

**Minutes of the Meeting of Haigh Parish Council
Held Monday 1 July 2024
6:30pm St David's Parish Rooms**

Present: Councillors Paul Kenyon (Chairman), Andrew Keogh, Roberta Darbyshire, Marie-Clare Kenyon, Andrew Wilson, Jill Ingram and Ian Parker
Mr Chris Pennington (Street Lighting Engineer, Wigan Council)
The Clerk to the Council: Mrs Krystyna Pilkington

181 Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr Paul Kenyon, the outgoing Chairman, opened the meeting and invited nominations for the Office 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 2025.

182 Apologies

None

183 Declaration of Interests

None

Standing Orders were suspended.

184 Christmas Decorations

Cllr Jill Ingram joined the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Chris Pennington of Wigan Council's Street Lighting Department. During the Council meeting in May Mr Pennington had informed the Council that the cost of fitting the infrastructure for lamp standard decorations in Haigh Road would be £350 per standard. This would be a one-off expenditure. The total cost would depend on how many lamp standards were involved.

Not all lamp standards involved along the selected stretch of Haigh Road were suitable, as some were too close to residential properties, but the Street Lighting team had identified 10 that could be used. Mr Pennington presented a location plan of the lamp standards in question and provided information (including the costs of both outright purchase and hire schemes) about potential motif designs. He also talked about the advantages of fitting garlands, which could consist of either static or twinkly lights and were cheaper to purchase than motifs. Moreover, there would not be a charge for fitting and removing garlands in 2024, as this would be done at the same time as the infrastructure was fitted.

A decision about motif designs could be made as late as the meeting on 2 September, but the order for infrastructure needed to be placed soon. Members discussed the way forward.

The Clerk advised that £3,300 had been allocated to an active cost centre for Christmas decorations and that £5,804 in funds had been set aside in the Participatory Budgeting Projects reserve, which could be used for this, since the request for the introduction of Christmas decorations had originally come from a resident and had been supported by other residents using the Vocal Eyes platform.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

Resolved: The Council approved an expenditure of £3,500 on the introduction of infrastructure to 10 lamp posts in Haigh Road for lamp post decorations.

Standing Orders were suspended.

Mr Pennington would look further into the cost of purchasing garlands and the Clerk would write to the three district councillors to ask if they would be willing to make financial contributions to the project.

*Mr Pennington was thanked for his presentation and left the meeting.
Standing Orders were reinstated.*

185 Matters Introduced by Members of the Public

None

186 Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council (7 May 2024)

Resolved: The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on Monday, 7 May 2024 were agreed to be a true and correct record.

187 DRAFT Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting (21 May 2024)

As the minutes were still being prepared, this item was deferred.

188 Matters Arising

Anti-Social Behaviour and E-motorbikes

The Chairman reported that there had been a number of incidents in the recent past of anti-social behaviour on the part of e-motorbike riders. Such individuals were regularly seen riding these bikes on self-made trails through the lower plantations and also speeding up and down the main route through the park. It was only a matter of time before someone was seriously injured or worse. The Chairman had shared this information with the Director of Environment at Wigan Council, who had replied that he would raise the matter with Wigan's Police Commander when he next met with her.

BioBlitz in Haigh Woodland Park

(This matter was raised after Item No.193)

The Chairman asked whether the Parish Council would be willing to support a BioBlitz in Haigh Woodland Park. The BioBlitz would be carried out by the Groundwork Trust, who would provide the scientific expertise, and would involve an intense period of biological surveying in an attempt to record all the living species within the park. Groups of scientists, naturalists, and volunteers would conduct an intensive field study over a continuous time period lasting 24 hours. The goals of the

exercise were (a) to get the public interested in the biodiversity in the park and (b) to preserve and protect that biodiversity.

AI&AI had been consulted and were very keen on the idea. The matter had also been discussed with Dr Sylvia Travers, who was interested in appointing someone from the staff at HWP to take responsibility for steering the project.

The idea and value of a BioBlitz were discussed. It was reported that there would be no financial implications for the Parish Council, who agreed to support the commissioning of a BioBlitz in Haigh Woodland Park.

189 Planning Applications

A/21/92629/MAJOR	Leyland Mills Leyland Mill Lane Haigh, Wigan WN1 2SB	Residential development of 17 two & three storey detached dwellings following demolition of former mill buildings	<i>Application withdrawn - Noted</i>
A/22/94184/FULL	Rothwell's Stud Sennicar Lane Haigh, Wigan WN1 2SN	Erection of four detached dwellings, following demolition of indoor riding arena, stables and store	<i>Non-determination appeal dismissed by Planning Inspectorate - Noted</i>
A/24/97227/CU	Waterworks Farm Arley Lane Haigh, Wigan WN1 2UJ	Change of use of existing land to private hire dog exercise area together with the erection of 1.8m high tensile steel deer fencing	<i>Noted</i>
A/24/97011/FULL	Haigh Woodland Park Stables Complex School Lane Haigh, Wigan WN2 1PE	Installation of an external cooling unit housed within a purpose built timber store with louvered doors	<i>Noted</i>
A/24/97005/LB	Haigh Woodland Park Stables Complex School Lane Haigh, Wigan WN2 1PE	Listed Building Consent for the installation of an external cooling unit housed within a purpose built timber store with louvered doors	<i>Noted</i>
A/24/96753/RET	Willoughby Farm Meadow Pit Lane Haigh, Wigan WN2 1LQ	Change of use of agricultural barn to a commercial venue (Use Class Sui Generis) with associated external alterations including installation of windows and doors and creation of additional parking spaces. Retrospective application	<i>Noted</i>
A/24/97313/VAR	Mowpin Lodge	To vary condition 2 of planning permission	<i>Noted</i>

	New Road Haigh, Wigan WN2 1PF	A/23/94895/LA - to alter the extent of the landscaping adjacent to Mowpin Lodge gate, including the removal of two trees	
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A/21/92629/MAJOR

The application had only very recently been withdrawn. It was reported that the owners were now looking more at the possibility of an industrial development.

The Stables, Pendlebury Lane

This matter was being dealt with by Planning Enforcement, who have referred it to Wigan Council's Legal team. The latter had started legal proceedings and a date for a Magistrates Court hearing had been set for mid-July 2024. During the discussion it was agreed that the Council would continue to support residents' complaints about activities on the site and the Clerk was asked to follow up on the letter sent to Wigan Council about applying for an injunction.

190 Bridge 63

An article had recently appeared in Wigan Today announcing that fresh plans had been unveiled to bring the neglected former pub back to life. Bridge 63 at Red Rock had stood empty and had become increasingly shabby since it closed its doors in 2011. Three years ago the owner had announced ambitious plans to revive its fortunes, but they had failed to materialise.

There had been an increasing amount of pressure from local residents on the owner to get something done about it. And now he had revealed new intentions for a revamp and a relaunch of the pub - calling it a "go to" inn - with its original name, The Crawford Arms. This time he was seeking business partners.

Members briefly discussed and noted the above information.

191 Canal Towpath

Cllr Paul Kenyon provided an update on progress with this project. Earlier this year the Parish Council had agreed to set aside £4,000 in grant funding from its budget towards the costs of repairs to the stretch of canal towpath in the Parish running from bridge 59A to bridge 63. A completed grant application form for completion and supporting documentation had been received from the Canal & River Trust and had been shared with the Parish Council.

Wigan Council's Environment Department had agreed to match fund this with a grant of £4,000 and Dist Cllr Chris Ready had agreed to support the project with a £1,000 grant from his allocation from the Brighter Borough Fund.

Cllr Kenyon reported that work had started on the refurbishment of the towpath. The team from the Community Payback Scheme were working on it for one day a week and were considering the possibility of extending this to two days a week. Cllr Kenyon agreed to write to Dist Cllrs Ron Conway and Laura Flynn to ask them if they would be willing to each make a contribution from their allocations from the Brighter Borough Fund.

Resolved: The Council approved a s137 grant of £4,000 towards the cost of refurbishing the canal towpath in Haigh.

192 Meeting with Wigan Council Officers

The meeting with Wigan Council officers had taken place on Monday, 17 June at 4pm via MS Teams. Minutes of the last two meetings with Wigan Council officers (the amended minutes of the meeting in March and the minutes of the meeting in June) had been previously circulated and were received. Members briefly discussed both sets. It was agreed that no amendments to the minutes were needed.

It was reported that the next meeting would be at 4pm on 2 September 2024. This was on the same day as the next meeting of the Full Council.

193 Haigh Parish Awards

It had been agreed at the last meeting that the nominations for the awards would be discussed electronically and decisions would be ratified at this meeting. The outcome of the electronic discussion resulted in several decisions being proposed to the Council for ratification.

Resolved: The Council ratified the following:

- (a) All nominees would be presented with an award.
- (b) All members of the group nominated would receive a small token, e.g. a medal, rather than the glass trophy originally agreed as the award to be presented to individuals.
- (c) The Mayor of Wigan should be invited to present the awards at a presentation evening.

Cllr Andrew Keogh reported that he had ordered the glass trophies, which would be delivered to the Clerk on 19 July. He had looked into the cost of medals and had found it to be prohibitive, particularly if there were a large number in the group receiving the award. A discussion followed.

Resolved: Each member of the group receiving an award would receive a framed certificate.

The arrangements for the presentation evening were then discussed.

Resolved: The presentation evening should take place on Thursday, 26 September at Two Left Feet. Wine and nibbles would be served.

194 Bubblefest 2024

The notes of the Working Group meetings of 4 and 25 June had been previously circulated and were received.

Resolved: Members agreed the following:

- (a) The Clerk would withdraw a £30 float in small change from the bank account.
- (b) A member of Haigh Woodland Park staff would be hired for a day for a fee of £100.

The hire of portable toilets, if necessary, for the day would be discussed during the Working Group meeting due to take place on Tuesday, 2 July. The cost was to be confirmed.

A decision would be taken by the Working Group the following evening about whether to sell tickets on the gate and how payments would be made. Cllr Andrew

Keogh would download the QR code so that payments could be made via Eventbrite for online bookings on the gate.

195 Internal Audit Report 2023-24

The Parish Council's internal audit had been completed and the reports associated with it were received and reviewed. One minor reporting issue had been identified in relation to end of year figures.

The internal auditor had advised that mileage payments, which had been included in Box 4 of Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023-24, should have been included in Box 6. The Clerk informed the Council that this would be addressed at the end of the 2024-25 financial year.

Resolved: The Internal Auditor's report for 2023-24 and the Annual Internal Audit Report 2023-24, which formed part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023-24, were accepted and approved.

196 Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit 2023-24

The Council reviewed the internal audit process for the 2023-24 accounts.

The Council affirmed that the internal auditor:

- a) was a person competent to carry out the work.
- b) was independent in relation to elected members and the Clerk.
- c) had provided the Council with a short report on the work he had carried out.
- d) had examined procedures and how decisions were recorded and
- e) had checked that the transparency requirements had been met.

197 Appointment of Internal Auditor 2024-25

Resolved: Heelis & Lodge were appointed as the Council's internal auditors for 2024-25.

198 New Financial Regulations 2024-25

The proposed new Financial Regulations for 2024-25 had been previously circulated and were considered.

Resolved: The new Financial Regulations for 2024-25 were adopted.

199 Review of Standing Orders

The previously circulated Standing Orders were reviewed.

Resolved: The Standing Orders for 2024-25 were approved.

200 Safeguarding Policy

The proposed Safeguarding Policy for children and vulnerable adults was considered. Although parish councillors and staff did not have unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults, it was necessary for the Parish Council to have a simple Safeguarding Policy in place. This was because the Parish Council ran

events for children and on such occasions some of its volunteers and staff might have either direct or indirect contact with children or vulnerable adults.

Resolved: The Parish Council approved and adopted the Safeguarding Policy.

201 Quarterly Budget Monitoring

The quarterly budget monitoring document was received and discussed. All cost centres were currently on line.

- (a) Because audit fees had increased since the previous year the 'Insce,Aud,Pub,Subs, Rent' cost centre was expected to show an overspend by October. Consequently, there was not enough allocated to the cost centre to cover room rent for the remainder of the financial year.

Resolved: Members approved a virement of £100 from the 'Contingency' cost centre to the 'Insce,Aud,Pub,Subs, Rent' cost centre to cover the anticipated overspend, reducing the 'Contingency' cost centre to £400.

- (b) The launch of a new email address via Ionos had introduced monthly charges which were not included in the 'Mileage, post, email' cost centre and it was expected to show an overspend by October. Consequently, there was not enough allocated to the cost centre to cover the total expenditure from this cost centre for the remainder of the financial year.

Resolved: Members approved a virement of £36 from the 'Contingency' cost centre to the 'Mileage, Postage, email' cost centre to cover the anticipated overspend, reducing the 'Contingency' cost centre further to £364.

- (c) The expenditure approved during the last financial year for a new notice board in Leyland Mill Lane had not been used to date.

Resolved: Members approved a rollover of £525 from FY2023 to FY2024 retrospectively.

202 Accounts 2024-25

Income from 3 April 2024 to 21 June 2024:

Bubblefest Stall fees = **£525**

Expenditure:

No	PAYEE	NARRATIVE	NET	VAT	PAYMENT
12	Employee No.1	Eml-b5 (Ins) (May)	£ 2.50	£0.50	£ 3.00
13	Employee No.1	Eml-arch (Ins) (May)	£ 1.00	£0.50	£ 1.20
14	Heelis & Lodge	Internal Audit fee	£170.00	N/A	£170.00
15	Employee No.1	Salary (May & June)	£632.72	N/A	£632.72
16	HMRC	Tax (May & June)	£158.20	N/A	£158.20
17	Wigan NE PCC	Room rent (July)	£ 20.00	N/A	£ 20.00
18	Employee No.1	Mileage (May & June)	£ 15.60	N/A	£ 15.60
19	Digi Impressions	Bubblefest posters	£ 28.67	£5.73	£ 34.40
20	Employee No.1	Eml-b5 (Ins) (June)	£ 2.50	£0.50	£ 3.00
21	Employee No.1	Eml-arch (Ins) (June)	£ 1.00	£0.50	£ 1.20
Total:			£1032.19	£7.73	£1039.32

Resolved: The above items were approved for payment.

Balance at bank on 21 June 2024 = **£30,657.23**

Estimated balance at bank after the above payments = **£29,617.91**

203 Clerk's Report

There was nothing further to report at this time.

204 Date of Next Meeting

2 September 2024 at St David's Parish Rooms.

It was announced that this had been Cllr Andrew Keogh's last meeting, as he had tendered his resignation as a Parish Councillor with effect from 8 July 2024. The Chairman thanked him for his service, which had been exemplary.

The meeting closed at 9:04 pm
Chairman