

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MELLOR PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT MELLOR VILLAGE HALL  
ON THURSDAY 13<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2020 COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM**

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**Present:** Cllrs. Nick Marsden (Chairman), Stella Brunskill, Quentin Colborn, Dot Crooks, John Hymas, Margaret Johnson, Michael O’Grady, Mick Venables. Also in attendance: 1 resident and Parish Clerk  
**Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all, noting that social distancing was in place, and face masks were worn.**

**1. Silence will be held in memory of Cllr. Noel Walsh who sadly died 03 August 2020**

1.1 Chairman led all in marking the passing of Cllr. Walsh, who had been a member of Mellor Parish Council for over 25 years; a former Chairman, a gentle man, who was always helpful and available; also represented Mellor Ward on Ribble Valley Borough Council for a similar period. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him. Press articles reflected his involvement in numerous local matters.

1.2 Clerk then read prayers, for the Parish Council meeting and for Cllr. Walsh.

**2. To receive and approve apologies for absence**

2.1 LCC Cllr. Schofield had sent apologies, due to LCC guidance regarding Covid for Cllrs. PCSO Mark Rigby sent apologies and asked to be informed of future meetings.

**3. To receive declarations of pecuniary or personal interest**

3.1 There were no Declarations made.

**4. To consider and approve any Co-option to Mellor Parish Council**

4.1 Clerk informed members that, following guidance from RVBC officers, it was within regulations to co-opt the resident who had made a presentation to February Parish Council meeting. Members then **RESOLVED unanimously to co-opt Anne Mellor to be a Member of Mellor Parish Council.**

4.2 Cllr. Mellor then duly signed the Declaration of Office and Declaration of Interests. Clerk countersigned the Declaration of Office, will submit the documents to Ribble Valley Borough Council and carry out induction procedures with Cllr. Mellor.

**5. Adjournment for Public Session (Max 5 minutes per person) Public**

5.1 Cllr. Mellor brought matters to Members’ attention regarding the escalating recent issues of flytipping, drug use and antisocial behaviour in Mellor Brook area. She had held discussions with PCSO and was asked to email Clerk with her concerns which members agreed should be supported by Council. Members were informed on the recent Police initiative “Lancashire Talking” as a two way communication tool.

**6. To resolve to confirm the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 05 March 2020 (circulated)**

6.1 The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020 (being the last Parish Council meeting held, due to Covid 19 lockdown) had been circulated to members and published on Council website. It was **RESOLVED that those Minutes be accepted, approved and they were duly signed.**

**7. To resolve to receive and approve the actions carried out under Emergency Powers during the Coronavirus Pandemic period (schedule attached)**

7.1 Members had received a schedule of all decisions made under Emergency Powers enacted 26 March 2020 and extended 01 July 2020. It was **RESOLVED that the schedule of all decisions made between 26 March 2020 and 13 August 2020 be accepted and approved.**

7.2 Members noted that whilst Ribble Valley Borough is currently in a lower risk area for Covid 19 regulations, due to the proximity of Blackburn with Darwen, Preston and Pendle areas it would be premature to rescind the Emergency Powers currently. Clerk was asked to check on dates for a further extension of the Emergency Powers and circulate these for approval by email, with audit trail.

**8. To resolve to consider and approve Annual Governance & Accounting Regulations**

a) **To consider and approve the Internal Audit Report 2019.20**

b) **To consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement 2019.20**

c) **To consider and approve the Annual Accounting Statements 2019.20**

d) **To consider and approve the further actions to complete External Audit requirements 2019.20**

8.1 Mellor Parish Council Internal Audit Report 2019.20 carried out by Alison Gerrard FMAAT had been circulated and it was

**RESOLVED to accept and approve Mellor Parish Council Internal Audit Report 2019.20**

8.2 The template for Annual Governance Statement 2019.20 had been circulated to members. This was followed in detail and it was then

**RESOLVED that Mellor Parish Council Annual Governance Statement 2019.20 be accepted, approved and duly signed.**

8.3 The completed Annual Accounting Statements, figures included, had been circulated to members. It was **RESOLVED that Mellor Parish Council Annual Accounting Statements 2019.20 be accepted, approved and signed.**

8.4 Members were reminded of the further actions for the completion of External Audit requirements 2019.20, including publication of all documents (which had been circulated to members), submission of documents to PKF Littlejohn (External Auditors) and the publication of the Exercise of Public Rights. It was **RESOLVED that Clerk be approved to carry out the further actions to complete External Audit requirements 2019.20.**

**9. Any Matters arising from the minutes not covered on this Agenda FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

9.1 Members were aware of the Consultation on a Devolved Authority and would consider this as a body in future as an agenda item.

9.2 Members noted that Clerk had sought advice from Ribble Valley Borough Council officers and she had spent a considerable amount of time in order to deal with a Freedom of Information request. The response had been sent and the matter had been closed. Clerk was thanked for her quick response to the request.

9.3 Following the previous resolution, Cllr. Hymas reported that he had not needed to purchase any additional litter picking equipment from the allowed £250 budget. One set of the basic equipment had been supplied to a resident and Cllr. Hymas still holds stock for loan.

9.4 Members noted that all had approved by email that the BT phone box be purchased for community use and further consideration is to be given to the community usage. Clerk was asked to check insurance position.

9.5 Due to Covid 19 regulations, members had of necessity communicated by email and had given consideration to Categories A, B & C, in order to minimise repetition, which was approved to continue. Members were reminded that unless a decision was needed, responses may not need to go to all, merely to those who were in discussions. It was noted that it may be simpler for Clerk to deal with quick queries by phone, during working hours, rather than numerous emails.

9.6 Members had earlier considered the possibility of a Christmas Tree or lights at the War Memorial; in view of Covid 19 uncertainties, this matter was deferred until 2021.

9.7 The Parish Newsletter had been printed in March 2020, but not fully distributed due to lockdown. However copies had been left in shops and the phone box and all seemed to have been taken. Members were asked to consider articles for submission for the next Newsletter to Cllr. Hymas, noting that the Working Party is short of members, following the earlier Cllr. resignations.

9.8 Members were asked to consider, as part of a future agenda item, the ways in which the Parish could mark the time of the Covid 19 period in order to leave a lasting benefit.

**10. To consider any response to be made to Planning Applications**

10.1 Clerk had circulated an update on all relevant planning applications and decisions since March 2020

10.2 Members were also aware of the recent possible changes to National Planning, again to be considered as a future agenda item. In terms of planning applications in Mellor, all were asked to physically look at application sites prior to any objections to be submitted. Cllr. Brunskill informed members that Parish Councils will be encouraged to have increased participation in future planning decisions, but will be given training in order to do so. Consideration was given to a Planning Working Party being formed and Clerk advised on possible Conflicts of Interest.

10.3 Members were informed of a recent incident in Mellor Brook area when Councillors had been asked to investigate a possible breach of the approved planning. This had occurred at weekend when RVBC Officers were not available, but they had subsequently looked into the case and were dealing with it. Cllr. Brunskill as Borough Councillor, awaited the officers' report.

10.4 Concern was expressed regarding the number of retrospective planning applications and the instances where major amendments to previously approved conditions were sought. Clerk was asked to write to Ribble Valley Planning to seek a tightening up of these processes.

**11. Financial Matters and Accounts To approve: Bank balances**

**a. To consider & approve; Invoices for payment since 31 July approved under Emergency Powers**

11.1 Members to note that there was one invoice due for payment, for room hire that evening. Clerk will liaise with Chairman & Vice Chairman to arrange payment.

11.2 Members noted, as per the Actual Cash flow statement at 11 August 2020 which had been circulated, the bank balances were at

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|--------------------|------------|
| Current Account    | £41,785.70 |
| Investment Account | £74.52     |
| Scholarship Fund   | £1,199.72  |

**RESOLVED that the Actual Cash Flow 11 August 2020 be approved as correct.**

**12. To consider and approve any actions following any report from the Play Area Working Party**

12.1 Members noted that the repairs to the fencing had been carried out, the small gate had been adjusted and invoices had been paid. They were informed that LCC Asset Manager had been emailed three times to ask

for railings at the front left of Mellor Library to be repainted. To date there had been no response. Members considered the railings to be in a very poor state, but provided no enclosing function and the adjoining gate was always open. It was therefore

**RESOLVED** Clerk to contact LCC Asset Manager to request urgent repair & repaint of railings, or preferably removal, copy to LCC Cllr. Schofield seeking support for this action.

12.2 Members noted that Annual Play Area Inspection would fall due on 25 September. Clerk was asked to instruct Playquest to carry out the Inspection.

12.3 Members discussed whether Mellor Play Area should remain closed. Covid appropriate signage in use at Clitheroe Castle Playground had been circulated and options were discussed. It was then

**RESOLVED** that Mellor Play Area be re-opened at the earliest opportunity, no specified date but subject to conditions having been met. The conditions included relevant insurance cover, full signage including parental responsibility; also that a full cleaning regime was identified, with a rota for volunteers to follow and Cllr. Venables approved to spend up to £200 on purchase of cleaning equipment and materials.

**13. To consider and approve any actions for Mellor Community Association :**

a) **to appoint 2 representatives from MPC to MCA Committee**

b) **To consider and approve any actions to use reserves in the current financial year budget to alleviate drainage and damp issues at Mellor Village Hall , noting that a meeting has been held with a Loss Assessor to evaluate a potential insurance claim Members to note that MCA Minutes are on their website <https://e-voice.org.uk/mellorvillagehall/minutes-of-last-mca-meeting/>**

13.1 Members noted the advice given in 2016 by Donna Carney (Community Futures) regarding MCA Trustees and voting rights for Parish Council representatives. Clerk advised that, in order to avoid any misunderstandings it would be prudent for two representatives of Mellor Parish Council (with a deputy) to attend each meeting, if that was not possible, there should be no attendant. She also recommended that any former MCA Trustees should not be the appointed to be Parish Council representatives, but they could seek to join MCA Trustees in their personal capacity, should they wish. This item was deferred to be a future agenda item.

13.2 Chairman informed members of the damage to the new wooden floor at the Hall, caused by flooding during Storm Ciara in late February. Under Emergency Powers, Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk had met with MCA Trustees and a Loss Assessor who has been appointed by Parish Council to deal with the potential claim from Parish Council insurers, under the Buildings clauses of the policy. His charge will be 10% + VAT of the total claim he achieves and he hoped to report in the following week.

13.3 In view of the situation regarding the flood damage, the consideration of the use of reserves was deferred until more information is known.

**14. To confirm and approve any actions following meeting re. the possible provision of electrical charging points and consideration of any application for Renewable Energy Feasibility Study Grants**

14.1 Cllr. Hymas explained that a meeting had taken place with NW Renewable Energy Officers and Charge My Street, with details circulated to members. He elaborated that discussions were at early stage for installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Points in Mellor, and some clarification on details was yet required, however due to the funding for this having a finite limit, it was

**RESOLVED** that Working Party of Cllrs. Hymas & Colborn with Clerk agree in broad terms to draft a lease with Charge My Street and clarify accounts details in order to install charging points. Chairman was included in developments, although not in meetings.

14.2 Cllr. Hymas followed to explain that NW Renewable Energy has a grant for Feasibility Study into various options for increased green energy generation for Mellor, which could be used in order to supply the requirement for charging points, or to supply residents. A summary had been circulated and it was **RESOLVED** that Working Party of Cllrs. Hymas & Colborn with Clerk agree in broad terms to apply for NW Renewable Energy Feasibility Grant. Chairman was included in developments, although not in meetings.

**15. To consider and approve structure, membership of and any Delegated Powers to any Committees or Working Parties**

15.1 Members acknowledged that the previous structure for numerous Working Parties needed to be reconsidered. Clerk was asked to produce and circulate a Report on findings and recommendations for an agenda item in the near future.

**16. To consider and approve any actions and budget for Books of Remembrance for each of four Churches (Balderstone PC will give financial support)**

16.1 A Working Party (Cllrs. Brunskill, Crooks, O'Grady & Clerk) had considered options with suggestions from a Calligrapher, but decisions had proved difficult due to Covid, and with no approved budget. Members considered that a loose leaf format was preferable, since further amendments / additions would be possible when more information might be accessed. It was noted that Balderstone Parish Council had agreed to give some unspecified financial support to the project. Clerk was asked to arrange a virtual meeting with Working Party & Calligrapher and it was

**RESOLVED** that a budget of £1200.00 + VAT be approved for 4 books, but a further allowance could be made, subject to full Council approval. The Working Party was approved to deal with this item.

**17 To consider and approve any appropriate actions to address speeding throughout the Parish**

17.1 Clerk had received a late email from LCC Cllr. Schofield on this subject, detailing a response to a Carter Fold resident's concerns about speeding to and from the shops, in addition to other residents' concerns about speeding on Mellor Lane. She was asked to circulate this to members & write an article for the Parish website.

**18. To receive reports from meetings**

- a. **LCC Report - any matters of note regarding Mellor - LCC Cllr. Schofield**
- b. **RVBC Report by Borough - Councillor Brunskill**
- c. **Report from RV LALC Liaison Committee Meeting - Cllr. Marsden**
- d. **Report from BAe Liaison Committee Meeting, if any**

18.1 There was no formal report from LCC Cllr. Schofield

18.2 Cllr. Brunskill reported that Ribble Valley Borough Council and Committees continued to meet virtually. Cllrs. have now been appointed to outside bodies, and she remains the Children's Champion. RVBC as a body, regardless of political party, strongly resisted the proposed Devolved Authority, deeming this premature & unnecessary particularly whilst Covid situation continues. VJ 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was to be commemorated on 15<sup>th</sup> August in Clitheroe, with High Sheriff in attendance, whilst she would attend as Mayor. She then explained that, following the recent death of Borough Councillor Noel Walsh, an Election will be held, but not until May 2021 and she therefore looked for support from Parish Councillors as and when required.

18.3 Neither RVBC Parish Council Liaison, RV LALC Liaison Committee nor BAe Liaison Committees have met and there was no report presented.

**19. To consider and approve any actions following the Staff Annual Appraisal Report - Cllrs. Colborn & Marsden**

Members noted that, as a Confidential & Sensitive Matter, Council must resolve to exclude Press & Public during this agenda item; however no resolution was necessary, as no public or press had attended.

19.1 Cllrs. Colborn & Marsden had met with Clerk and then circulated the report from that meeting. It was noted that a plan for future handover to a new Clerk was underway. Members then

**RESOLVED to accept and approve the Staff Annual Appraisal Report.**

19.2 **Members resolved to continue past 9.00pm (2 hours meeting) in order to complete the agenda.**

**20. Matters brought forward by members FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

20.1 There were no further matters brought forward by members.

**21. Dates of future meetings, with frequency & venue to be determined**

21.1 Members noted the ongoing Covid situation, particularly in adjacent areas, but there was a backlog of Parish Council business needing attention. Emergency Powers were still in force and therefore it was **RESOLVED that Parish Council meetings may be increased in the near future but the Emergency Powers will remain in force at the present time, with possible extension and continual review by Clerk, Chairman & Vice Chairman.**

Chairman then thanked all for their attendance and input before closing the meeting at 9.07pm.