

**Minutes of a Meeting of Haigh Parish Council
Held Monday 6 July 2020
6:32pm Virtual Meeting**

Present: Councillors R Lawson (Chairman), R Darbyshire, C Hatherall, A Goodman, C Higham, P Kenyon, I Parker and the Clerk, Mrs K Pilkington.
Dist Cllr C Ready and two members of the public.

180 Apologies for Absence

None.

181 Declaration of Interests

None.

Standing Orders were suspended.

182 Matters Introduced by Members of the Public

Issues with Cyclists, Walkers and Horse Riders

A resident described some of the issues that were currently being created along footpaths and canal towpaths in the Parish. There were no designated routes and some quite steep drops in the area and, with the increase in the number of walkers and cyclists using them for recreational and exercise purposes, their condition had deteriorated and navigating them had become a nightmare. The towpaths were quickly becoming racetracks for cyclists and dangerous for pedestrians.

The number of stables and horses in the area had increased, but the number of bridleways had not. Some horse riders were abusing access/rights of way and abusing local residents when challenged. In the resident's view more bridleways were needed to alleviate some of the issues. More signage warning both cyclists and horse riders to beware of pedestrians would also be helpful. A member observed that some temporary signage had recently been posted in the Plantations stating that horses were not permitted in the Woodland Park.

The issues and the way forward were discussed. It was agreed that the Clerk would bring the issues (as they applied to Haigh Woodland Park) to the attention of Mr K Bergman of Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles. Dist Cllr C Ready offered to speak to Mr Bergman and his staff in connection with these matters. He would also prepare a joint letter from the LA and the Parish Council for submission to the Canal & River Trust to ask them to install signage warning bikers of pedestrians and asking them to show the latter consideration.

Please see Minute 185 for further related discussions and actions.

Speeding Along Various Roads in Haigh Parish

The Clerk reported that she had received two emails from a resident of Aspull who wished to raise concerns about (a) the speed of traffic travelling in both directions from Riley Lane, Haigh to the Fingerpost junction – often reaching 50 mph – and (b) the speed of traffic travelling along Copperas Lane and New Road in Haigh, where it frequently exceeded the 20 mph speed limit.

The issues raised and possible solutions were discussed. Cllr C Higham was composing a letter about speeding along Riley Lane and Meadow Pit Lane to send to the Highways Department at Wigan Council and agreed to add the issues raised in relation to Riley Lane to the letter. Dist Cllr C Ready would speak to the officer at the LA who was dealing with the issues in Haigh Road to establish what progress had been made. Copperas Lane and New Road were part of Keith Bergman's remit.

The Clerk would inform the resident of what the Council had agreed.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

183 Minutes of the Annual & Ordinary Meetings (26 May 2020)

Resolved: The Minutes of the Annual and Ordinary Meetings of the Council held on Tuesday, 26 May 2020 were agreed as a true and correct record.

184 Draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting (26 May 2020)

The draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 26 May 2020 were received.

185 Matters Arising

Horse Riding in the Plantations

A resident had complained to a member that more and more horse riders were using the plantations, but some were not respecting the area or other users. Another person had told the member that a couple of riders had asked them to put their dogs on leads. This had been done in a very unfriendly manner. The member reported that he had personally experienced the ire of a group of 6 riders who had completely ignored his request that they leave the plantation the way they had come in. They were even using some of the felled logs at the top of Hall Lane for jumping practice. The issues were discussed.

Members were only aware of two bridleways in the Parish: the old Whelley Loop Line and the path from Brock Mill to the boundary. The view was expressed that there was a lack of signage in Hall Lane informing riders of what they could and could not do – more needed to be introduced.

Dist Cllr C Ready agreed to speak to Mr K Bergman about the signage, as this area was part of his remit, and provide the Clerk with feedback. Cllr C Hatherall would liaise with owners of stables in the Parish and possibly invite them to the next Parish Council meeting to discuss the issues further.

It was reported that the Friends of Haigh Hall Heritage and Open Access for All were investigating the locations of bridleways in Haigh Woodland Park in connection with their discussions with Wigan Council over Rights of Way.

The Clerk was asked to write to the Assistant Director (Corporate Contracts and Assets) to request that the Parish Council be given access to the meetings about the Rights of Way so that they could be part of the discussion.

Anti-Social Activities in Hall Lane

A member reported that members of the public had expressed concern about the increase in anti-social activity – particularly in that related to drug dealing – in Hall Lane and Wingates Road. Drug paraphernalia had been found along these roads.

Dist Cllr C Ready left the meeting.

The issues were discussed. The possibility of asking the LA to install CCTV to monitor activities in the area was suggested. A member advised that installing CCTV in the area had legal implications, because it was a public place. Both the Police and the LA would need to apply for the relevant authorisation to install and use CCTV.

It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the Police to alert them to the increased activity. The Chairman would endeavour to speak to the occupants of the Lodge at the entrance to Hall Lane to establish whether they had any concerns. It was observed that a bank of evidence was needed and residents should be encouraged to report anything they found or witnessed to the the LA on the Report It app.

Actions from Previous Meeting

It was reported that the Japanese Knotweed growing in some areas of the Parish had been treated. Concern was expressed that the LA had not as yet provided a map of the known locations of Japanese Knotweed in the area, as agreed during the meeting with Wigan Council's officers. The Clerk was asked to chase this up.

Virtual Meeting

Members were asked to provide feedback on the virtual meeting in May. One member reported that in May he had experienced issues with sound, but on this occasion there were no such issues. It was observed that the experience was better than with Zoom.

Standing Orders were suspended.

Facebook Page & Other Social Media Sites

Mrs M-C Kenyon, an experienced administrator of social media sites, was introduced. She had been invited to the meeting to advise the Parish Council about social media platforms and how they could be used. Prior to joining the meeting she had looked at the Parish Council's Facebook page and social media sites belonging to other parish councils.

She reported that most councils who used social media had one twitter and one Facebook account. These were both considered to be traditional social media platforms. There were now others, like Instagram, which were becoming increasingly popular. Facebook tended to be favoured by an older demographic, while Instagram was more popular with a younger demographic.

Whichever social media platforms the Council opted for, they needed to be used more strategically than they were at present. Chat groups could be set up on Facebook to allow people to come in on the debates in relation to topics discussed during the meeting. Membership of other Facebook groups would enable posts to be shared with them.

Mrs Kenyon suggested that the Council should prepare a Social Media Plan and adopt a Social Media Policy. As the latter should come first, it was

agreed that the Chairman and Mrs Kenyon would prepare a draft Social Media Policy and circulate it to members for comment with the aim of it being formally adopted at the meeting in September. The Council recognised that there was some overlap between the Community Engagement Strategy and a Social Media Policy, so it was agreed that the Chairman would forward this and the Haigh Parish Plan to Mrs Kenyon for information.

Mrs Kenyon also recommended that the Parish Council should have its own separate website. This would be in line with most other parish councils and would make the Parish Council's information easier to find.

Mrs Kenyon was thanked for her presentation.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

186 Planning Applications

Members discussed the previously circulated list of planning applications for developments in the Parish.

A/20/88955/FULL	Land To South Of Hall Lane Wigan	Construction of equestrian ménage with the erection of 5 stables, hay barn, and tack room, as well as associated hardstanding.	<i>Representation submitted – awaiting decision</i>
A/20/89094/FULL	Nightingales Farm, Tuckers Hill Brow, Haigh	Erection of agricultural building.	<i>Noted</i>

187 Internal Audit Report & Action Plan 2019/20

Members received and reviewed the Internal Audit Report. They considered the two recommendations from the Internal Auditor:

1. With reference to GDPR, the Council should consider Data Protection registration with the ICO.
2. The council should review whether earmarked reserves needed to be established.

Recommendation One:

ICO Advisory: 'Organisations or individuals who only process personal data for judicial functions, elected representative functions, to maintain a public register or for domestic or recreational reasons are exempt. You therefore do not have to pay a fee to the ICO.

However, it is important that your organisation adheres to the principles of the General Data Protection Regulations and understands best practice for managing information. To help ensure you are complying with the GDPR, we have produced a range of **training materials**, including practical toolkits, training videos and more.

Even if you are exempt, you may still wish to **pay a data protection fee.** '

The Clerk reported that she had carried out the self-assessments available on the ICO's website and had determined that the Parish Council were exempt from registration and paying a fee (£40 or £35 if payment were made by direct debit).

Recommendation Two:

The Clerk reported that on a previous occasion - when the Council had been subject to external audits - the External Auditor had observed that the Council's reserves were too high, because they were greater than the precept levied. At that time the Council had only general reserves recorded, but there were funds set aside for repairs to Haigh Windpump. Following that observation, ear-marked reserves had been introduced.

Resolved: The Council accepted and approved the Internal Audit Report and, having considered the two recommendations from the Internal Auditor, agreed to maintain the status quo with regard to both, subject to (in the case of Recommendation One) GDPR being adhered to at all times.

188 Review of Internal Audit 2019/20

The Council reviewed the internal audit process and agreed that the following criteria had been met:

- a) The internal auditor was a person competent to carry out the work.
- b) He was independent in relation to elected members and the Clerk.
- c) He provided the Council with a short report on the work he had carried out.
- d) No issues had been identified, but two recommendations had been made, which had been considered by the Council.
- e) The auditor had examined procedures.
- f) The auditor had examined how decisions were recorded.
- g) He had checked that the transparency requirements had been met.

189 Appointment of Internal Auditor 2020/21

Resolved: The Council appointed Heelis & Lodge as their Internal Auditors for 2020/21.

190 Accounts 2020/21

Income: £nil

Expenditure

No	PAYEE	NARRATIVE	NET	VAT	PAYMENT
5	Employee No.1	Salary (June) (net)	£161.88	N/A	£161.88
6	HMRC	Tax (June)	£ 40.40	N/A	£ 40.40
7	Heelis & Lodge	Internal audit fee	£ 50.00	N/A	£ 50.00
Total:			£252.28	N/A	£252.28

Resolved: The above items were approved for payment.

Balance at bank on 2 June 2020 = **£7,665.27**

The following prior payments had not been presented as at 2 June 2020:

St David' Haigh & Aspull PCC	=	£20.00 (January meeting)
LALC/NALC (annual subscription)	=	£186.53
Employee No.1	=	£323.76
HMRC	=	£80.80
Zurich Municipal	=	£359.84
TOTAL	=	£970.93

Estimated Balance at bank after the above expenditure
(including the above prior unrepresented payments) = **£6,442.06**

191 Quarterly Budget Monitoring 2020/21

The monitoring document was reviewed. All cost centres were currently on line.

192 Standing Orders

The previously circulated document was discussed. The Chairman asked members to study it and become familiar with it.

The Clerk advised that the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by subsequent Acts) formed the legal basis for the Parish Council's procedures. Some of the standing orders were set down in law and could not be changed, unless the law was changed. Others were in line with accepted convention and could be changed by the Council, if appropriate.

193 Planting of Hedgerows

Cllr P Kenyon outlined his suggestions in relation to the idea behind persuading local landowners to plant hedgerows where the last open cast work were carried out around Sennicar, Pendlebury and Red Rock Lanes. One way in which the Parish Council could support the landowners was by signposting them in the direction of how and where to apply for grants. This idea was discussed.

Another member suggested that, with permission from the landowners, an application could be made by the Parish Council to the Woodland Trust for free hedgerow saplings. Residents who had land on which they wished to have saplings planted could be invited to let the Parish Council know.

It was agreed that Cllr P Kenyon would initially approach a couple of local landowners and sound them out.

194 Parish Newsletter

Cllr C Hatherall reported that he already had some content for the newsletter and would be happy to pull the edition together and circulate it to members. Another couple of articles were needed and members were invited to add content to the circulation. Ideas and materials for the content were welcomed and it was suggested that, ideally, each member should contribute or have a section.

Resolved: A newsletter would be prepared for the end of July and would be published in both paper and electronic versions. Members would take responsibility for deliveries of paper copies to residents.

Prior to the Covid-19 crisis the Parish Council had planned to hold a Bubblefest at Haigh Woodland Park in September. The Clerk was asked to contact Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles to establish what the position was with regard to this.

195 Clerk's Report

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

Meeting with Wigan Council's Officers

Members discussed the suggestion that a meeting with Wigan Council officers should take place virtually on Tuesday, 24 November at 1pm. This was agreed.

At the last meeting between members of the Parish Council and Wigan Council's senior officers the latter had agreed several actions. Some members expressed concern that some of the actions agreed had not been completed to their satisfaction. The Clerk was asked to gently remind them of the actions in question.

Cllr A Goodman left the meeting.

A member asked about the possibility of members being provided with identity badges. This was discussed and the Clerk was asked to look into it.

196 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 7 September 2020 at 6:30pm. This meeting would take place virtually.

The meeting closed at 8:55 pm

Chairman