

Mollington Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 2 May 2017 at Mollington, Backford & District Village Hall

Present: Councillors Mike Jones (in the Chair), Amanda Clarke, Charles Charlesworth, Phil Crane, Brian Crowe and Angus MacSween

In Attendance: Mrs Pauline English (Parish Clerk) and one member of the public.

17.28 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Jones was nominated by Councillor Crane and seconded by Councillor Charlesworth. There being no further nominations, Councillor Jones was duly elected Chairman of Mollington Parish Council for the year 2017-18

17.29 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor Crane was nominated by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor Charlesworth. There being no further nominations, Councillor Crane was duly appointed Vice-Chairman of Mollington Parish Council for the year 2017-18

17.30 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received

17.31 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Charlesworth declared an interest in Minute 17.45 as the Parish Council's representative on the Village Hall Committee.

17.32 OPEN FORUM

During the cable laying in Well Lane some four weeks previously the old wall had been damaged and was now unstable. The damage had not been reported by Virgin or their contractor to the Police at the time although they were aware of it as the contractor had sent someone to look at it the evening it happened. The contractor had not admitted causing the damage but had agreed verbally to repair the wall "as a gesture of goodwill". It was resolved that the Parish Council should write to Virgin seeking assurance that the repair work would be done as soon as possible.

17.33 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2017 were confirmed as a correct record. It was confirmed that Amenity Notices had been submitted to CWaC in relation to Wrockwoodine and The Elms Farmhouse.

17.34 VACANCY FOR A COUNCILLOR

There had been no interest expressed in the vacancy for a Councillor. It was agreed that it should be re-advertised.

17.35 REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following documents were reviewed and it was resolved that no changes be made:

- (1) Standing Orders
- (2) Financial Regulations
- (3) Complaints Procedure
- (4) Data Protection and Information Security Policy
- (5) Dignity at Work, Bullying and Harassment Policy
- (6) Discipline, Dismissal and Grievance Policy
- (7) Equality and Diversity Policy
- (8) Freedom of Information – Publication Scheme
- (9) Health and Safety Policy
- (10) Policy and procedure for handling requests for information
- (11) Risk Management Strategy
- (12) Scheme of Delegation

17.36 OUTSIDE BODIES

The following representatives on outside bodies were noted:

- Backford Trust: Councillors Charlesworth and Crowe until 2019

- War Memorial Trust: Backford Parish Council to appoint a representative to replace Rev Southgate
- Village Hall Committee: Councillor Charlesworth until December 2017

17.37 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2017/18

To complete the Annual Return, the Parish Council was required to approve the Annual Governance Statement by considering the statement in each box and ticking either yes or no. The Parish Council was satisfied that they had put the relevant procedures in place, all boxes were ticked as yes and the Chairman signed the document

17.38 ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2016/17

The accounts for 2016/17 had been completed and a copy of the year end summary had been circulated with the agenda. It was resolved that the Chairman and Clerk should sign the statement in the Annual Return.

17.39 PLANNING

(1) Applications Received:

17/01258/ADV	3 Feather Flags displaying the company logo at Footgolf Chester, the Pavilion, Parkgate Road, Mollington, Chester – it was noted that the applicants had erected these flags without permission and had been told to take them down. The Parish Council was concerned about their proximity to the main road and would ask that the flags be fixed back from the road so as not to cause a distraction, otherwise no objections.
17/01509/FUL	Change the use of The Good Intent to Offices (ground floor) Demolition of existing single storey extension and porch and re-positioning of a boundary wall at The Good Intent, Parkgate Road, Mollington, Chester – no observations to be made
17/01570/OUT	Outline residential application for two detached dwellings (resubmission of 16/01629/OUT) on land adjacent Greenfields, Grove Road, Mollington, Chester. This application had been submitted previously and withdrawn. It was agreed that the Parish Council should object on the following grounds – Green Belt, lack of special circumstances, no proven need because there are other, similar properties in close proximity.

(2) Decisions by the Borough Council - None

17.40 HIGHWAYS, RIGHTS OF WAY AND AMENITY CLEANING

It was reported that Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC) had received a direction from the Planning Inspector to make an Order for some of the paths claimed across the site between Mollington and Blacon. CWaC were organising the internal decision to make an Order and would have it advertised as soon as possible. The Parish Council would receive a copy. The successful appeal had not included a short section, and it was advised that there were two ways to get this back. The first was a high court case, for which the Ramblers were being requested to provide indemnity. If a high court case was to go ahead then CWaC would be advised to wait for the result before making the current orders. The second option was to provide evidence from some users and, should the landowners object and the appeal go to a public inquiry, the inspector at the inquiry could make an order outside the modification if he/she was convinced. .

17.41 MOLLINGTON SCHOOL AND PLAYING FIELD

No issues raised

17.42 MOLLINGTON GRANGE

Traders at Mollington Grange business park were anxious for their future after the site owners revealed they intended to convert the units into two and three bed mews houses which would be sold on the open market. It was seen by the developers as a semi-rural high quality development. Advice from CWaC Planning Officers was that if the developers wanted to convert to residential, they could do so using 'permitted development' rights, but they would need to apply to CWaC first for 'prior approval' of certain details. CWaC confirmed that they had not yet received an application. It was resolved to invite Nial Casselden and/or Cathy Reay to the next meeting.

17.43 LISTING OF MOLLINGTON ESTATE WALL

The Parish Council wondered whether it would be possible to list the old Mollington Hall estate wall on Well Lane (if it wasn't already listed) so that some control could be maintained over the way in which repairs were done. It was noted that there was no longer a Conservation Officer at CWaC. Councillor Crowe would take this up with CWaC. It was queried who maintained the Well. It was resolved to look into this further and report back to the next meeting.

17.44 CHARTER FOR TREES, WOODS AND PEOPLE

NALC had partnered with more than 70 organisations, including the Woodland Trust, to help develop a new Charter for Trees, Woods and People, which would be launched on 6 November 2017. The new Tree Charter would set out how local communities and trees could best benefit one another. It would serve as a resource which local councils could use in support of their efforts to look after the trees in their area. Local councils could support the Tree Charter by becoming a Charter Branch. The Council's level of involvement was at Members' discretion but for more imaginative projects and activities around trees funding of up to £1,500 was available. No action to be taken.

It was noted that a tree had fallen on the Village Green. The tree was in Lea, not Mollington, and the remains had been taken down and a stump left.

17.45 VILLAGE HALL

Councillor Charlesworth declared an interest in this item as he was the Parish Council's representative on the Village Hall Committee. He reported that the Hall's Big Lottery Fund (BLF) application submitted at the end of March was for £500,000, the maximum allowable, which would leave a shortfall of up to £500,000 to complete the full project. It would therefore be necessary to adjust the scope and/or find supplementary grants. For example, an initial scope could cover the new hall building and connecting corridor. There were possible sources of supplementary grants to cover the rest of the project, some of which required a 10% contribution from an outside body. A sum of £20,000 had been mentioned. Councillor Charlesworth had repeatedly warned that in no way could Mollington Parish Council be responsible for such a grant.

The use of the Hall area and facilities by the Virgin Media cable laying contractors had not been covered by a formal agreement and the contractors had apparently taken full advantage of this. It was understood that the tennis court area would be used as a builders' yard base for completion of the cable lay to Saughall. There was no information on when the area would be cleared, much less restored. The Hall Management Committee were trying to establish a basis for a claim against Virgin Media for remediation of the tennis court and car park areas, equivalent rent for use of the area, compensation for utility usage, compensation for loss of hiring income and overall inconvenience.

17.46 WEBSITE

Councillor Crane had produced an "idiot's" guide to logging onto and updating the website. He had completed uploading the Policies and Procedures, and was now uploading agenda, minutes and accounts to comply with the Transparency Code.

17.47 VIRGIN MEDIA

It was agreed that CWaC Highways should be asked to provide plans, dates and timings for the Virgin work in Mollington.

17.48 CORRESPONDENCE

Electoral Review of Cheshire West and Chester: Warding Arrangements: At the request of Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council (CWaC) the Local Government Boundary Commission for England was carrying out a review to deliver electoral equality across the Borough and to correct current imbalances. The consultation would close on 5 June 2017. Draft recommendations would be published in September with a further round of consultations. The final recommendations would be published in January 2018. The Commission was minded to recommend a reduction in the number of Councillors from 75 to 69. It was resolved to write to the Boundary Commission to object to any

proposals that did not include Mollington in a grouping with Backford, Caughall, Chorlton and Lea, on the grounds of community of interest as they shared a school, a church and a village hall.

17.49 FINANCE

- (1) **Payments:** The following payments were noted::

Method		Amount
Tfr	Service Charge	18.00
S/O	Parish Clerk – salary May 2017	130.40
BACS	Village Hall – Room Hire May	16.00
BACS	Parish Clerk – expenses March-May 2017	
Chq237	J Davies (Amenity Cleaner) – wages May 2017	166.40
Chq238	J Davies (Amenity Cleaner) – wages June 2017	166.40
S/O	Parish Clerk – salary June 2016	130.40
BACS	Cheshire West & Chester Council – licence for use of playing field	300.00
BACS	P Morgan – Laptop and software (from Transparency Fund grant)	534.99

- (2) **Receipts:**

ChALC - Transparency Fund grant	3,317.81
CWaC – Precept and CTRS grant	7,204.00
HMRC – Repayment of VAT	86.77

- (3) **Balance** as at 2 May 2017 was £20,711.31
- (4) **Approval of use of BACS payments:** The Legislative Reform (Payments by Parish Councils, Community Councils and Charter Trustees) Order 2014 provided the opportunity for Parish Councils to make payments by BACS transfer provided such payments were authorised by the Parish Council. It was resolved to continue to make payments by BACS in 2017/18.
- (5) **S137:** The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had advised that the appropriate sum for the purpose of section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 (the 1972 Act) for local (parish and town) councils in England for 2017-18 was £7.57 per head of population

17.50 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND NEXT MEETING

No issues raised

17.51 MEETINGS IN 2016-17

The dates of meeting in 2017/18 were approved as follows:

Tuesday 4 July 2017 at 8.00pm

Tuesday 5 September 2017 at 8.00pm

Tuesday 7 November 2017 at 7.30pm (Garden Competition presentations)

Tuesday 2 January 2018 at 8.00pm

Tuesday 6 March 2018 at 8.00pm (Annual Parish Meeting at 7.30pm)

Tuesday 1 May 2018 at 7.30pm (Annual Meeting)