

CHELFORD PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held

Thursday 16th May, 2024 at 7:30p.m.

at Chelford Primary School, Oak Road, Chelford.

Present Councillors B. Brindley (Chairman), T. McCrum, C. Montaldo, D. Wilson, S. Wilson.
The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP.
Cheshire East Ward Member: Cllr. A. Harrison.
Members of the public (12).
Dr. E. M. Maddock – Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

1. **Apologies for absence** – Cllrs. J. Fielding, C. Howlett, C. Wright. Mr. M. Asquith.

DECISION (a) **To note the above apologies for absence.**

2. **Minutes** – The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held 11th May, 2023 had been previously circulated.

DECISION (a) **That the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held 11th May, 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

3. **Parish Council Chairman's Report for the civic year 2023/24** – Councillor B. Brindley reported that several projects being pursued by the Parish Council remain ongoing. Permissions are still awaited to allow the installation of the new benches within the Parish. Improvement works are still ongoing at the Chelford Activity Park. Efforts are still being made to secure the release of s.106 funds to support improvements to Parish facilities. The newsletter continues to be produced on a monthly basis and positive feedback is received from residents. There are two vacancies on the Parish Council at present – any resident interested in joining the Parish Council should contact the Clerk for more information. The Hub, under the management of the Chelford Social Committee, is thriving and is used by several local groups. No progress updates have been received from broadband providers regarding the potential to improve services within the Parish. The Parish Council would like to thank all the Chelford volunteers for their time and dedication to community.

DECISION (a) **To receive the report.**

4. **The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP**

The Chairman welcomed The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP to the meeting and invited her to lead the question and answer session with residents.

The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP reminded residents that regular surgeries are held in the area for any residents to raise issues and/or concerns. Whilst it is necessary for time to be split between local commitments and the role of Minister without Portfolio an overarching aim is to deal with matters, both local and national, with a pragmatic approach and a focus on delivering outcomes which are beneficial to residents.

The following issues were raised during the question and answer session:

(a) **Poor broadband within the Parish:** It was reported that Openreach is working with providers to provide schemes and financial support to deliver installations in areas experiencing poor services. Connecting Cheshire has been working to improve services across Cheshire particularly in rural areas which have not previously benefited from the fibre rollout. The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP offered to follow up on this issue to establish whether a local scheme can be implemented to improve broadband in Chelford.

(b) **Poor mobile phone reception, frequent power failures and low water pressure:** It was reported that trees had been affecting the power network leading

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to power cuts. Also an increased number of pole failures had arisen, affecting the network, due to suspension of routine works during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP offered to follow up on these issues to establish any further actions could be taken by electricity and water providers to reduce the frequency and impact of service interruptions.

- (c) **Future of St. John's Church, Chelford:** Representatives of Friends of Chelford Church provided background information to the current situation at the church and requested support from The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP to secure the future of the church building. The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP offered to meet with representatives of Friends of Chelford Church in order to allow a more detailed discussion. It was noted, however, that a meeting with representatives of The Diocese of Chester was planned for the summer.
- (d) **Protection of local amenities including sports and culture:** Residents expressed concern regarding the potential loss of sporting and/or cultural assets within the Parish.
- (e) **Condition of local highways:** It was reported that The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP had met with Cheshire East Council on numerous occasions regarding the condition of local highways. It was reported that funding was available to undertake repairs, however, there did not appear to be sufficient motivation at Cheshire East Council to deliver quality repairs in a timely manner. It was noted that current highway issues included blocked gullies, overgrown hedges, potholes and faulty street lighting. Councillor A. Harrison agreed to follow up on current highway issues.

DECISION

- (a) **To thank The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP for her attendance at the meeting.**
- (b) **To thank The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP for agreeing to follow up on the issues raised during the meeting.**

5. Public Forum

Councillor A. Harrison updated residents on a number of local issues including the following:

- (a) That efforts were being made to arrange for remedial works at Chelford Activity Park to address issues raised following installation.
- (b) That the situation relating the bowling green continues to be monitored and that local opinion appears consistent that the facility should be retained.
- (c) Cheshire East Councillors representing rural areas are continuing to fight for funding to be retained for rural services and facilities. At present, Cheshire East Council appears to prefer to focus resources to Macclesfield and Crewe.
- (d) There had been a positive outcome for Chelford during the green spaces maintenance review. Proposed cuts to maintenance had been reduced significantly.
- (e) Work is ongoing to tackle speeding and road safety. Consideration is being given to installing new speed indicator devices. Signage, road markings and village gateways are being considered as additional measures to help address speeding issues. Efforts continue to press for improvements to the zebra crossing.
- (f) Cheshire East Councillors are continuing to fight the proposed closure of household waste recycling centres within the borough. Also, opposition has been expressed regarding the proposed introduction of revised car parking charges across the borough.

A resident asked whether there were any plans to improve the pond area at Mere Court

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Park. It was reported that this issue has been raised with Cheshire East Council on a number of occasions and that representations will continue to be made.

A resident requested that a list of Parish Councillors be added to the Parish Council notice boards so that those residents who are not able to or choose not to access the information online are still aware of who the Councillors are.

A resident asked whether any progress had been made to review the yellow lines near the junction of Oak Road and Knutsford Road. It was reported that the matter had been referred to Cheshire East Council for attention.

A resident asked whether any further significant residential developments had been approved within the Parish. It was reported that, at present, no further large developments had planning permission, however, two parcels of land had been allocated within the Cheshire East Local Plan for development post-2030.

A resident asked what impact the two recent developments had had on the population of the Parish. It was reported that the population had approximately doubled.

A resident asked what the current position was regarding the cricket ground. It was reported that the outcome of a planning application, relating to the site, was still awaited. The application seeks to deliver residential units along Peover Lane whilst retaining a cricket ground to the rear of the site.

A resident asked whether any plans were currently known to provide a coffee shop within the Parish. It was reported that no such plans had been brought to the attention of the Parish Council.

DECISION

(a) To thank residents for their questions.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 8:40p.m.

Signed:.....

Confirmation date: 13th June, 2024