jones	Christmas baubles	£23.10	£13,493.01
01/03/2024	St Oswald's School	Room Hire for Nov 23 & Jan 2024	£40.00	£13,453.01
01/03/2024	HMRC	PAYE	£450.64	£13,002.37

(ii) **That any future payments, unless of an urgent nature and covered by the Financial Regulations, must be pre-approved (nature of purchase and sum of purchase) by the Parish Council before any expenditure is incurred;**

(iii) **That the following payments detailed in Schedule B below, be approved:-**

##### • Schedule B

Barnes Cooper	Payroll Updates	£360.00
Grasshopper Services	Lengthsman work completed 12/02/2024	£75.00
J Davies	Amenity Cleaner – March 2024	Approx. £113.36
M Clough	Clerk - March 2024	Approx. £201.91
J Davies	Amenity Cleaner – April 2024	Approx. £113.36
M Clough	Clerk - April 2024	Approx. £201.91

##### • Budget Head Expenditure

Members received the Budget Head Expenditure to 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024. The Chair reported that the Budget Allocations were not compatible with those established by the temporary Clerk, and the Clerk agreed to reconsider the budget allocations for 2024-2025 and submit to the next meeting for approval.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the Budget Head Expenditure be received, and the Budget Allocations be reconsidered for 2024-2025 at the next meeting of the Parish Council.**

- **Bank Reconciliation**

The Clerk submitted the Bank Reconciliation to 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024. She added that the Parish Council balance at that date was £13,002.37

## **RESOLVED**

**That the Bank Reconciliation to 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024, be received.**

- **Parish Council Income**

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council income to 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024 was £14,650.00.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the total income for the Parish Council, be noted.**

### **9.2 Tax Liability**

The Chair explained his understanding of the tax liability of the Parish Council, for the non payment of income tax since 2018. As a consequence, the Parish Council had incurred late filing penalties and Barnes Cooper Accountants had been contracted to help settle the matter with HMRC. The latest advice that he had received from Barnes Cooper was that the penalty and any tax owing up to December 2023 would be cleared, by paying £585.65 plus the interest charged for late payment of £36.59, for the period ended 05/04/2022 (Charge Reference XG003147673228).

It was noted that the Parish Council was still liable for the Quarter 4 2023-2024 income tax, which was due in April 2024.

The Chair added that Barnes Cooper was challenging the penalties, which might result in a rebate.

## **RESOLVED**

**(i) That the payment of £585.65 plus interest in the sum of 16p per day to HMRC be approved;**

**For the purpose of these Minutes, the HMRC invoice reference 709PR00201337 was for the sum of £929.23. The Parish Council payments reference is 16 (Mar).**

**(ii) That the payment of £36.59 to HMRC for the Charge Reference XG003147673228 be approved.**

**For the purpose of these Minutes, the Parish Council payments reference is 15 (Mar).**

**(iii) That Councillor Brassington to make arrangements for Councillor Jack Jones to be an authorised signatory (authorisation only) for the bank account;**

**(iv) That the Chair to request that the Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer receives all future financial documents.**

### **10. INTERNAL AUDITOR**

The Clerk asked Members to consider the appointment of Davenport Accountants as the Internal Auditor for 2023-2024, for a sum of £130.00.

Members agreed that Barnes Cooper were doing an excellent job resolving the tax matters and arranging the monthly payroll for the Parish Council, and that there would be a conflict of interest, if they were also employed to complete the internal audit.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the appointment of Davenport Accountants, as the Internal Auditor for 2023-2024 be approved in the sum of £130.00.**

## **11. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY**

The Chair asked Members to consider projects to be funded from the Community Infrastructure Levy received from the sale of Eden House, in the sum of approximately £3,600.

Members discussed the benefits to the village of a speed indicator device on Well Lane, and Councillor Eardley agreed to donate some of his budget towards this purchase.

## **RESOLVED**

**That Councillor Eardley to obtain quotes for the following and report back to the next meeting:-**

- (i) **Replacement “Welcome to Mollington” signs (likely to be in the region of £1000 for two);**
- (ii) **Smiley/frown face speed indicator sign.**

## **12. PLANNING**

The Parish Council noted the following planning matters:-

### **• New Planning Application**

- (i) Ref No: 24/00239/FUL 15 Mollington Court Mollington Chester CH1 6LA. Widening of drive and formation of new drop kerb.
- (ii) Battery Storage Pre-Planning Stage. The Chair reported that there were no updates on this matter.

### **• Decisions Made**

- (iii) Ref No: 24/00040/AGR Land at Mere Farm Townfield Lane Mollington Chester Cheshire. Agricultural general purpose storage building. Status: Decided
- (iv) Ref No: 23/03569/PMA CSS House Parkgate Road Mollington Chester CH1 6NQ. Conversion of office to single dwelling house. Status: Decided
- (v) Councillor Crowe declared his interest in this item as he was the owner of the property. He took no part in the discussions thereon.

Ref No: 23/01513/FUL Glebe Farm Coalpit Lane Chester CH1 6LJ. Change of use of agricultural land to form 1 no. tennis court with boundary fencing on the site of a former chicken shed. Status: Refused.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the planning matters detailed above, be noted.**

## **13. HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

The Chair updated the Members on the following matters relating to the Parish Highways and Public Rights of Way:-

- Townfield Lane approaching Coalpit Lane – the edge of the highway was severely deteriorating. Councillor Eardley agreed to contact Cheshire West and Chester Council Highways Department, over this matter;
- Damage to grass verge, St Oswald's Primary School (installation of posts and chain) – Mrs Kay Parry (Principal Engineer at Cheshire West and Chester Council) had advised that this project was not something that would be permitted in a private capacity, as it involved land on the public highway, but was a project that the Council could provide with a chargeback to the Parish Council, to cover the cost of provision. There were no further applications being considered for such projects until the new financial year, so she asked that the Parish Council contact her again in April.

Councillor Eardley reported that he had asked the local PCSO to monitor the area and challenge parents, where necessary, over parking concerns.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (i) **That the Clerk contacts the Principal Engineer in April to request a price for the installation of verge markers;**
- (ii) **That Councillor Brassington contacts the PCSO and asks for a police presence at the location, during drop off and pick up.**

#### **14. ESSAR MARATHON**

The Chair reported on correspondence received from a local florist, who was concerned about the detrimental impact on her business, due to disruption (closure of roads) and the subsequent loss of income as a result of the 10k marathon being held on Mother's Day.

The Chair agreed to reply to the correspondence and explain that despite having no influence on this matter, the Parish Council had contacted the organiser and passed on the business owner's concerns.

Councillor Eardley agreed to raise this matter with Cheshire West and Chester Council event organisers.

#### **RESOLVED**

**That the report be noted.**

#### **15. D-DAY CELEBRATIONS**

Members discussed village celebrations to commemorate the event.

#### **RESOLVED**

**That Councillor Jack Jones be authorised to purchase a £200 Tommy statue, from the Royal British Legion.**

#### **16. NEWSLETTER**

The Chair reported that the Newsletter had been distributed.

#### **17. CORRESPONDENCE**

The Chair reported that no further correspondence had been received other than relating to Minute 14. The Clerk confirmed that she had not received any correspondence.

#### **18. WARD COUNCILLOR'S BRIEFING**

Councillor Eardley reported on the following:-

- (i) There was ongoing correspondence relating to the leaking of water near the Shropshire Union bridge. This matter was being pursued by Highways. The blockage originated on private land;

- (ii) The implementation of a change to the speed limit on Townfield Lane and Overwood Lane, was awaited;
- (iii) HighNet had announced that a consent order has been granted. Full details and next steps/timelines were awaited;
- (iv) Highway expenditure was to increase nationally, to £168 million. The criteria had not yet been released by the government;
- (v) Cheshire West and Chester Council tax was increasing by just under 5% for the 2024-2025 financial year.

**RESOLVED**

**That the report be noted.**

**19. PARISH COUNCIL FILE STORAGE**

The Clerk asked for ideas for the appropriate file storage for Parish Council documents. Members discussed the possibility of scanning the files and storing them electronically, on the “Cloud”.

**RESOLVED**

**That this matter be considered further at the next meeting.**

**20. URGENT ITEMS**

The Chair considered that the following item of business required consideration as a matter of urgency due to its impact on the Parish.

**21. NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, DUNKIRK WAY**

Members discussed the new housing development at Dunkirk Way, which had just received planning permission, and its impact on the existing road work. It was anticipated that the development would significantly increase traffic congestion.

Councillor Eardley confirmed that the application had been ‘Called-In’ and agreed to report back on this matter to the next meeting.

**RESOLVED**

**That this matter be discussed at the next meeting.**

**22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members noted that the next meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 7.30 pm at St. Oswald’s Primary School.