

Delamere & Oakmere Parish Annual Parish Meeting

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF DELAMERE AND OAKMERE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 20TH APRIL 2020 AT 7PM.

Present: Councillors C Ball, C George, S Ralph, A Walsh, A Bell, J Edwards, D Rutter and R Gilbert-Bratt.

Also, present Clerk, Mrs J Monks.

1 Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor A Bell welcomed everyone to the Parish Council meeting. Councillor A Gore and Councillor D Wheeler had sent their apologies for the meeting.

2 Chairman's Annual report

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor A Bell gave an annual report as follows;

This year has been one of much change and development for Delamere and Oakmere. We are continuing to see the housing developments at Earlsbrook and The Old Courthouse, combined with the new visitors centre development combined with the Forest Holidays cabins and the new watersports centre at the Fishpool Quarry.

I am pleased with all the progress we have made regarding Road Safety and hope that this will continue over the coming months, and this will provide benefits for the community. Our work also with the Frith Avenue Field and Neighborhood Plan also continues to progress well and a big thanks to John for all his efforts in kickstarting the proceedings in this.

I would like to thank Clive who has been a valued Parish Councillor for many years, and keeping us all up to date with the Magazine, To all the councillors for their individual efforts, particularly during these challenging times. and to Joanne who has been an extremely invaluable source of help and assistance, and her hard work is always very much appreciated

We are at this moment living in very difficult and unusual times, and I would also like to extend a particular thanks to all those in our community who have gone beyond their means to keep the residents of our community supplied, particularly Lee, Suzanne and Team at Delamere Stores, The Buckleys at Coronation Farm, and most importantly to our NHS workers and Key workers who live in Delamere and Oakmere and beyond, for helping to keep us all safe and well.

I wish you and your families all the very best over these coming months, and thanks again for all your hard work during this past year

3 Open discussion

No one wished to raise any issues at this point.

Delamere & Oakmere Parish Council Meeting

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH MEETING OF DELAMERE AND OAKMERE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 20TH APRIL 2020 AT 7PM

Present: Councillors C Ball, C George, S Ralph, A Walsh, A Bell, J Edwards, D Rutter and R Gilbert-Bratt.

Also, present Clerk, Mrs J Monks.

Part 1, items to be considered in the presence of the press and public

1 Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor A Bell welcomed everyone to the Parish Council meeting. Councillor A Gore and Councillor D Wheeler had sent their apologies for the meeting.

2 Member's Code of Conduct and declarations of interest

Councillor R Gilbert-Bratt declared pecuniary interest in relation to item 7 (f), 20/01109/FUL, Refurbishment and alterations including demolition of existing conservatory and side porch, two storey extension to front, addition of dormers to front, alterations to and replacement of windows, addition of render and cladding to facades and new slate roof, Racecourse Bungalow Racecourse Lane, Cotebrook, as this was her property as such she did not take part in the discussion or decision in relation to this planning application.

3 Public Participation

No members of the public had contacted the clerk requesting to speak.

4 Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting

RESOLVED that;

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Delamere and Oakmere Parish Council on Monday 10th February 2020 be approved as a correct record.

The clerk noted that there were no minutes for March 2020 as the Parish Council meeting was cancelled due to Covid-19.

5 Progress Reports and Outstanding Items

The clerk has received notification dated 3rd March 2020 from Department of Transport that they have issued a draft Order (Revised) NW/4117 regarding the proposed stopping up of the Highway at Footpath FP4 Delamere Forest, however this public consultation has now been deferred following the outbreak of Covid-19.

The clerk informed the Parish Council that she had undertaken the year end accounts and had submitted a claim to HMRC for £97.96 in order to claim the VAT back for the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020.

The clerk has received a letter dated 14th April 2020 from the Parish Council's solicitors, Butcher and Barlow. They have confirmed that the Land Registry has completed the registration of the lease for the land at Frith Avenue. The title number of the lease is CH684885 and the entry shows that the Parish Council have the lease for the land from 9th July 2019 to 9th July 2044. The final solicitors bill is £640.00 and the clerk will prepare a cheque to be signed at the next Parish Council meeting.

6 Correspondence and Clerks report for March 2020

The clerk circulated a report in March 2020 as the Parish Council meeting in March was cancelled as follows;

The clerk confirmed that she had received ten responses from the Frith Avenue questionnaire which was sent to residents.

The clerk had received an acknowledgment and thank you letters in February 2020 for the donations from NW Ambulance, Delamere Community centre, Tarporley War Memorial Hospital, Oakmere Cricket Club and St Peters Church.

The clerk has received notification dated 5th March 2020 that the Highways Department will be reducing the speed limit to 40mph on the A556 from the junction with Abbey Lane to the existing national speed limit near Waste Lane. In the decision notice it stated. *"Reasons for the decision; Cheshire West and Chester Council have received concerns from the local Parish Council regarding the speed of traffic along Chester Road Delamere."*

The clerk had received a request to install a 'bug hotel' on Frith Avenue field at no cost to the Parish Council. As there were no objections to this the clerk granted permission for this as there was no Parish Council meeting in March due to Covid-

The clerk received an email dated 25th March 2020 from the Defib shop informing the Parish Council that the defibrillator pads at the Delamere Community centre were due to expire on 14th April 2020. The cost of two replacement pads is £87 plus VAT. The clerk purchased and installed the pads, all Parish Councillors were informed of this purchase and it was authorised by Councillor A Bell (Chairman), Councillor C George (Vice-Chair) and Councillor C Bell.

RESOLVED that;

The actions in the above clerk's report and any actions contained in the report were approved.

Councillor C George had provided his resignation from the post as Parish Councillor with immediate effect. The Parish Council thanked Councillor C George for all his hard work and contributions towards the Parish Council over many years and he would be sadly missed.

7 Planning

The Parish Council considered all of the planning applications that had been received up to 20th April 2020.

RESOLVED that;

- a) No objections were to be made to 20/00674/S73, Delamere Forest Ashton Road Delamere Northwich Cheshire Proposal: Variation of Condition 21 (Landscaping) of 16/03550/FUL (Appeal Ref APP/A0665/W/17/3185481)
- b) 20/00990/FUL, Raise roof to provide first floor accommodation including extension to side and alterations, Avondale The Ridge Delamere CW8 2HX.
- c) 20/00983/FUL Enlargement of the dwelling by raising the roof height, introduction of first floor window to the front, rooflights, cedar cladding, and the addition of a rear extension - amendment to application 18/04827/FUL to include cedar cladding. 77 Station Road Delamere.
- d) 20/01012/S73, Variation of Condition 18 of 11/04200/MIN (to allow importation of recycled soil compost for mixing with sand for construction and landscaping market) Crown Farm Quarry Stoneyford Lane Oakmere.
- e) 20/01098/REM, Approval of reserved matters following outline application 16/00659/OUT for one dwelling. Land at Cherry Orchard Farm Abbey Lane Oakmere.
- f) 20/01109/FUL, Refurbishment and alterations including demolition of existing conservatory and side porch, two storey extension to front, addition of dormers to front, alterations to and replacement of windows, addition of render and cladding to facades and new slate roof, Racecourse Bungalow Racecourse Lane, Cotebrook.

8 Finance

The following financial reports had been circulated for the attention of the Parish Councillors.

Clerk's Financial Report – March 2020

The clerk reported that the current bank balances were as follows and bank statements showing these amounts were presented and signed by the Chairman
Bank account balance is £23,541.95 as at 29th February 2020 (The bank balance amount includes the New Homes Bonus fund)

Earmarked funds as follows;

£3160.00 for speed sign on Station Road agreed at December 2019 meeting.

£872.83 for Parish Council solicitors' fees (Butcher & Barlow) appointed 16th October 2017. (deduced from the New Homes Bonus fund).

£2,000 for Frith Avenue project, resolved to spend in November minutes.

RESOLVED that;

the following payments be authorised;

Method of payment	Payee	Particulars of payment	Amount
Standing Order 21 st	Clerk	Salary for March	£369.39
Standing Order 21 st	Cheshire Pension Fund	Employers & employees contribution for March	£133.35
001068	Clerk	Expenses for March	£27.25
001069	HMRC	Quarterly payment	£275.00
001070	Clive George	Printing of newsletter	£334.70
001071	Destroyed		
001072	Changing Lives	Annual payroll processing fee	£168.00
001073	Clerk	Annual Email hosting charge	£23.99

Clerk's Financial Report – April 2020

The clerk reported that the current bank balances were as follows and bank statements showing these amounts were presented and signed by the Chairman.

Bank account balance is £22,827.27 as at 31st March 2020.

(The bank balance amount includes the New Homes Bonus fund)

Earmarked funds as follows;

£3160.00 for speed sign on Station Road agreed at December 2019 meeting.

£872.83 for Parish Council solicitors' fees (Butcher & Barlow) appointed 16th October 2017. (deduced from the New Homes Bonus fund).

£2,000 for Frith Avenue project, resolved to spend in November minutes.

New Homes Bonus fund (which is included in the bank balance) is £12559.76.

Unpaid cheques are £547.40. Income received is £174.00 advertising income.

£294.00 outstanding from March 2020 newsletter however invoices only issued on 14th March 2020.

RESOLVED that;

the following payments be authorised;

Method of payment	Payee	Particulars of payment	Amount
Standing Order 21 st	Clerk	Salary for April	£369.39
Standing Order 21 st	Cheshire Pension Fund	Employers & employees contribution for April	£137.26
001075	Clerk	Expenses for April	£24.30
001076	Neave Creative	Webhosting annual charge	£35.00

The clerk was requested to post the minutes and cheques for signing each month to the Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor A Bell.

Following the resignation of Councillor C George the clerk was asked to contact the NatWest in order to remove him from the bank mandate.

RESOLVED that;

Councillor R Gilbert-Bratt would be added onto the bank account in order to replace Councillor C George.

RESOLVED that:

The Authorised Signatories in the current mandate for the NatWest account in the name of the Parish Council, for the accounts detailed in section 1.3, be changed in accordance with section Authorised Signatories and the current mandate will continue as amended.

9 Appointment of internal auditor

RESOLVED that;

Mr M Garnett, who has effectively undertaken the internal audit previously, be appointed to undertake the Annual Internal Audit for Delamere and Oakmere Parish Council for 2019/2020 in accordance with the requirements of the Annual Return.

10 Reconciliation of bank accounts and review of end of year accounts for 2019/2020

To note the reconciliation of the bank account as at 31st March 2020 and to review the end of year accounts for 2019/2020. (reports included in Financial report for April) The clerk reported that the reconciliation of the bank account as at 31st March 2020 was as follows;

Bank balance as at 31st March 2020 is £22,872.27

Less £275.00 unpresented cheque 001069

Less £168.00 unpresented cheque 001072

Less £104.40 unpresented cheque 001074

Total balance is £22,279.87.

RESOLVED that;

The reconciliation of the bank account was accepted by the Parish Council.

Accounts for 2019/2020

The clerk reported that the accounts for 2019/2020 had been completed and will have to submitted to the internal auditor.

RESOLVED that;

The payments and receipts report as follows was accepted by the Parish Council.

Payments were as follows;

Payments	Budget 2019/2020	Actual Payments
Clerk's salary inc HMRC and Pension	6700.00	7041.28
Clerk expenses	600.00	811.89
Room Hire	110.00	110.00
Printing of Newsletter	1500.00	1156.83
Cheshire Assoc of Local Councils subs	450.00	434.88
Footpath Society subs	8.00	8.00
Insurance	400.00	415.89
External audit fee	250.00	0.00
Training	250.00	70.00
Website & email	100.00	82.98
Contingencies	500.00	438.40
Payroll Services	170.00	168.00
Community Engagement	100.00	0.00
CWAC dog bin charge	400.00	364.00
Donations	1514.00	1514.00
Data Protection fee	40.00	40.00
Cheshire Community Action subs	20.00	20.00
Election costs	0.00	197.00
Total Payments	13112.00	12873.15

Receipts were as follows;

Receipts	Budget 2019/2020	Actual Receipts
Precept	9547.00	9547.00
Council Tax Reduction scheme grant	133.00	133.00
Advertising Income	1500.00	1395.00
Other		60.70
Community Infrastructure levy payment		0.00
Scottish Power	14.00	14.59
Net		11150.29
VAT reclaimed		777.50
Total Receipts	11194.00	11927.79

11 Earmarking reserves

The bank balance as at 31.03.2020 is £22,827.27. These reserves need to be earmarked.

RESOLVED that;

The reserves as at 31.03.20 were earmarked as follows;

Earmarked reserves as at 31.03.20		
Unpresented cheques at 31.03.20		547.40
Speed sign for Station Road	Agreed Dec 2019	3160.00
Solicitors Fees for Butcher & Barlow	Agreed October 2017	872.83
Frith Avenue project	Agreed Nov 2019	2000.00
Community Infrastructure Fund		0.00
New Homes Bonus Fund		12559.76
Contingencies		3000.00
	Total	22,139.99

The clerk noted that the Community Infrastructure fund was nil as the money had been transferred into the earmarked funds for the speed sign for Station Road.

12 Interactive speed sign on Station Road

The Highways Department of Cheshire West and Chester Council have supplied maps showing the locations of the pipes surrounding the location of the proposed pole. The clerk has requested a copy of the contractors Street works Accreditations from TWM. However, it still remains the Parish Council's responsibility to ensure that the drawings are examined by the contractors prior to installation.

The clerk has contacted all the statutory undertakers to see if they have any objections to the installation. SP Synergy Networks have confirmed that they have no objections but have supplied a copy of the Safety Guidance on undertaking works under overhead cables. The clerk has sent this to the contractors for their attention. United Utilities have a raw water main (16" cast iron) within the footpath where the work is to be undertaken as such they have supplied guidance which the clerk has sent to the contractor for their attention. The clerk has not received any reply from BT.

The contractor has supplied a copy of the Street works accreditation for the sub-contractor and this has been supplied to the Highways Department of Cheshire West and Chester Council for their attention.

The clerk has received an email dated 3rd March 2020 from the contractor stating that the cost of installation has increased from £800 to £1900.

Issues;

- 1) Licence agreement from Cheshire West and Chester still needs to be signed by Parish Council.
- 2) No response from BT.
- 3) Cost of increase of the installation price from £800 to £1900.

The contractor was trying to find another sub-contractor to undertake the installation however the firm were now temporarily shut due to Covid-19.

13 Grit bins

The clerk had submitted a request to the Highways Department of Cheshire West and Chester Council for permission to site five grit bins. The Highways Department however confirmed that none of the sites submitted meet the criteria the Highways Department. The Cheshire West and Chester criteria is as follows;

“grit bins are only provided in residential areas next to shopping areas, part way up hills with a slope over 10% or where there are special circumstances.”

The only sites that the Highways Department would permit are the following;

- A grit bin on land near the Parish Council notice board on the left as you turn right coming from the direction of Chester off the A556, into Mere crescent. This could be approved but on our site inspection we noted that there is clearly much local pride in the condition (google maps illustrates it to) of these verges & would query whether the characteristics (& likely usage over 12 months) is genuinely worth the permanent detriment to the aesthetics of the local area. Some consultation on this would be worthwhile.
- One is the corner of Station Road and Frith Avenue. I believe you mean Station Road (which is gritted as part of the routes). Frith Avenue is not 10% gradient, although this could be approved.
- Corner of Mere Crescent.

The Highways Department would only approve these three areas however they queried the benefits and these roads were not though roads and had low speed limits. The Highways Department confirmed that they would not maintain or refill these grit bins.

The Highways Dept of Cheshire West and Chester Council stated that they would be very reluctant to implement a grit bin on Shakerley Close, any location is likely to block the footway (be problematic for wheelchairs/pushchairs) & we expect you will face considerable opposition from residents who will not want the grit bin fronting their property. The Highways Dept asked if the parish wish to consult with residents over a proposed site & then submit it to the Highways Dept for review.

The Highways Dept have refused permission for the following;

One is on the corner of Chester Road and Shakerley Close. The area on the plan marked is barriered off, we would not permit it on the footway given accessibility concerns. Area around the junction relatively flat & would query how residents would transport grit to area with more significant gradient much further into the Close, therefore the Highways Department could not approve.

One is on the corner of Mere Crescent and Chrimes Drive Chrimes Drive is unadopted & not under highways jurisdiction. We would not want two bins this near each other on Mere Crescent, therefore the Highways Department could not approve.

One halfway down Racecourse Lane. Racecourse Lane is unadopted & not under highways jurisdiction, low population, therefore the Highways Department could not approve.

All grit bin locations would need to be subject to the 115E advertising process.

This item would have to be deferred due to Covid-19.

14 Woodland Trust trees

RESOLVED that;

The clerk was asked to apply for 105 sapling pack of trees for Frith Avenue from the Woodland Trust. The application reference is CTP34286.

15 Maintenance in Little Wood

This item would have to be deferred due to Covid-19.

16. Payment for Cheshire West and Chester Council to empty the Eddisbury Hill Dog bin at the annual cost of £364.00 (£7.00 per week)

RESOLVED that;

The Parish Council would continue to pay Cheshire West and Chester Council the annual cost of £364.00 (£7.00 per week) to empty the Eddisbury Hill dog bin. The clerk was asked to contact Cheshire West and Chester Council to request an invoice for payment.

17. Update from Cheshire West and Chester Councillors

No update had been received.

18. Councillor's report and future agenda items

Councillor A Bell reported that Councillor D Wheeler asked if the clerk could provide an update with regards to the Marley Tiles site and progress on the roundabout.

Councillor J Edwards reported that the Covid-19 help and assistance page was now live on the website.

Councillor A Bell reported that the new Reverend had settled in and was providing valuable contribution to the Parish.

Councillor C Ball asked if anyone had noticed an increase of fly-tipping in the area. Any reports will be sent to Cheshire West and Chester Council for their attention.

All the Parish Councillors thanked Councillor C George for his service as a Parish Councillor and wished him all the best in the future.

19. Date and time of next meeting

Annual Parish Meeting and the next Parish Council meeting is Monday 18th May 2020 at 7pm. (Virtual Meeting).

Part 2; contains confidential information and only Councillors and reporting officers can be present. The clerk will leave for this part of the meeting as it concerns the clerk's working from home allowance.

20. Clerk's Working from home allowance

The working from home allowance for the clerk has always been paid at the maximum allowance you can receive from HMRC without keeping any records. The clerk informed the Parish Council that she does not claim the costs of any telephone calls in addition to the working from home allowance.

RESOLVED that;

The clerk's working from home allowance was increased from £18 per month to £26 per month from 6th April 2020 in line with the increase from HMRC.

Chairman's signature.....Dated.....