

Bold Parish Council Annual Report 2019/2020



Annual Parish Meeting

Unfortunately, due to the Covid 19 pandemic lockdown, the Annual Parish Meeting which was due to be held on Wednesday, 8th April 2020, regrettably could not take place. The Annual Parish Meeting is essentially a residents' meeting which provides an opportunity to raise and discuss issues about Bold and the work of the Parish Council. It is an ideal way to learn about the work of the Parish Council and say what you would like to see done in the future. As soon as conditions allow the Parish Council will rearrange the Annual Parish Meeting.

Contacting Your Parish Council

Contact details for Parish Councillors and the Clerk are included on the back page. These are also on the website. There were nine new councillors elected in May 2019, which represents a significant change in the composition of the Parish Council.

Residents are welcome to attend any Parish Council meeting but are requested to give **10 days'** notice to the Clerk if they wish to speak on a matter at the Council meeting.

Meetings are normally held at approximately six-week intervals on Wednesday evenings, commencing at 7:15 pm, usually at St Michael and All Angels Church, Gartons Lane. Notifications of meetings are displayed on the Parish Council notice board and website.

Working with the Police

When resources have permitted, police officers have attended parish council meetings and provided incidents reports together with reports on action being taken. Although there have been fluctuations in the levels of crime related activities, most of these have remained broadly the same as the previous year. With the support of the Parish Council the police continue to be proactive by offering support in the establishment of neighbourhood watch schemes. They continue to undertake activities such as "Operation Handle", and "Operation Spring Watch", aimed respectively at reducing burglaries and nuisance from scrambler and quad bikes. Once again the latter has resulted in a number of apprehensions, formal warnings, and seizing and destroying a number of machines. The Parish Council has worked with the police and local authority to help address issues associated with anti-social behaviour, and particularly drug dealing. Particular "hotspots" have been Field Road garages, the former Green Dragon Hotel, and Clock Face Country Park.

The police continue to actively engage with local communities and have in place an information / messaging website at www.merseynow.org. Residents can come along both to listen to police reports and to raise any issues of concern. Alternatively matters can be raised via one of your parish councillors or via the above police website.

If you don't raise a problem it can't be dealt with. The police are keen to emphasise the importance of vigilance, reporting issues and the importance of receiving local intelligence.

Parish Council Finances

Bold Parish Council has continued to spend its precept money wisely and to the benefit of parish residents. In January 2020 the Parish Council set a precept of £12.07 for 2020/21 (an increase of 1.7%). This will generate a precept income of £13,422 for the year. The audit of the accounts for 2018/19 was completed without issues.

Christmas Illuminations – Clock Face Village

The Christmas illuminations on Clock Face Road continue to prove popular with local residents. The Parish Council replaced the illuminations for Christmas 2019 due to the former set having reached the end of their life. It also entered a contract with the local authority for the annual installation and storage of the illuminations, which will virtually halve the annual cost to the Parish Council budget.

Traffic related issues.

At the start of the year concern was once again expressed by local residents regarding traffic speed along Gorsey Lane. Subsequent to this similar concern was expressed regarding speeding on Union Bank Lane and dangerous parking on Gorsey Lane and Clock Face Road. The Parish Council continues to liaise with, and make representations to the local authority and police in this regard, once again requesting surveys as appropriate, and urging the implementation and enforcement of traffic control measures. This work has resulted in formal monitoring, speed camera days, and latterly the potential establishment of a Community Speed Watch initiative.

The Parish Council is once again grateful to local residents for reporting such issues, and would request continued information in that regard.

Planning Applications and Local Interests

There has been a wide range of planning applications during 2019/20, and, the Parish Council is consulted on all of these. It represents the views and interests of local people, and ensures that these are properly taken into account in the local authority planning process. The Parish Council has been influential in planning issues including commercial developments and the establishment of local businesses. The Parish Council continues, on behalf of local residents, to take account of and express views on Local Development Planning issues of its own local authority, together with those of close neighbours including Warrington and Halton. It has and continues to engage with the local authority over issues relating to the draft Local Plan, and has made strong representations regarding what it and local residents consider to be the damaging implications of the use of greenbelt land for significant housing development in the Bold area. More recently it has raised similar concerns over proposed commercial development on the Omega site.

Local Groups and Funding Support

The Parish Council has once again supported a number of voluntary community groups which enhance the lives and well-being of Bold residents. These include, Clock Face ARLFC (junior section), North West Miners' Heritage Assoc., and support to the establishment of the Dream "parkrun". The Parish Council is grateful for the positive and valuable work undertaken by these organisations on behalf of local residents.

Bold Forest Park

The Parish Council has continued to represent the area of Bold on the Bold Forest Park Implementation Group, which seeks to develop and promote activities in the Bold Forest area. Unfortunately however, due to a reduction in local authority resources and manpower, the frequency of meetings has latterly reduced. The Parish Council has been very active in attempting to resolve problems associated with litter and dog fouling: it has procured a new dog / litter bin for Clock Face Country Park and encouraged and supported the establishment of litter picking teams. It continues to look for solutions to address dog fouling issues on the Forestry Commission owned Dream site. The Parish Council has also urged the local authority to address issues relating to footpaths, including overgrown vegetation, litter, and a weak bridge.

Potential Initiatives

The Parish Council has reviewed the previously earmarked site for the establishment of a local war memorial and a workers' memorial. It has attempted to identify an alternative site which is readily accessible, and is currently exploring the possibility of a location within the grounds of St Michael and All Angels Church. Progress would be subject to satisfactory site surveys, planning approval, and church authority approval. A sub-committee has been established in an attempt to progress the project. Funds have been earmarked for the purpose.

The Parish Council has also earmarked funds for defibrillators, having identified a significant lack of such an important resource. Having taken advice from the Community Heartbeat Trust it has already purchased one defibrillator, for which it is working with the local authority to establish an appropriate site on the New Bold estate. It has plans to purchase more, and is currently investigating further possible sites.

Bus Travel

Issues relating to inappropriate conduct of drivers of the 32A bus which terminates at Crawford Street have been pursued with Mersey Travel on behalf of local residents. In addition, significant representation has been made with Mersey Travel and local authority councillors regarding the routes and timetabling of certain buses.

Parish Councillors 2019/2020:

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