

LITTLE BOLLINGTON PARISH MEETING

Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 2 November 2021 at Little Bollington School

1. PRESENT & APOLOGIES

Present:

<u>LBPM Officers</u>	Mike Reed (Clerk)
<u>Officials</u>	Kate Parkinson (Ward Councillor);
<u>Lymm Road</u>	Ged Mann; Mike & Helen Riley; Ross McNab
<u>Park Lane</u>	Paul Barker
<u>Spode Green Lane</u>	Giselle & Mike Rusted; Ve Whitworth; Paul Duncalf-Grey;
<u>Park View</u>	Gail & Andy Blackburn;
<u>High Field</u>	Chris Wood; Mary Gifford;
<u>Other Areas</u>	Nigel Hennerley; Gillian Broadbent;

Apologies:

Paul Amphlett (Chair); Rev Phillip Robinson & Rev Patricia Robinson (Parish Church); Thom Betts (Novo); Ann Amphlett; Rosemary & Joe Bowden; Kath & Allan Milne; Lillian Cox; Brian Hurd

Room arrangements

Stringent protective measures were taken to make the room safe against coronavirus. These included prior cleaning of all chairs and surfaces, ventilation of the room via open windows and doors, distances between all seats, face coverings, and hand gel.

Chair

The meeting agreed that Giselle Rusted would chair the meeting in the absence of Paul Amphlett.

2. PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first Parish Meeting to be held in person since the lockdown in March 2020. There had been several Parish Meetings during lockdown, mostly by Zoom or with very low attendance. These were held on 28 August 2021, 14 January 2021, 18 November 2020, and 26 August 2020, The minutes of these meetings were approved.

3. FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk reported that the current balance of the account is approximately £1,900. The regular income is £1,100pa and the regular expenditure is approximately £800pa, leaving a balance of £300 each year for optional expenditure. The balance had built up in recent years due to a low level of activity especially during the Coronavirus lockdown.

A fundraising project had been undertaken in conjunction with Cooperative stores for the provision of benches in the village. The Coop have reported that this has raised a sum of £842, which will be paid to LBPM shortly.

4. CEC proposal to merge the parishes of Little Bollington, Agden and Millington

The Clerk had circulated a briefing paper on this draft proposal and the consultation by Cheshire East Council (CEC). He gave a summary and the matter was opened for discussion. The following points were noted. The CEC draft proposals were based on a population of about 150 in each parish. They

fail to take account of the imminent increase of 20% in the Little Bollington population following completion of the Stamford Arms redevelopment. The CEC consultation is open until 28 November. Little Bollington School is the only public building in this wider area, although meetings can be legally held in pubs, provided that alcoholic drinks are not consumed. The merged body could be called a Parish Council, or it could be called a Community Council, Neighbourhood Council, or Village Council. Elections would be held to appoint eight councillors on the new body. Little Bollington could set up a local committee to consider local views, and it may be possible for this to report to the new body. There would be a single parish precept for the combined area. There will be one Clerk which will allow a saving in overall expenditure for the three areas. The local community can continue to organise social events independently of the Parish Council. Millington Parish Council will meet on 9 November to consider the proposed merger.

It was proposed to respond to the consultation that LBPM would support the proposed merger provided that there will be proportional representation on the Council of elected members to fairly represent each area and provided that measures are taken to protect the local sense of identity and spirit of community.

5. POSITION OF CHAIR AND CLERK

The Clerk reported that Paul Amphlett had expressed his wish to resign from the position of Chair of the Parish Meeting. The resignation was accepted by the meeting with thanks to Paul for his service. It was agreed to seek nominations for a new Chair and to hold an election at the next Parish Meeting.

The Clerk reminded the meeting of his longstanding wish to resign, but it had proved impossible to find a new Clerk from within the community. The following points were noted. The Parish Meeting has the power to increase the parish precept in order to pay a salary and recruit from the wider area. The salary would be about £1,100pa and would require a 100% increase in the Parish precept. This would mean the average precept would increase from about £17 per household to £34. This compares well with the precept in other areas and the meeting considered it reasonable. A new Parish Clerk would undertake the duties of administration, meetings, correspondence, finance and accounts. But they would not undertake other duties managed by the current Clerk, such as circulating news and items of interest, policy and action on local issues, chasing progress on local problems, preparing evidence and arguments regarding development proposals etc. It would still be necessary to recruit volunteers for this work. The meeting supported the option of an increased precept and external recruitment of a new Clerk. Another option is for the current Clerk to continue, but undertaking only the basic role, until the outcome of the CEC Governance review is decided. It was noted that the Clerk could simply resign leaving a vacancy to be filled. The Clerk agreed to consider these options and express a preference at the next meeting.

6. LITTLE BOLLINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Ged Mann reported on the current status of the Neighbourhood Plan and the steps required for the plan to be approved and adopted. Considerable work has been done and investment of £9,000 has been made in commissioning independent reports by experts. The research and documentation is complete and ready for submission. But a Parish Meeting is not legally entitled to present a Neighbourhood Plan. It is therefore necessary to establish a Neighbourhood Forum for the area. This requires a minimum of 21 members although only a few will be required to undertake the bulk of the work. This body will then organise the next steps ie adopt a constitution, undertake a further public consultation, submission to CEC, local referendum, amendments if required, and adoption of

the Plan. The timescale is expected to be about one year. Ged will seek to have the Neighbourhood Plan approved before any changes resulting from the CEC Governance review are implemented. The meeting supported the proposal and many present signed up to join the proposed Neighbourhood Forum. This is open to those who live or work in the area. Ged Mann will check whether non residents are allowed to join. The Clerk will circulate the invitation widely. The Chair and Clerk expressed thanks to Kirsty Mann for leading and managing the huge project to complete the Neighbourhood Plan and to Ged Mann for taking the lead in managing the process through to completion.

7. PROPOSED MOTORWAY SERVICE AREA ON M56/A556

The Clerk had circulated details of the proposals by Tatton Group and Westmoreland Group to construct a motorway service area on green belt land around Yarwood Heath Farm. It was noted that, following a public enquiry, the green belt designation of this land was confirmed in the CEC Local Plan, which applies until the year 2030. The developers had promised many benefits including employment opportunities, food and other goods sourced locally, safety improvements to the new A556 roundabout, and financial contributions to local communities. The meeting noted other benefits including: a proposed cycleway; electric vehicle charging points; a quality design, including extensive landscaping and tree planting.

A number of concerns were expressed. The Clerk noted the comments and will ask for updates and any further information from the developers, including the date for submission of the planning application. The Clerk will ask the National Trust at Dunham Massey for their views on the proposals. It was agreed to consult all residents, then consider the proposals further and prepare comments on the Planning Application.

8. UPDATE ON OTHER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENTS

The Clerk reported that Thom Betts of Novo had intended to provide an update on the Stamford Arms development, but he was unable to attend due to illness. He will provide updates by email and at future meetings.

The Clerk reported that he had been unable to obtain updates from CEC on the two planning applications on land off Spode Green Lane. These are the retrospective application for farm buildings and the application for the dog exercise area.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Paul Barker announced the event in the Community Orchard on Park Lane on Sat 27 November. This will include fireworks and barbeque with baked potatoes and hot chocolate and marshmallows etc. Helen and Mike Riley announced a grand event at Ye Olde No. 3 pub on Saturday 6 November from 10am to midnight. This is a charity event for HGV drivers and will include food, music and other entertainments.

10. NEXT MEETING

A further meeting will be held in December or early January to elect a new Chair, agree the precept for next year and other matters. Those present favoured a meeting in person rather than by digital means. They felt that the measures taken at this meeting provided a safe environment.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.