

St Helens Parish Council

Minutes of the parish council meeting held on the 8th June 2015 at St Helens Sports Pavilion at 7pm.

In attendance:

Chair: Mrs Parker

Councillors: Cllr Bacon, Mr Campbell, Mr Earnshaw, Miss Ryan and Mr Thomson.

Clerk: Mrs Dyer

4 members of the public.

69/2015 Apologies for absence.

Apologies received from Mr Robertson.

70/2015 Declarations of interests.

None received.

71/2015 To approve the meeting Minutes for the meetings held on 13th April 2015 & 11th May 2015.

Miss Ryan proposed that the minutes be approved as true and correct.

2nd Cllr Bacon.

RESOLVED – Minutes signed as true and correct.

72/2015 Public forum.

A member of the public asked whether the organisers of the car boot sale contributed towards the cost of cleaning the toilet block on the Green?

The Clerk confirmed that they did not.

The parish council was then asked to reconsider providing toilet cleaning facilities when the contract was up for renewal.

A member of the public asked whether the grounds maintenance contract had a requirement for litter picking in the garden at the top of Latimer Rd?

The Clerk said she thought that maintenance was due twice yearly and would check the details of the contract.

A member of public asked who took away the double bin from the Old Church Green?

The clerk confirmed that Island Roads had replaced the bin as the old one was broken.

A member of public raised that they had reported potholes on Field Lane and was told by Island Roads that the road was unadopted and that they were not responsible for it.

The Clerk said she would check with the District Steward but hadn't had any trouble in the past reporting potholes on this road.

73/2015 To discuss and agree purchasing a new notice board.

Mr Campbell proposed that the parish council purchase the 6040 Aluminium notice board from parishnoticeboards.co.uk

2nd Mr Thomson

RESOLVED

74/2015 To discuss the Draft affordable housing consultation.

No comment on proposed consultation.

75/2015 To discuss proposed Public Forum protocol.

Mr Earnshaw outlined the proposed protocol (Please see attached) and reminded members and the public that parish council meetings are meeting held in public and not public meetings.

Mrs Parker said that she believed the protocol reiterates the standing orders and there is still scope for the Chair to include the public in discussions.

Mr Campbell said that he does not like it when the public forum becomes a debate. Members of the public during the public forum should ask questions and receive answers it should not descend into debate.

Cllr Bacon thought that the purpose of the public forum should be for questions, not for statements or speeches.

Mr Thomson thought that 10 minutes for the public forum, as stated in the Standing orders, was not enough time and would like time limit in the Standing Orders to be reviewed at the next meeting.

Miss Ryan proposed that the public forum protocol be adopted.

2nd Mrs Parker

RESOLVED.

76/2015 To approve the parish newsletter for print.

Cllr Bacon asked that his contact details be changed on the newsletter.

Cllr Bacon proposed the newsletter be approved for print.

2nd Mrs Parker

RESOLVED.

77/2015 To receive and approve internal audit report and approve the annual audit return.

The Clerk explained that the internal audit had been undertaken and no concerns had been noted.

Cllr Bacon proposed that the internal report and the annual audit return be approved.

2nd Mr Campbell.

RESOLVED - Audit return approved for submission to external auditor.

78/2015 To discuss and agree purchasing a litter bin to be placed on Broomlands path and associated collection costs.

The Clerk explained that she had found a bin that could be mounted on the barriers at the end of Broomlands path. The Glasdon Supertrimline bin costs £126.62 exclusive of delivery.

Mr Campbell proposed that the parish council purchase the aforementioned bin for Broomlands path and approve the associated collection costs.

2nd Mr Bacon

RESOLVED

79/2015 To discuss and agree hiring a large bin to be placed on Old Church Green and associated collection costs.

The Clerk explain that the bin was £0.20p per day to hire and collection costs are £18 per empty.

Miss Ryan stated that she didn't think the parish council should have to fund this and that Nodes Point should be approached.

The Clerk stated that Nodes Point had been approached in the past and had declined. She would approach them again to see if they would fund for next summer.

Cllr Bacon proposed that a large biffa type bin be hired for July and August to be collected once a week.

2nd Mr Thomson

RESOLVED – Clerk to arrange installation of Biffa bin for July and August.

80/2015 To discuss the way forward with regard to Grass cutting and landscaping on the Old Church Green and Village Greens and other areas for 2016/17 onwards.

Mr Thomson asked the Clerk to read his proposal.

Mr Thomson proposed the following:

St Helens Parish Council write to the IW Council and tell them that as from the end of the current contract with the contractor for the grass cutting of the Old Church Green the parish council will no longer be paying for this work, also, following on from the last letter to the IW Council the parish council will not be paying for the grass cutting of the Village Greens at the end of the current contract and expect the IW Council to carry out this work at the same specification as they have done in the past. As the IW Council insist on keeping the income from the car boot sales then they should use this money to pay for the grass cutting/ maintenance to the village greens.

The parish council should then include in the next newsletter an explanation of this to all the residents of St Helens. Also explaining that if the IW Council refuse to carry out this work it could result in some problems with the Grass cutting after 2016.

It should be explained that at present the IW Council take the income from the car boot sales but they, the residents, pay for the grass cutting.

The parish council should ask Mr Bacon the Parish/IOW/Leader of the council to take this up with the IW Council in order to support this proposal.

The parish council should then keep up the pressure on the IW Council for a reply in order to avoid the fiasco of last year when the IW Council failed to provide the information required by the PC in good time.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that once a decision has been reached it can't be reviewed for six months and that they should be wary of making a decision that binds them. She also stated that once the public learned of the IW Council plans to cut the grass only 3 times per annum the only calls she had had were from concerns residents asking the parish council to ensure that the greens were cut.

Cllr Bacon stated that the money raised by the car boots sales covers the administration of the Greens. The IW Council simply don't have the money to fund grass cutting to the level in previous years. Cuts in government funding are over arching and although he's not happy about it he has to be realistic.

No 2nd received for the proposal.

Miss Ryan asked why the parish council was against taking over the greens. There are Councillor's on the parish council with legal backgrounds and she thought that the parish council taking over the management of the greens it should be looked into.

Mr Williams suggested contacting Great Bentley as they have the largest village green in the country. They may be able to help with information regarding the pitfalls, benefits and costs.

81/2015 Clerk's report.

The Clerk reported:

That she had had a reply from the residents of Nelson's Quay regarding them taking over the maintenance of the triangle of land opposite their properties – the residents don't want to take over maintenance. She promised to get in touch with Mr Hetherington once the licenses from the IW Council had been received.

Planning Training – The Clerk confirmed that she and Mr Earnshaw would be attending training on the changes to the IW Council planning services.

She confirmed that the SSE Grant application for £1688 towards the emergency plan had been approved.

She also reported that In light of the savings made with cutting the village green and the grant from the SSE the funds are healthy for implementing the parish plan. If there are any projects that require funding for elements of the parish plan please could Councillors let her know. There may now be scope in the budget for projects we thought we would not be able to fund such as laying gravel or bark on the both the Horsehoe Trail and Broomlands path to make them passable in wet weather. She will put this on the next agenda for discussion.

She also reported that she is on holiday from the 27th July for 10 days.

82/2015 Finance report – To receive report and approve any payments due.

	Finances Due June 2015		
Chq011	£21	St Helens Communiy Centre	Hall hire March
Chq012	£388.88	Zurich Insurance	Parish Insurance
Chq013	£45	Lisa Dyer	Office/ Broadband allowance
EP	£240	Martin Rivers	Landscaping
SO	£606.67	EasyCleaners	Toilet Cleaning
Chq014	£110	Gareth Hughes	Internal Audit Fee

The Clerk confirmed that the account had been reconciled and that the balance stands at £46679.80. The Clerk gave the quarterly finance report. Please see below for details.

Mrs Parker proposed that all invoices be approved for payment.

2nd Mr Campbell

RESOLVED – All invoices approved for payment.

83/2015 Councillor's reports.

Mr Thomson reported/asked:

Has anything been done about the youth sailing scheme?

The Clerk replied that she had been busy with audit but would be contacting BHYC shortly. She hoped to get the scheme in place for the last few of the summer holidays.

There is a problem with the "Car Park" sign at the bottom of Duver Hill. Clerk to report to Island Roads.

Miss Ryan reported/asked:

That she had had two meetings with Jillie Wheeler from the K9 clean up campaign. She asked whether the parish council would like their logo on the signs to make them look official. Councillors agreed that if there was room the logo should go on the signs.

She has noticed that the Post Office do not have a bin outside the shop leaving customers with nowhere to put their rubbish.

She also reported the rubbish in the alley way between the pub and Broomlands Close was an eyesore. She asked the Clerk to check who is responsible for clearing it up.

Mr Campbell reported:

That there are two large potholes on Station Rd near Station House. Clerk to report to Island Roads.

Broomlands Path is over grown and the hedge needs cutting back.

Meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Expenditure	Budget	Actual
Staff costs	8003.52	1333.92
Admin costs		
Mileage	150	
Office/broadband	180	
Printing/photocopying	300	57.98
training	0	
subs	0	
postage	100	
Clerk cover	50	
Replace laptop	0	
Meeting room hire	200	
Annual & Extra Newsletter	200	
stationary	150	
Toilets		
Cleaning	7280	1213.34
Utilities	750	
maintenance	750	
Insurance	500	
Old Church Green		
Grass cutting	1920	240
Bins	0	
Bin collection	1000	
additional works	250	
Grass cutting Green	2960	
Misc Expenses		
Christmas	1000	
Insurance	508.3	
Election costs	1500	
Cutting greens	2960	
Churchyard contribution	250	
Wreath	50	
Parish plan hall hire	0	
Consultation expenses/HNS	300	
CLlr training	100	
Audit		
Internal	120	
External	120	
Subs	280	
Parish plan development and	5000	
Notice Board	1500	
	38431.82	2845.24

St Helens parish council meetings – protocol for public participation

This protocol applies to:

Participation in the public forum by members of the public

1 Introduction

1.1 Council Approach to Public Forum. This Council meets and makes its decisions in public and is committed to community engagement and therefore warmly invites members of the public, the press, the police and district and county councillors to attend meetings and contribute within the public forum. A council meeting is not a public meeting; it is a meeting held in public and there is no requirement in law to provide an opportunity for the public to question the council, but this council welcomes the opportunity to offer it.

1.2 Disruption to Council Meetings. Members of the public are asked to respect the fact that this is a meeting to conduct council business and interruptions during council business are not permitted. If, in the opinion of the Chairman, the business of the meeting is disrupted in any way, the Chairman will ask the person/s causing the disruption to be quiet and if they refuse then ask them to leave. Mobile phones must be switched off during the meeting.

1.3 Best Practice. This protocol has been developed based on best practice and recommendations from other Parish Councils and advice from the Local Government Association.

1.4 Reason for Protocol. Reflecting the fact that public discussion can occur on topics about which people care strongly (which is why they attend), this protocol exists to ensure that the public forum is conducted politely and in a structured and unemotional way that comes to a conclusion within a reasonable timeframe.

2 Protocol

2.1 Duration. Public participation will be for a maximum period of 10 minutes.

2.2 Form of Questions. Written questions received in advance of the meeting are encouraged but not essential: if provided in advance this will make it easier for an answer to be prepared. If questions are not provided in advance then members of the public should be aware that the Chairman may be unable to answer those questions and defer that topic to a future date.

2.3 Time of public session.

The agenda will indicate when the public participation will take place. This will be early on in the agenda so that councillors may take into account views expressed when reaching decisions.

2.4 Topics for Questions.

Public participation is permitted regarding items on any topic within the remit of the parish council but members of the public should be aware that if questions are raised which relate to topics not on the agenda then the matter is more likely to be deferred for a subsequent response as investigation may be required. If members of the public are unsure whether a question is within the remit of the parish council, then clerk will be able to answer this.

2.5 Provision of responses. If the question relates to a topic on the agenda then the Chairman may decide to address it immediately or carry it forward for a response at a later date depending upon whether the question needs a quick response.

2.6 Discussion of topics by councillors. Members of the public should note that the council is only allowed to take decisions committing the council on topics that are publicised on the agenda, except where a response has a deadline prior to the next scheduled meeting of the council. Therefore, the council will not enter into any substantive discussion on a question raised if it is unable to answer a question directly.

2.7 Duration of each question. A maximum of 2 minutes is permitted for a member of the public to ask a question. If members of the public wish for a more detailed dialogue than the 3 minutes allows on a question then they should contact the Chairman or any other councillor for an individual discussion: the parish council meeting is not the correct forum for conducting debates between councillors and members of the public. Supplementary comments or questions are solely at the discretion of the Chairman.

2.8 Other Ways to ask Questions. Members of the public should be aware that rather than bringing questions to the entire council and other members of the public attending, questions may be addressed either via the Clerk during business hours or via email, through one of your local parish councillors or in the confidential surgery with councillors at 7pm, before the main meeting starts. Agenda items may be suggested no later than 2 weeks before each parish council meeting, however, the agenda is subject to the approval of the Chairman.

2.9 Role of Chairman. All communication shall be through the Chairman. Councillors may not address questions raised by members of the public except through and with the permission of the Chairman. Members of the public may not address individual councillors except through, and with the permission of the Chairman. The Chairman's decision is final on public participation. Councillors and members of the public must respect the role of the Chairman and may be asked to leave if in the opinion of the Chairman they breach this protocol in a way that disrupts the orderly conduct of the meeting.

3 Other Points

3.1 Guidance.

Members of the public are recommended to make the most of the 3 minutes by preparing notes carefully. If several people want to introduce the same question, it would be helpful where possible, to get together in advance to pool your thoughts and choose the best person to speak for you all.

3.2 Discretion of Chairman.

The Chairman may, in exceptional circumstances, at his or her discretion, invite a member of the public to speak on an agenda item during the parish council meeting if, in the opinion of the Chairman, that individual has relevant information not available to the parish council which will help in its deliberations