

**Minutes of a Meeting of Haigh Parish Council
Held Monday 20 January 2020
6:30pm St David's Parish Rooms**

Present: Councillors R Lawson (Chairman), R Darbyshire, C Higham, A Goodman, P Kenyon, I Parker and the Clerk, Mrs K Pilkington.

Two members of the public.

Dist Cllr C Ready and Ms E Ramsden of Wigan Council's The Deal initiative were present for Items 122 – 125.

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all those present.

122 Apologies for Absence

Cllr C Hatherall

123 Declaration of Interests

None.

Standing Orders were suspended.

**124 The Deal and Wigan Council's Grant Funding Streams
(Investment Fund)**

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to the visitors. Dist Cllr C Ready introduced Ms E Ramsden – the officer at Wigan Council who was responsible for administering The Deal initiative. Members of the Parish Council introduced themselves.

A Brief History of The Deal

Dist Cllr Ready provided a brief history of his role as a councillor and followed this with an overview of why and how The Deal initiative was born.

Ten years ago Wigan Council were told that, because of austerity, they had to make £30m in cuts. Dist Cllr Ready was given the responsibility of overseeing £1m in grant funding for the community – this was now known as the Investment Fund. Initially the grants were invested in projects such as making improvements at Sunshine House. Large investments were made for three years. Investments were also made in small projects, e.g. providing better meals at Brook House. Over the past decade there had been many examples of projects in which investments had been made.

Under the current criteria the funding could not be used to pay for staff or capital projects and the projects had to be sustainable.

The Deal 2030

Ms E Ramsden told the Parish Council that in 2019 Wigan Council staff had carried out a Borough-wide consultation of residents to establish residents' expectations. They had visited all wards, speaking to approximately 6,000 people, who provided them with ideas for The Deal 2030.

During the consultation they discovered that residents were proud of the area in which they lived, but not of being from Wigan or Leigh. With encouragement from Council officers people were starting to work with shop

owners in their locality to try to persuade them to improve their shopping environment. There was now a greater emphasis on heritage and culture – these were things that the Council had never considered before.

Tracey Williams (Community Capacity Officer North) was leaving towards the end of February. This had created a vacancy. Tracey held regular networking events for community groups in the three wards that formed the Northern area – which includes Haigh Parish. All grants awarded were published online.

In 2019 a new set of priorities was launched for the Investment Fund. Grants of up to £2,000 could be applied for by any community group as long as their project met these priorities.

In the case of grants greater than £2,000 the voice of young people was key. They had to be consulted. The list of priorities was in the booklet on The Deal 2030 that had been circulated by Ms Ramsden. Projects had to bring communities together – the emphasis was on collaboration.

The closing date for the submission of bids for grants from the Investment Fund 2020 was 16 February.

Wigan Council also supported Crowdfunder, providing a maximum of £1,000 in match funding for funds raised through this means.

Wigan Council had a Volunteering Officer who could signpost people in the Parish Council's direction. Other officers had other specialisms. The Community Cohesion Offer and the 'In Bloom' and 'Incredible Edible' offers were quoted as examples. There was also an external grant funding advisor who might be prepared to attend a meeting of the Parish Council.

The Chairman thanked Dist Cllr Ready and Ms Ramsden for their presentations.

125 Matters Introduced by Members of the Public

Members of the public raised several matters and addressed questions to Dist Cllr Ready.

Toddington Farm Planning Application

A resident reported that, even though the retrospective planning application had been turned down, work in relation to the commercial wood storage and chipping business was continuing.

There was a belief that the work could continue pending the outcome of any appeal. Dist Cllr Ready informed the meeting that the work should have ceased and that any work that was being carried out was being done at the owner's own risk. Wigan Council's enforcement officers had been made aware of this and were working on it.

Greenfield Farm

It was reported that the Environment Agency had visited the Farm on 2 December. Since then there had been no fires.

Ms E Ramsden left the meeting.

Local Access Forum

A resident asked Dist Cllr Ready if there was any possibility of the Access Forum being re-instated. The resident had been working towards this outcome for 20 years without making any progress.

FP18

It was reported that FP18 was still blocked with overgrowth. The Rights of Way Officer had tried to get it cleared, but this had been passed on to contractors and so far she had not succeeded in getting them on site.

Dist Cllr Ready informed the meeting that Wigan Council's workforce had been significantly reduced over recent years because of austerity. Consequently, it was taking longer to deal with issues.

Dist Cllr C Ready left the meeting.

Dumping on Footpaths

A resident reported that there had recently been a lot of instances of builders dumping bags of waste on footpaths in the Parish.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

126 Minutes of the Last Ordinary Meeting (2 December 2019)

Resolved: The Minutes of the Last Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Monday, 2 December 2019 were agreed to be a true and correct record.

127 Matters Arising

Traffic on the B5239

Cllr Higham reported that:

- the relevant speed limit signs along the B5239 were due to be changed by the end of January;
- the overgrown hedge had been tackled;
- it was disappointing that the white lines had stopped at the point where they had stopped;
- some signage was hidden by overgrowth, but the working party would deal with that.

Pavement Clearing in Red Rock Lane

It was reported that a stretch up to Canal Row still needed to be cleared. The possibilities of doing this would need to be considered.

Wall Hey Chimney

Cllr Parker reported that Aspull & Haigh Historical Society were trying to create a group that would work on the restoration of the chimney, which was the last remnant of coal mining in the locality and was in poor condition. There was only one other example of such a chimney in the country and the Society took the view that it would be a pity if it disappeared.

INNS

Cllr Kenyon would be attending a meeting the following day in connection with the ecology of the Douglas Valley. He was also looking into how working parties could be set up for July to eradicate Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed in the Parish. Floating Pennywort on the canal could not be tackled, however. This would need grant funding to be secured in order to pay for the work to be done professionally. Grant funding might also need to

be accessed in order to train working parties how to deal with Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed.

The Future of Haigh Hall

Included on the agenda for Wigan Council's Cabinet meeting on 23 January was the future of Haigh Hall. The Clerk was asked to inform residents of this via the Council's Facebook page. Cllr Kenyon reported that he would be attending the Cabinet meeting as an observer.

109 Planning Applications

A/19/86710/RET	Toddington Farm, Toddington Lane, Haigh	Change of Use of land to commercial wood storage and wood chipping	Decision made 06/12/19 - permission refused (<i>noted</i>)
A/19/87674/FULL	Grazing land northeast of The Alms Houses, Hall Lane, Wigan	To construct new menage with stables	Representation submitted (<i>decision awaited</i>)
A/19/88156/ADVLA	Highway verge junction of School Lane with Meadow Pit Lane, Haigh	To retain two free standing signs	Approved with conditions (<i>noted</i>)
A/19/88335/HH	1 Samuels Fold, Pendlebury Lane, Haigh	To extend dwelling house single storey to side with detached garage (re-submission of A/19/87937/HH)	Noted

129 Neighbourhood Planning

A summary of key objectives for the Parish Council to achieve - provided by members - was circulated and discussed. There was a general view amongst councillors that the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan was not the best way forward, as most of the Parish was already subject to a variety of spatial protections, and that the preparation of a Parish Plan would better serve both the Council and its residents.

Members were asked to review the key objectives contained in the document and send their comments to the Chairman (who would prepare a paper for the next meeting) by 2 March.

Resolved: A letter would be sent to the Planning Department to seek written confirmation that *'given that land in the parish was mainly Conservation Area, Green Belt or Haigh Woodland Park, it was largely protected from significant development under current legislation'*.

130 Parish Council Logo

Previously circulated revised designs for the new logo were considered.

Resolved: The Council agreed the following:

- (a) the preferred options were the two at the bottom of the sheet entitled 'Alternative Options'
 - (b) the lettering of the logo on the left should be in white
 - (c) the lettering of the logo on the right should be in black.
- Subject to the above amendments, both logos were approved.

131 VE Day Celebration

Cllr Higham reported that:

- The Village on the Green and the Jazz band had both been booked for Friday, 8 May. The venue would be free of charge.
- Wigan Jazz Club had agreed to collaborate and to organise the music for the event.
- The event would take the form of a concert and would not include dancing – sufficient space was not available for the latter. Seating would be available for tables of 10.
- St David's Church Choir had been invited to sing appropriate songs.
- Promotional material would ask people to wear period dress. It would consist of posters and hand bills. The latter would need to be posted through letter boxes. The literature would be available for the next meeting.
- 200 tickets would be printed and would be sold for £20 each (to include a pastie supper).
- The venue would be free of charge.
- As the Jazz Club were doing most of the work for this, the proceeds would be split between the Club and the Parish Council.

It was agreed that there was no need to set up a working party. Arrangements for 'on the day' would be discussed and agreed at the next meeting.

132 Events for 2020

Suggested dates for events for 2020 were discussed.

Dragon Boat Event

It was observed that Sunday, 31 May was too soon and did not provide enough time to prepare for the event. It was agreed that it should be deferred to a date in 2021.

Bubble Event

Saturday, 12 September was a suitable date for the Bubble Event. Further information about the cost and availability of the person delivering the event and how it worked was needed. It would be necessary to book the walled garden, sell stalls, advertise the event and possibly sell tickets beforehand. Enquiries could be made with Two Left Feet about the possibility of the venue providing bar facilities, if appropriate. Cllr Darbyshire would contact the Friends of Haigh Woodland Park to ask if the Parish Council could take responsibility for the Crazy Golf that day.

Resolved: The Council agreed that the Bubble Event would go ahead, subject to the availability of the person delivering it.

133 Blackburn Cathedral Carol Service

Together with all other parish councils in the Palatine the Parish Council had received an invitation from the Dean of Blackburn for the Chairman and his

spouse/guest (as appropriate) to attend the annual Lancashire Civic County Carol Service, at Blackburn Cathedral on Sunday, 2 February at 6:30pm. Neither the Chairman nor any other representative of the Council would be attending.

134 Buckingham Palace Garden Party

The Chairman would submit an application to LALC for selection to attend the Buckingham Palace Garden Party for civic leaders to be held in May.

135 LALC December Newsletter

The LALC's December newsletter was received.

136 Training 2020

Information from Parish & Town Training about courses available in 2020 was received and noted. Members were asked to let the Clerk know if there was a course they wished to attend.

137 Accounts 2019/20

Income = £nil

Expenditure

No	PAYEE	NARRATIVE	NET	VAT	PAYMENT
31	St David's H&A PCC	Room rent (December)	£ 20.00	N/A	£ 20.00
32	Employee No.1	Salary (Dec & Jan)	£323.76	N/A	£323.76
33	Employee No.1	Mileage	£ 5.20	N/A	£ 5.20
34	HMRC	Tax (Dec & Jan)	£ 80.80	N/A	£ 80.80
Total:			£429.76	N/A	£429.76

Resolved: The above items were approved for payment.

Balance at bank on 2 January 2020 = **£5,608.39**

The following prior payments had not been presented by 2 Jan 2020:

St David's Haigh & Aspull PCC = £20.00 x 2 = £40.00 (Rent)

HMRC = £40.60 (Tax – Dec)

Heelis & Lodge = £65 (Internal Audit)

Cultivate Creative Ltd = £75.00 (Logo design deposit)

C Horridge = £50 (Lamp post display poppies)

Total = £270.60

Estimated balance at bank after the subtraction of the above expenditure and unrepresented prior payments

= **£4,908.03**

138 Quarterly Budget Monitoring

The previously circulated document was reviewed and discussed. Most cost centres were on line. However, the 'Insurance, etc' cost centre was showing a small overspend, which would increase by the end of March because one more payment of rent would be due. To cover the additional cost to the end of March it will be necessary to vire £28 from 'Contingency' to this cost centre.

Resolved: A virement of £28 from the 'Contingency' cost centre to the 'Insurance, etc' cost centre to cover the amount already overspent and future expenditure under this heading was approved.

139 Budget & Precept 2020

The proposed budget and precept for FY2020 were discussed.

Resolved: The Council approved a budgeted expenditure of £4,350 (to include an expenditure contingency of £500) and set a precept of £2,400 for the financial year ending 31 March 2020. The General Reserve was estimated to stand at £3,441 on 1 April 2020 (9.7% less than in 2019).

140 Text for Council Tax Letter

It was agreed that the Chairman would draft the text to be included on the Council Tax letter and forward it to the Clerk for submission to Wigan Council.

141 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was received. *See Appendix A.*
Its contents were discussed briefly.

Cllrs Lawson, Goodman, Darbyshire, Parker, Kenyon and Higham were all available to attend the meeting with Wigan Council senior officers. The Clerk would also attend. The Chairman would delegate tasks on the agenda to individual councillors to cover.

Cllr Higham reported that the Clerk had provided him with the locations of the other benches. He would assess their condition.

In reply to a question from the Chairman the Clerk reported that to date there had been no response to the request that all parish councillors be allowed direct access to the Report It for Councillors App.

142 Date of Next Meeting

Monday, 16 March 2020 at 6:30pm.

The meeting closed at 9:45 pm

Chairman