**Billinge Chapel End Parish Council**

**DRAFT Minutes of the Council Meeting held on**

**18 November 2024**

Present: Cllr Fiona Gill (Chair) Cllr J Barnes (Vice Chair)

Councillors B Bates, B Bradbury, C Betts, S Gardner, Frank Gill, M Webster

**Public Session**

Borough Cllrs C Betts and P Peers were present.

7 members of the public were present.

Borough Cllr P Peers reported that he had been advised by the Officer at St Helens Borough Council that he still did not have an update on what was happening with the old Library Building but expected to have one soon. Borough Cllr Peers said that he would continue to follow up on getting a progress report.

Two members of the public were there representing the football club at the Eddleston Fields and advised about progress being made with securing grant funding, increasing membership and scope of activities, and their latest successes. The Parish Councillors thanked them and congratulated them on their successes.

The young people from Billinge (who were raising funds to cover their costs of going to Kenya to take part in community and environmental projects in 2026) gave excellent presentations on why they wanted to go; what they hoped to achieve and how they would benefit from the experience.

Borough Cllr P Peers advised that he was going to give each of them a grant of One Hundred Pounds.

**No 68**

**Apologies for Absence**

**Noted** apologies for absence from Cllr S Murphy and **approved** the reasons for absence.

**No 69**

**Noted** there were no declarations of interest.

**No 70**

**Resolved** to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2024 as a correct record.

**No 71**

**Noted** the presentations from the two school children who have volunteered (as part of their studies) to go to Kenya in 2026 to take part in community and environmental projects. The Parish Council commended the two school children on wanting to do this and help children less fortunate than themselves and applauded their efforts around fundraising to-date.
**Resolved** to award a grant to each of the children of £300 .00 in 2025/26. The Parish Council would be in touch with each of them to make arrangements about payment.

**No 72**

**Christmas Tree Lighting 1800 29 November 24 in The Millennium Garden**

**Noted** that the Chair will turn on the lights; the Billinge Residents Association will provide refreshments; and the Billinge Community Music Group will play music in The Public Hall from 6.30pm.

**Resolved** to thank all of those who had helped and to also thank Cllr C Betts for organising the work on the lights.

**No 73**

**Aims and Objectives 2024/25**

**Dam Slacks Improvements**

**Noted** that the Parish Council had been a beneficiary of a Will and had allocated this to a Developments Reserve in the 2024/25 budget and that the balance was currently £26,919.00.

**Resolved** that the balance in the Developments Reserve would be allocated to achieve the key aim to make improvements at Dam Slacks. This would be used to develop and expand the play area and plant a wildflower garden. The proposed play equipment would enable older primary children to have a play area at the bottom end of the village.

**Noted** that The Parish Council has already resolved to install picnic benches in memory of its 50th Anniversary.

**Noted** that the Parish Council’s Health & Safety Advisors had visited the play area when they did the 2024 Audit and advised that there was no reason to not develop the site further and planting a wildflower area was also feasible. Advice would be given again once the design etc were available.

**Noted** that a play equipment company had visited the site and given their advice on the site and its potential for more play equipment. Other companies would now be invited to visit the site and quote for play equipment supply and fitting.

**Community Led Book Service**

**Noted** that the Clerk advised that she had (following being advised by Cllr Frank Gill that Eddleston Trust’s agent was very interested to discuss terms with Book Cycle) phoned Book Cycle and asked them to ring the Trust’s Agent which they had said they would do. However there had been no feedback to-date. These negotiations had been going on for some considerable time with no progress which was extremely frustrating.

**Resolved** to progress the idea of building an extension onto The Public Hall. The Clerk had supplied information on what was involved in applying for a loan from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB). This advised that before an application could be made it was necessary to have secured planning permission for the proposed extension and to have conducted a precept consultation.

**Resolved** to submit a planning application based on the drawings for an extension and, if planning permission was granted, to conduct a precept consultation.

**No 74**

**Billinge Residents Association**

**Noted** The Association had kindly shared its Constitution with the Parish Council and this had been noted at the last Parish Council meeting but, due to time pressures, was not discussed in detail.

**Resolved** that the Chair (supported by The Clerk) would contact the Residents Association to ask for an explanation of the inclusion of Seneley Green in the Constitution. The Chair would also thank the Chair of the Association for sharing the Constitution and ask him for more information on how the Constitution aligned with national advice on the role of Resident Associations.

**Resolved** that a report back from the two representatives of the Parish Council on the Association would be a standing item on future agendas and that the Parish Council would actively promote that the Resident Association Meetings were open to all Billinge Residents. The Association meets on the second Monday in each month in The Public Hall at 2pm.
 **No 75**

**New Website**

**Noted** that the website and email addresses had all been transferred successfully to NetwiseUK who specialise in Parish Council websites.

**No 76**

**Planning**

**Resolved** to not submit observations on the following:

P/2024/0554/HHFP 17 St Mary’s Avenue

**No 77**

**Financial Matters**

**Resolved** to authorise the payments listed on the attached Schedule of Payments for November 2024 VNs 73- 82 totalling £2971.70.

**Resolved** to approve the application for a grant of £500.00 to Billinge Residents Association towards the costs of the Children’s and Pensioners Christmas Parties 2024.

**No 78**

**Noted** the update from the Personnel Committee on the successful recruitment of an experienced Clerk/RFO. The existing Clerk/RFO was thanked for all she had contributed to the Parish Council and the Parish during her time in office.

The meeting closed at 2115.