

Delamere & Oakmere Parish Council Annual Meeting

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF DELAMERE AND OAKMERE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 15th MAY 2023 AT 7PM

Present: Councillor A Bell, Councillor F Goodier, Councillor J Edwards, Councillor G Hudson, Councillor C Topping, Councillor D Rutter and Councillor D Wheeler.

Also, present Clerk, Mrs J Monks and three members of the public.

1 Election of Chair

RESOLVED that;

Councillor J Edwards is the Chair of the Parish Council.

2 Election of Vice-Chair

RESOLVED that;

Councillor F Goodier is appointed Vice-Chair of the Parish Council.

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Also, present Clerk, Mrs J Monks and three members of the public.

1 Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair of the Parish Council, Councillor J Edwards welcomed everyone to the Parish Council meeting. Councillor M Shaw sent her apologies for the meeting.

2 Member's Code of Conduct and declarations of interest

Councillor D Rutter interest in relation to item 19, grants and donations as he was a member of the committee of Delamere Community Centre.

3 Code of Conduct

To confirm the code of conduct for the Parish Council.

RESOLVED that;

the code of conduct for the Parish Council was approved.

4 Acceptance of office forms

RESOLVED that;

Each Parish Councillor completed a new acceptance of office form which was signed by the Parish Councillor and clerk.

5 Public Speaking Time

No member of the public wished to address the Parish Council.

6 Register of interest forms

RESOLVED that;

Every Parish Councillor completed a new declaration of interest form. The clerk will put these on the website and send them to Cheshire West and Chester Council for their attention.

7 Expenses forms for Cheshire West and Chester Council

RESOLVED that;

Every Parish Councillor was asked to complete and return an expenses form to Cheshire West and Chester Council.

8 General Power of Competence

The clerk was qualified and two third of the Parish Councillors had been elected to the Parish Council.

RESOLVED that;

The General Power of Competence was adopted for Delamere and Oakmere Parish Council.

9 Vacant seats following uncontested election

The clerk confirmed that the Parish Council had an uncontested election. There were six seats on each ward.

The following Parish Councillors had been elected to the Delamere Ward;

Councillor J Edwards, Councillor F Goodier, Councillor A Bell, Councillor D Rutter and Councillor D Wheeler.

The following Parish Councillors had been elected to the Oakmere Ward;

Councillor M Shaw, Councillor G Hudson and Councillor C Topping.

This leaves four vacant seats, one on the Delamere Ward and three on the Oakmere Ward.

RESOLVED that;

The seats for the vacant posts will be advertised on the Parish Council's website with a closing date of 12 noon on Friday 2nd June to look at co-option at the June's Parish Council meeting.

10 Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting

RESOLVED that;

The minutes of Delamere and Oakmere Parish Council on Monday 17th April 2023 and the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting on Monday 17th April 2023 were approved.

11 Progress Reports, Outstanding Items

The clerk confirmed that she had chased up the PCSO regarding the community speed watch request for Station Road in Delamere. The PCSO confirmed that he was still awaiting a response from Cheshire West and Chester Council to complete a site visit and he will let the clerk know when the results are provided.

The PCSO confirmed that all incidents and complaints regarding speeding need reporting directly to himself or to Cheshire Police so they can act on the issues raised by members of the public.

12 Planning

The planning applications that had been received up to Monday 15th May 2023 were considered.

RESOLVED that;

No comments were to be made on 23/01361/LDC, Application for a certificate of Lawfulness of existing use of land as a private garden. Mount Pleasant, The Ridge Delamere.

13 Review of end of year accounts for 2022/2023 and internal auditors report

RESOLVED that;

The end of year accounts for 2022/2023 were accepted by the Parish Council.

RESOLVED that;

The internal auditors report was accepted by the Parish Council.

14 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/2023

The clerk confirmed that the accounts for 2022/2023 had been to the internal auditor and there were no issues arising from the internal audit. The Parish Council can declare itself exempt from a Limited Assurance review or ask the External Auditors for a full review at the cost of £210 plus VAT.

RESOLVED that;

The Parish Council would declare itself exempt from a Limited Assurance Review and the exemption certificate was signed by the Chair of the Parish Council, Councillor J Edwards and the clerk. The clerk would publish this on the website and send it to the External Auditor.

15 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/2023 Annual Governance Statement

RESOLVED that;

The Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023 is approved and is signed and dated by the Chair for 2022/2023, Councillor J Edwards and the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Mrs J Monks.

16 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/2023 Accounting Statements

The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer has filled in the Accounting Statements for 2022/2023 and the Parish Council considered the Accounting Statements. The clerk confirmed that the internal auditor had audited the Parish Council accounts and had signed and dated the relevant sections on the return.

RESOLVED that;

The Accounting Statements were approved and signed and dated by the Chair for 2022/2023, Councillor J Edwards and the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Mrs J Monks.

17 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

RESOLVED that;

The Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were approved.

18 Annual review of Internal Financial Controls

The Parish Council has undertaken a review of the internal financial controls.

RESOLVED that;

The present arrangements for financial controls as detailed below are acceptable;

- a) Bank transfers are raised in accordance with the financial report which is circulated with the agenda prior to each Parish Council meeting by the clerk.

- b) The financial report is approved at each Parish Council meeting and then the bank transfers are authorised by two Parish Councillors.
- c) The Chairman at each Parish Council meeting reconciles the bank balance on the financial report with the bank statement and signs and dates each.
- d) The financial statement which includes the bank balance and the bank transfers for payment for that month is entered into the minutes accordingly.
- e) If any item of expenditure had been already approved a bank transfer can be undertaken, if necessary in-between Parish Council meeting dates and added on the following month's financial report.

19 Finance

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

Bank account balance is £31,259.41 as at 30th April 2023

£336.00 advertising income and £12,225 precept received for April 2023.

RESOLVED that;

the following payments be authorised;

Zurich	Annual insurance	300.00
Joanne Monks	clerk expenses	32.30
Joanne Monks	May pay	466.94
Cheshire Pension Fund	May contributions	170.50

20 Risk Assessments and Assets

The clerk had undertaken a Risk Assessment review for the Parish Council.

RESOLVED that;

That the Risk assessment was accepted by the Parish Council.

The clerk noted that the Parish Council would need to complete a tree survey for both Little Wood and the land at Frith Avenue.

Asset Register

The clerk had reviewed the asset register for the Parish Council.

RESOLVED that;

The asset register was confirmed by the Parish Council

21 Reconciliation of bank accounts as at 31st March 2023

RESOLVED that;

Banking Reconciliation as at 31st March 2023 is as follows;

Banking Reconciliation 2022/2023	
Bank Accounts	
Natwest balance 31.03.22	£20,363.79
Less unpresented cheque	£32.30
True balance	£20,331.49
Plus Precept	10,646.00
Plus Income	5,161.04
Less Staff costs	8,870.96
Less expenditure	7,669.04
Natwest balance 31.03.23	£19,598.53

22 Earmarking reserves

RESOLVED that;

The reserves were earmarked as follows;

Ear-Marked Reserves 2023/2024	
Contingencies (ER)	2800.00
Frith Avenue project (ER)	1855.00
New Homes Bonus Fund (ER)	13285.59
Community Infrastructure Levy (ER)	1522.5
Total	19463.09

23 Speed limit request change for Station Road

The clerk confirmed that she had submitted a request to the Highways Department of Cheshire West and Chester Council to review the speed limit on Station Road. The Highways department however had come back and stated that they would need the Parish Council to fund 50% of the cost of changing the speed limit if a lower limit is recommended. The Parish Council would therefore have to contribute between £1,500 and £2,500 to the Highways Department of Cheshire West and Chester Council. The Highways Department of Cheshire West and Chester Council would need this financial commitment from the Parish Council before starting any assessment.

RESOLVED that;

The Parish Council would not fund 50% of the cost of changing the speed limit on Station Road if a lower limit was recommended as such no assessment of the speed of Station Road will be undertaken.

24 Speed limit request for Eddisbury Hill

RESOLVED that;

The clerk was asked to submit a request to the Highways Department of Cheshire West and Chester Council to look at the possibility of amending the speed limit on Eddisbury Hill from 30mph to 20mph and the clerk was asked to contact the Highways Department and ask them to look and inspect the overall condition of the road.

25 Earlsbrook Housing Development

The clerk confirmed that she had contact the Highways Department of Cheshire West and Chester Council who had confirmed that the roads on the Earlsbrook Housing Development had not yet been adopted by Cheshire West and Chester Council.

Lane End were developing the site on behalf of Laurus Homes who were part of Trafford Housing Trust who have now merged with London and Quadrant.

The Planning Department of Cheshire West and Chester Council had confirmed that they would not get involved as there were no changes to the planning permission which had been granted for the site.

RESOLVED that;

The clerk was asked to contact the Cheshire West and Chester Ward Councillors and MP to see if they could assist with the residents' complaints.

The clerk was asked to add to the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting in June.

26 Locations for Wildflower planting

Councillor A Bell confirmed that the seeds were in cold storage awaiting planting. Location for the planting has yet to be determined.

27 Tree survey

This item was deferred until the next Parish Council meeting in June.

28 Annual insurance

The clerk confirmed that the annual insurance is with Zurich and is due for renewal on 1st June 2023. The annual cost of the policy is £495.73. However, there is a new online policy (with the same company) and the annual cost of this is £300.00 which has been specifically created for small Parish Councils. This new online policy covers items up to £34,000, which includes computer equipment up to the value of £2,000.

RESOLVED that;

The Parish Council takes an annual insurance policy with Zurich from 1st June 2023 to 31st May 2024 at the cost of £300.00 including VAT.

29 Grant and Donations

Councillor D Rutter interest in relation to item 19 as he was a member of the committee of Delamere Community Centre.

RESOLVED; that

The following payments were to be made:

St Peter's Churchyard Fund	£664.00
Oakmere Cricket Club, for the youth section of the club	£100.00
Oakmere Methodist Church for grounds maintenance	£100.00

The clerk noted that a decision with regards to a grant for Delamere community centre was to be deferred.

30 Delamere and Oakmere news

The clerk confirmed that the cost of printing the March edition of the newsletter was £446.95. The total advertising income received was £507, which meant that there was a profit of £60.05. There were no unpaid invoices.

Councillor A Bell confirmed that the next edition will be published in July.

31 Kings Coronation

Councillor F Goodier will research costs and items for the celebration of the Kings Coronation.

The clerk will contact Norley Parish Council to obtain details of what they have done and ask the Cheshire West and Chester Ward Councillors if there is any funding via the Ward Members budget.

32 Forest England car parking charges

Councillor A Bell reported that Forest England have increased the car parking charges.

RESOLVED that;

The clerk was asked to contact Forest England raising the following concerns over the increases; To ask them what the rationale behind the increases were, why the increases were necessary especially in the current cost of living crisis, why there was no discounted rate for residents, why there was a full charge for blue badge disability and mobility car users.

It was clear that the immediate impact of the increase in the car park charges was resulting in cars avoiding the charges altogether and parking on the streets immediately surrounding the forest and this was causing issues particularly for residents. The Parish Council would like to request a meeting with representatives from Forest England to discuss.

33 Update from Cheshire West and Chester Councillors

There were no Cheshire West and Chester Councillors present.

34 Councillor's report and future agenda items

The clerk was asked to report the faded crossroads sign on Chester Road outside Delamere Academy to the Highways Department of Cheshire West and Chester Council and ask for this to be replaced. This has been reported under HW516391716.

The clerk asked Councillor J Edwards to delete Councillor R Gilbert-Bratt and Councillor J Ralph's official email addresses as they had now left the Parish Council.

Councillor A Bell requested that the clerk contact the PCSO asking for a speed watch campaign to be undertaken around Delamere Academy school.

Councillor A Bell reported that a new Mid-Cheshire Community Rail Officer has been appointed and the work at Pettypool station will continue.

Councillor A Bell reported that a resident had stated that the information board at Little Wood required attention. Councillor G Hudson will have a look at this.

Councillor F Goodier reported that the planters at Frith Avenue need building and the compost putting in them. Volunteers will be organised to do this over the next Bank Holiday Monday weekend.

Councillor F Goodier reported that the football posts on the field at Frith Avenue require attention. Councillor J Edwards will assist with the renovation of these.

35 Date and time of next meeting

The next Parish Council meeting is Monday 19th June 2023 at 7pm.

Councillor G Hudson and Councillor D Rutter gave their apologies for the next Parish Council meeting as they were unable to attend.

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