



**Minutes of a meeting of
RAINFORD PARISH COUNCIL
held on 22 January 2024 commencing at 7pm in the Council Chamber**

Present: Councillors: Bardsley, Bimpson, Bowden, Denton (arrived 7.03pm), Dodson, Grice, Holden, Lamb BEM (Chairman), Long, Roberts (arrived 7.12pm, left 8.10pm), Stockton-Pugh, Turner, Whalley

Absent: Councillor: Reynolds

In attendance: Sally Powell (Clerk)
Victoria Swainbank
4 residents

1. **Apologies for Absence:**
Councillor Lee (Away)
2. **Formal announcements from the Chairman, Councillor Chris Lamb BEM:**
The Chairman wished everyone a Happy New Year.
3. **Declaration of Acceptance of Office, of Interest, and Updating of the Register:**
None.
4. **To hear and respond to any questions/deputations by members of the public:**

Councillor Denton joined the meeting

Yvonne Taylor: *Reinstatement of the Reading Room and other ideas for events at the Village Hall*
Rainford Library will close on 26.01.2024, but a community library may not be operational for a year or longer. In the meantime, would the Parish Council consider:

- i. Making the Reception Room available free of charge for the Reading and Rhyme sessions for young children which currently take place at the library on Tuesdays at 10.30am. This is well attended and much appreciated by the parents and carers and its loss will be felt keenly by them. Also, the educational benefit to the children would be lost. If the Reception Room could be used, the sessions would initially be organised by Yvonne and other volunteers. A book swap could also be facilitated and storage for a box of books would be a bonus.
- ii. If another hour was available then a Book Meet and Chat session would benefit those residents, many elderly, who have come to rely on the library for books, some social contact and a warm space. Again, a book swap would help those unable to travel to Moss Bank or any other library. If some form of computer access could be available that would be a bonus.

There was a short discussion.

The Chairman stated that the Parish Council would consider the proposals and thanked Yvonne.

Action: All members/The Clerk

Meryl Shippam: *Funding for a bereavement group in Rainford*

Meryl informed the Council that there is a need for a bereavement group in Rainford that would run a number of activities for those attending. She has volunteers with a wide range of skills who are available to provide the activities. The group would gather the community together and be an opportunity for people who are feeling lonely to get out and get together. Would a donation towards a starter fund be available? Councillor Denton spoke about the Community Hub meetings, which

despite a lot of work, have been difficult to get off the ground. It is understood that the Rainford Carers group is also poorly attended. One possibility would be to amalgamate these groups. It was agreed that there are possibilities here, with lots of ideas for further discussions, including the use of the Village Hall as a community resource. Councillor Denton will meet with Meryl for further discussions.

The Chairman thanked Meryl for informing the Parish Council of her plans.

Action: Councillor Denton/The Clerk

Proprietor of Little Italy: Planning Application P/2023/0714/FUL

Councillor Roberts joined the meeting

Members were given up-to-date information about the above application and how the negative comments made on social media and to the planning officer are affecting the family.

There was a discussion during which Councillor Denton informed the meeting that she had advised one resident to stop posting on social media about this issue. Planning policy relating to the application was also discussed. It was suggested that the Borough Councillors could be contacted.

The Chairman thanked the resident for attending the meeting and keeping the Parish Council informed.

5. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Rainford Parish Council meeting held on Monday 11 December 2023:

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 11.12.2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record, proposed by Councillor Bardsley, seconded by Councillor Denton and carried unanimously.

Action: The Clerk

6. Receipts and Payments for December 2023: See Appendix 1 for further details

Receipts £ 13,542.43

Payments £ 10,227.49

Bank balances @ 31.12.2023:

Current Account: £ 13,543.51

Business Account: £ 66,056.42 (£4734.74 Christmas Fayre)

Councillor Long clarified that the Christmas Fayre monies are earmarked, but form part of the business account.

7. Budget 2024/25: See Appendix 2

The draft budget has been produced without increasing the precept, the hiring charges for the Village Hall, or the bar prices. The budget includes the cost of sanding and polishing the Main Hall floor. There was a discussion, particularly the raising of the licence fees for businesses using the Village Hall by 5%. It was agreed that this was acceptable as the businesses only have to pay for their own broadband.

RESOLVED: *Councillor Long proposed that the draft budget for 2024/25 is approved. This was seconded by Councillor Whalley and carried unanimously.*

Action: The Clerk

8. Knifesavers – Councillor Bowden:

Councillor Bowden explained what a Blood Box is and how it would benefit the community. The cost would be £500. The Clerk has asked Rev Janet if it would be possible to fix the box to the parish hall to avoid the necessity for planning permission to house it on the Village Hall.

RESOLVED: *Councillor Bowden proposed that the Parish Council fund an external Blood Box which contains Bleeding Control kits to be sited in the Village Centre. This was seconded by Councillor Bimpson and carried unanimously.*

Action: Councillor Bowden/The Clerk

9. Neighbourhood/Parish Plan – Councillor Roberts:

Councillor Roberts informed members of the current situation; there had been a misunderstanding over the contribution required to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, regarding the time, expertise and expense involved.

Councillor Roberts suggested that a Parish Plan would be a better option and the Clerk outlined the process and reasons why a Parish Council may choose to produce one. The comments that have already been received from residents could be used as a basis to build on.

There was a discussion and it was agreed that the idea of creating a Parish Plan should be on the agenda for the next Community Liaison Committee meeting, so that the idea could be further explored. Additionally, members would like to invite an officer from St Helens Council to attend the next meeting to give information about producing a Neighbourhood Plan. All members were asked to look at the documents circulated by the Clerk about Neighbourhood and Parish Plans.

Action: All Members/The Clerk

Councillor Roberts left the meeting.

10. Update on Miller Homes Development: Councillor Lamb BEM:

Councillor Lamb BEM informed members that a meeting had been arranged with a David Brackley, Operations Manager with Miller Homes. This will take place at the Village Hall on 23.02.2024. There was a short discussion. It was agreed that Councillor Bimpson would also attend the meeting.

11. 1974 – 2024: Rainford Parish Council 50 years Celebrations:

Councillor Stockton-Pugh informed the meeting that various celebratory events were being planned:

- A Gala Dinner on 23.03.2024 to which the Chairman and a guest from the other Parish Councils would be invited.
- An Inter-Parish games
- A charity pub crawl around the Parish
- A family May Day event
- A 1970's disco

The larger companies in Rainford would be approached for sponsorship for some of the events.

The Event Co-ordinator requested that posts on social media for the Parish Council, the Village Hall and the Beer Festival are commented on, 'liked' and 'shared' by members so that they reach as many people as possible.

Councillor Stockton-Pugh will be attending other Parish Council meetings to put forward his ideas for the Inter-Parish Games.

Action: Councillor Stockton-Pugh/The Event Co-ordinator/The Clerk/All Councillors

12. The Reception Room: Councillor Lee:

Councillor Lee had asked for this to be included on the agenda, even though she was unable to attend the meeting. The boards from the High School are still in the Reception Room, which is inappropriate. The company who put them up has offered to replace them with scenes of Rainford, free of charge as a contribution to the DIY SOS project. Photographs are required. One resident has agreed to supply images and another will also be contacted. The images will be circulated before the next meeting and a decision will be made on which ones will be used.

Action: The Clerk

13. Clerk's Office Report:

The following report was circulated with the agenda. Additions are in italics.

- i. A meeting has taken place with Steve Littler and other officers from St Helens Council regarding the lease for the Village Hall. Copies of documents were requested by the officers, which have been provided. The list of works and information for the lease which Steve Littler stated would be provided before Christmas has still not been received.
- ii. The work on the flat roof has been completed and the invoice received for £16,664.40, which has been paid. *The scaffolding has been removed.*
- iii. The invoice for the outside tree lights has not yet been received.

- iv. A quote has been received for sanding and polishing Main Hall Floor for £4693.00 including materials, this has been included in the budget for next year.
- v. Flooding on the Linear Way continues to be a problem. Officers from St Helens Council have undertaken site visits, but the volume of rain appears to be the problem.
- vi. The Council Tax Base (Band D equivalent properties) has been confirmed as 2,961.
- vii. The boilers have been serviced and quotes for replacement are awaited. Ventilation to the door to the cellar is required.
- viii. *Email of thanks from Lynda Shave on behalf of RiB for providing support and refreshments at the Kings Award for Voluntary Service Assessment Day. Results are not until the King's Birthday in November.*
- ix. *Request for a donation from Ali Crawford towards the cost of sending 6 Rainford girls to the World Dance Championships in Prague. There was a discussion.*

RESOLVED: *Councillor Lamb proposed that Ali Crawford be allowed to book the Main Hall free of charge for an event that would raise funds collectively for the girls attending from Rainford. This was seconded by Councillor Denton and carried unanimously.*

Action: The Clerk

- x. *Request for funding from Meryl Shippam. See item 4.*
- xi. *The office has a new mobile number: 07502546553. Mobile numbers are needed by the Clerk's office from Councillors Bardsley, Bowden, Lee, Long & Turner. This will only be given to residents with a Councillor's agreement, but they will be used for contact with the office, particularly if arrangements have changed at short notice. WhatsApp groups will be created for ease and speedy contact. Eg. Cancellations or changes to meetings.*
- xii. *One of the Proprietors from Little Italy contacted the office regarding planning application P/2023/0714/FUL. See item 4. There was a discussion and it was agreed that a submission supporting the application should be sent to the planning officer. The Clerk advised that this would need to be sent urgently and asked all Councillors to reply when the draft was sent to them.*

Action: The Clerk/All members

- xiii. *Several Councillors had recently requested information on the dates of meetings and events. There was a discussion. It was agreed that the Clerk will send a list every Thursday with diary dates on. This should also be posted on the website. There was a general discussion about getting dates and information out to residents. It was agreed that the monthly A4 newsletter should be re-instated and should have input from Councillors. This could include Ward information. Also, a mailing list should be established for sending out information to residents.*

Action: The Clerk

- xiv. *Use of the Reception Room for classes currently being held at the library. There was a discussion, taking account of the information given by Yvonne Taylor.*

RESOLVED: *Councillor Whalley proposed that the Reception Room is offered free of charge to the Read & Rhyme class, along with additional time for a Book, Meet & Chat session. This was seconded by Councillor Stockton-Pugh and carried unanimously.*

Action: The Clerk

- xv. *Councillor Denton requested information regarding packs sent to the elderly at Christ by St Helens Council. Other members confirmed that these used to be received, but were not any longer.*

14. Committee & Working Party Reports:

➤ **Borough Council:**

Councillors Case & Mussell sent the following report:

Borough Councillors report January 204

Happy New Year to everyone.

Adult Health and Social Care

Cllr Mussell attended the above scrutiny meeting and recieved an update on Integrated Care Partnerships which included an update on the newly formed Mersey West Lancs Trust (Ormskirk, Southport, St Helens and Whiston Hospitals).

Presentations on Family Hub in Sutton and how Rainford residents can access the service

Also the Care Grow Live initiative which supports family with addiction problems. (more information if needed available)

Members have undertaken a spotlight review of Dentistry in the Borough and a report and recommendation to be presented to Cabinet.

Place Scrutiny

Cllr Case is a member of the panel and the latest meeting focused on Business Growth and support from the Council,

A presentation of the schools catering service which included future of the service.

Budgets

We have been involved in looking at the financial position of the Council and possible changes to services, with recommendations to be made to cabinet and full Council.

One consideration is the removal of CiF which will impact possible future initiatives.

General

We met with the new Police Sergeant who is responsible for Rainford, We discussed a number of topics included but on exhausted, the visibility of the police, response times, anti-social behaviour. She is happy to meet with the PC if needed to discuss issues in general.

John is to continue the speed checks with the new PCSO starting on the 22nd January.

Potholes

There seems to have been a great deterioration of roads which we are pushing for intervention which includes a drive round the ward with the highways engineer.

Library

The library will close on Friday 26th January, and the estate team will in following weeks start the process to empty the building of books, equipment etc. In the meantime, we have met with the CEO and Director to discuss the next steps with the Council to progress our plans of a Community Managed Library, there is a designated process but this meeting was very encouraging.

Cllr Linda Mussell

Cllr John Case

➤ **Community Liaison Committee:**

In Councillor Reynolds absence, Councillor Stockton-Pugh informed the meeting that the committee had discussed the following:

- 50 years celebrations
- Rainford Youth Council. The next meeting is on 25.01.2024 and the group is planning a car wash on 13.04.2024
- The benches on the Linear Way are in place, but no photos as yet have been posted on social media

➤ **Finance, Planning & Administration Committee:**

Councillor Bimpson informed the meeting that the committee had discussed the following:

- There had been no objections to the planning applications
- The work required at the Village Hall to raise the EPC had been commissioned, but not completed
- The boiler had been serviced, but the quote for a replacement had not yet been received. The Clerk was asked to chase this

Action: The Clerk

- The scaffolding had been removed from the Bar roof

➤ **Health & Safety Committee:**

Councillor Stockton-Pugh informed the meeting that the committee had not met since the last full Council meeting, but would be meeting in February.

➤ **Village Hall Improvements Working Party:**

➤ **Rainford Christmas Fayre Working Party:**

Councillor Stockton-Pugh initiated a discussion regarding the amalgamation of the Village Hall Improvements and the Rainford Christmas Fayre Working Parties. It was agreed that the Clerk would email members concerning membership.

Action: The Clerk

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.01pm.

Councillor Chris Lamb BEM
Chairman, Rainford Parish Council 2023/24

Appendix 1: Receipts & Payment for December 2023



9. Dec 2023
Receipts.pdf



9. Dec 2023
Payments.pdf

Appendix 2: Budget 2024/24



Budget
2024.2025.pdf