



**Minutes of a meeting of  
RAINFORD PARISH COUNCIL  
via Zoom**

**held on Monday 22 June 2020 immediately following the Annual Meeting of Rainford Parish Council which commenced at 7pm**

**Present: Councillors: Bardsley, Brown, Collins, Grice, Jones, Lee, Long, Monk (Chairman),  
Nichols, Reynolds, Sterry, Travis, Wesley**

**In Attendance: Sally Powell (Clerk)  
Victoria Swainbank (Event Co-ordinator)  
1 resident**

**1. Apologies for Absence:**

Councillors Lamb (Family), Newton (Technical difficulties)

**2. Declaration of Acceptance of Office, of Interest, and Updating of the Register:**

None

**3. Formal announcements from the Chairman:**

- **Coronavirus restrictions:** The office has remained open Monday – Friday with either Sally or Vicky working in the office and the other from home. Charis and the caretakers were immediately furloughed.
- There has been a steady stream of enquiries from residents. The office has been kept busy with, among other things: setting up and managing the Rainford Volunteers scheme, finalising the year end accounts, maintaining the bar and learning how to hold meetings on line.
- The caretakers have now been brought back into work to undertake maintenance on the building, including painting, varnishing and polishing.
- It is hoped to bring Charis back to work on a part-time basis in the near future.
- Councillors Monk & Jones have maintained close contact with the Clerk's office to ensure that the Parish Council continued to function and maintain services as far as possible and to monitor the Council's financial position.
- Councillors Long, Lamb & Sterry have been involved in meetings (Exec WP and FPA) to continue with Council business where possible.
- During April and May, the Clerk took periods of time off due to family circumstances.
- Systems were put in place in the Village Hall to maintain social-distancing. At present, the hall is not open to the general public.
- **Financial position:** The Council remains solvent. At present the income from the Village Hall is limited to those offices who are able to pay rent. Rent Holidays were given to those who were forced to close. Those who have been able to trade would pay half rent for June. It is hoped that all Licensees will pay full rent again from July.
- A cashflow document has been produced and will be regularly updated. The budget is being revised.

- **Hall Users:** At present all functions that were booked in until the end of August have been postponed or cancelled. All regular classes are on hold. All regular users have been contacted to check if they intend to return when possible.
- A virtual VE Day concert was held with the assistance of Rev. Janet, which went well.
- A virtual Civic Sunday service was also held and it was pleasing to see so many Councillors in attendance.
- Councillor Grice has requested an addition to the agenda item 13

**RESOLVED:**

***Councillor Long proposed that Item 13 on the agenda be extended to include a discussion to be introduced by Councillor Grice regarding a plaque outside the Village Hall. This was seconded by Councillor Lee and carried unanimously***

4. **To hear and respond to any questions/deputations by members of the public:**  
None

5. **To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Rainford Parish Council meeting held on Monday 24 February 2020:**

**RESOLVED:**

***Councillor Sterry proposed the minutes of the meeting held on 24.02.2020 as a true and accurate record. This was seconded by Councillor Bardsley and carried unanimously***

Councillor Reynolds requested that Item 13 was taken next and the Chairman and other members agreed.

13. **Bench for Mike Olley:**

Councillor Reynolds gave an explanation of Mike Olley's involvement with the Community First Responders and training over 250 members of the public in basic life support and using a defibrillator. Mike sadly died in November 2019 and 2 residents had approached the Council wishing to have a bench in Mike's memory on the lawn outside the Village Hall. All Councillors agreed that Mike had made a great contribution to the Rainford community and that a bench would be very fitting.

**RESOLVED:**

***Councillor Reynolds proposed that the Parish Council allow a bench to be placed outside the Village Hall in memory of Mike Olley and that the administration of this is delegated to the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk. This was seconded by Councillor Long and carried unanimously***

***Action: Councillor Monk and the Clerk***

Councillor Grice outlined his proposal for a plaque commemorating the on-going COVID-19 pandemic and the Rainford residents who lost their lives to the virus. There was a short discussion during which it was recognised that the crisis may be far from over and that it would also be appropriate to recognise the volunteers who have assisted the vulnerable households throughout the crisis.

**RESOLVED:**

***Councillor Wesley proposed that this item is deferred for further discussion at the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council to be held in September 2020. This was seconded by Councillor Collins and carried unanimously***

***Action: The Clerk***

6. **Receipts and Payments for March, April & May 2020:**

*See Appendix 1 for full details*

**Receipts for March 2020: £8790 Payments for March 2020: £6157**

**Amount Invoiced in March 2020: £3276**

Bank Balances @ 31.03.2020: Current A/C £5908 Savings A/C £10974

**Receipts for April 2020: £21360 Payments for April 2020: £11027**

Amount invoiced in April 2020 £500

Bank Balances @ 30.04.2020: Current A/C £16242 Savings A/C £49038

**Receipts for May 2020: £175 Payments for May 2020: £3868**

Amount invoiced in May 2020: £680

Bank balances @ 31.05.2020: Current A/C £12549 Savings A/C £49038

**RESOLVED: Councillor Jones proposed the figures be accepted. This was seconded by Councillor Long and carried unanimously**

**7. Clerk's Report:**

*See Appendix 2*

The Clerk highlighted a number of items in the report and stated that current priorities in the Clerk's office were to put the Health & Safety policy documents together and to get the Village Hall ready for re-opening as soon as possible. People who had booked the hall have been encouraged to postpone rather than cancel bookings. Councillor Brown asked if all classes would be resuming. All class leaders had been contacted and all have indicated that, so far, they intend to return. Additional hiring conditions have been drafted and all hall hirers will have to sign to accept the additional conditions.

**8. Committee Reports:**

▪ **Borough Council:** Councillor Reynolds reported the following:

- The next meeting of St Helens Council is due to take place on 22.07.2020. At present, to ensure social-distancing, members who are not group leaders or portfolio holders have been asked not to attend the meeting.
- Recycling and green bin collections have resumed on a different rota and details are available on the Parish Council Facebook page
- More children are back at school. The schools worked together to formulate plans.
- At some time after the next meeting there will be an extraordinary meeting of St Helens Council to discuss a report from the boundaries commission stating how many Councillors there should be on St Helens Council.

▪ **Community Liaison Committee:** Councillor Lamb was not able to attend the meeting, so no report was available.

▪ **Finance, Planning & Administration Committee:** *See Appendix 1 for the draft minutes of the FPA meeting held on 10.06.2020*

Councillor Jones reported the following:

- The report from the surveyor has not yet been received. Any maintenance required may have to take place later in the financial year
- There are some anomalies in the monthly figures for March, April and May 2020 as St Helens Council had not informed the Parish Council how much is owed for salaries in March 2020. Additionally, the figures for May are incorrect.
- Income from the Hall is virtually non-existent since lockdown on 23.03.2020
- The loan from the PWLB was finally received in April and the first repayment has been made
- The Parish Council is just ticking over at present as income from the hall usually represents approximately two thirds of the Parish Council's income over the year.
- Re-opening the hall is a priority and everything is being put in place to allow this to happen as soon as possible.

Councillor Wesley asked for clarification regarding item 6 on the FPA draft minutes regarding the Flower Club. Councillor Lee declared an interest as secretary of the Flower Club. Councillor Jones explained that the Flower Club had asked for its Monthly Thursday slot to be

kept open until next year. Given the current situation, this would not be possible if a regular Thursday booking could be secured. It was hoped that the Flower Club could be accommodated when it wished to meet again.

Councillor Reynolds asked if a forecast had been completed given that the change in circumstances meant that the Council's original budget would no longer be viable. Councillor Jones informed the meeting that a cash flow document had been circulated with the papers for the meeting. This will be updated on a monthly basis.

**Action: The Clerk**

**9. Working Party Reports:**

- **Executive Working Party:** Councillor Monk informed the meeting that the working party had met via Zoom and worked with the Clerk to set the agenda for this meeting.
- **Neighbourhood Plan Working Party:** Councillor Travis reported that the working party had met via Zoom and decided that the Neighbourhood Plan would have to be put on hold for the time being as the next stage was public consultation, which could not be practically completed at present. Additionally, the Local Plan did not appear to be progressing.

**10. Annual Governance Statement:**

**RESOLVED:**

***Councillor Jones proposed that Rainford Parish Council (RPC) has complied with the following during the financial year 2019/20:***

- a) Rainford Parish Council has put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements***
- b) RPC maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness***
- c) RPC took reasonable steps to be assured that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the authority to conduct its business or manage its finances***
- d) RPC provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit regulations***
- e) RPC carried out an assessment of the risks facing the authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required***
- f) RPC maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems***
- g) RPC took action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit***
- h) RPC considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year end, have a financial impact on the authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statement***

***This was seconded by Councillor Sterry and carried unanimously***

There was a short discussion regarding the current Government restrictions due to the coronavirus crisis.

**RESOLVED:**

***Councillor Nichols proposed that Rainford Parish Council was aware that the ultimate consequences of the coronavirus pandemic were unknown. Additionally, the Council is mindful that the impact of the coronavirus crisis is unquantifiable, but that the Council has taken relevant steps to mitigate the immediate consequences of the current situation. This was seconded by Councillor Reynolds and carried unanimously***

The Chairman signed the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year ending 31.03.2020

**11: Annual Accounting Statement:**

*See Appendix 3*

There was a discussion regarding the Annual Accounting statements and the following points were made:

- Councillor Brown was concerned about the number of debtors. Councillor Jones stated that the last few months had been extenuating circumstances and the debtors were being chased.
- Councillor Wesley offered a vote of thanks to the Clerk, the Admin Asst and the Chairman of the FPA Committee for producing the end of year accounts in difficult conditions.
- Councillor Reynolds noted that there was an 8% increase in income and that all the expenditure included the expense of the Bar refurbishment.

**RESOLVED:**

***Councillor Jones proposed that Rainford Parish Council approve the Annual Accounting Statement for the financial year ending 31.03.2020 which was prepared on an Income and Expenditure basis and presents fairly the financial position of Rainford Parish Council as at 31.03.2020. This was seconded by Councillor Reynolds and carried unanimously***

The Chairman signed the Annual Accounting Statement for the financial year ending 31.03.2020

**12: Community Support during the on-going Coronavirus crisis:**

Councillor Monk stated the Council had reacted well to the coronavirus crisis. It had immediately formulated a plan to set up Rainford Volunteers. The Chairman thanked the Admin Asst for all her work in setting up and managing the scheme. Currently 130 households are registered with the scheme and around 70 volunteers had been active. Residents had been extremely grateful for what the volunteers have done. The buddy system has worked very well, with relationships being built up. There is now a register of volunteers and the crisis has brought out the very best in people. Councillor Grice told the meeting about the buddy his household had been allocated.

There was a short discussion about arranging an event for the volunteers and possibly the vulnerable households they helped, at an appropriate time.

The initiative had been a great success.

**14. Land at the rear of the Village Hall:**

Councillor Monk informed the meeting that a resident may be interested in leasing the plot of land beyond the high fence bordering Pilkington Street from the Parish Council. There was a discussion. It was agreed that permission from St Helens Council would be required. Additionally, it should be on a short-term basis on an annual renewable licence, with no permanent structures allowed.

Councillor Reynolds declared an interest as a member of St Helens Council

**RESOLVED:**

***Councillor Monk proposed that Rainford Parish Council approaches St Helens Council to establish if it will allow that piece of land can be licensed to a third party. This was seconded by Councillor Collin. All those who voted were in favour. There was one abstention.***

***Action: The Clerk***

**15. Rainford Christmas Fayre:**

Councillor Monk opened a discussion about whether the Council should go ahead with the Christmas Fayre given the current restrictions and the uncertainty about when the restrictions would be relaxed. The feeling of the meeting was that there may still be restrictions in place and it would be premature to do a lot of organising at this stage. Councillor Reynolds suggested that a meeting of the Working Party should be arranged.

**RESOLVED:**

***Councillor Monk proposed that a meeting of the Christmas Fayre Working Party is convened and that a feasibility study is undertaken. This was seconded by Councillor Sterry and carried unanimously***

***Action: The Clerk***

**16. Art Exhibition:**

Councillor Monk initiated a discussion regarding the postponement of the Art Exhibition until March 2021

**RESOLVED:**

***Councillor Monk proposed that (if possible) an Art Exhibition is held at the Village Hall 26 – 28 March 2021. This was seconded by Councillor Grice and carried unanimously.***

***Action: The Clerk***

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.40pm

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**Councillor David Monk**  
**Chairman, Rainford Parish Council 2020/21**

**Appendix 1**  
**Items 6 & 8**



1.Draft June Minutes  
10.06.2020 .pdf

**Appendix 2**  
**Item 7**



Clerks report for  
22.06.2020.pdf

**Appendix 3**  
**Item 11**



Annual Return  
31.03.2020.pdf