BOLD PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Bold Parish Council held on Wednesday 13th May 2020**

**(Due to the pandemic lockdown the meeting was held virtually)**

**Present:** Councillors D. Hawley, P. Gerrard, C. Hughes, C. Foy, S. Hull, C. Smith, and A. Makin (from item 14)

*Whilst Councillor A. Makin was attempting to log on to the virtual meeting it was decided that Councillor D. Hawley should chair the meeting.*

**20/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

 Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors D.J. Jackson, C. Gerrard, P. Fishwick, A. West, and D. O’Keefe. Councillor A. Makin indicated his intention to log in to the meeting if at all possible (from item 14).

 **Resolved** that the above be noted.

**20/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

 None were declared.

**20/13 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 4th March 2020**

There were no matters of accuracy raised.

There were no matters arising which were not already on the agenda:

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 4th March 2020 be approved and signed as a true record.

**20/14 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

 Due to the meeting being held virtually there were no members of the public present.

 **Resolved** to note the situation.

**20/15** **CLERK’S REPORT**

 The clerk reported on the following items:

1. NALC Spring Conference

Due to the control requirements associated with Covid 19 the above had to be postponed. The Parish Council has actually paid a fee of £268.97 for the Chairman to attend. At this point in time the fee has been retained in the hope that the conference will be rearranged. In the event that this is not possible the Parish Council would require a refund.

1. Rat Infestation, Crawford Street Gardens

Several resident complaints had been made regarding the above. The Clerk had contacted Environmental Health, and an officer had been assigned to implement control measures. Councillor Smith, who lives in the vicinity, had also reported the issue and informed members that the problem had subsided for the time-being.

1. Donation to Clock Face Recreation Club (Section 137 Grant)

As an urgent action, in accordance with delegations permitted under Financial Regulation no. 10, a grant of £199 had been approved for the above organisation to support the provision of food parcels for local residents who were unable to shop during the pandemic lockdown. The Chair had issued a personal cheque which required reimbursement.

1. Annual Report 2019/20

Whilst the Annual Report had been printed in good time a decision was made by the Clerk in consultation with the Chair for this not to be delivered to residents. There were two reasons for this:

* The report invited residents to attend the Annual Meeting of the Parish on 8th April 2020 which was cancelled at short notice due to the pandemic lockdown
* Delivery would have put Parish Council members at risk

An adjusted copy will be placed on the Parish Council website

1. Colliers Moss Fire Damage

The Clerk informed members of extensive fire damage at the above. The Clerk had previously informed Members by email. The police, St Helens Council, and Mersey Forest have also been informed. The damage is currently being assessed, and health and safety checks are being undertaken

 **Resolved** to note the above.

**20/16 POLICE LIAISON REPORT**

 Due to the meeting being virtual there was no police representation. Councillor Foy requested that the police be thanked for recent good work which had been undertaken by the police in addressing issues at the Dream Site. The police had been particularly approachable and accessible

 **Resolved** to note the situation and the Clerk to pass on the above thanks to Sergeant Rackham.

**20/17 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

***Proposals for Consideration***

There were no new applications for consideration.

***Committee’s Actions***

*There had been no comments on the following planning applications:*

**P/2020/0243 – 75 Gorsey Lane, Clock Face**

Single storey rear extension.

**P/2020/0253 – 2 Bridge Court, Bridge Road, Clock Face**

Two storey side extension

**P/2020/0283 – 5 Union Bank Lane, Bold Heath**

Two storey side extension

**Resolved** that the above be endorsed

*Decisions*

*Approvals*

**P/2020/0052 – 14 Hazelwood Close, Clock Face**

Works to assorted trees covered by a tree preservation order.

P/2020/0099 – 6 Sunflower Close, New Bold

Conversion of existing garage to habitable room

P/2020/0146 – 466-468 Clock Face Road, Clock Face

Single storey rear extension

**Resolved** to note the above decisions

**20/18 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

(a) Following the payment of accounts submitted for the last scheduled meeting the bank balance currently stands at £23,744.57. Details of payments and the total spend per budget item were shown on the statements signed by the Chairman.

 **Resolved** to note the report.

(b) Accounts for Payment

**Resolved** that the following be approved for payment:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Payee | Amount£ | Cheque Number |
| NALC & LALC Annual Subscription 2020/21  | 540.57 | 000709 |
| Chairman – reimburse Section 137 donation to Clock Face Recreation Club (see minute 20/15) | 200.00 | 000710 |
| Clerk – reimburse costs relating to:* Annual Report printing
* Locks for noticeboards
* Printer ink contract Feb/March & March/April
* Ground Rents (St. Helens Council)

TOTAL | 135.0010.006.580.83152.41 | 000711 |
| M.G. Productions (website support –see minute 20/11)) | 100.00 | 000712 |

(c) Year End Financial Report 2019/20

 The Clerk presented for formal approval the year-end financial report relating to 2019/20, including Balance Sheet, Summary of Receipts and Payments, Transaction List for the year, Budget Comparison Statement, and bank reconciliation. The end of year bank balance was reported as £23,744.57, and bank statements were included in the report in support of this.

 **Resolved** that the end of year financial report for the financial year 2019/20 be approved and signed by the chairman

(d) Annual External Audit for the Year Ending 31st March 2020

The Clerk informed members of the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations regarding the completion of an annual governance statement, audit of the accounts, and the exercise of public rights. Members were informed that for these purposes the Parish Council is categorised as a “small authority” and as such can choose to be exempt from external audit (though must still carry out all of the usual end of year processes). The Parish Council requested exemption for 2018/19 resulting in a saving of £200 in audit fees. The Clerk invited members to consider its position and confirm whether it wishes to exempt itself for 2019/20.

The Clerk also presented a list of key dates for confirmation:

* As soon as possible after 31 March 2020 (but by 30th June 2020 at the latest)– approval and submission of Exemption Certificate
* 31st August 2020 - deadline for approval of Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)
* 30th November 2020 – deadline for AGAR to be published on website.
* 15th June to 24th July 2020 - Period for exercise of by public rights (notice to be displayed)

**Resolved to** submit a Certificate of Exemption from external audit and approve and note the above timetable

(e) Audit Report 2019/20 and Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control & Audit

The Clerk informed members of the following in relation to the above:

1. The Council’s Internal Auditor has indicated that the parish council’s systems of internal control are both adequate and effective for the purposes intended. A final (virtual) meeting with the internal auditor took place on 11th May 2020, where the internal auditor signed-off the Annual Audit Return for 2019/20. The internal audit letter had been circulated by email.
2. Members were reminded of the nature of the present internal audit arrangements and the checks which take place. These checks are laid down by the Audit Commission and are detailed on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). This procedure is

in accordance with the Practitioners Guide issued for the Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales. Members also considered a “Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control and Audit” document which had been previously circulated by the Clerk in order to assist members in reviewing their internal control and audit arrangements and effectiveness of financial controls.

1. The AGAR was circulated prior to the meeting for information and for signature by the Chair on behalf of the parish council, for publication on the Parish Council website.

**Resolved** that

1. the report and internal audit letter be noted
2. the present internal audit arrangements continue for the financial year 2020/21
3. the arrangements and systems of internal control and audit be approved
4. the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2019/20 be approved in the required sequence (sect. 1 then sect. 2) for signature by the Chairman and published on the Parish Council website.

**20/19 DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

 **Resolved** that the dates for the council year, 2020/21, be as follows (subject to members not identifying any significant clashes with St Helens Council events) :-

24th June 2020

5th August 2020

16th September 2020

21st Oct 2020

9th December 2020

20nd January 2021 (Precept Meeting)

10th March 2021

7th April 2021 (includes Annual Parish Meeting)

 12th May 2021 (includes Annual Meeting of Parish Council)

Unless agreed to the contrary all meetings to start at 7:15pm and be held at St. Michael and All Angels Church.

**20/20 REVIEW OF INSURANCE PROVISIONS AND RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

 Members considered and reviewed risk management arrangements and adequacy of insurance.

**Resolved** that the Council considers that it has assessed the potential risks to the Council and taken appropriate measures to manage those risks and will continue to monitor the position throughout the year.

**20/21 PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE MAINTENANCE**

The Clerk advised members to note that since the establishment of its website all updates and advice to the Clerk have been provided by the developer (his son). Inevitably this takes time and expertise which would otherwise have had to be bought-in. The Clerk informed members that without such technical support he would be unable to operate the legally required website. At its meeting on 10th May 2019 a remuneration sum of £100 was agreed in recognition of this work. The Clerk also advised members that, in the interests of continuity and as a risk mitigation measure, it was in the Parish Council’s interest to ensure retention of the service – at least in the short term. He emphasised that the Parish Council was obviously free to commission alternative arrangements if it so wished.

A question was asked with regards to the need for a website and the number of “hits” experienced. The Clerk reminded members of the requirements of the Transparency Code and the legal requirement to have a website.

**Resolved** to make a payment of £100 in recognition of work undertaken and as a retention safeguard. The Clerk to enquire as to whether there was any data on the number of times the website had been accessed.

**20/22 ID BADGES**

Following a query raised by a member of the public the Clerk asked members to consider whether they wished to have ID badges. A discussion took place regarding the merits of such badges.

**Resolved** that Parish Council ID should be carried by councillors when appropriate, and that a suitable supplier be determined for the production of credit card style ID. Councillor Hull agreed to explore options.

**20/23 DEFIBRILLATORS**

The Clerk informed members of his communications with the local authority regarding satisfying its requirements for the siting of a defibrillator adjacent to the New Bold community noticeboard. Possibly due to the pandemic communications had reached an impasse. Members expressed concern at the lack of progress.

Councillor Hawley reminded members of the availability of a defibrillator which had been donated by a local doctor. It had been proposed that this should be located on the Bold Industrial Estate at Bold Tyres. It would require a secure cabinet with a power supply. A local electrician had agreed to assist with the installation. The doctor had offered his support regarding ensuring protocols, and the New Bold Community Group have offered to fund any ongoing costs e.g. replacement pads etc.

**Resolved that**:

1. The Clerk contact the relevant officer at the local authority for an update / guidance regarding the installation of a defibrillator adjacent to the New Bold noticeboard.
2. The practical implications of mounting the recently purchased defibrillator to the existing noticeboard stanchion be explored
3. A sum of £1,000 be set aside from the general balance to fund the purchase and installation of a secure defibrillator cabinet at Bold Tyres

**20/24 WAR MEMORIAL AND INDUSTRIAL MEMORIAL**

Concern was expressed at the lack of progress. It was suggested that, due to Councillor O’Keefe’s commitments, Councillor Smith should take the lead on the working group and in doing so should reaffirm the membership and respective tasks.

**Resolved** that the above be approved.

 **20/25 REPORTS**

1. Councillor Gerrard informed members that the issue of flooding on Farm Close appeared to have resolved for the time being. He had suggested the excavation of a drainage trench which up until now had alleviated the problem.
2. Members were informed that during the lockdown certain known individuals had been boasting on social media about flouting the rules in Clock Face Country Park, by the fishing lake. Further concern was expressed about the fishing lake where people who were night fishing had been leaving litter. The issue of the management of the lake was discussed and the need for this to be formalised.
3. Councillors discussed the important work which had been undertaken by Clock Face Recreation Club in support of the local community during the lockdown. Members expressed a wish for the Parish Council to acknowledge this on behalf of local residents, and that this should be considered at the next meeting.

**Resolved** that the above be noted and that reports 2 and 3 should be considered at the next Parish Council meeting.

**20/26 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

 **It was resolved** that the next meeting take place at 7:15 pm on Wednesday 24th June 2020 either virtually or at St Michael and All Angels Church – subject to pandemic conditions.

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Chairman Date