

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ECCLESTON PARISH COUNCIL held on TUESDAY
12 DECEMBER 2023 at 7.30 pm in ECCLESTON VILLAGE HALL, Kiln Lane, Eccleston**

PRESENT: Cllr G Pearl (Deputy Chair)
Cllrs Johnson, C Pearl, Spencer, N Taylor, V Taylor and Williams
1 resident
Janet Anderson (Clerk)

23.96 APOLOGIES

Cllrs Ashcroft, Cass, Haw, Madine and Sims

23.97 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllr G Pearl declared an interest in item 23.105 – Planning Applications.

23.98 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 14 NOVEMBER 2023

Resolved that the minutes be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

23.99 MATTERS ARISING

None.

23.100 RESIDENTS' ISSUES

The resident attending the meeting enquired whether the Post Office at Walmesley Road would be closing. Cllr Pearl informed the meeting that it was not closing. The hours may be changing and the shop may be re-arranged but it was not closing.

He also reported 2 potholes that he felt were dangerous. Both were on Mill Brow. One was outside the new nursery building and the other was at the junction of Long Meadow. The Clerk would report to St Helens Council.

The resident once more raised the issue of blocked grids in Church Lane and Chapel Lane. Cllr Pearl explained that grid cleaners carried out maintenance on a regular basis. The Clerk had reported the issue to St Helens Council after the last meeting. There was still no update to report.

23.101 POLICE REPORT

The latest crime figures were given to Councillors. A discussion took place regarding theft from shops. The figures showed a decrease. Councillors felt this was a crime on the increase. It was thought that maybe not all shops reported thefts.

23.102 REPORTS

Resolved to note the following:

Smithy – The Curators were working on planning for next year's exhibition.

Ecclesfield – Tuesday 5 December 2023 at 7pm at Eccleston Village Hall – Cllrs Ashcroft, Cass and Spencer along with the Clerk attended. The following items were discussed:

- The Caretaker had reported problems with locking the changing rooms. He had returned a few times to find the doors not locked and lights on. All teams were reminded to lock the changing rooms when not in use.
- No issues from BHR teams. They had not played for the past 3 or 4 weeks due to bad weather and waterlogged pitches.
- It was agreed that the Secretary should apply for the pitch improvement grant available from Liverpool FA.
- It had been reported that other teams may be using the pitches and not paying for them. Cllr Ashcroft went along on a couple of occasions but there were no teams other than BHR's girls.
- A discussion took place regarding possible uses of the field – running track/distance markers, cricket, rounders and a summer gala for Eccleston and Windle residents were suggested.
- Proposed budget for 2024/25 was presented to Councillors – in summary: Parish Council's contribution to cover maintenance costs being charged by St Helens Council – £9661; a 5% increase in caretaker's salary; 5% increase to Secretary's honorarium; £100 for any internal decoration. A 10% increase in hire fees.

Cllr Pearl reported that the Christmas tree lighting at Eccleston Library had gone well. St Julies School provided the carols/songs and library staff provided refreshments.

Cllr Sims and the Clerk had attended the Christmas tree lighting at St Helens Road for which Eccleston Lane Ends school provided the singing.

23.103 OPEN SPACES

The costs for the annual maintenance had been received from St Helens Council for 2024/25 – £13,236.54 excluding Ecclesfield £8803. It was agreed to continue with St Helens Council and to sign the Request for Work form.

23.104 ANNUAL MAGAZINE

A request for articles to be sent in by the end of January 2024 was made. Councillors were asked to contact any schools/clubs/groups for short articles remembering the A5 format. A discussion took place regarding delivery as the usual business used had closed.

23.105 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Resolved to note the following:

Delegated

69 Springfield Lane

Removal of 1no beech tree under TPO and replace with new tree species at new location

Refer to Trees and Woodlands Officer

74 Rainhill Road

Erection of garage to rear garden

N/O

Decisions

19 Forest Grove

Single storey rear extension

Granted 8/12/23

23.106 ACCOUNTS

Received: Village Hall Hire £341; R Kelsey Salary + PAYE £433.60; Interest 0.56 and £93.22; WPC – phone and copier £45.17; Ecclesfield Project £8535 (grnds maintenance)

Total Receipts **£9448.55**

Payments

SSE – gas	75.88
Water Plus – water	33.22
L Poole – December	459.36
V Griffiths – December	248.17
J Chamberlain – December + expenditure	268.82
J Anderson – December + petty cash + expenditure	1493.11
R Kelsey – December	460.42
Merseyside Pension Fund – employer and employee contributions	558.30
St Helens Council – grounds maintenance £4187.61 and VH cleaning £1281.60	5469.21
H M Revenue & Customs – PAYE & NI – Oct-Dec	1612.68

Total Payments **£10679.17**

RECONCILIATION - The Clerk reported that as at 30 November 2023 the balance in the Current Account was £6,500.00, Reserve Account £77,189.05 and Capital Deposit Account £473.13.

PETTY CASH - Expenditure for the month of November 2023	£30.90
Balance at the end of November 2023	-£14.77

INTERNAL AUDIT – nothing to report.

A BUDGET MEETING TO BE ARRANGED FOR JANUARY 2024 TO DISCUSS THE PRECEPT REQUEST

23.107 CORRESPONDENCE

None

23.108 DATE OF MEETINGS

Resolved to note the following:

Tuesday 9 January 2024	7.30 pm	Parish Council	Village Hall
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The meeting closed at 7.55pm.

SIGNED DATED