

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ECCLESTON PARISH COUNCIL held on
TUESDAY 8 MARCH 2022 at 7.30 pm in ECCLESTON VILLAGE HALL, KILN LANE**

PRESENT: Cllr G Pearl (Deputy Chair)
Cllrs Barton, Cass, Kempzell, C Pearl, and Skepper
Janet Anderson – Clerk
1 resident

21.141 APOLOGIES

Cllrs Ashcroft, Gray-Williams, Haw, Sims and Watmough

21.142 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllr G Pearl item 21.150 – Planning Applications

21.143 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 8 FEBRUARY 2022

Resolved that the Minutes be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

21.144 MATTERS ARISING

Ref 21.129 – Cllr Pearl reported that he had contacted the Highways Department of St Helens Council over the dangers encountered crossing the junction of Kiln Lane and Millbrook Lane reported at the last meeting. An officer had visited the site and explained to Cllr Pearl that there had been no update since previous investigations into the junction. Nothing could be done at the junction because of the layout of the roads.

21.145 RESIDENTS' ISSUES

None reported.

21.146 POLICE REPORT

The latest figures were presented. It was noted that both public order and criminal damage offences had increased compared to the previous year. PCSO Dearing included an explanatory note that 4 criminal damage offences had taken place at the same address. Also, the large increase in public order offences had been down to 5 offences at one address with another 5 at a separate address.

21.147 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The item would be referred to the May meeting of the Parish Council after elections.

21.148 ANNUAL MAGAZINE

The magazine had gone to print. All magazines would be delivered to residents by 15 April 2022.

Library Service Meeting – Monday 28 February 2022 at 7.00pm, Eccleston Village Hall. Councillors Ashcroft, Barton, G Pearl, Sims and Williams attended along with the Clerk. The proposed Library Strategy was discussed and the following points were noted:

- Cllr Sims explained that she and Cllr G Pearl had met with St Helens Council officers when the proposal was first mentioned, but that the strategy had been unclear.
- The Strategy had since been approved by St Helens Council.
- One suggestion would be that St Helens Council would be asking for volunteers to run libraries. Cllr Barton felt this was unfair as it would mean job losses. Cllr Ashcroft added that the role of a librarian was a specialist role.
- It was agreed that Councillors would gather information to show that the library was invaluable to the community.
- Cllrs Pearl and Sims would find out from St Helens Council what they were proposing at a strategic level.
- Cllrs Ashcroft and Barton would visit Eccleston Library to establish what services they offered.
- Cllr Williams would look at what other areas had done and whether there had been any feedback.

Ecclesfield – Tuesday 1 March 2022 at 7.00pm, Eccleston Village Hall. Councillors Ashcroft, C Pearl, G Pearl and Sims attended along with the Secretary.

- Caretaker reported the handle on the defib cabinet had been broken. The Clerk had obtained a quote for a new handle. The fire extinguishers had been serviced and everything else was fine.
- A quote had been obtained for a risk assessment of the water system. Cllr Sims would also provide details of a second company to provide a quote.
- No users had attended. The adult team had requested a change of pitch. The Secretary was asked to contact Bleak Hill Rovers to ask whether they had any objection.
- Pitch fees for 2022/23 would remain the same – seniors £460, juniors £100 and U10s £40.
- Storage unit – Cllr Sims explained that at a recent meeting between herself, Cllr G Pearl and St Helens Council officers, it was confirmed that the container was owned by St Helens Council. A draft agreement from St Helens Council had been received by Ecclesfield Management Committee regarding the use of the container and the responsibilities of the Committee. It was agreed that the Management Committee should have nothing to do with the container as it was not owned by the Management Committee. The Secretary was asked to contact St Helens Council to report the decision of the Management Committee.
- Signage – planning permission had been granted in December 2021. The Secretary was asked to arrange for the sign to be installed.
- The budget was accepted.

Smithy Working Party – 8 March 2022, 7.00pm – Councillors were given a copy of the Curators' report. The following points were discussed:

- New Season – Curators were preparing for the new season.
- Blacksmith's Day – Curators had been making preparations for Blacksmith's Day and arranging for craftspeople to attend.
- Schools – Curators would be contacting schools to inform them of the new exhibition and loan box service.
- Exhibition – the new exhibition would be entitled 'The Making of St Helens' and would be looking at the history of industry in the town.

21.150 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Resolved to note the following:

10 Carmelite Crescent

Prior approval for single storey rear extension projecting 3.82m from the rear, 3.31m high overall and 2.41m to the eaves

N/O

54 Houghtons Lane

Single storey kitchen and garage extensions

N/O

Cllr Barton reported that trees at the former Carmelite site were still being approved for felling even though the Trees and Woodland Officer at St Helens Council had reported that no more would be. Cllr Pearl explained that the Council would only remove trees if they were dead, diseased or dangerous.

21.151 ACCOUNTS

Resolved to note the following:

Received: Received Village Hall Hire £383, RK PAYE £81.00, NatWest interest 0.48, 0.01 and 0.39, HMRC VAT £179.49

Total Receipts **£644.37**

Payments:

Water Plus – water	22.91
GPS Telecom – clerk’s phone/internet – Jan	52.27
SSE – gas	198.72
J Chamberlain – March	175.78
J Anderson + PC	1365.28
V Griffiths – March	175.78
L Poole – March	383.25
Merseyside Pension Fund – employer and employee contributions	481.18
Chris Barber – VH grounds maintenance + plants	265.00
Golden Hygiene – washroom services	403.20
St Helens Council – cleaning March	388.00
Total Payments	£3911.37

RECONCILIATION – The Clerk reported that as at 28 February 2022 the Balance in the Current Account was £6,500.00, Reserve Account £50,317.79 and Capital Deposit Account £467.01.

PETTY CASH - Expenditure for the month of February 2022	£0.00
Approximate balance at the end of February 2022	£7.37

Cllr Barton offered to look into a smart thermostat system for the central heating system at the Village Hall to try to reduce the cost of gas. The heating system was currently set on a weekly timer. Councillors felt the heating could be reduced to just when groups were using the hall.

21.152 CORRESPONDENCE

- **Email from the gardener** reporting trees that were not in good condition with a quote of £250 to remove them.
Cllr Cass reported that the Village Hall grounds were looking tidy and in good condition. He examined the trees in question, and recommended that the middle fruit tree be removed as it was dead and the other 2 trees be crowned. He also recommended that the tree at the rear of the Village Hall be crowned. The Clerk would arrange for the work to be carried out.
- **BT** – notice of price increase from 31 March 2022.
- **GPS Telecoms** – notice of price increase from 1 April 2022.
- **An email from St Helens Council** regarding the library strategy had been sent to Cllr Sims in reply to her enquiry regarding any consultations that had taken place about the future of Eccleston Library. The email had been copied to all Councillors.

21.153 DATES OF MEETINGS

Resolved to note the following:

Tuesday 12 April 22	6.45pm	Finance Sub Ctte	Village Hall
	7.00pm	Smithy	Village Hall
	7.30 pm	Parish Council	Village Hall

Tuesday 26 April 22	7.30 pm	Annual Parish Meeting	Village Hall
---------------------	---------	-----------------------	--------------

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm

SIGNED DATED