

Penketh Parish Council

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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Of Local Electors

MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 19 MAY 2025 AT 18:00

At Penketh Pool and Community Hall, Penketh WA5 2EY

Members of the press & public were welcome; the meeting was recorded.

Meeting opened at 18:05

Chairman: Cllr Geoff Fellows

Present:

51 members of the public were in attendance.

Cllrs Andrea Haywood, Joe Dodd (Vice Chair), and Michael Potts were also present.

1. Apologies for Absence

Formal apologies were received from Cllr Eunice Peters and recorded at the meeting. No other apologies were received.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 13th May 2024

The Chairman provided a summary of the actions taken following the previous meeting. It was noted that only Cllrs Andrea Haywood and Cllr Fellows were present at that meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th May 2024 were presented and approved as a correct record by a show of hands.

Cllrs Joe Dodd, Andrea Haywood, and Michael Potts were among those in favour. No objections were recorded.

3. Reports from Parish Council and Standing Committees

Cllr Fellows delivered a summary of the Parish Council's activities over the past year. No formal standing committee reports were submitted. Residents were invited to raise any questions or comments.

4. Open Forum

The Chairman invited attendees to indicate by a show of hands who was present in relation to the **proposed Battery Energy Storage Site (BESS) application**. All attendees indicated they were there for this issue. *No other matters were raised.*

Cllr Fellows opened discussion on the proposal, clarifying the planning process and the Parish Council's role as a consultee. He explained that while the Parish Council cannot make planning decisions, it can submit objections to Warrington Borough Council, the local planning authority, which may trigger consideration by the Development Management Committee.

Key matters raised by members of the public included:

1. **Petition and Government Involvement:** A petition has been launched calling for government investigation. The Clerk thanked them and welcomed the petition but advised the meeting's focus should be on likely grounds for objection to the current screening opinion and expected planning application.
2. **Screening Opinion & Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA):** Concerns that a full EIA should be required. Cllr Potts clarified the purpose of the screening opinion. Residents were encouraged to submit comments. Parish Council to respond and request a full EIA and will approve its response at a future extraordinary meeting to meet the 3rd June Deadline
3. **Visual Impact:** A visual representation of the site was shared by an elector and it was agreed to be included in the Parish Council's objection. This indicated the scale of the area this potential site could be viewed from.
4. **Trust in the Process:** Some attendees expressed concerns about transparency and confidence in the planning process.
5. **Public Consultation Issues:** Criticism of the consultation meeting and feedback that it lacked information. Concerns raised over proximity to a **Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSI)** and Ramsar site designation on parts of the Mersey, to be further considered and explored.
6. **Green Belt Impact:** Residents highlighted the Green Belt location. Cllr Potts referenced the recent Holly's Farm application rejection.
7. **Fire Safety and Emergency Services:** Concern over lack of Fire Brigade consultation. Clerk to check guidelines. Environmental concerns over fire response and water usage.
8. **Housing Development Proximity:** Questions about the Local Plan and proximity of future housing to the site already approved for the Fiddler Ferry site, and whether those future houses are taken into consideration for this application.
9. **Community Awareness:** Concerns over who was notified. The clerk advised only nearby properties were contacted. Future newsletter mentioned as possible channel.
10. **Public Amenity & Noise:** Loss of green space and potential noise pollution raised.

Meeting closed at 19:00

Temp Clerk to the Council 20/05/2025
