

**Minutes of Meetings of Haigh Parish Council  
Held Monday 5 July 2021  
6:35pm Virtual Meeting**

**Present:** Councillors R Lawson (Chairman), R Darbyshire, P Kenyon, I Parker and A Wilson and the Clerk, Mrs K Pilkington  
Dist Cllrs C Ready and L Flynn  
Eight members of the public

**321 Apologies for Absence**

Cllr C Hatherall and Dist Cllr R Conway

**322 Declaration of Interests**

None

**323 Co-option of Councillor**

**Resolved:** The Council approved the appointment of Anita Edwards as a Co-opted Councillor.

Cllr A Edwards would make her declaration of acceptance of office at the Council meeting in September.

Standing Orders were suspended.

Item 325 was taken before Item 324.

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

A resident had written on behalf of a group of residents to the Parish Council to complain about the way the Balcarres Arms was being run and the incidents of anti-social behaviour that seemed to be occurring regularly since the pub had re-opened after the easing of lockdown restrictions. The resident was seeking advice on how to deal with the situation. The issues were discussed.

The Clerk was asked to write to the resident and suggest the following:

- (a) The residents could make a formal complaint to Wigan Council about their concerns, but, if they wanted them to be considered, the complaint could not be anonymous.
- (b) The residents could ask Wigan Council to review the landlord's licence. This meant that the Licensing Department would have to investigate whether the landlord was complying with the terms of the licence.
- (c) Incidents of anti-social behaviour should be referred to the Police.

**325 Tent Pegging in Pendlebury Lane**

In recent weeks the owners of a piece of land in Pendlebury Lane had started holding regular tent pegging events on their property. Issues relating to these events were creating concerns amongst the owners of neighbouring properties.

One of the residents present (who had all attended the meeting to raise concerns about this issue) provided the Council with a short history of the developments of the past few months. The land was purchased by its current owners in February and since then a planning application, A/21/90931/FULL, for a stable block and other equine facilities had been submitted. It had been called in by two of the district councillors and was due to be considered by the Planning Committee later this year.

Soon after taking possession of the site the owners started constructing an access to the site. They had since built a temporary horse shelter and had started excavating a tent pegging track, which was about 150m long and 40/50m wide. Five horses had also been delivered to the site.

The first tent pegging event had taken place on 6 June. This had been filmed and the film had been displayed on YouTube. The group of residents had been given advice by the ward councillors on how to go about raising objections to the planning application. The residents had appointed a planning consultant, who had prepared and submitted a formal objection to the planning application on their behalf and would represent them at the Planning Committee meeting.

The Chairman explained the Parish Council's position, which was one of support for the residents in their concerns about the scale and frequency of the tent pegging events, and had formally objected to the planning application.

It was reported that the events were being advertised online and were currently attracting 50-60 people. Once lockdown was lifted it was entirely possible that the number of spectators would increase and the traffic associated with them would have a considerable impact on both School Lane and Pendlebury Lane. Wigan Council had advised that 28 such events could be held annually on private land without any consent being needed from the local planning authority.

A web page had been set up by Wigan Council to advise residents of the Planning Department's legal position in relation to the situation and to ensure that accurate information was provided. The public were invited to submit questions to the district councillors, who would try to provide them with the answers. They would also ensure that the questions were included on the website as FAQs.

The issues were discussed at length. It was observed that clarity was needed about what was required to run an event. Even though permission was not needed to run as many as 28 tent pegging events, other things, such as sanitation, would need to be provided and there could be other licences that were required. Quite a few aspects of the sport of tent pegging, which involved the riding of horses at speed and the very skilful use of sabres and other similar weapons, could, if something went awry, pose considerable risk for the spectators on the site.

Cllr C Ready left the meeting.

Standing orders were re-instated.

### **326 Duke of Edinburgh Award – Candidate’s Report**

The third report from the candidate for the Duke of Edinburgh Award had been circulated previously and was discussed briefly. Members expressed their admiration for the candidate’s hard work and dedication and agreed that they were all looking forward to receiving her presentation at the Council meeting in September.

The candidate had also written an article for inclusion in the newsletter. This had been passed on to Cllr C Hatherall.

### **327 Minutes of the Meetings (10 May 2021)**

**Resolved:** The Minutes of the Annual and Ordinary Meetings of the Council held on Monday, 10 May 2021 were agreed to be a true and correct record.

### **328 Chairman’s Length of Service**

The suggestion that a cap should be placed on the number of years that any one person should serve as the Chairman was discussed. The purpose of the cap was to give other members the opportunity to take on the role, if they so wished. The Clerk explained that the Chairman had by law to be elected annually regardless of whether the Council chose to limit the number of years that any one individual could serve in this capacity.

Members agreed to maintain the status quo.

### **329 Draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting – 10 May 2021**

The draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 10 May 2021 were received.

Cllr I Parker left the meeting.

### **330 Matters Arising**

#### **Canal Aqueduct Near Canal Row**

Cllr Kenyon had sent an enquiry to the Canal & River Trust about the leak from the canal aqueduct onto the old railway line / bridleway at Red Rock. Repairs had been carried out in the past, but the leak was now worse than it had been before they had been carried out. Water was now also coming out of the supporting walls. Several residents of the parish had raised concerns that the structure could catastrophically fail as well as creating a hazard for riders or walkers using the pathway. The Canal & River Trust had replied that repair work was being undertaken. They had grouted the offside and had significantly reduced the leak through the abutment wall. At the time of his email they were working on the towpath side and hoped to resolve the leak from the trough that week.

#### **Cleaning of the Junction of Yellow Brook with River Douglas**

Cllr P Kenyon reported that the Bio-diversity officer at Wigan Council had given permission for the clearing of the blockages at the junction of Yellow Brook with the River Douglas, subject to the provision of risk assessments, information about the equipment to be used and proof of capability and

competence in its use. The Douglas Rivers Association was in the process of putting the plan together and preparing the required risk assessments.

Dist Cllr L Flynn left the meeting.

### 331 Planning Applications

A/21/91736/HH	Brock Mill Farm Wingates Road WN1 2SJ	To extend dwellinghouse - single storey to side and rear and associated external works, following demolition of existing garage	Under consideration
A/21/91737/LB	Brock Mill Farm Wingates Road WN1 2SJ	Listed building consent for the erection of a single storey to side and rear and associated external works, following demolition of existing garage	Under consideration
A/21/90931/FULL	Land North of Pendlebury Lane, Haigh	To erect a new stable block, associated horse exercise area, storage/sitting cabin and resurfacing of access road	Representation objecting to the application submitted - referred to the Planning Committee
A/21/91406/FULL	Land At Waterworks Farm, Arley Lane Haigh WN1 2UJ	Erection of a block of 10 stables, 2 tack rooms and creation of parking area	Noted

#### **A/21/91736/HH and A/21/91737/LB**

These applications in relation to a Grade II listed property were discussed. All members were asked to look at the applications on the LA's Planning Portal and to raise any objections they might have.

#### **A/21/91406/FULL**

The application was discussed. It was observed that there were six dwellings on the site – apart from the original farmhouse, most appeared to be conversions of buildings that had originally been outbuildings belonging to the farm. The application was noted.

The Chairman encouraged members to review the planning applications brought to their attention on the planning portal prior to future meetings.

### 332 Bubblefest 2021

Cllrs A Wilson, R Darbyshire and C Hatherall had attended a meeting with Keith Bergman at Haigh Woodland Park to discuss plans for the Bubblefest.

Cllrs Wilson and Darbyshire both reported that it had been a good meeting and the latter shared some of the notes that she had made.

Cllr Hatherall had taken notes and had shared them with Mr Bergman and with Cllrs Wilson and Darbyshire for verification. Cllr Wilson forwarded them to the Clerk, who would circulate them to all members.

Cllr Hatherall had asked if there could be a Working Party meeting early the following week. The Clerk was asked to arrange a meeting for either Monday, 12 or Tuesday, 13 July at 6:30pm.

### **333 Spring Newsletter**

Cllr C Hatherall would be circulating a draft of the newsletter later in the week.

### **334 Documenting PROWs**

During the meeting held with Wigan Council officers a request had been put forward by the Parish Council that a face-to-face meeting take place between Cllr I Parker and the Highways Asset Manager to discuss the information currently held on PROWs by Cllr Parker. The Highways Asset Manager was happy to hold such a meeting, restrictions permitting. He had suggested that the meeting could be held in mid-June and he would arrange it. In the absence of Cllr Parker, members discussed this briefly. The Chairman would contact Cllr Parker by email to establish progress.

### **335 Update on Haigh Hall**

#### **(a) Stakeholder Meeting**

Cllr R Darbyshire, who had attended the meeting, reported that the meeting should have taken the form of a workshop on volunteering. As only two of the stakeholders were present, it had focussed purely on the gardens and had been somewhat disappointing.

#### **(b) Haigh Hall**

The Chairman reported that there had been no further updates since the meeting with Wigan Council officers in May, when the officers had reported that the LA had spent approximately £4.9 million to get the Hall back. Some initial activity had taken place and plans for the Hall would be shared with the public by the end of the year.

### **336 Haigh Woodland Park Visitor Traffic in School Lane**

Cllr A Wilson began by outlining the issues in School Lane relating to Haigh Woodland Park. On busy days the operation of the barrier systems at the entrances to the car parks resulted in queues of vehicles forming along School Lane – often in both directions. As School Lane was narrow, this could lead to road blockages.

A couple of years ago Cllr Wilson had attended a lottery funding meeting. At that meeting a plan for changing the methodology by which traffic to and from the site would be controlled had been announced. However, nothing had changed since then.

The issues were discussed. Another member recalled seeing a report on a recent briefing from the Woodland Park management team that a system of paying on the gate on leaving the car park was going to be introduced. It was observed that it would be helpful if arrangements could be made for entering vehicles to queue on an interior road.

It was agreed that Cllr Wilson would draft a letter and send it to Keith Bergman.

### **337 Meeting with Wigan Council Officers**

The Minutes of the meeting with Wigan Council Officers that took place on 24 May 2021 had been circulated previously and were received. The next meeting with Wigan Council Officers was scheduled to take place virtually on 24 August 2021 at 4pm. A decision would be made nearer the time as to whether the meeting would still be held virtually or face to face.

A decision about the subjects to be discussed would also be made by consensus nearer the time. The Clerk was asked to contact members at the end of July and ask them to forward their requests to her by the second week in August.

### **338 Wigan Council Ward Boundary Consultation**

The Local Government Boundary Commission's consultation on Wigan Council's ward boundaries was current in progress and was discussed briefly. The Council agreed that they would not be making a corporate response.

### **339 Internal Audit Report 2020/21**

The Annual Internal Audit had taken place on 23 June. The AIAR 2020/21, which formed part of the AGAR, and the detailed Internal Auditor's report had been previously circulated and were received.

The Internal Auditor had made two recommendations in his detailed report. Both had been actioned. There were no issues raised in the AIAR 2020/21.

**Resolved:** The AIAR 2020/21 and the Internal Auditor's report were accepted and approved.

### **340 Review of internal Audit 2020/21**

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.

**341 Appointment of Internal Auditor 2021/22**

**Resolved:** Heelis & Lodge were appointed as the Council's Internal Auditors for 2021/22.

**342 Accounts 2021/22**

**Income: £nil**

**Expenditure**

<b>No</b>	<b>PAYEE</b>	<b>NARRATIVE</b>	<b>NET</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>PAYMENT</b>
6	Employee No.1	Salary (June) (net)	£166.40	N/A	£166.40
7	HMRC	Tax (June)	£ 41.60	N/A	£ 41.60
8	Employee No.1	Mileage	£ 5.20	N/A	£ 5.20
9	Heelis & Lodge	Internal Audit fee	£ 50.00	N/A	£ 50.00
<b>Total:</b>			<b>£263.20</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>£263.20</b>

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

Balance at bank on 2 June 2021 = **£7,940.63**

Unpresented on 2 June 2021:

HMRC = £83.20

LALC/NALC = £186.54

Zurich Municipal = £361.84

**TOTAL = £631.58**

Estimated balance at the bank after the above expenditure and the unpresented items = **£7,045.85**

In reply to an enquiry about the nature of the Council's insurance cover and an observation about the associated premium, a member was signposted to the Policy, which had been circulated in May, and was advised that competitive quotations were sought annually from specialist providers.

**343 Clerk's Report**

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

**344 Date of Next Meeting**

6 September 2021

In reply to a question from the Chairman about the nature and location of the next meeting, the Clerk advised that she was taking advice from her professional body and investigating the possibility of hybrid meetings.

The meeting closed at 8:43 pm

**Chairman**