

**Minutes of the Meeting of Haigh Parish Council
Held Monday 4 December 2023
7pm via MS Teams**

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

89 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Andrew Wilson and Ian Parker

90 Declaration of Interests

Cllr Andrew Keogh wrt elements of Item No.94 (personal & prejudicial / potential dpi)
The Clerk wrt Item No.108 (personal & prejudicial)

91 Matters Introduced by Members of the Public

Culvert Blockage in Sennicar Lane

Two residents of Sennicar Lane had been in touch with a member to report that a culvert which was completely blocked by leaves was causing issues along the lane. Water was running down the lane to drain, but was not able to do so because of the blockage. The drainage system in the area was managed by Haigh Woodland Park. A request that the culvert should be cleared would be made to Wigan Council.

92 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council (23 October 2023)

Resolved: The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Monday, 23 September 2023 were agreed to be a true and correct record.

A member asked if, in view of the recent inclement weather, the matter of the grit bin for Hall Lane could be brought to Wigan Council's attention earlier than the meeting with Wigan Council officers. After a short discussion it was agreed that Cllr Andrew Keogh would draught an appropriate letter.

93 Matters Arising

Friends of Haigh Walled Kitchen Garden Volunteers

It was reported that the Friends of Haigh Walled Kitchen Garden Volunteers group was being disbanded because of the impending construction work on the new developments being planned for the kitchen garden and the bothy yard. They had been told that they would be able to volunteer as individuals when the kitchen garden re-opens, but not as a group. After a short discussion it was agreed that a letter of support for the volunteers would be sent to Wigan Council. The Parish Council were of the view that they were a valuable resource, having between them contributed 18 years of hard work to the development of the walled gardens, and wished to ask whether they could be provided with another area within the boundaries of Haigh Woodland Park or somewhere else in the Borough which they could develop.

Bubblefest 24

In view of the developments mentioned above the Clerk would write to the General Manager of Haigh Woodland Park to establish whether the developments planned for the bothy yard and the kitchen garden would in any way impact on the other two walled gardens and consequently Bubblefest 24.

Vocal Eyes

It was reported that community engagement via the Vocal Eyes platform had reduced in recent months and needed to be revived. A member suggested that a more formal Haigh Community Group needed to be set up that was autonomous from the Parish Council and was able to bid for grants that the Parish Council was unable to access. This was discussed. It was agreed that the Parish Council's Grant Awarding Policy and the Community Group would be agenda items at the next meeting.

Canal Towpath

Over the past few weeks the Chairman had been in correspondence with Wigan Council's Highways Assets Manager about the possibility of funding improvements to the canal towpath in Haigh. The Chairman had also been in contact with the Canal & Rivers Trust's Area Operations Manager, who had told him that they would be supportive of any work to upgrade the section of the towpath that ran through Haigh Woodland Park, but, due to financial constraints, were not able to carry out the work at present.

Work had recently been carried out in Chorley Borough with a grant the C&RT had received from Chorley Council. It was carried out efficiently and economically by utilising the Community Payback scheme. Cllr Paul Kenyon had arranged to look at the work carried out to see what could be achieved with limited funds with the Haigh stretch in mind.

Aware that the C&RT were responsible for the maintenance of the towpath, the Chairman had asked whether it might be possible for Wigan Council to make a financial contribution towards the costs of an upgrade of this stretch of towpath. This section of towpath ran through what was probably the main tourist destination in the borough, with the highest footfall of any section of the canal. Improvements to the towpath in this area might encourage more people to use this route to access Haigh Woodland Park and help massively towards alleviating the amount of traffic entering the park.

The above request had been shared with Wigan Council's Director of Environment, who had asked the Highways Assets Manager to look into the indicative costs involved. Once these had been established the matter would be considered further. An update was awaited.

94 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 – decision deferred subject to submission of revisions by September 2023 deadline</i>
A/22/94184/FULL	Rothwell's Stud Sennicar Lane Wigan	Erection of four detached dwellings, following demolition of indoor	<i>Objection sent - awaiting decision - non determination</i>

	WN1 2SN	riding arena, stables and store	<i>appeal dismissed by Planning Inspectorate</i>
A/23/96168/FULL	The Coach House Haighlands Copperas Lane Haigh Wigan WN2 1PB	To convert and extend former coach house to use for residential purposes, together with alterations to external elevations	<i>Noted</i>
A/23/96169/LB	The Coach House Haighlands Copperas Lane Haigh Wigan WN2 1PB	Listed Building Consent to convert and extend former coach house to use for residential purposes, together with alterations to external elevations	<i>Noted</i>
A/23/96252/HH	Windmill Cottage 9 Copperas Lane Haigh, Wigan WN2 1PA	Single storey and first floor extensions to side and rear following removal of existing garage together with associated external alterations	<i>Noted</i>

It was reported that the owners of the tent pegging arena in Pendlebury Lane had been given a deadline by which they would need to clear the site.

95 Places for Everyone – Proposed Modifications Consultations

The consultation was noted.

96 Planning for the Future of Wigan Borough to 2040

The consultation was noted.

97 Wigan Transport Strategy

The consultation was noted.

A member observed that there was very little about Haigh in all three consultations. The Transport Strategy included the Standish Mineral Line enhancements, which involved the viaduct and would cost millions.

98 Plans for the Annual Parish Meeting

Plans for the Annual Parish Meeting were discussed.

Resolved: It was agreed that Cllr Clare Kenyon would approach AI&AI about the possibility of their providing an update with regard to the Masterplan on a date in May, rather than in March. As Haigh Hall would not be available, the availability of the Stables would be looked into.

One nomination for a Community award was received. In view of this the deadline for nominations was extended to 28 February.

99 Canal Towpath

The Chairman provided an update on progress with his research into the possibilities with regard to upgrading the canal towpath in Haigh Parish. This was discussed and minuted under Item 93.

100 Asset Register 2023-24

The Asset Register was reviewed. There had been no changes.

Resolved: The Asset Register for 2023-24 was approved.

101 Review of H&S Risk Assessments

The H&S risk assessments were reviewed. No changes were made.

Resolved: The H&S risk assessments for 2023-24 were approved.

102 Accounts 2023/24

Income: £Nil

Expenditure:

No	PAYEE	NARRATIVE	NET	VAT	PAYMENT
37	Employee No.1	Salary (Nov) plus backpay (net)	£413.39	N/A	£413.39
38	HMRC	Tax (Nov)	£103.40	N/A	£103.40
39	Employee No.1	Mileage	£ 5.20	N/A	£ 5.20
TOTAL:			£521.99	£0.00	£521.99

Resolved: The above items were approved for payment.

Balance at bank on 31 October 2023 = **£24,228.32**

Estimated balance at bank following payment of Items 37 to 39 = **£23,706.33**

103 Quarterly Budget Monitoring

Cost centres included anticipated expenditure to the end of December. It was reported that all were currently on line.

An overspend was anticipated in the 'Clerk salary' cost centre. This was due to approved changes in the Clerk's Terms & Conditions both at local level and anticipated changes following national arbitration.

Resolved: To cover the overspend members approved a virement of £997 from the General Reserve to the above cost centre.

104 Preliminary 2024-25 Budget Preparation

Preliminary proposals for the 2024-25 budget plan were discussed. The Clerk explained that for the first time a cost centre had been included for 'Events'. This had been funded to include expenditure that had already been committed for Bubblefest 2024 and possible additional expenditure.

Questions were taken. No changes were made to the proposals at this time.

105 Review of Reserves

The amounts currently held in reserves were reviewed and agreed in principle.

106 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was received and discussed. *See Appendix A*

Clearing of Pavement on Red Rock Lane

In reply to a question from a member the Clerk advised that it was necessary to establish whether the footpath was in public ownership before anything could be progressed.

107 Date of Next Meeting

22 January 2023 – to be held via MS Teams.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

Resolved: That, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

108 NJC National Pay Award

The Clerk withdrew from the meeting.

Members discussed the NJC national pay award.

Resolved: The Council approved the NJC National Pay Award, which would be backdated to 1 April 2023.

The Clerk re-joined the meeting and was advised of the changes.

The meeting closed at 8:30 pm
Chairman