



Moulton Parish Council

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MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of a meeting of Moulton Parish Council held on Tuesday 14th March 2023 at 19:30 in Moulton School, School Lane, Moulton

Start: 19:30

Cllr Capstick (Chair), Cllr Harding (Acting Clerk), Cllr Le Breuille, Cllr Marr, Cllr Jennings, Cllr Simpson

235	Apologies	To receive, with explanation, any apologies for absence <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time Allocated: 5 minutes</i></p>
236	Declarations of Interest	Members to declare any (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and (b) Other Disclosable Interests as required under Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 and Moulton Parish Council's Code of Conduct <i>None received</i>
237	Public Forum	<i>Maximum of three minutes per speaker, with an overall limit of fifteen minutes All parishioners who wish to speak should make their intentions known to the clerk prior to the meeting None received</i>
238	Regent Street Backs	<p>238.1 To consider the revised contract for Regent Street Backs Motion: To approve the revised contract for Regent Street Backs <i>Cllr Capstick and Cllr Harding provided a brief summary of the amendments in the contract and the implications of not accepting the revised schedule (due to the costs already accrued or promised from the 2015 agreement with the land agent)</i></p> <p><i>The significant increase in build costs is directly attributable to the delay caused by Planning Permission – and the subsequent rise in building materials. The previous build contractor had gone into administration and the monies received by the parish council for the land would be closer to the actual value of the land.</i></p> <p><i>Cllr Harding stated that council needed to get value, but that there was a clear value in tidying up that space and providing needed properties and car parking. There was community frustration in the delay and that CwaC's mishandling of this planning permission stage was outrageous.</i></p> <p><i>Cllr Marr echoed the frustration and anger at the intolerable delay and spoke that on the balance of agreement that the council should accept the revised terms. He asked for his comments to be minuted.</i></p> <p><i>"Since the original Planning Application for the Regent Street Backs, numerous changes to the plans have been made. A wider, curvier road, fewer car parking spaces, fewer houses, changes on placements. Much of this has been at the request of Cheshire West and Chester Council.</i></p> <p><i>Ultimately, much comes down to delivery. The public elect local representatives to make decisions and deliver good value for taxpayer's money. The original deal, in my opinion, provided us with that in spades.</i></p> <p><i>The initially revised deal also did so, providing us with the equivalent of over 2 years of parish precept, which provides both a strong backup to alleviate future Parish Council Tax rises and funding for future investment.</i></p> <p><i>But, this uncertainty has cost us. Not just in the many changes from the original design and plans, but financially.</i></p> <p><i>What was originally offered at £250k has now been chipped down to under £50k. According to the Bank of England's Inflation Calculator, the value of the land (which was £47,500 in 2020) would be in January 2023, £47,500: £55,236.75</i></p> <p><i>Significantly lower than the proposed deal and does not provide us with the financial headroom we were hoping to see.</i></p> <p><i>I have supported the Regent Street Backs development as I felt the overall benefit to the community were large – aside from the money for the land, it provided residents a fresh, expanded and safer environment to park cars, with EV Charging points and proper green spaces, along with a small number of houses which fit in our Neighbourhood Plan to aid our protections towards our green belt.</i></p>

12/06/2023

Undoubtedly then, the financials of the deal have become poorer. But, what is the alternative? Being lumbered with a significant cost to the village? Still requiring further clean up on the site? Worst of all – the possibility that a future development could be proposed that do not fit in with what residents wanted and our community needs? There is no cost-neutral solution to cancel, after all.

To be clear – I am beyond frustrated that, thanks in large part to Cheshire West's delays in planning, that this has led us to this point. Leaving us in a worse position on this deal financially than originally planned and losing the faith of some in the process.

Probably the most common topic that is raised with me is around planning – not just what is happening with Regent Street Backs, but also around the outstanding Outline Application from Miller Homes on Niddries Lane. People are rightly concerned that decisions simply aren't being made, don't seem to be looked at, and, worst of all, that we simply are ignored and forgotten by by our Borough Council.

This lack of decision is disappointing to see, especially on the back of the successive increases in Council Tax, year-on-year. Our aim should seeking the best deals for Moulton – one that gives us the repairs to potholes we need, investment in our local community and more, and ensuring that we provide good value for public money.

Financially, therefore, I find that this latest proposal is a poorer value for money than we should have been aiming for. However, given that we are still going to benefit with the extra parking we desperately need, fresh infrastructure and public electric car charging points, it is with a heavy heart that I will be voting to support this deal."

A vote was held, and the motion was carried 5-1 to accept the contract. Resolved.

239	AOB	Items to be placed on the agenda of the next meeting.	
240	Next Meeting	Moulton Parish Council	Monday 3 rd April 2023
241	Exclusion of Press & Public	It is recommended that Council considers a resolution under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and representatives of the press from the meeting during the consideration of the following items, on the grounds that matters contain sensitive information and by reason of the confidential nature of the business being transacted. Motion: To exclude press and public for the remainder of the meeting	
242	RSB	To provide an update on Regent Street Backs	

P. J. J. J. 12/06/2023