

Mollington Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 6 January 2016 at Mollington, Backford & District Village Hall

PRESENT: Councillors Angus MacSween (in the Chair), Charles Charlesworth, Phil Crane, Brian Crowe, Mike Jones and Mike Riley

In Attendance: Mrs Pauline English (Parish Clerk) and Chris Jones, Chairman of the Village Hall Committee. There were no members of the public present.

16.01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

16.02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Charlesworth declared an interest in Minute 16.08 as the Parish Council's representative on the Village Hall Committee.

16.03 OPEN FORUM

No issues raised.

16.04 MINUTES

It was resolved that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 3 November 2015 be confirmed as a correct record. It was noted that under Minute 15.93 the bench had not yet been repaired but would be as soon as possible.

16.05 PLANNING

(1) Applications Received:

15/04067/FUL - Change of use of land to 'Footgolf' facility with associated infrastructure on land at Parkgate Road, Mollington, Chester – No application had been received by the Parish Council and the documents on the CWaC website were considered to be inadequate. The Parish Council was not aware that neighbours had been consulted. It was agreed that the Parish Council should object to this application (Councillor Charlesworth to provide the grounds for objection)

(2) Decisions:

15/04564/LDC - Replace garage door with two windows (form habitable room) at Monachyle, Well Lane, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6LD - APPROVED

(3) Awaiting Decision:

15/04549/FUL - Residential Development of 4 dwellings - Amendment to 15/01844/FUL - land adjacent To Mollington Banastre Hotel, Parkgate Road, Mollington, Chester

(4) Neighbouring Parishes:

15/04944/FUL- Proposed touring caravan park with 10 pitches, camping area with 5 pitches, part conversion of building to form toilet and shower block, access alterations & installation of drainage system at Oakwood Farm, Parkgate Road, Saughall, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6EY

16.06 HIGHWAYS, RIGHTS OF WAY AND AMENITY CLEANING

Street Numbering in Mollington village: A resident had asked how streets in which the houses had names only could be numbered, in particular Townfield Lane. The Clerk had received the following advice from CWaC. The resident who wished to introduce this change should petition all of the other residents on Townfield Lane (and any other streets affected). More than two thirds of the residents must agree before the process could begin. The Parish Council and local Ward Member should be included in the petition. The residents must be informed that they would have to bear the costs of changing all of their documentation, eg. passport, driving licence, insurance documents, etc. to accommodate the change to their addresses. If more than two thirds of the residents agreed to this change the numbers could be allocated and would become part of their official address. This meant that the numbers must be included in their address and could not be left out. Utility companies, the Land Registry, Royal Mail, the Emergency Services and CWaC departments would be notified of the new addresses which would

eventually filter out to other organisations who used numbers as the main property identifier if numbers had been allocated. Not using the numbers could result in delays, for example by emergency response vehicles.

16.07 MOLLINGTON SCHOOL AND PLAYING FIELD

It was noted that Mollington CE Primary School was, once again, the school had achieved top results with 100% of all pupils achieving a Level 4 or above in reading, writing and arithmetic at Key Stage 2. Pupils had achieved an average point score of 35.4 making the school the best primary in the country for the essential criteria. The Clerk was asked to write to the Headteacher offering congratulations.

16.08 VILLAGE HALL

Councillor Charlesworth declared an interest as the Parish Council's representative on the Village Hall Committee but did not leave the meeting. It was reported that in a meeting between representatives of the Village Hall Committee and CWaC planning officers it was agreed that the site was a brown field site within the green belt and that it could be argued that, considering the nature of the site and its surroundings, redevelopment similar to that previously proposed would not detrimentally affect the openness of the green belt. Although the planning officers believed that very special circumstances did exist to permit such development within the green belt, they considered that these had not been demonstrated in the current application and that they should be formally expressed within a planning statement to support any future application. The importance of "continuous/uninterrupted use" of the hall and how this had informed the proposed staged approach to the development, together with the siting of the "replacement" hall, was discussed. The planners thought that the position previously proposed (at the A41 end of the site) was logical and was acceptable to them as it would have very little impact on neighbouring properties. Concerning the scale of a "replacement hall" the planners thought that it would be acceptable (with the correct demonstration of "very special circumstances") to have a similar footprint to the existing (to be demolished) hall and a height of between 3 and 4 meters to eaves level with a pitched roof over. An increased height would assist with regard to expanding what was currently on offer and would help in terms of possible increased offerings of RTA productions. Floor area could possibly be increased by the inclusion of a mezzanine space. The proposed courtyard and how this could be more visually open and acceptable to the planners was discussed. With regard to car parking it was felt that as the use of the site was to remain unchanged in terms of volume/numbers and that the proposal would not reduce the area currently available for car parking, no additional requirement was needed although this would have to be discussed further with the Highways Department.

16.09 WEBSITE

The home page had gone 'live' and could be viewed at <http://www.mollington-pc.org.uk/>. Chris Jones demonstrated this and showed how the website was progressing. Documents that would be available on the website included agenda and minutes, policy documents, year end accounts, annual governance statement and internal audit reports from the Annual Return and the annual Chairman's Report. This would enable the Parish Council to comply with the requirements of the Transparency Code.

16.10 PARISH PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire had been distributed with reply paid envelopes to the Chairman. The results would be discussed at the next meeting.

16.11 CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL

It was noted that CWaC currently had active consultations relating to Review of Services for disabled children and young people aged between 0-25 (closing date 31 January 2016); Gypsy and Traveller Allocation Policy (closing date 7 February 2016); Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy consultation (closing date: 21 February 2016) and Chester Northgate (closing date: 11 January 2016). Councillor Crowe explained that in 2009, when the three district councils had come together to form Cheshire West and

Chester, the policy on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing adopted by each district had remained unchanged. The current consultation was aimed at setting one policy for CWaC and the current proposals mirrored the requirements adopted by Vale Royal which were considered to be less stringent than those currently in use in Chester and Ellesmere Port. Councillors were encouraged to respond to this consultation.

16.12 APPOINTMENT OF PARISH REPRESENTATIVES TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

CWaC wished to appoint two Parish Representatives who could be consulted when a complaint was made about the conduct of a member of a local council in the borough. Five applications had been received and the Parish Council was invited to vote for two of these to become the CWaC Standards Parish Representatives. It was resolved to vote for Fiona Crane and Ted Lush.

16.13 FINANCE

(1) **New Homes Bonus:** Mollington Parish Council had been awarded a New Homes Bonus grant of £1,811 for the financial year 2015-16. The grant allocation had been determined by the level of housing growth in the parish area in the period October 2010 to October 2014 and reflected CWaC's current discretionary policy to transfer a top slice of 20% of the New Homes Bonus grant it received from central government to local councils. The use of the grant was at the Parish Council's discretion. As CWaC was facing significant financial challenges over the coming years it was proposed to end the payment of New Homes Bonus to local councils from 2016-17. A short questionnaire sought the views of local councils on this proposal. It was noted that there was an on-line petition against the withdrawal of the grant.

(2) **Budget and Precept for 2016-17:** Resolved that:

- a) the Clerk's salary from 1 April 2016 be increased by 1% to an hourly rate of £12.44 (£1,940.64 per annum)
- b) the monthly fixed payment of £10 to mitigate the costs of having the Parish Council's registered office at the Clerk's home be agreed for 2016-17; and
- c) the rate per mile to be paid for casual use of own transport by both employees and Councillors on Parish Council approved business should remain at 45p per mile.
- d) the Amenity Cleaner's wage from 1 April 2016 be increased to £7.50 per hour
- e) The precept be set at £6,864 plus the Council Tax Reduction Scheme grant of £136, making a total of £7,000.

(3) **Risk Assessment:** The Parish Council considered and approved the assessment of financial and other risks facing the Parish Council in 2016-17 and the means of dealing with them.

(4) **Payments:** The following payment were approved:

Cheque No		Amount
206	Mollington, Backford & District Village Hall – Room Hire	16.00
207	Mollington, Backford & District Village Hall – Balance of Annual Grant	122.50
S/O	Parish Clerk – salary December 2015	123.20
208	J Davies (Amenity Cleaner) – wages January 2016	150.80
209	J Davies (Amenity Cleaner) – wages February 2016	150.80
BACS	Parish Clerk – expenses November 2015-January 2016	34.87
BACS	HMRC-Income Tax – October-December 2015	211.50

(5) **Receipts:** The following receipts were noted

Bank Interest (as at end December 2015)	2.87
New Homes Bonus (Cheshire West & Chester)	1,811.00

(6) **Internal Audit for 2015-16:** It was resolved that the appointment of Wellfield Accounting Services as the Parish Council's internal auditor for 2014-15 at a cost of £85 + VAT (£102) be confirmed.

16.14 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

None

16.15 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2016

The first Wednesday had been agreed at the last meeting subject to the availability of the Village Hall. It transpired that on the first Wednesday the History Group were booked into the Hall and a French class was booked into the Committee Room leaving only the Garden Room available for the Parish Council, although the History Group would require access to this room to return chairs at the end of their meeting. The cost of the Garden Room was £12 per hour compared to the £8 per hour for the Committee Room. It was resolved that the next meeting should be held on either Tuesday 1 March or Wednesday 2 March 2016, subject to the availability of a room at the Village Hall.