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**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting**  
**held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2024**  
**in the Community Hall, commencing at 7.00pm**

Prior to the meeting, due to the absence of both Chairman and Vice Chairman, the Clerk asked for nominations for Chairman for this evening. Cllr Pearson was nominated and agreed.

**Present: Cllr J Pearson, Chairman, Cllr B Ashcroft, Cllr S Houghton, Cllr J Shawcross, E Murphy, D. Wainwright, J Collins, S Collins, A Finney, V Finney**

APM2024/01	<p><b>Apologies for Absence:</b>          The following apologies had been received: Cllrs S Murphy, B Pilkington, J Stevenson</p>
APM2024/02	<p><b>To confirm the minutes of the last Parish Meeting held 13<sup>th</sup> April 2023</b>          Confirmed as a true record.</p>
APM2024/03	<p><b>To receive the report of the Chairman of the Parish Council</b>  <i>Cllr Pearson welcomed those present to the meeting and read out the Report on behalf of the Chairman:</i>  <i>“We are fortunate residents come along to our meetings to give their views on Parish matters and raise issues that may need our attention. However residents wishing to complain, comment or compliment about anything then they don’t have to wait for a meeting to raise in person, they are most welcome to contact us at any time.</i>  <i>This Annual meeting is the only time residents can raise issues and agree resolutions. Along with these resolutions, items raised under ‘Public Participation’ at normal business meetings can subsequently be considered and/or included on a future Parish Council meeting Agenda. During this current civic year:</i>  <i>We have continued with our efforts to find resolution for the accessibility and service issues at our rail station. We regularly raise ongoing concerns over delays and cancellations and we look forward to this improving when issues facing Northern Rail such as staff shortage, absence and ongoing rail strikes are resolved. As many of you know, Cllr Gomez Aspron, who is Cabinet Member for Transport at St Helens Council has attended a recent meeting to answer your queries. We stay in regular contact over the issues you raised at that meeting and update at each meeting.</i>  <i>Following consultation and continued and our repeated representation to St Helens Council, our library sadly closed (along with several others in the Borough) earlier this year. A number of residents have come forward to offer their time in supporting a volunteer-led service and work to facilitate this is ongoing.</i>  <i>The Miners’ Memorial at the Parish Hall is almost ready for us to organise a formal unveiling event to which those involved in mining in our area and/or their families will be invited along with those who have contributed to the time capsule. The community in general will also be most welcome to come along.</i>  <i>We again provided space for the NHS mobile unit on the car park at our Community Hall for a week – this mobile dealt with appointments already made for early-stage cancer detection.</i>  <i>It is satisfying to see our halls and pitches being used and enjoyed on a regular basis. Activities have included Football and Rugby, Rainbow, Brownie and Guiding units, Trinity Girls Brass Band, Garswood School of Dance and Fitness Forever. Both halls have also</i></p>

been used by Garswood Surgery for meetings/training, and also one-off bookings for community groups and celebrations such as birthday parties.

Our commitment to support work to improve our area carried out by Friends of Seneley Green continues. Their grant funding application from the Lottery, along with work done free of charge, provided us with a much needed replacement kitchen at the Community Hall. The halls/playing fields have been used for their community events, including a Christmas Fayre and more recently their Good Friday event. We also recently granted £400 towards their planters now in place throughout the Parish. We thank them for their time, effort and enthusiasm, it is much appreciated.

We continue to support the two defibrillators in our area (Hamilton Road and here outside the Community Hall. Cllr Jim Stevenson and Andrew Boyle carry out the weekly recorded testing to ensure they remain operational and available.. Of course, we would prefer this equipment is never used, but should it be needed, having two units available will make the life-saving difference.

Remembrance in our area included Parish Council supplied lamppost poppies that were installed by Cllr Jim Stevenson along with his wife and Andrew Boyle and also Remembrance figures installed by Cllr Jason Shawcross – our thanks go to them for this. Children from Garswood Primary and Rectory CofE Primary schools attended the Remembrance event in Billinge.

Christmas in the Parish included the enjoyable and successful Tree Lighting at the Community Hall with added family fun in the hall including entertainment, refreshments plus selection packs and a visit from Santa for the children. Our tree continues to thrive wonderfully well as a result of the dedication of Julie and Steve Collins plus Andrew Boyle in the regular watering of it - and it made a very fitting centre piece for the celebration. Both halls were also illuminated throughout the festive season. We again supported Cllr Sue Murphy's Christmas Toy Appeal by facilitating the storage and sorting out space needed. There was also a Santa Tour of the streets facilitated by Cllr Jason Shawcross to the whole Ward of Billinge & Seneley Green and money donated to this was added to the Toy Appeal.

The more routine work of the Parish Council has included Planning Applications; monitoring and response by our Planning Committee and work involving the resolution of one off issues raised by residents. We remain committed to keeping in touch with residents with the introduction of our new website and the continued use of both Facebook and our hall-based noticeboards; Reporting and monitoring issues submitted to St Helens Council for action. Liaising with Ward Councillors, portfolio holders at St Helens and Liverpool City Region Mayor, in relation to Parish issues. Keeping in touch with our police team over local issues. Needless to say budget monitoring remains as important as ever. The introduction of Leased Land Charges and the significant rise in utility costs created a budget pressure that after little or no rise in Precept for the past 15 years, could not be absorbed in 2023-24. This resulted in an unprecedented rise in our Precept for that year and a recently agreed but much-reduced rise in Precept for 2024-25. Less routine tasks include currently dealing with two funding applications in relation to improving our pitches and we have started the work towards renewing the lease on the hall and playing fields (prior to renewal 2027). We are also liaising with Seneley & Garswood Juniors plus St Helens Council and the FA in relation to grants for improvements to the changing rooms and storage.

Having already mentioned thanks to Friends of Seneley Green I would like to take this opportunity to also thank the Knit and Natter Group for their wonderful decoration of our area on specials days and occasions like Christmas, Easter, and Remembrance. The work of all volunteers who give freely of their time and energy is also acknowledged and appreciated. Without them, our local groups, clubs and activities wouldn't exist. We would particularly thank Tom Nugent who stood down last summer from his day to day work over the last 40 years following his initial creation of Seneley & Garswood Juniors but he remains involved as their lifetime President; Ruth Skinner, who sadly passed away recently but who had given years of dedicated service to the Guiding Association and will be greatly missed. Carl Duffy of Rectory Nurseries also sadly passed away last year – his help, advice and supply of plants to not only the Parish Council but to schools

	<p><i>and other groups in the area is remembered with great appreciation.</i></p> <p><i>It just remains for me to thank my fellow councillors for enabling the running of Seneley Green Parish Council over the past year. Particular thanks are given to the former Cllr Elaine Murphy for her valuable work as a Member of the Parish Council. And lastly but not least to our staff whose dedicated work and commitment to keeping the business, halls and playing fields running smoothly is very much appreciated”</i></p>
APM/2024/04	<p><b>Parish Matters:</b></p> <p>Matters raised included:</p> <p>Downall Green Common – Elaine Murphy said whilst she knows the land is common land and as such is an area of open space that has to remain accessible/available but it is sustaining vandal damage. She understands that it is permissible to undertake work protect this land and that a fence or planting of a hedge may be possible. She further commented that vandals are effectively ruining community efforts to maintain and improve this area. She proposed for Parish Council to pursue steps to protect it with St Helens Council (currently responsible for the land)</p> <p><b><i>Resolved: Residents present wish Parish Council to approach St Helens Council re ways of protecting the land and subsequently engage with other bodies to become involved in any work needed to ensure access to, safety/security of the area.</i></b></p> <p>Steve Collins put forward the idea of installing commemorative benches to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Parish Council. He further commented that Billinge Parish Council are installing commemorative benches in their local park</p> <p><b><i>Resolved: Residents present wish Parish Council to consider installing 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary commemorative benches in our area.</i></b></p> <p>Derek Wainwright commented that whilst other areas seem to be ‘in the know’ about initiatives and projects St Helens Council are introducing/rolling out, meaning that they have the opportunity to become involved. For example: the planting of trees in some areas of the Borough – whilst some Wards and Parishes know about them and have secured trees for their own area, it doesn’t seem to be the case with Seneley Green. Cllr Pearson spoke a little about procedures he is aware of in that regard.</p> <p><b><i>Resolved: Residents present wish for Parish Council to formally contact Ward Councillors re keeping us updated on any St Helens initiatives/projects in a timely manner so as to enable Parish Council and other bodies in the Parish to become involved.</i></b></p>

The meeting closed at 7.30