

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF ECCLESTON PARISH COUNCIL
held on TUESDAY 9 MAY 2023 at 7.30 pm
in ECCLESTON VILLAGE HALL, Kiln Lane, Eccleston

PRESENT: Cllr Sims (Chair)
Cllrs Cass, Madine, C Pearl, G Pearl, Spencer and Williams
J Anderson – Clerk

23.01 APOLOGIES

Cllr Johnson

23.02 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllr G Pearl declared an interest in Item 23.21 – Planning Applications

23.03 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 11 APRIL 2023

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

23.04 MATTERS ARISING

None.

23.05 ELECTION OF CHAIR

It was proposed and seconded that Cllr Sims be elected as Parish Chair for the year 2023/2024.

23.06 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

It was proposed and seconded that Cllr G Pearl be elected as Deputy Chair for the year 2023/2024.

23.07 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS/CODE OF CONDUCT

Councillors completed Declaration of Interests forms. Councillors were reminded that the Code of Conduct adopted by St Helens Council had been agreed and adopted by Eccleston Parish Council in January 2022.

23.08 CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES

Resolved that the committees be constituted as follows:

Planning – Cllrs Ashcroft, Johnson, Madine, Sims, N Taylor and Williams

Finance – Cllrs Haw, G Pearl and Sims

Hall & Personnel – Cllrs Haw, C Pearl and Sims

Open Spaces – Cllrs Haw, C Pearl, G Pearl and Sims

Editorial – Cllrs Haw, G Pearl and Sims

Procedures – Cllrs Ashcroft, Haw, G Pearl and Sims

Smithy Working Party – all Councillors to attend. Held before each Parish Council meeting

Smithy Heritage – Cllrs Ashcroft, Sims and Williams

Ecclesfield Management – Cllrs Ashcroft, Cass, C Pearl, G Pearl, Sims and Spencer

War Memorial Working Party – Cllrs Cass and Haw

23.09 REPRESENTATION OF OUTSIDE BODIES

Resolved that the following be noted:

Merseyside Playing Fields – Cllr Haw

Merseytravel – Cllr Johnson

23.10 STANDING ORDERS, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND QUORUM

Resolved that Society of Local Council Clerks' model Standing Orders along with Financial Regulations continue to be used. Meetings would take place with a quorum of 4 councillors, as per Standing Orders.

23.11 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER AND INTERNAL AUDITOR

Resolved that the Clerk continue to carry out the duties of Responsible Financial Officer and Ms A Roberts would carry out the role of Internal Auditor for 2023/2024.

Resolved that in order to comply with the current audit requirements, the Parish Council would request the Internal Auditor to undertake on a regular basis a review of the financial procedures adopted by the Council in connection with payments and receipts, insurance and other such matters as may be identified from time to time as part of ongoing assessment of the Council's activities.

23.12 BANK MANDATE AND DIRECT DEBITS

Resolved that the present mandate, specifying 2 Councillors and the Clerk sign cheques, would continue. Resolved also that the direct debits would continue for SSE Energy, Water Plus, CF Corporate (photocopier lease), BT (Smithy telephone) and GPS Telecoms (Clerk telephone). Bank transfer to be used for the following only: Merseyside Pension Fund and salaries for J Anderson, J Chamberlain, V Griffiths, R Kelsey and L Poole.

23.13 APPROVAL OF ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 was agreed by Councillors and signed by the Chair.

Internal Audit – Ms Amanda Roberts had completed and signed the Annual Internal Audit Report for the External Audit when she carried out her final quarterly audit.

23.14 APPROVAL OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The Annual Accounting Statements 2022/23 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

23.15 REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, EMERGENCY PLAN

The following policies and procedures had been reviewed with no changes made:

- Forward Plan
- Documentation Policy
- Documentation Plan
- Environmental Sustainability Statement
- Collections Development Policy
- Care and Conservation Policy
- Care and Conservation Plan
- Documentation Procedural manual
- Access Policy Statement

- Information and Data Protection Policy
- Privacy Notice
- Hall Terms and Conditions
- Emergency Plan

23.16 RESIDENTS' ISSUES

A resident had contacted the Clerk raising the issue of parking around the Griffin Inn and on the grassed area. This had been reported to St Helens Council in May last year but the Clerk had received no reply. Cllr Sims reported that St Helens Council were monitoring the situation and it was being discussed between Ward Councillors and officers. The Clerk would inform the resident.

23.17 POLICE REPORT

Crime figures had been received.

23.18 REPORTS

Resolved to note the following:

Smithy Working Party – all Councillors were given a copy of the Curators' Report for May. The following points were discussed:

- The new exhibition about Stefan Skura had been well received.
- The Curators had been invited to the Polish Saturday School in Morecombe as part of the Polish Heritage Days.
- Merseyside Polonia would include details of the exhibition in their guide for Liverpool's European Festival.
- Blacksmith's Day – 20 May 2023, 12pm-6pm. The Curators would gratefully accept contributions of cake to be sold on the day.
- Problems had been encountered recently when Vicky had tried to access the Village Hall to open the Smithy. A group had booked the hall for the day and were not expecting anyone to walk through the hall. It was agreed to look at the cost of a lock on the corridor fire door so that the Curators could access the Smithy via this door and not the Village Hall. The Clerk would get a quote.
- Cllr Sims asked the Curators to contact Eccleston Lane Ends School to possibly go along to deliver a session to the children. Cllr Sims would ask the school to contact the Smithy.

23.19 OPEN SPACES

(a) St Helens Council had reported a tree that had split and would need removing costing £520.73. A replacement would cost £474.10. Cllr Sims would look into funding this through the Councillor Improvement Fund.

(b) The Junior team had complained that the pitch lines had been painted but then the grass had been cut removing the lines. It was agreed to contact St Helens Council regarding the schedule of marking the lines and cutting the grass.

23.20 ECCLESFIELD PITCH FEES

It was agreed to propose to Ecclesfield Management Committee in June, that pitch fees increase by 10% meaning open age would be £506, Junior would be £110 and Under 10s would be £44.

23.21 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Resolved to note the following:

Delegated

Applications

54 Millbrook Lane

Single storey side and rear extension

Ensure sufficient off-street parking

15 Chapel Lane

Single storey rear extension and partial garage conversion

N/O

Decisions

66 Springfield Lane

External alterations to the property including new pitched roofs over existing flat roofs, amendments to existing window and door openings, removal of chimney, and the addition of cladding and render to the whole property

Refused 17/4/23

Knowsley Road/Millfields/Holme Road Roundabout

Consent to display 4no non illuminated advertisement hoardings

Granted 18/4/23

21 The Spires

Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a single storey rear extension, first floor front extension and conversion of part of garage to form office / utility room.

Refused 21/4/23

Colliery Cottage

Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a two storey dwelling and single storey outbuilding with associated landscaping

Granted 28/4/23

Valencia Stables

Change of use of land from agricultural use to garden attached to property

Refused 25/4/23

23.22 ACCOUNTS

Received: Village Hall £828, 1st half precept £39,251.89, RK Salary + PAYE £433.60, Windle phone £12.57, HMRC VAT Jan-Mar – £1,521.68

Total Receipts

£42,047.74

Payments:

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|---|----------------|
| GPS Telecom – Clerk's phone March | 45.25 |
| SSE – gas | 139.24 |
| J Anderson – mobile phone for caretaker | 89.99 |
| BT – Smithy phone | 194.14 |
| CF Corporate – copier lease | 76.80 |
| SSE – electricity | 1037.13 |
| J Chamberlain – May + Smithy expenditure | 224.55 |
| V Griffiths – May | 188.17 |
| L Poole – May | 459.36 |
| J Anderson – May + petty cash | 1465.96 |
| R Kelsey – Ecclesfield May | 346.80 |
| Merseyside Pension Fund – employer and employee contributions May | 558.30 |
| Best Security – Smithy alarm annual monitoring and service | 443.24 |
| Guardian Fencing – repair to Mill Brow fence | 1068.00 |
| Tatton Brewery Ltd – beer for Smithy IBD event | 196.32 |
| Total | 6533.25 |

INTERNAL AUDIT – Amanda Roberts carried out the quarterly audit with nothing to report. She completed and signed the Annual Internal Audit Report for the External Audit.

RECONCILIATION – The Clerk reported that as at 30 April 2023 the balance in the Current Account was £6,500.00, Reserve Account £74,877.65 and Capital Deposit Account £469.07.

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|---|--------|
| PETTY CASH – expenditure for the month of April 2023 | £23.53 |
| Approximate balance at the end of April 2023 | -£6.77 |

23.23 CORRESPONDENCE

Noted

- Email from St Helens Council, Library Service. Draft Library Strategy Consultation – 1 May-31 July. Drop-in sessions at libraries – Eccleston on 16 May, 11am-1pm.
- Email from St James with St Matthew’s Church requesting the grant for the maintenance of the Garden of Remembrance – will be on June agenda.

23.24 DATES OF MEETINGS

Resolved to note the following:

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|----------------------|---------|----------------|--------------|
| Tuesday 6 June 2023 | 7.00 pm | Ecclesfield | Village Hall |
| Tuesday 13 June 2023 | 7.00 pm | Smithy Meeting | Village Hall |
| | 7.30 pm | Parish Council | Village Hall |

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

SIGNED DATED