**Billinge Chapel End Parish Council**

The Public Hall, 216 Main Street, Billinge WN5 7PE

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**Billinge Chapel End Parish Council Meeting**

**Minutes of the Billinge Chapel End Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting**

**on Monday 21st July 2025 at 7.00 pm**

**at The Public Hall, 216 Main Street, Billinge WN5 7PE.**

**Present:**
Chair Cllr Frank Gill, Cllr Fiona Gill, Cllr Bill Bradbury, Cllr Bill Bates, Cllr Jeremy Barnes, Cllr M Webster, Cllr S Jennings

**Also in Attendance:**
Clerk

1 member of the public

**1. Apologies for Absence**

The Council received apologies for absence from Cllr Colin Betts**.
Resolved:** That the apology be accepted.

**2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

There were no declarations of interest, and no requests for dispensations were received in relation to items on the agenda. **Noted.**

**3. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 16th June 2025 were reviewed.
**Approved:** That the minutes be accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chair. **Proposed:** Cllr Fiona Gill**Seconded:** Cllr Bill Bradbury

**4. Public Participation**

A local resident raised concerns about the pedestrian gate leading to Bankes Park

 on Beacon Road, which had remained closed throughout the week. The issue was discussed, and the Council agreed to seek clarification from the responsible authority. **Resolved:** That the Clerk write to St Helens Council requesting an explanation and action regarding the gate closure.

**5. Co-option to the Council**

The Council received a statement from a candidate interested in filling the current vacancy. Councillors asked relevant questions to assess suitability. **Resolved:** That Sarah Jennings be co-opted onto Billinge Parish Council with immediate effect. **Proposed:** Cllr Fiona Gill**Seconded:** Cllr Jeremy Barnes **All Agreed**The Chair welcomed Cllr Jennings to the Council.

**6. Grant Applications**

Two grant applications were considered. After discussion, the Council agreed to support both groups.
**Resolved:**

* That Billinge in Bloom be awarded a grant of £500.
* That the Residents Association be awarded a grant of £300. **Proposed:** Cllr Bill Bradbury Seconded: Cllr Fiona Gill

**6.3** Additional Item: £5,000 Grant received for Reading Room

**Noted:** The Council formally acknowledged receipt of a £5,000 grant from St Helens Council to support the furnishing of the Reading Room.
The Council discussed potential items to be purchased and considered the best approach for procurement. **Resolved:** That responsibility for managing procurement using this grant be delegated to the Building Works Working Group. **Proposed:** Cllr Fiona Gill**Seconded:** Cllr Frank Gill

**7. Planning Applications**

**7.1 Application P/2025/0360/HHFP** – 32 St Mary’s Avenue
The Council considered the application for a first-floor side extension. **Resolved:** That no objections be raised to this application.

**7.2 Planning Updates**No Further Updates on previously submitted applications were received. **Noted.**

**8. Policy and Procedure**

The Council reviewed and considered the constitutional and governance documents for the 2025/26 municipal year. It was **Resolved** to **Approve** and **Adopt** the following:

* Risk Management Policy
* Risk Assessment
* Data Protection Policy
* Investment Policy
* Equality and Diversity Policy

**Proposed: Cllr** Malcom Webster**Seconded:** Cllr Bill Bradbury

**9. Fire Risk Management**

The Council reviewed fire risk assessments and training. A discussion took place around preparedness and compliance. **Resolved:**

* That fire risk training be arranged for relevant personnel. To see what the limit on attendance is.
* That the Clerk make enquiries about providing First Aid and Defibrillator training for residents.

**10. Appointment of Internal Auditor**

The Council considered the appointment of Jo O’Donoghue as internal auditor for the 2025/26 financial year. **Resolved:** That Jo O’Donoghue be appointed as Internal Auditor and a letter of confirmation be issued by the Clerk. **Proposed:** CllrBill Bradbury**Seconded:** Cllr Frank Gill

**11. Internal Audit Report 2024/25**

**11.1** It was **received** and **noted** that the Internal Audit Report for the financial year 2024/25 had been completed.

**11.2** Members **Noted** the findings of the report and **confirmed** that the Clerk/RFO had taken appropriate steps to address the minor issues identified.

**11.3** The Council **Noted** the comments and recommendations of the internal auditor, which were generally positive, and included some procedural improvement suggestions.

**11.4** The Council **Confirmed** that the Clerk/RFO had already implemented actions in response to the audit, including improvements in record-keeping, timely bank reconciliations, and financial control documentation.

**11.5** It was **Agreed** that a quarterly internal review of financial procedures will be introduced to further support robust financial management and governance.

**11.6** It was **Resolved** that the Council is satisfied appropriate measures are in place to ensure sound financial and governance practices, with the additional actions **Agreed** under item 11.5 to be implemented.

**Proposed:** CllrBill Bradbury**Seconded:** Cllr Frank Gill

**12. Finance and Governance**

**12.1** It was **Resolved** to appoint Cllr Sarah Jennings to review and verify monthly bank reconciliations against the cashbook and bank statements as part of the Council’s internal control procedures.

**12.2** The Payment Schedule for June 2025 was **Approved**.

**12.3** The bank reconciliations for June 2025 were **Approved.**

**12.4** The Payment Schedule for July 2025 was **Approved** and **Authorised.**

**12.5** The Council **Noted** the publication of items over £100.00 for June 2025 on the parish council website.

**12.6** The Clerk’s Report on the Council’s income and expenditure for Q1 of the 2025–26 financial year was **Reviewed**, and the contents **Noted**.

**Resolved:** That Cllr Sarah Jennings be appointed to verify monthly bank reconciliations.
**Proposed:** Cllr Fiona Gill Seconded: Cllr Bill Bradbury

**13. Financial Oversight and Approval**

**Noted:** That the authorised signatories for Parish Council bank accounts are:

* Cllr Fiona Gill
* Cllr Bill Bradbury
* Clerk Karen Newton

**14. Fixed Asset Register**

**14.1** The Council **Reviewed** the current Fixed Asset Register, confirmed the accuracy of listed assets, and **Noted** the acquisitions and disposals recorded during the financial year.

**14.2** It was **Verified** that the Fixed Asset Register is complete and accurately reflects the Council’s current holdings.

**14.3** The Council **Approved** the listed additions and removals of assets for the financial year 2025–26.

**14.4** It was **Confirmed** that the Fixed Asset Register aligns with the audit and the insurance policy will be reviewed regarding the amount insured.

**14.5** The Fixed Asset Register was **Approved** to reflect the same figure on thesubmitted on the AGAR 24/25

**Resolved:** That the register be verified, approved, and amended to agree with the submitted with the AGAR 24/25. **Proposed:** Cllr Frank Gill**Seconded:** Cllr Bill Bradbury

**15. Public Hall Reading Room**

The Council **received an update** regarding the Public Hall Reading Room. Cllrs Colin Betts, Malcolm Webster, and Bill Bradbury had met with surveyor Nicola Atherton earlier that morning to review the proposed drawings.

It was **Noted** that:

* The dimensions of the new building need to be adjusted to 5m x 5m.
* The gas meter will require relocation to the front of the building to accommodate the new layout.
* The amount of glazing in the new building must be reduced, as current designs show glass making up 50% of the floor area, whereas regulations permit a maximum of 25%. Further updates will be brought to the working Group and shared with full Council as the design progresses.

It was **Resolved** that the building works and required submissions will proceed without the need to call further Council meetings, to avoid delays and ensure continued progress on the project.

 **Proposed:** Cllr Frank Gill**Seconded:** Cllr Bill Bradbury

**16: Website and Email Accounts**
The Council **considered updates** on the website and email accounts. Minor improvements were noted, and further updates will be brought to a future meeting as necessary.

**17: Social media**
The Council **discussed matters** relating to access and management of the Parish Council’s social media platforms.

It was **Agreed** that a Parish Council Facebook page will be created and managed by the Clerk. Administrative access and posting guidelines will be reviewed and formalised to ensure clarity, consistency, and accountability in communication.

**18: Security Lights and Side Gate Installation**
The Council **received an update** on the installation of the security lights and side gate.

Cllr Colin Betts reported to the Clerk that initial works had been completed; however, it was **Agreed** that finalising the installation would be more appropriate once the new build is complete, to ensure compatibility and avoid duplication of effort.

Further updates will be provided in due course.

**19: Reports from Parish Council Representatives**
The Council **received an update** from Cllr Bill Bates on behalf of the Residents’ Association regarding upcoming community events to be held at St Marys Club. The following dates were provided:

* VJ Tea Dance - 17th August 2025
* Halloween Event – 31st October 2025
* Remembrance Event - 7th November 2025
* Christmas Light Switch On – 28th November 2025
* Christmas Craft Fayre - 30th November 2025
* Children’s Christmas Party – December 2025
* Over 60’s Christmas Party - 14th December 2025

**Noted:** Cllr Malcolm Webster reported on ongoing plans for tree planting at Dam Slacks play area. Further updates will be provided as the project progresses. He also noted that approval is still being sought for the proposed lighting of the beacon for VJ Day.

Verbal updates **noted**.

**20: Reports and Correspondence (Information Only)**
The Clerk reported that a request had been made to the PCSO for a Police Report; however, no report had been received to date. As a result, the Clerk has requested a meeting with the police to be held at the Public Hall and is currently awaiting a response.

All other correspondence was **received and noted** for information.

**21: Date and Time of Next Meetings**

Monday 15th September 2025

**Meeting Closed:** 21:00

**Signed: Karen Newton**
Karen Newton – Clerk to the Council
**Date:** 15/09/2025

Signed: Chair

Date: 15/09/2025

Press and public are welcome to attend.