

Clerk to the Council: -
Mr. R. J. Hallam
31 Farnham Close
Appleton
Warrington
WA4 3BG
01925-264201
07801 472083

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Walton Parish Council held at St. John's Church Community Hall, Old Chester Road, Higher Walton, on Thursday the 8th June 2023.

Present Councillor R Hardie - Vice Chair
Councillor B M Price
Councillor R D Bennett (7.30)
Councillor A Bowles
Councillor A Williams
Councillor V C Lacey
Councillor S A Harris
Councillor D M Karalius

In Attendance Parish Clerk R J Hallam
Residents 1
Borough Councillor M Jervis

The Vice Chair opened the meeting at 7.00pm and welcomed everybody.

34. Apologies for Absence

The Vice Chair reported that apologies for absence had been received from the Chair Councillor Shaikh (work) and Councillors Hazeldine (holiday) and Greene (work).

35. Adjournment

The Vice Chair called for an adjournment to allow a resident Mrs Gadd to address the meeting at 7.01pm. ***It was resolved that the meeting go into adjournment proposed by Councillor Harris and seconded by Councillor Karalius all in favour.***

Mrs Gadd referred to the street tree planting that the PC had done some years ago and asked whether more trees could be planted opposite her property on Osborne Road. She was happy to contribute towards the cost and also canvas her neighbours about their views.

Councillor Bowles explained about the plans of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Group in respect of tree planting.

Action - The Vice Chair said that he would send Mrs Gadd a copy of the note he had used when canvassing residents views previously. It was agreed that the matter would be included on July's agenda for discussion.

The meeting went back into session at 7.07pm.

36. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 4th May 2023 were reviewed.

It was resolved that the minutes be accepted as a true record. Proposed by Councillor Williams and seconded by Councillor Lacey. All in favour.

37. Reports on Matters Arising from the previous minutes

The report had been issued with the meeting documentation and the Clerk had nothing further to add.

Police Report.

The Clerk advised that Matt Kirkham was now the PCSO for HSW, as Phillip Hilton had moved to Appleton and Stockton Heath as part of changes to job roles.

Ellesmere Road, Walton- parked car damaged by unknown offender keying the side of vehicle. There have been similar incidents reported at the Stockton Heath end of the road. Patrols have been increased in the area. The Clerk advised that he had also received a phone call from a resident of Ellesmere Road, who was also complaining about this issue.

Chester Road, Walton- report of male and female possibly graffitiing the swing bridge. Enquiries identified the pair and established they were making some effort at cleaning the 'SLIM' graffiti tag that the male had painted several months ago, the incident linked to the damage to the war memorial.

Speed indication Device (SID)

A SID has been deployed to Walton New Road. It is still operating and will be removed and the data downloaded this month.

Community engagement

Walton Lea project. Continued support of the bike recycling project by delivering bikes from the police property system.

St Johns Church coffee morning.

38. Report from Borough Councillor.

Local Plan - Councillor Jervis (MJ) gave a detailed update on the Local Plan.

WBC have opened up the consultation for a further 6 weeks.

The 656 planning enquiry delayed until October 2023.

The SWPG agreed to engage a barrister for the 1 day hearing. All within budget, not new money.

Daresbury Expressway - Halton Borough Council had not consulted with WBC about the closure. They will meet on Monday 12th June 2023. Options to be covered include, signage, traffic management, rat runs and Creamfields. Following a point raised by Councillor Lacey, MJ will ask question about whether a risk assessment had been carried out .

Action – MJ will update the Clerk.

39. Forward Plan Update.

Councillor Harris gave a recap of the plan and reiterated that it is a working document and would like responses from councillors.

40. Civility and Respect.

The Vice Chair did say that he was uncertain about the difference between this and The Code of Conduct and felt that the pledge was incomplete.

Contributions from other councillors stated that this was a reinforcement and public declaration, it is more in depth and adds to the CofC.

It was resolved that the PC undertakes to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge (NALC) and to adopt the principles contained therein. Proposed by Councillor Harris and seconded by Councillor Lacey. 5 votes in favour and 3 abstentions.

41. To receive and accept the report from the Clerk on the Parish Accounts and to formally approve the accounts for payment.

The Clerk had issued with the Agenda the Financial Report (FR) and a copy of the Receipts and Payments Account for the current year to date, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

The Clerk presented: -

Cheque number 001476	payable to Community First Trading Ltd	Insurance renewal	£302.36
----------------------	--	-------------------	---------

Cheque number 001477	payable to R J Hallam	Clerk's Salary	£324.20
Cheque number 001478	payable to HMRC	PAYE/Tax	£81.05
Cheque number 001479	payable to R J Hallam	Off Exp Ink£9.99	£9.99
Cheque number 001480	payable to Gardenia Gardens Ltd	Warden (Inv5152 25X£15=£375+VAT£75)	£450.00
Cheque number 001481	payable to R Hardie	Stone plaque to mark location of time capsule	£66.50
Cheque number 001482	payable to JDH Business Services Ltd	Internal Audit Fee	£246.00

It was resolved that the Financial Report and the Accounts for Payment be approved. Proposed by Councillor Bowles and seconded by Councillor Bennett. The cheques were signed by Councillors Hardie and Karalius.

Pensions Regulator

The Clerk confirmed that he had received a letter confirming that he had completed the re-declaration of compliance with the Pensions Regulator.

Internal and External Audit

The Clerk told the meeting that the Internal Audit had now been completed by JDH Business Services Ltd. One issue had been raised:-

Issue - Minutes refer to a 'financial report' provided by the Clerk at each meeting rather than the budgetary control report.

Recommendation – Minutes need to more directly evidence ongoing budgetary control review, by referencing to a budgetary control report provided by the Clerk, that compares spend to date against the budget.

Action – The Clerk will prepare a suitable spreadsheet document to include spend against budget and present this to the meeting on a quarterly basis commencing in July 2023.

Councillors accepted this action as a way forward in meeting the Internal Auditors requirements.

42. Report from Advisory Groups.

Events Planning Group.

Anita Raggett the retiring vicar of St. John's the Evangelist has agreed to bury the time capsule on Saturday the 1st July. Councillor Greene to be asked to seal the capsule.

Action – Clerk to write to the vicar.

Donations Advisory Group

An application from St. John's Church (churchyard maintenance) had been received.

It was resolved that the PC agree to a donation of £300 for churchyard maintenance at St. John's Church. Proposed by Councillor Harris and seconded by Councillor Karalius, all in favour.

Planning Matters

The Planning report had been circulated to councillors with the meeting documentation.

Councillor Hardie referred to the consultation by Cornerstones to replace the 20 metre aerial to 25 metre aerial at Rows Wood off A56 Chester Road.

Climate and Ecological Emergency Group

Councillor Bowles referred to the new action plan she had issued to all councillors.

The swift boxes are now in place.

Report from Village Betterment Advisory Group

Councillor Hardie referred to the minutes of the VBAG meeting which took place on the 23rd May.

It was agreed that we would plant more daffodils and other plants. Councillors were asked to email wishes for what and where.

Volunteers are needed to help with this, but proper notice is required so that councillors can plan their availability.

There was further debate on areas which could be considered for planting. Including the right hand side of the Mill Lane entrance on Chester Road.

The Clerk pointed out that only £2K of the Creamfields money had been earmarked for spending, leaving £3K with no plans for spending.

It was resolved that the PC spend up to £600 on plants and compost for the flower beds and tubs. Proposed by Councillor Hardie and seconded by Councillor Harris, all in favour.

It was decided at this stage not to provide any financial assistance for improving the front garden area of the Church Community Hall.

Councillor Hardie pointed out that the time was approaching (Dec 2025) when thought needs to be given as to whether the PC decides to take up the option of taking ownership of the Village Triangle.

Councillor Harris suggested that we need to make this an agenda item in the near future, so that we are prepared.

A discussion took place about the role The Daresbury Estate have in the ownership of the Village Triangle.

Action – Councillor Price to approach the Treasurer of St. John’s Church about the connection the Church have with The Daresbury Estate.

Once this is established then a letter could be drafted to Lord and Lady Daresbury about the connection with the Village Triangle.

43. Report on Parish Matters

Local Plan.

Covered under Borough Councillors Report.

Other Parish Matters

Daresbury Expressway Closure – Covered under Borough Councillors Report.

Councillor Harris wanted to bring to everybody’s attention the notes she had circulated of the Walton Estates Events Meeting held on 23rd May 2023 and the notes of the Creamfields meeting. Further meetings to follow.

AED Training – Dave McClure will provide ‘Use of AED and Basic Life Support’ training for councillors and members of the public on the 6th July prior to the July PC meeting. These will be in 2 half hourly sessions in the Church Community Hall. Councillors to advise Councillor Williams of their attendance within next 7 days.

Further training will be available monthly on a Saturday at Walton Lea Partnership.

Councillor Williams will confirm arrangements with councillors by email and also ask Councillor Hazeldine to include on website and Facebook.

Councillor Williams has emailed our thanks to the Walton Arms and will follow this up with emails to the Stag Inn and Walton Lea Partnership.

44. Reports from Appointed Representatives

Footpaths/Towpaths – Councillor Price – Councillor Harris reported that the footpath on Runcorn Road was overgrown with both the hedge and creeping grass. Clerk to follow up on previous request to clear.

Roads/Traffic and Street Lighting – Councillor Bennett – reported that an untaxed transit van parked on the grass verge near Walton traffic lights had been removed by the police and DVLA. This van had reappeared and needs reporting to WBC.

The underground pipework drains between the gullies on A56 Chester Road remain blocked. Clerk to notify Borough Councillor Jervis who will take up with Highways.

Frank Karalius and Ryan will relocate the paving flags for the planters at the junction of Park Lane and Chester Road and on completion Councillor Bennett will then move the planters to the new site.

Councillor Karalius raised the lack of action in cutting back the hedge at 113 and 115 Walton Road and said she would also raise the matter personally with WBC.

Action – Clerk to report to WBC.

Walton Hall Estate – Cllr. Price – Following a question from Councillor Hardie, Councillor Price will ask Neil Simpson about the number of weddings being held at the Hall. Councillor Harris gave some information on the work being done by the management of the Hall in generating income.

Councillor Bowles did question whether this was relevant and any of the PC's business and Councillor Karalius said the information required by Councillor Hardie was available through Councillor Harris and Councillor Williams. The Vice Chair said he wanted to ensure that the Hall was being used to its fullest advantage.

Following further discussion Councillor Harris said she wanted to make a point of order, she thought the tone of the meeting had gone down considerably and that it fully demonstrated why she was very happy that the PC had signed up to the Pledge "Civility and Respect" and hoped that we start to put it into practice.

The Vice Chair said he was also frustrated by the chitter chatter and talk about other matters and hence wished to move the meeting on.

Following this Councillor Harris said she didn't have anything more to say and left the meeting.

45. Review of Correspondence

Broomfields Leisure Centre – Councillors agreed to provide a letter of support.

Action – Clerk to prepare and send letter of support.

Village Triangle Trees email from resident. – The majority of councillors agreed that the PC does not have responsibility for the trees on the Village Triangle, although it does have an option to consider taking ownership in December 2025.

Action – Clerk to respond to resident and advise WBC of the residents concerns.

Vicar's retirement party 1st July Church Community Hall 12.30pm – 4 councillors said they would be attending.

46. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be Thursday 6th July 2023, at St. John's Community Church Hall, Old Chester Road, Walton, commencing at 7.00pm.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The meeting closed at 21.03 hrs.