

AUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 12 AUGUST 2019, AT AUGHTON VILLAGE HALL ANNEXE, COMMENCING AT 7.30pm

CHAIRMAN: Councillor Graham Jones

MEMBERS PRESENT: As recorded in the Register of Attendance

11161 APOLOGIES were tendered on behalf of:

Councillor Mercer	-	personal commitment
Councillor Woolgar	-	personal commitment

All APOLOGIES were READ and APPROVED.

11162 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – members were reminded to declare their interests before the start of each Agenda Item or when appropriate.

11163 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 8 JULY 2019, copies circulated prior to meeting, were APPROVED and SIGNED as a correct record.

11164 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES:

- a) A reminder that Civic Sunday would be held at St Michael's Church, Church Lane, Aughton on 15 September 2019, meeting in the Church Hall at 10.10am for 10.30am Service, returning to the Church Hall afterwards for light refreshments.
- b) Aughton's Best Kept Garden Competition 2019 – a brief report was given on this popular community event which took place on 5 August 2019. The presentation of trophies and certificates of merit to be arranged with the Garden Judge and confirmed in due course.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – the Chairman adjourned the meeting at this stage and welcomed County Councillor David O'Toole to the meeting and invited him to speak. Councillor O'Toole said he had always refused to comment on 'fracking' in his Division – it was within the law to 'frack'. However, he had always said that regardless of any personal opinion on this matter, he would represent the views of his residents to the best of his ability. He explained that he was not a member of the Development Control Committee at Lancashire County Council (the decision maker at LCC) but he was a member of the Planning Committee at West Lancashire Borough Council (a consultee on any fracking applications). He gave an update on the current situation with the Aurora Energy Resources Exploratory Wellsite at Altcar Moss application, the pre-determination rules, the site visit, and the permission granted by the Chairman of Development Control for him to speak and represent the local residents in his Division. He would be saying that the fact that 'Fracking' was lawful was not a valid reason for agreeing approval but the actual location, lack of infrastructure and the strong local feeling were valid reasons. Councillor O'Toole said he may have to request to speak at the Borough Council Planning Committee Meeting also.

A question and answer session then took place with Councillor O'Toole on the Fracking Application and the procedure to 'frack'. The lack of street cleaning and weed control was also discussed.

A resident from Long Lane spoke about the recent restructuring of West Lancashire Borough Council and asked what affect this would have on any New Local Plan?

Councillor O'Toole said the controlling group was looking to have a new Local Plan but there was no further information at present. The restructuring procedure had been discussed by the controlling group at 'a closed meeting' West Lancashire Borough Council with a large financial deficit would, in the future, be implementing a new Operating Manager Model as part of its Organisational Review, with reduced staffing but no announcement yet of names for new positions.

Public Question Time (Continued)

The Chairman thanked Councillor O'Toole for attending. Councillor O'Toole then left the meeting. An update was then given on the provision of the Speed Awareness Signs in parts of the Parish – anticipated completion during late October. As there were no further comments, the Chairman resumed the Meeting.

11165 WLBC PLANNING:

(items marked* were considered under the Parish Council Prior Notification Procedure (PNP) to meet the deadline for response)

a) Weekly List Items

There were NO COMMENTS in the cases of:

*2019/0643/FUL *0652 0677/LDC 0616 0690 0768/LBC

In the case of:

*2019/0517/FUL Walsh Hall Farm, Formby Lane – members noted the latest application for development and raised concern about:

a) the affect of neighbouring properties in respect of drainage – ‘surface water run-off from new development’ should the proposals go ahead.

b) the proposed access track is a Public Right of Way, ie PF.30 running through the site towards Back Lane (two other PRW also cross the site, ie PF.8 & PF.29. There should, therefore, be no obstruction of these PF's if approval given for the development and no detrimental impact on the farm track (Birches Brow).

2019/0598/FUL Moor Hall Restaurant, Prescott Road – members noted the success of Moor Hall Restaurant and the need for extra car parking for the additional staff, albeit the loss of the important woodland. The southern car park adjacent the main entrance may be more acceptable with regard to the ‘setting of Moor Hall’. The Parish Council, however, would not wish to see any further expansion for car parking in the future as this would be considered ‘over development’ of this important site.

2019/0635/FUL Mews Cottage, Brookfield Lane – members wished to ensure, in order to protect residential amenity of nearby properties, there would be no increase in flood risk on or off the site resulting from the proposed new development and the site would be properly drained.

2019/0648/ARM Land to the rear of 69-75 Town Green Lane – members noted the Reserved Matters application and commented as follows:

Access – visibility was approved at Outline Stage and the Highway Development Officer's comments were supported, so no further comments. Drainage – noted the comments from WLBC Drainage Officer in respect of ‘disposal of surface water’ and noted that Network Rail had been consulted and their comments were awaited.

2019/0701/FUL 43 Granville Park West – members noted the pre-application advice, without further comment.

2019/0721/FUL Silver Birch Lodge, Bold Lane – members noted the site was in vacant possession but could not support the retrospective application to retain the timber perimeter site boundary fence. The scale and height of the fence, without any ‘green relief’ detrimentally affects the setting of Holt Green Conservation Area, and the landscaped Public Right of Way alongside Beech Gardens toddlers’ playarea which is owned by the Parish Council. There was no indication of timescale for its use, was it proposed for a temporary period? If the intention was to make this a permanent structure, then permission should be refused and consideration given to an alternative boundary enclosure more in-keeping with a Conservation Area.

2019/0740/FUL 15 Fernhurst Gate – members noted the nearby residents’ support for the proposal.

2019/0751/FUL 74 Long Lane – members noted the pre-application advice which seems to have been adhered to.

2019/0767/FUL St Mary's Barn, Prescott Road – members noted the pre-application advice regarding a more appropriate design which seems to have been adhered to.

2019/0389/OUT Land adjacent ‘Woodside’, Parris Lane – Amendment: to include a tree survey and ecological survey was noted. Members iterated their comments in respect of the speed limit on Parris Lane.

Para. 11165 (Continued)

b) Appeals/Planning Control: WLBC Council Meeting held 17 July 2019 – a Question raised on ‘Weed Control on Highways’ by Our West Lancashire Group and the response was noted, ie ‘The annual weed spray undertaken on behalf of LCC is specified in the agreement to be undertaken in May/June and August/September some 8 weeks apart. This year the first application has been slightly delayed due to our weed contract having to be re-tendered. The first application commenced on 15 July and the second spray will be undertaken in August/September as planned. The mechanical sweeping will be undertaken as scheduled to follow the weed spraying to remove dead weeds and detritus. The work in 2020 will commence as scheduled.’ NOTED

(Councillor Mrs Morrison, as a member of the Moss Alliance (Anti-Fracking Group), declared a pecuniary interest in the next item, and left the meeting during discussion)

11166 LCC PLANNING:

a) Planning Application submitted by Aurora Energy Resources for a wellsite at Suttons Lane, Great Altcar – although not a Consultee, to consider whether Aughton Parish Council wished to submit comments on LCC/2019/0037 (an invitation to make a presentation at this meeting had been declined by Aurora as it was felt that such a presentation would not be appropriate at this time as Aughton was a significant distance from, and will be unaffected by, the proposed development).

After discussion, the Parish Council – although not a statutory consultee on this application - agreed to OPPOSE the proposal and raise the following concerns:

- Inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- The detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- The particular location is Grade I Agricultural Land.
- Lack of infrastructure would be a major problem particularly the access to the wellpad which is on a narrow farm track.
- The detrimental impact on important wildlife, habitat and the environment.
- The proposed development would cause harm in various ways including potential flooding, noise pollution, traffic pollution, and water pollution.
- Local residents living in the immediate and wider area were not supporting the proposal of ‘Fracking’.

(Councillor Mrs Morrison resumed the meeting at this stage)

11167 CHAIRMAN, VICE-CHAIRMAN/PARISH CLERK’S AUGUST MEETING WITH THE LOCAL POLICE – a brief report was given on the informal meeting held 12 August 2019. There had been 14 reported crimes since the last meeting including 1 case of fraud & forgery (Long Lane), 1 case of Theft (Back Lane), 1 assault (Prescot Road), 2 burglary (Gaw Hill Lane, Standhouse Lane), 1 missing from home (returned), 1 theft of vehicle (Mickering Lane), 1 criminal damage excluding vehicles (Mickering Lane), 2 domestic cases, 1 robbery (Back Lane), 1 public order (Noel Gate), 1 harassment (Granville Park), 1 vehicle crime (Cherry Tree Lane). In Aughton, other than reported crimes, there had been 134 incidents and 8 cases of Nuisance/ASB. Discussion took place over the antisocial behaviour around the park including the park off Cherry Tree Lane. At the request of local residents overlooking the park, it was agreed to lower the hedges once again and request the assistance of the Chief Inspector (copying in the Police & Crime Commissioner).

11168 PARISH FINANCE:

a) Parish Council Uncontested Election 2019 – members noted the recharge breakdown and queried one of the costings. The Electoral and Administration Manager to be asked for further details.

b) Independent Internal Audit – the audit fee to Mr A Gore MCIPD CILCA for undertaking an audit of the Parish Council financial records and completion of the supporting documentation for External Auditors was APPROVED in the sum of £100.

11169 ACCOUNTS (circulated to members)

Income

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Expenditure

(includes VAT)

Imprest Renewal

54.08

S R Moorcroft – repairs to Pavilion & Bus Shelter

29.50

Rawsthorne Commercial Landscaping – grounds maintenance

2,789.00

Global Maintainance Ltd – quarterly power sweep maintenance to tennis courts

360.00

Shaw Savage Business Services Ltd – printer ink

106.20

Mr A Gore – audit fee for independent internal audit

100.00

Dr David Gallagher (webmaster) – reimbursement for 1 year's instant site

Hosting with LCN

89.94

Defib Store Ltd – purchase of replacement battery, pads etc

87.60

Salaries – part-time Clerk/part-time Park-keeper

1,430.25

HM Revenue & Customs – Income Tax & NIC

154.26

It was RESOLVED that all the foregoing accounts be paid.

11169 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 9 September 2019.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm.