

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Haigh Parish Council  
Held Tuesday 16 May 2023  
7pm St David's Parish Rooms**

**Present:** Councillors Paul Kenyon (Chairman), Marie-Clare Kenyon, Roberta Darbyshire, Ian Parker and Andrew Keogh  
The Clerk to the Council: Mrs Krystyna Pilkington  
No members of the public were present.

Members present made their declarations of acceptance of office prior to the start of the meeting.

**1 Election of Chairman**

Cllr Paul Kenyon, the outgoing Chairman, opened the meeting and invited nominations for the Office of Chairman.

A nomination was received for Cllr Paul Kenyon. The nomination was seconded.

**Resolved:** That Cllr Paul Kenyon would serve as Chairman until the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May 2024.

**2 Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

Cllr Paul Kenyon made and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office. The Clerk signed as witness to the Declaration.

It was reported that two councillors had not yet made their Declarations of Office. This was discussed.

**Resolved:** The Council agreed to allow Cllrs Andrew Wilson and Emily Hetherington until the Ordinary Parish Council meeting on 3 July 2023 to make their Declarations of Office before the Clerk.

**3 Election of Vice Chairman**

A nomination was received for Cllr Ian Parker. The nomination was seconded.

**Resolved:** That Cllr Ian Parker would serve as Vice Chairman until the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May 2024.

**4 Audit, Governance & Standards Committee**

**Resolved:** That Cllr Roberta Darbyshire was appointed to serve as a Co-opted Committee member of Wigan Council's Audit, Governance & Standards Committee until the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May 2024.

**5 Register of Interests**

Members present had submitted their completed Register of Interests forms to the Clerk before the beginning of the meeting. Members who had not yet registered their interests had until 28 days after the date of the election to do this.

## **6 New Code of Conduct for Members 2023**

A new Code of Conduct for Members (which was based on the Local Government Association's Model Code of Conduct) had been adopted by Wigan Council in March. It had recently been shared with the Parish Council. The copy previously circulated to members had been personalised for the Parish Council. It was discussed briefly.

**Resolved:** The new Code of Conduct for Members 2023 was adopted.

## **7 Training for New Councillors**

It was reported that there were still places available on a course called 'A Whistlestop Tour for New Councillors & Clerks'. The course was run virtually by the Lancashire Association of Local Councils for large numbers of councillors and the next online session was on Monday, 12 June at 7pm.

New councillors and any sitting members who were not able to join the session provided earlier in the year were invited to consider joining on 12 June and were asked to let the Clerk know if they wished to be booked into the session.

**Resolved:** Course fees would be paid by the Parish Council.

## **8 Apologies for Absence**

Cllrs Emily Hetherington and Andrew Wilson

## **9 Declaration of Interests**

None

## **10 Matters Raised by Members of the Public**

None

## **11 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting (27 March 2023)**

**Resolved:** The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Monday, 27 March 2023 were agreed to be a true and correct record.

## **12 Matters Arising**

### Consultation About Locations for a Christmas Tree

Residents had previously been consulted via the digital platform about (a) the idea of having a display Christmas tree in Haigh and (b) about suggestions for locations. Cllr Clare Kenyon had subsequently enquired about the possibility of arranging for an installation at the front of St David's CE Primary School and had established that there was insufficient space available at the front, as some of it had been reserved for another project.

Other suggestions for Christmas decorations were discussed. The tree outside the Balcarres Arms at the junction of Haigh Road with School Lane was deemed to be suitable for decoration with Christmas lights and to be in an ideal location to act as a focal point for Christmas related activities. Cllr Andrew Keogh agreed to approach

the publican about the possibility of the Parish Council dressing it for the festive season.

### Community Engagement

Cllr Clare Kenyon reported that:

- The setting up of a Haigh Parish Community Group Association was still a work in progress. Only three people had expressed an interest in having a meeting. More people were needed to make the group viable.
- The creation of a bridleway had triggered an excellent response.
- The idea of a Scarecrow Festival had been abandoned because no residents of properties along the proposed route had expressed an interest in taking part. The reasons for this were discussed.

### Litter Bins

Wigan Council had set aside four new litter bins and had asked the Parish Council to select locations for them within the Parish. Residents had been asked through the digital platform and social media for suggestions about where the four litter bins should go. These were discussed.

The following locations for litter bins were agreed:

- The corner of New Road with Copperas Lane
- The junction of Wingates Road with Brock Mill
- Outside Mowpin Lodge
- The School Covert on School Lane – near Old School House Cottages

The Clerk would let Wigan Council know.

### Haigh Hall Car Park Queues in School Lane

Cllr Andrew Wilson had written to report that the queues of vehicles waiting to enter the car park at Haigh Woodland Park remained a problem for the Parish and had observed that this was an Health & Safety risk that needed to be managed. This had been raised with Wigan Council previously and they had responded to say that they were working on a traffic management plan. This did not appear to have been shared so far. Cllr Wilson had asked whether the Parish Council would raise this topic again with Wigan Council to find out if there were any further updates on progress.

This was discussed. An enquiry about progress with HWP's traffic management plan would be submitted to the LA. The Clerk reported that a resident who had attended the Annual Parish Meeting in March had written to her after the meeting to suggest that School Lane should be made one way. The suggestion had been passed on to the LA and there were rumours that it was seriously being considered.

## **13 Planning Applications**

A/21/92629/MAJOR	Leyland Mills Leyland Mill Lane Wigan WN1 2SB	Residential development of 17 two & three storey detached dwellings following demolition of former mill buildings	<i>Objection sent – awaiting Planning Committee date and decision</i>
A/22/94184/FULL	Rothwell's Stud Sennicar Lane Wigan WN1 2SN	Erection of four detached dwellings, following demolition of indoor riding arena, stables and store	<i>Objection sent -awaiting Planning Committee date and decision</i>

### **A/22/94184/FULL**

It was reported that the applicant had submitted an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate on the grounds that Wigan Council had so far failed to determine the application.

### **Listing of the Bridge at Leyland Mill Lane**

There followed a short discussion about the process involved in arranging for a structure of historical interest to be listed. Two members agreed to research the information needed. This would be an agenda item at the meeting in July.

Cllrs Andrew Keogh and Ian Parker both agreed to look into the process involved in ensuring a building was listed.

## **14 Parish Newsletter**

A member had prepared a mock layout for the newsletter. It contained some suggestions for topics to be included. Other items for inclusion were discussed. It was agreed that the final draft should be prepared and be ready for printing and publication by the end of May. The newsletter would be distributed in early June.

A distribution list was circulated. Areas already selected by volunteers had been pre-populated. The method of distribution would be finalised during the Bubblefest Working Group meeting at the end of May.

## **15 Path Improvements in the Lower Plantations**

Cllr Paul Kenyon reported that he would be meeting with Wigan Council officers on 23 May to discuss improvements to the footpath running by the river in the lower plantations. The matter had been discussed by other Wigan Council officers with the Public Rights of Way Officer, as it was part of route 37.

If the Parish Council were permitted to make the improvements, funding would need to be sourced. Grants to a maximum of £40,000 were available from the Greater Manchester Development Fund for community projects. It was hoped that the LA would be willing to match fund the improvements. During the discussion that followed it was suggested that the Environment Agency could also be approached about the provision of funding.

**Resolved:** The Council agreed that applications for grants could go ahead, if the outcome of the meeting were satisfactory.

The area in the vicinity of this stretch of footpath contained a considerable amount of Himalayan Balsam. It was reported that St David's Primary School were interested in being involved in the Balsam bashing that would be needed to clear it.

## **16 Haigh Parish Award**

A proposal that the Parish Council should present an award to those who made a valuable contribution to Parish life was presented by Cllr Andrew Keogh. A document containing details of the proposal, the formal Policy and a nomination form had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. The framework for selecting the recipient, cost and nature of the award were discussed.

**Resolved:** The Haigh Parish Award Policy and associated documents were adopted.

Cllr Keogh would explore gift ideas and share them with the Council at a future meeting.

## **17 Budget Out-Turn to 31 March 2023**

The budget out-turn for 2022/23 had been previously circulated and was discussed briefly.

It was reported that most cost centres showed small underspends. A successful insurance claim for the damaged bench resulted in a significant saving in the 'Street Furniture' cost centre.

Last minute cancellation of the Bubblefest in September 2022 had resulted in a loss of income from events and funds from reserves. This was because stall and ticket fees had to be refunded and, consequently, reserves had to be used to partially pay performers and cover the purchase of the stock of bubble wands that could not be sold.

A grant of £2,500 had been received from Northern Heart & Soul at the end of the financial year. This had been placed in a reserve for use to support projects nominated via the 'Vocal Eyes' platform.

Balances remaining in the active cost centres totalled £825 (including expenditure contingency). All VAT spent over the past three years had been re-claimed.

**Resolved:** The budget out-turn for 2022/23 was approved.

## **18 Income / Expenditure Account, y/e 31 March 2023**

The Income / Expenditure Account for the year ending 31 March 2023 was received and discussed briefly.

**Resolved:** The Income / Expenditure Account for the year ending 31 March 2023 was approved.

## **19 Annual Governance Statement 2022/23**

The previously circulated Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 was reviewed.

**Resolved:** The Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 was approved.

## **20 Accounting Statements 2022/23**

The previously circulated Accounting Statements 2022/23 were considered.

**Resolved:** The Accounting Statements 2022/23 were approved.

## **21 Exemption from External Audit 2022/23**

The Council's eligibility to certify itself as exempt from external audit was considered.

**Resolved:** As all criteria had been met, the Council certified its accounts for 2022/23 as being exempt from external audit.

## **22 Period for the Exercise of Public Rights 2022-23**

**Resolved:** The Council agreed that the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights with respect to the 2022-23 financial year would run from 5 June 2023 until 14 July 2023.

## 23 Insurance

The Parish Council's insurance with Zurich Municipal was due for renewal on 1 June 2023. The Policy Schedule had been circulated to members. The premium quoted this year was: £394.32. This was £30.42 more than in 2022-23 – a larger increase than usual, as the Council had submitted a claim in 2022 for the damaged bench that was replaced at Red Rock car park.

This was briefly discussed.

**Resolved:** The quotation from Zurich Municipal for the Parish Council's insurance cover for 2022-23 was accepted and approved.

## 24 Accounts 2023/24

### Income:

Vocal Eyes grant = £2,500 (received on 29 March)

Precept = £4,200

Council Tax Support grant = £1,032

**TOTAL = £7,732**

### Expenditure:

**Resolved:** The above items were approved for payment.

Balance at bank on 31 March 2023 = **£10,685.69**

No	PAYEE	NARRATIVE	NET	VAT	PAYMENT
1	Employee No.1	Salary (April & May)	£366.34	N/A	£366.34
2	HMRC	Tax (April & May)	£ 91.60	N/A	£ 91.60
3	Employee No.1	Mileage	£ 10.40	N/A	£ 10.40
4	Wigan NE PCC	Room rent (May)	£ 20.00	N/A	£ 20.00
5	LALC/NALC	Annual subscription	£168.41	N/A	£168.41
6	Zurich Municipal	Insurance	£394.32	N/A	£394.32
<b>Total:</b>			<b>£1051.07</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>£1051.07</b>

Estimated balance at the bank after the income received post 31 March 2023 and the above expenditure = **£14,866.62**

## 25 Clerk's Report

There was nothing further to report.

## 26 Bubblefest 2023

The last Bubblefest Working Group meeting had taken place on Tuesday, 18 April 2023. The notes of the meeting had been circulated and progress with arrangements was discussed.

Members and the Clerk updated the Council on actions that had been undertaken since the Working Group meeting and discussed the way forward.

### Volunteers

A call for volunteers via the digital platform had so far not had a positive results.

The Chairman reported that he had secured the help of four volunteers who would be able to help on the day. He too would be there. He agreed to contact two former parish councillors to confirm whether they would still be available. Other members at the meeting indicated whether they would be available on the day. Members not present would be contacted to establish whether they would be able to help.

It was reported that the equipment for the Bubblefest was still being held in storage by a former parish councillor. Cllr Paul Kenyon agreed to arrange its collection and transfer to the event site.

### Stalls

The Clerk reported that the booking of stalls was in progress. The SandArt stall that had been booked in 2021 and 2022 would not be available this year.

HWP's manager had given the Parish Council permission to approach Santus Mints about the possibility of a stall selling Uncle Joe's mint balls at the Bubblefest.

### Bubble Artists and Other Entertainers

Three bubble artists had been confirmed and had sent all their documentation. The fourth bubble artist that the Clerk had been asked to contact would not be available. She reported that the locations of bubblers could only be decided on the day, as they would depend on the wind direction. The balloon modeller / clown had also been booked and had submitted all of his documentation.

HWP's manager had provided the Clerk with details of the financial arrangements for the buskers being employed on site on 24 June. He would provide the Clerk with the selection list once they had decided which ones they would be using.

Punch & Judy shows registered on the lists at Wigan Pier Promotions were available. They each provided intermittent performances over a period of four hours. Costs depended on the entertainer, but were usually in the region of £350.

Entry ticket charges were discussed. The Clerk reported that ticket sales were ready to be launched, but a decision about whether the Eventbrite fee would be absorbed into or added on to the price advertised needed to be made.

**Resolved:** The Council agreed:

- To book a Punch & Judy show.
- To charge a fee of £5 per ticket for adults and children aged 3+ and absorb the Eventbrite fee. Entry for children aged 2 and under would be free.
- To update the posters used in 2022 and to display these at various locations.
- The next Bubblefest Working Group meeting would be held virtually at 7pm on Tuesday, 30 May.

## **27 Date of Next Meeting**

3 July 2023

The meeting closed at 9:35 pm  
**Chairman**