

**Minutes of the Meeting of Haigh Parish Council
Held Monday 2 September 2024
6:30pm St David's Parish Rooms**

Present: Councillors Paul Kenyon (Chairman), Roberta Darbyshire, Marie-Clare Kenyon, Andrew Wilson and Jill Ingram
The Clerk to the Council: Mrs Krystyna Pilkington

205 Apologies

Cllr Ian Parker

206 Declaration of Interests

None

207 Casual Vacancy

Cllr Andrew Keogh had resigned from the office of councillor with effect from 8 July 2024. The Casual Vacancy was announced by the Returning Officer soon afterwards. The Elections Officer has written to say that she has not received any requests for an election, so the Parish Council may now set the process for co-opting a new councillor in motion.

The procedure for co-opting a councillor was enclosed. Members were asked to note that under the Council's statutory equality duties the vacancy for a co-opted member had to be advertised. Members were advised that the earliest date on which a new member could be formally co-opted would be at the December Council meeting.

The Chairman announced that Cllr Bobbie Darbyshire had decided to resign as a parish councillor with effect from the end of this meeting. Cllr Darbyshire had served on the Council since her co-option on 21 May 2009. Cllr Paul Kenyon thanked her for her dedication and her contribution to the life of the Parish over more than fifteen years.

The way forward was discussed. The Clerk advised that the first step would be to let the Elections Officer know that Cllr Darbyshire had resigned. Once the casual vacancy had been advertised and it had been established that there were no electors asking for an election, the Council would be able to co-opt a second councillor.

Resolved: It was agreed that applications for the first co-option would be invited as soon as possible, with a closing date of 31 October 2024.

If there were a sufficient number of suitable applicants, it might be possible to fill both vacancies at the same time.

208 Matters Introduced by Members of the Public

None

209 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council (1 July 2024)

Resolved: The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Monday, 1 July 2024 were agreed to be a true and correct record.

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

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

211 Matters Arising

None

212 Planning Applications

A/24/97280/OUT	Rothwells Stud Sennicar Lane Wigan WN1 2SN	Outline application for the erection of 3 detached dwellings, following the demolition of the existing steel portal frame building	<i>Objection submitted – there had been no further developments - Noted</i>
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The Stables, Pendlebury Lane

It was reported that the Planning Enforcement officer had informed the Parish Council that the court case with regard to unlawful development was heard on 19 July at the Magistrates Court. The landowners pleaded guilty to failing to comply with the Enforcement Notice and were fined £470 each. Whilst the Magistrates Court did not have the powers to instruct that the notice should be complied with, the Magistrates gave a clear warning to the defendants of the need to comply with the Enforcement Notice to avoid further action and costs.

Notwithstanding this, in order to ensure compliance with the Enforcement Notice and in line with the Council's Enforcement Policy, Planning's Local Enforcement Plan and advice from Wigan Council's Legal team, the Council were now considering taking Direct Action under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. At this stage no exact timescales could be put on when any Direct Action would take place. The Enforcement Officer would provide a further update in due course.

The temporary Tent Pegging events were a separate matter. The activities that had been observed in the field and reported to the Planning Department did not constitute Temporary Events on more than 28 days per calendar year or a requirement for a change of use. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 4, Class B allowed up to 28 temporary events per calendar year without requiring planning consent. By 11 July 2024 there had been one event that met the criteria. In addition there had been no material change of use of the land as defined within Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

213 Christmas Decorations

In July the Parish Council approved an expenditure of £3,500 on the introduction of infrastructure for Christmas lighting to 10 lamp posts in Haigh Road. The Clerk reported that the infrastructure had been ordered.

At that meeting Wigan Council's Street Lighting officer was asked to look further into the cost of purchasing lighting garlands. The Clerk was asked to contact Wigan's Aspull ward councillors to ask them if they would be prepared to make a financial contribution towards the project.

A company called Lite had the following stock available:

- 6 x refurbished static white wraparound garlands and
- 4 x refurbished static white wraparound garlands with a flash

at a cost of £90 each (total = £900) provided the order was placed by 31 July 2024.

An email consultation indicated that the majority of councillors were in favour of making the purchase, so an order was placed.

The 'Christmas Decorations' cost centre currently stood at £3,300.

Resolved: Members retrospectively approved the purchase of

- 6 x refurbished static white wraparound garlands and
- 4 x refurbished static white wraparound garlands with a flash

at a cost of £90 each (total = £900) and a virement of £1,100 from the 'Participatory Budgeting Projects reserve' to the 'Christmas Decorations' cost centre to cover the cost. This would leave £4,704 in the reserve.

The garlands would be installed at the same time as the infrastructure, so the total cost this year will be £3,500 + £900 = £4,400. In future years the cost of installing the garlands was likely to be £1,100 each year.

A short discussion followed. The Clerk was asked to record that members were disappointed that, whilst the Aspull ward councillors had been willing to make a contribution to the cost of a living Christmas tree, they had not been willing to make a contribution towards the cost of the lamp post garlands and associated infrastructure. In view of the cost of the project, the Parish Council could not guarantee that they would be able to pay for the installation and removal of the garlands every year.

214 Canal Towpath

Cllr Paul Kenyon provided an update on progress with this project. The Parish Council had awarded a grant of £4,000 to the Canal & River Trust towards the costs of materials. Wigan Council's Environment Department had provided match funding to the value of £4,000 and Dist Cllr Chris Ready had promised a donation of £1,000 from Brighter Borough funding. The Community Payback Scheme were providing the labour and were working on it for one day a week, although this had been paused for a couple of weeks over the Summer due to people being on annual leave.

So far the work that had been carried out looked very impressive. However, at the current pace it is likely that completed surface repairs will not have reached Sennicar Lane by the Winter. After Sennicar Lane the condition of the towpath was not too bad.

215 Meeting with Wigan Council Officers

The meeting with Paul Barton, the Director of Environment, had taken place earlier in the afternoon via MS Teams. Most members had been able to join the meeting and provided feedback. The view, in general, was that the meeting had been quite positive.

Discussions with Wigan Council had covered progress with the joined-up bridleway, repairs to the canal towpath and issues with footpaths numbered 37 and 20. The

introduction of an incorrect sign along Chorley Road saying 'Welcome to Worthington & Haigh' had been brought to Mr Barton's attention. He had undertaken to contact Wigan Council's PR team to ask them to correct the situation.

The review of the meeting led the Parish Council to consider the possibility of lobbying for the abandoned railway viaducts in the Parish to be repaired and incorporated into green routes in the area.

216 Haigh Parish Awards Evening

The Clerk reported that since the meeting in July:

- (a) The upstairs reception area at Two Left Feet had been booked from 6:30pm on Thursday, 26 September. Hire of the room normally cost £90, but the Parish Council would only be charged £30. Car parking would be available free of charge at the Stables car park and egress would be managed by Two Left Feet.

Resolved: The Council approved the hire fee of £30.

- (b) All recipients had been notified about their awards and most would be able to attend the presentation evening. (Arrangements would need to be made to present awards to those not able to attend on another occasion.)
- (c) The Mayor of Wigan had accepted the invitation to present the awards. Dist Cllr Debbie Parkinson and her consort would arrive at 6:45pm. They would need to be formally greeted at the entrance and escorted to the reception.

During the discussion that ensued the following were agreed:

- (a) Cllrs Clare Kenyon and Jill Ingram would design and organise the printing of the certificates for the members of the group receiving an award. The Clerk would send them the wording used on the trophies and the list of recipients.
- (b) Because the Mayor would be in attendance there would be a protocol to follow. The Clerk would forward this to the Chairman and Cllr Clare Kenyon, who would prepare the order of events and print a sufficient number of copies for all of those attending. A copy (together with instructions as to what the Parish Council would like the Mayor to do, e.g. give a speech, present the awards, etc) would need to be sent to the Mayor's secretary at the earliest opportunity. The awards would be presented to recipients in alphabetical order.
- (c) As the number attending was still being finalised, the Clerk was authorised to order catering for 40 guests.

217 Bubblefest 2024

Members provided feedback on Bubblefest 24 and discussed the way forward with regard to 2025.

The Clerk reported that the invoice from one of the food vendors for vouchers redeemed by volunteers on the day and a promised donation from one of the other vendors were still awaited. In view of this the figure had not yet been finalised, but it currently stood at £6,119.38.

Because attendance had been 50% lower than in the previous year and fewer stalls had been booked, net income had been significantly lower than in 2023. Members

were of the view that the long run of very wet weather and a poor forecast had been major contributory factors in relation to the reduced attendance. The Clerk reported that she had been told that attendances at outdoor events had been lower this year than in past years. In other respects things had worked well. Those attending had enjoyed their visit and, with the lower numbers, the entrance point had been easier to manage.

Resolved: The Council agreed to run a Bubblefest again in 2025 and the Clerk was asked to investigate the possibility of booking a date in the second half of June 2025.

The Clerk advised that the date of a future event would depend on the availability of bubble artists and the facilities at Haigh Woodland Park.

218 Remembrance Sunday

Remembrance Sunday this year would be on 10 November. Arrangements were discussed. It was agreed that the Clerk would order the wreath via Aspull Royal British Legion, from where it would be collected by the Chairman on Remembrance Sunday. The Chairman and members attending would join the parade to the War Memorial, where the former would lay the wreath on behalf of the residents of Haigh.

Resolved: The Council approved a s137 donation of £100 to the Royal British Legion.

The Council's display poppies would be attached to lamp posts or telegraph poles around the Parish by Cllr Paul Kenyon and Mr Andrew Keogh in time to be on display throughout the month of November, at the end of which they would remove them. Both would be covered by the Parish Council's insurance during this activity.

219 BioBlitz at Haigh Woodland Park

Cllrs Clare and Paul Kenyon reported that, ideally, they would like to arrange for BioBlitzes to take place in Haigh Woodland Park in both the Autumn and the Spring. However, they were still in discussion about the proposal and so far nothing had been formalised.

220 Quarterly Budget Monitoring

The quarterly budget monitoring document was received and discussed. Expected routine expenditure to the end of September had been included in the report. All cost centres were on line.

(a) Income from Bubblefest 24 had been included in the tracker.

Resolved: Members approved the transfer of £8,950 of the income from Bubblefest 24 to the General Reserves.

(b) A s137 grant of £4,000 to the Canal & Rivers Trust had been approved in July. This amount had previously been ring-fenced in a reserve and had subsequently been transferred by BACS to the Canal & Rivers Trust following a virement of this amount to the 'Grants & Donations' cost centre.

Resolved: Members approved the virement of £4,000 from the 'Canal Towpath reserve' to the 'Grants & Donations' cost centre retrospectively.

The Clerk reported that she had received an enquiry from the Treasurer of Wigan Civic Trust about the situation in relation to vandalism that had occurred at Haigh Windmill earlier in the year and whether repairs had been undertaken. It seemed that the Civic Trust possessed funds that had been ring-fenced for work on the windmill when required. After a short discussion a member asked if the windmill could be included as an agenda item at the next Council meeting.

221 Accounts 2024-25

Income from 1 July 2024 to 15 July 2024:

Bubblefest Stall fees = **£150**

Bubblefest gate tickets (Cash) on the day = **£223.20**

Bubbling stall (Cash) = **£85**

Eventbrite = **£8,382.50**

TOTAL = £8,840.70

Expenditure:

No	PAYEE	NARRATIVE	NET	VAT	PAYMENT
22	ToiletsontheGo	Toilet hire	£ 304.00	£ 60.80	£ 364.80
23	Councillor No.1	Plaques	£ 86.66	£ 17.33	£ 103.99
24	Councillor No.2	Carpet	£ 45.00	N/A	£ 45.00
25	Employee No.1	Golden Days	£ 8.65	£ 1.73	£ 10.38
26	Wigan Pier Promotions	3 x Performers' fees	£1185.00	£237.00	£1422.00
27	Bubble Artist (1)	Performance fee	£ 400.00	N/A	£ 400.00
28	Bubble Artist (2)	Performance fee	£ 650.00	N/A	£ 650.00
29	C&R Trust	s137 grant	£4000.00	N/A	£4000.00
30	Bubble Artist (3)	Performance fee	£ 450.00	N/A	£ 450.00
31	Employee No.1	Salary (July)	£ 316.46	N/A	£ 316.46
32	HMRC	Tax (July)	£ 79.00	N/A	£ 79.00
33	Employee No.1	Eml-b5 (Ins) (July)	£ 2.50	£ 0.50	£ 3.00
34	Employee No.1	Eml-arch (Ins) (July)	£ 1.00	£ 0.20	£ 1.20
35	Wigan Council	HWP staff hire	£ 100.00	N/A	£ 100.00
36	Employee No.1	Salary (August)	£ 316.26	N/A	£ 316.26
37	HMRC	Tax (August)	£ 79.20	N/A	£ 79.20
38	Employee No.1	Mileage (August)	£ 5.20	N/A	£ 5.20
39	Employee No.1	Eml-b5 (Ins) (Aug)	£ 2.50	£ 0.50	£ 3.00
40	Employee No.1	Eml-arch (Ins) (Aug)	£ 1.00	£ 0.50	£ 1.20
41	Wigan NE PCC	Room rent (Sept)	£ 20.00	N/A	£ 20.00
Total:			£8052.43	£318.26	£8370.69

Resolved: The above items were approved for payment.

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

Estimated balance at bank after the above income and payments = **£30,087.92**

222 Clerk's Report

There was nothing further to report at this time.

223 Date of Next Meeting

28 October 2024 at St David's Parish Rooms.

The meeting closed at 8:24 pm
Chairman