

**Minutes of a Meeting of Haigh Parish Council  
Held Monday 7 December 2020  
6:30pm Virtual Meeting**

**Present:** Councillors R Lawson (Chairman), R Darbyshire, A Goodman, P Kenyon, and I Parker and the Clerk, Mrs K Pilkington.  
No members of the public.

**238 Apologies for Absence**

Cllrs C Hatherall  
Dist Cllr R Conway

**239 Declaration of Interests**

None.

**240 Parish Councillor Resignation**

The Chairman announced the resignation of Cllr Colin Higham with immediate effect. The Clerk reported that the Elections Officer at Wigan Council would need to be notified. Normally the election process would be triggered immediately, but, as the Coronavirus regulations had deferred all elections until May 2021, the Council would probably have to run with a vacancy until then.

The Chairman wished to have it put on record that Cllr Higham's input over the last couple of years had been significant; in particular with respect to his work on traffic issues and arranging the VE Day Event. It was a real shame that this wasn't able to go ahead. Cllr Lawson also wished to thank Cllr Higham on a personal level for his support.

Cllr Higham had offered to support the Parish Council in future, if needed. The Council joined him in wishing Cllr Higham all the best for the future.

**241 Matters Introduced by Members of the Public**

**Widening of Wingates Road**

A couple residing in a property in Wingates Road had raised concerns about the fact that the LA were widening the road. It was being converted from a single track carriageway with passing places to a two-way carriageway and the couple were suspicious that there was a hidden agenda behind this transformation. This was discussed briefly and the Clerk was asked to try to establish why it was happening.

**242 Minutes of the Meeting (19 October 2020)**

**Resolved:** The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Monday, 19 October 2020 were agreed as a true and correct record.

**243 Matters Arising**

### **Remembrance Sunday**

Cllr R Darbyshire reported that she had attended a small, socially-distanced, service at the Aspull War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday on 8 November and had laid a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council and the residents of Haigh.

### **Dates of Meetings 2021**

The dates of meetings for next year were now displayed on the website.

## **244 Planning Applications**

There were no new planning applications to bring to the Council's attention.

### **The GMSF Consultation**

The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Publication Plan 2020 was presented to the AGMA Executive Committee on 30 October 2020. Following that, it was presented to all ten principal authority councils for approval. The consultation on the final plan was due to go live on gmconsult.org from 1 December 2020 and end on 26 January 2021. However, the Clerk had been informed recently that Stockport MBC had not approved the Plan. In view of this the consultation had been withdrawn.

### **Rothwell Stud**

Approximately three years ago planning consent was given for a four bedroomed house to be built on the site. It was intended for the use of staff working at the Stud. The Parish Council – in common with a number of residents – had objected to the application at the time. The property had never been built and the land in question was now being advertised as being for sale with outline planning permission for £1.5m.

It was reported that there were no horses on the site – the Stud had not functioned for a number of years and a number of residents had concerns about what might be happening.

The issue was discussed.

**Resolved:** The Council noted the residents' concerns and shared them. It was agreed that the Chairman would look into the matter (including the conditions associated with the planning consent) and report back to the Council.

## **245 Traffic & Littering in the Parish During the Current Lockdown Period**

### **Traffic in Hall Lane**

It was reported that during the recent lockdown period the volume of traffic in Hall Lane had increased and the risk to pedestrians was massive. The road seemed to be in use as a substitute car park and grass verges were being destroyed as a consequence. It had previously been suggested to the LA that they should install speed bumps as part of their traffic calming measures along the road, as vehicles travelling too quickly were something of an issue, but the LA had taken the view that they would be inappropriate.

The issue would be an agenda item for further discussion at the January meeting.

### **Littering in Hall Lane**

Due to the volume of visitors, littering had become an issue in Hall Lane. There were usually a lot of volunteers who were active in relation to litter picking, but, because of Covid, they had paused this activity. It was observed that Lady Mable's Wood was one of the worst spots. There were not enough bins in the area and consequently the existing bins are often full.

**Resolved:** The Clerk would send a request to Wigan Council for the provision of a litter bin at one of the entrances to Haigh Woodland Park in Hall Lane. The Chairman would let her know which entrance would be the best one for this.

#### **246 Speeding Issues**

Correspondence between former parish councillor Colin Higham and the LA's Traffic Management team about speeding issues along the B5239 had been circulated previously. Mr Higham had asked about the possibility of permanent speed cameras being introduced along the route and had been told that there had not been enough serious accidents along this stretch of road to warrant this. However, temporary signage in relation to motorcycles was being introduced. The LA was keen for residents to use the 'Community Speed Watch Scheme' (subject to Covid-19 restrictions) but had also agreed to undertake additional surveys directly at some point in the near future.

#### **247 PROWs**

Cllr I Parker reported that he had started to plot a map of known footpaths in the Parish. Local residents were providing him with information about the routes of old footpaths. Once the exercise had been completed the Council would share it with the LA and ask if they could be included on their map.

The exercise was discussed.

**Resolved:** It was agreed that an appeal would be circulated via the Facebook page for information about footpaths or public rights of way in the Parish.

#### **248 Planning for Events 2021**

The Clerk reported that the booking forms for the Bubblefest and the Fete had been completed and sent to Keith Bergman of Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles. He had acknowledged them and had booked the events in provisionally, as whether they would go ahead would depend on the situation with Covid-19.

The Council discussed concerns about the feasibility of holding events next year in view of the Covid situation. Members were of the view that May was perhaps too early for an event such as the fete. It was suggested that it could perhaps be combined with the Bubblefest.

**Resolved:** The Clerk was asked to write to IHL to advise them that, because of Covid-19, the Council were uncertain about holding an event in May. However, they wished to keep both dates for the time being and they would be reviewed again in the new year.

#### **249 Parish Newsletter**

The latest draft of the Parish newsletter had been sent to the Chairman and the Clerk just before the meeting. One or two items were a little out of date and would be reviewed and updated by the Chairman after the meeting. The final draft would be circulated to members for comment before going to print. It had been previously agreed that the newsletter would be published on the Facebook page and that paper copies would be delivered to each house in the Parish by volunteers, hopefully before Christmas.

**Resolved:** The Council approved the printing of black & white paper copies at a cost of £92. Residents would be asked to send their email addresses to the Clerk by email if they wished to receive a copy of future editions electronically.

## **250 Meeting with Wigan Council Officers**

The Council received feedback from the meeting that had taken place virtually on 24 November and had been attended by the Chairman and the Clerk. The minutes of the meeting, which had been prepared by Democratic Services, had been circulated to members. Important points from the meeting had been included in the minutes.

The Chairman reported that matters with respect to Haigh Hall were still sub judice and it was too early for any information to be shared. However, they had assured the Parish Council that they would do so once it was possible.

One of the subjects discussed during the meeting had been Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS). A member observed that the Canal & River Trust had been noticed carrying out work to remove Floating Pennywort on the canals in Haigh recently.

## **251 Dates of Future Meetings with Wigan Council Officers**

The following dates had been proposed by Wigan Council's senior officers for meetings in 2021: Monday, 22 February; Monday, 24 May; Tuesday, 24 August; Tuesday, 23 November. All meetings had been scheduled to begin at 4pm.

**Resolved:** Members approved the above dates.

## **252 Rural Voucher Scheme to Improve Broadband**

The Chairman explained that there was funding available for improving broadband in rural areas. Residents of a community could pledge their funding to be grouped together to cover the cost of installation in order to bring higher speed broadband to an area. This might be ideal for some of Haigh's rural locations if a sufficient number neighbours in an area could coordinate their pledges. The total amount required was an unknown, but it was likely that most qualifying properties would need to pledge their vouchers to raise enough for the works to be carried out.

The scheme was discussed.

**Resolved:** The Clerk would post this information on the Council's Facebook page and the Chairman would add an item to the newsletter.

## 253 Accounts 2020/21

Income: £nil

Expenditure

NO	PAYEE	NARRATIVE	NET	VAT	PAYMENT
16	Employee No.1	Salary (Nov) (net)	£166.40	N/A	£166.40
17	HMRC	Tax (Nov)	£ 41.60	N/A	£ 41.60
	<b>Total:</b>		<b>£208.00</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>£208.00</b>

**Resolved:** The above items were approved for payment.

Balance at bank on 2 November 2020 = **£6,037.50**

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

Employee No.1 = £355.60

HMRC = £ 89.50

Royal British Legion = £100.00

Employee No.1 (Wigan Council) = £20.00

Employee No.1 (Lanyards Tomorrow) = £8.08

**TOTAL = £572.68**

Estimated Balance at the bank after the above expenditure and unrepresented prior payments = **£5,256.82**

## 254 Quarterly Budget Monitoring

The previously circulated budget monitoring document was discussed. The Clerk reported that all cost centres were currently on line and that significant savings had been made in relation to office expenses and room rent as a result of Covid-19 restrictions.

## 255 Budget 2021/22

The first draft of the budget was received and discussed. The Clerk reported that Wigan Council had confirmed that the Parish Council would receive a Council Tax Support grant of £1,032 as in past years. However, the Council Tax Base had not yet been calculated, so it was not yet possible to assess the impact of the precept set on individual properties. The Council were unlikely to receive this figure until January.

Further discussion was deferred to the meeting in January, when the budget and precept for 2021/22 would have to be approved.

## 256 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported that the Electoral Commission were due to be completing a ward boundary review for Wigan Council's wards in 2022, when all-out elections had been scheduled. Because of Covid-19 the review period had

been extended with completion now scheduled for 2023, followed by all-out elections in May of that year.

**257 Date of Next Meeting**

18 January 2021 at 6:30pm

The meeting closed at 8:15 pm

**Chairman**