

Rainhill Annual Parish Meeting
24th April 2013
Held at Rainhill Village Hall

Present Cllrs: B. Almond, J. Carroll, J. De'Asha, M. Donovan, J. Doyle, S. Glover, L. Glover, D. Kelly, J. Kelly, W. Wood, PCSO K. Dearing (Merseyside Police), 8 residents.

Apologies received from Cllrs B. Heydon and C. Moore and from Sgt S. Barcroft (Merseyside Police), Mrs J. Speakman (Rainhill Townswomen's Guild) and Mr D. Whitley (Rainhill Civic Society).

1. The Chair, Cllr J. Carroll, welcomed residents to the meeting, thanked them for attending, and explained how the meeting would progress.
2. The Chair then asked members of the Council to introduce themselves and gave a report on the activities of the Parish Council over the previous twelve months.
Key points included:
 - The Parish Council continued to support Rainhill Gala which managed to raise over £8000 for Willowbrook Hospice and other local organisations and charities. This is a tremendous achievement and a real reflection not only on the charitable giving of the community but the amazing year-round efforts of the Gala Group.
 - At last year's Annual Parish Meeting it had been reported that Barnardos unfortunately had to give up the 4F Centre but that the Parish Council had worked with Ward Councillors, St Helens Council, 'Friends' Groups, Rainhill High School and other parties to see the set-up of a new 4F Centre Management Group chaired by Cllr DeAsha. After some initial financial support from the Parish Council the 4F Centre is now a financially self-sufficient and thriving community resource for young and disadvantaged people.
 - The Parish Council continued to support the Village Hall by contributing towards the hall running costs.
 - The Parish Council, with the help of Ward Councillors and St Helens Council, continued to support the provision of open spaces for the enjoyment of Rainhill residents. The Council has responsibility for 8 parks spread over 43 acres of Rainhill. The Council provides support to two junior football teams, Rainhill United and Rainhill Rocket.
 - Last year it had also been reported that former Councillor Gordon Jamieson had sadly passed away and unfortunately had not lived long enough to see the planned memorial plaque for Gordon's long-term partner Cathy Wilson at Rainhill Railway Station. The Chair was pleased to report that the plaque, which is mounted on the disabled access gate that Cathy had campaigned for, was unveiled by Cllr Lynn Glover alongside members of both Gordon's and Cathy's families in September.
 - The Parish Council continued to help Rainhill Music Festival by providing trophies and prizes and Cllr Doyle presented the Mike Doyle Memorial Trophy to 'Young Musician of the Year' Niall Kavanagh.
 - The Parish Council continued to support local residents by vetting local planning applications and making comments and objections where necessary.

- Thanks were given to Longton Lane School Choir who performed at the switch on of the Christmas Tree lights and helped make a special and festive occasion.
 - The Good Citizenship Award was presented this year to Bill Humphries, Colin Oldfield and Allen Walpole to recognise their excellent work in and for the community.
 - Plans were recently announced of an Eco Garden, hopefully for the benefit of all residents, on the area of grassed land in Exchange Place. This followed massive support demonstrated by members of the local community and culminating in a group being formed by residents, members of local community groups and representatives from both Rainhill Parish Council and St Helens Council to progress the plans including applying for planning permission, fundraising, obtaining grants, building the garden, planning events and on-going long term support.
 - The Parish Council website continued to be improved and is both a regular source of messages to the Council and a source of information about the Council. Any suggestions for additional content will be welcomed.
 - Close co-operation continues between the Police, Ward Councillors, St Helens Council and the Parish Council.
 - The Annual Report has, once again, been distributed to all homes in Rainhill.
3. The Clerk briefly presented the draft accounts for 2012/13 to the meeting:
- The 'Income' total for the year was similar to the previous year; next year it will be significantly less due to the reduced Precept.
 - In the 'Expenditure' section there was a significant decrease compared with last year but it was still more than income. The largest spend was due the Parish Council's contribution towards the cost of a number of 'Environmental Schemes' including Houghton Street Refurbishment, Community Notice Boards, Christmas Illumination improvements and, the biggest cost, CCTV on Warrington Road. The largest part of Section 137 expenditure was due to support given to the 4F Centre during its first year of operation.
 - In the final section the reduced 'Cumulative Fund Balance' reflects the increased spending / reduction in reserves.
- Mr C Tigwell enquired about the reduction in Precept. The Clerk gave a brief explanation which was expanded on by Cllr Grunewald.
4. Mr C. Tigwell gave a report on behalf of Rainhill Railway and Heritage Society including:
- Ongoing support for the Rainhill Trials Museum
 - Refurbishment of the Trials railway carriage by Northern Rail
 - Monthly meetings have been well attended although membership, unfortunately, continues to decline
 - Successful Northern Rail event at Edge Hill late last year
 - The Society has had no involvement in the alterations to Skew Bridge
 - A flowering cherry tree will be planted in the 'Riverside Triangle' in memory of Gordon Jamieson.
5. PCSO Dearing, Merseyside Police, apologised for not having year on year crime figures due to a technical problem. He then offered to answer any questions about local policing:

- Cllr DeAsha asked about policing of the parking situation on Rainhill Road and particularly from the 'Coach & Horses' corner onwards. He was particularly concerned about prams and wheelchairs having unrestricted access along the pavement given the encroachment of cars onto the pavement. PCSO Dearing suggested a solution might be parking restrictions on one side of the road which has worked well in similar situations. There then followed a discussion about what the police could and could not do and PCSO Dearing said he would report back to Sgt Barcroft on the issues raised.
 - Issues of pavement parking in other areas of Rainhill were discussed with Cllrs Donovan and Almond indicating there were areas where pavement parking couldn't be avoided without causing obstructions to traffic.
 - Cllr D Kelly reported that people were parking in the bus stop area on Rainhill Road.
 - Cllr Doyle mentioned a chemist delivery van had been booked outside of the Doctor's surgery on Rainhill Road. PCSO Dearing advised this is likely to have been St Helens Council enforcement officers as local PCSOs would have used their discretion. Cllr Grunewald advised that St Helens Council traffic wardens do have some discretion and giving 5 minutes leeway on yellow line offences would not be unusual.
6. The Chair introduced the Open Forum section requesting that residents wishing to speak should give their name and address before speaking:
- Mr P Crabb asked about the lack of enforcement for the 9am to 9pm prohibition of vehicles going through the Arnside Road estate. A discussion followed about a significant split in feeling from estate residents about any proposals put forward on the issue. Cllr DeAsha said the police could be asked to look at enforcement but would expect there would be an issue in terms of their policing priorities and suggested it might be better to go back to what was originally proposed and work to get more support from residents. PCSO Dearing also suggested it would be difficult to enforce the existing restrictions. Cllr Donovan insisted the solution would be to block off roads. Cllr DeAsha said he would get the parties together to discuss the problem further.
 - Mr P Johnson asked if it would be possible to have an additional light-controlled crossing on Warrington Road between the ones in the village centre and Rainhill High School. Cllr DeAsha suggested the Clerk to the Parish Council might contact Mr G Houghton at St Helens Council to undertake a traffic survey.
 - Mr P Johnson asked if more buses could go through the village instead of turning left at Rainhill Road. Cllr S Glover advised there had been a bus service (107) that continued through the village but it had been discontinued through lack of demand. He added that it wasn't possible to divert the 10A service from its established route and that a campaign to resurrect the 107 service, if it had sufficient support, would be more likely to be successful. Cllr DeAsha added that the 510 service also used to go through the village. Cllr Doyle advised that the Merseytravel Customer Forum was open to any members of the public and she would give details of the next meeting to Mr Johnson.
 - Cllr Doyle said she had received complaints about the new sandstone on Skew Bridge. Mr C Tigwell advised that the original sandstone is Rainhill sandstone. The Clerk to the Parish Council said he had some information from St Helens

Council and from Network Rail that might help in answering questions about the process and offered to pass it on to Cllr Doyle.

7. Mr C Tigwell gave a vote of thanks for the work of the Parish Council and the voluntary efforts of the Councillors on behalf of residents.
8. Being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 8.35 pm.

Chair, Rainhill Parish Council
13th May 2013