

Little Bollington with Agden Community Council

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING, TUESDAY 16 MAY 2023

At Little Bollington School

1. Present and Apologies

Present:

Agden Ward: Will Blackburn, Rick Taylor

Little Bollington Ward: Thomas Britton, Paul Cassidy, Robin Palmer

Acting Clerk: Mike Reed

Apologies: Anne Blackburn, Raluca Khajeh

2. Approval of agenda

The agenda submitted by the Acting Clerk was approved.

3. Appointment of Chair

The Clerk explained that the Councillors decide the appointment of the Chair for a period of 12 months, with a new appointment each year. It was agreed to appoint the Chair for the year ahead rather than delaying until the next meeting. After some discussion Robin Palmer was appointed Chair by unanimous decision.

4. Recruitment of Clerk

The meeting decided to retain the services of Mike Reed as Clerk until a new Clerk is recruited and appointed. The Clerk agreed to take advice from ChALC on recruiting a new Clerk. This will involve advertisements and promotion, job description, form of employment, salary level, contract of employment.

ACTION

CLERK

5. Bank account

The Clerk reported that the bank accounts of the predecessor Parish Meetings are still open and in use. These are Barclays for Agden PM, and Co-op Bank for LBPM. The meeting considered the options of opening an account with one of these or selecting another bank. The meeting decided to open a new account with the Co-op Bank, and approved Thomas Britton and Rick Taylor as signatories. It was agreed to consider at a future meeting whether to appoint a treasurer.

ACTION

CLERK

The question was asked whether Cheshire East Council (CEC) provides grants for local councils to enable them to operate. The Clerk explained that they do not; funding is provided by the local precept. This is decided by the local council and collected on their behalf by CEC. There are grants which can be applied for, such as those from Manchester Airport and the Coop Community Fund.

ACTION

CLERK

The Clerk agreed to provide for the next meeting a financial report and statement for the predecessor Parish Meetings.

ACTION

CLERK

6. Insurance

Both Agden and Little Bollington Parish Meetings have insurance provided by Zurich. Information had been received about an insurance service provided by Abbeystone based in Manchester. There appear to be few other companies providing insurance for local councils. It was agreed to obtain quotations and details from both companies.

ACTION

CLERK

7. Communications, email account and website

A WhatsApp group has been set up for the Council Members and Clerk. The meeting decided to use this for regular communications between Councillors. Documents can be sent as attachments, or they can be sent by email with a WhatsApp message to draw attention to this.

There is an email circulation list for residents of Little Bollington and the area around. It was agreed to invite residents of Agden to sign up for email communications. This would enable news and information to be circulated by LBACC to residents. The invitation could be done by a maildrop to residents houses possibly using a business card. It was agreed to do this once an email account had been established.

LBPM has an email and website account with Ionos costing £18/month. The email capacity is very limited. The meeting agreed to investigate this and other options. Paul Cassidy will consult a colleague, Thomas Britton will consult Chris Wood, the administrator of the LBPM email account.

ACTION

PC & TB

The meeting suggested that email be used to circulate important information and consult residents where necessary. The meeting also agreed to make use of the notice boards in Agden and Little Bollington.

8. Membership of ChALC

The Clerk advised that membership of ChALC would be very worthwhile because of the excellent information and advice they provide. After some discussion it was agreed to join ChALC.

ACTION

CLERK

9. Training for Councillors

The Clerk recommended the planned induction sessions for Councillors provided by ChALC. They last two hours online and cost £25 per person. The meeting decided to postpone a decision until a financial report and statement had been presented and considered.

10. Working Groups / support for LBACC

The Clerk explained that the Council can appoint working groups to assist in its work. A number of LB residents had offered to do work to support the new Council and they could be invited to join a Working Group. These could carry out investigation of issues and topics

and provide reports and recommendations to the Council. Topics could include eg Planning and Development, Highways and traffic etc. Another topic suggested was the proposed transfer by CEC to the Council of land used for garages in Little Bollington. There was a lengthy discussion of this issue. It was reported that there are 8 garages all privately owned by LB residents, with the land owned by CEC. It was noted that the local Council is expected to pay CEC's legal costs for the land transfer. It was agreed to bring a report to a future meeting.

The Clerk was asked to bring to the next meeting a list of local people who can offer particular skills and experience of value to the Council.

ACTION

CLERK

11. Future Meetings

It was agreed that monthly Council meetings are required for an initial period of say 6 months until the new Council gets established. Thereafter meetings are expected to be quarterly. It was agreed to meet monthly on the second Tuesday of the month at 6.00pm in Little Bollington School, with meetings lasting 90 minutes. Holy Trinity Church was noted as an option for an alternative venue. The next meeting will be on Tuesday 13 June at 6.00pm.

12. Other Business

Site Compound

Questions were asked about the site compound near the Bowdon roundabout. The Clerk reported that some time ago Tatton Estate submitted a planning application for an extension of time. The M56 Smart Motorway project required an extension of about 6 months, but the application was for 5 years. It appears that no decision has been made on the application to date.

National Trust

It was reported that the National Trust at Dunham Massey is widening the area used by its visitors and is undertaking work in the wider area such as reclaiming land and rewilding. It was noted the National Trust is an important neighbour with its extensive land ownership and through attracting very high number of visitors to the area. LBPM has recently re-established liaison meeting with the NT. It was agreed that relations should be established between the new Council and the NT at Dunham Massey with regular meetings.

Neighbourhood Plan

It was reported that the Little Bollington Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is now being considered by CEC for approval and adoption. The NP is related to the specified geographic area rather than the Local Council. It does have importance for the Council and for CEC, particularly when considering planning proposals and policies.

Declaration of Acceptance

Councillors reported that they had received a letter advising them of the requirement to make a Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Councillors agreed to find out more and address this as soon as possible.

ACTION

ALL

The meeting ended at 9.00pm