



# HALE PARISH COUNCIL

of the Halton Borough in the County of  
Cheshire



MINUTES of the **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** held on Monday the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at  
**HALE VILLAGE HALL, HIGH STREET, HALE VILLAGE, L24 4AE**  
**COMMENCING AT 7.30PM**

Present: Cllrs Trevaskis, Williams, Kierman, Wright, Healey, Hunter, Cleary and Mitchell  
There were 24 members of the public present

1. To receive Apologies

*Cllrs Spargo and Anderson*

2. To consider and approve the Minutes of the meetings held on the 12th September, 17th September, 23rd September and 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019.

*It was resolved that the minutes of the meetings held on the 12th September, 17th September, 23rd September and 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019 should be approved and that the chairman should sign them as a true and accurate record.*

3. To receive Declarations of Interest

*None*

4. To receive and note (if available) the police report on crime statistics

*No police report was available*

5. To receive an update with regard to the Village Hall.

*A verbal report was presented confirming that bookings were increasing substantially, the Civic Service and Beer Fest had been well attended, the new web site was attracting a lot of business, good feedback has been received concerning the well maintained standards at the hall and a number of housekeeping requirements including PAT testing, lift servicing and fire extinguisher servicing has now been completed. The electricity bill had now finally been resolved and gas costs were still being investigated. Whole in whole significant progress had been made in the last few months.*

6. To adjourn the meeting for a period of public participation

*It was mentioned and confirmed that the provisional figure allocated to obtain professional advice with regard to past Vat building reclaims had proved insufficient and that an agenda item was to be discussed later in the meeting to consider the quotation now received from the recommended professional firm who could provide indemnified advice on how to proceed.*

*It was mentioned that lights may have been left on all night at the village hall on one recent occasion. This led to a further discussion concerning the terms and conditions concerning the use of solar power within the village hall. It*

was stated that no monies had been received as a result of supplying the National Grid and that it had not been envisaged that this would occur. Whilst the electricity bill had now been settled further investigation might be required concerning the exact terms for using solar power.

The Chairman of Hale Bank Parish Council made a statement asking for the support of this Council and other local Councils in writing to the Secretary of State asking that planning powers be removed from Halton Borough Council as it was considered that their planning dept was not fit for purpose. A meeting is to be arranged shortly to discuss this and members of this council will be invited. The Clerk confirmed that no decision could be made tonight but that any proposed letter should be sent to him so that it could be placed before the Council for consideration.

A resident stated that a complaint had been made against him a member of this Council and that he was considering what action he should take.

A resident expressed his support for the proposal outlined above by Hale Bank Parish Council.

7. To receive and ratify the list of payments (enclosed) made between 11<sup>th</sup> September 2019 and 30 October 2019 recorded in the Cash Book Record which has been reconciled to the Bank Statements to that date all payments having been made under Financial Regulation 6.4

***It was resolved that the list of payments detailed above should be ratified – it was suggested that a little more specific detail might be appropriate in future***

8. To receive a summary of income and expenditure to the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019 for Hale Village Hall and a projection of income and expenditure for 2020/2021 which will be required to assist HPC setting its Precept for 2020/2021

***It was resolved that the above documentation should be received and that the projection of income and expenditure for 2020/2021 should be accepted as the basis for the Parish Council making a provision to support the VH to the extent of £7K in year 2020/21, if required, for revenue purposes only as no potential further capital expenditure had been included. Any additional capital expenditure would require a grant request to be made either to the Parish Council or another external funder for consideration.***

9. To consider and approve that Scott Harris should be engaged as a sole trader with a Service Contract for 6 months to undertake open space works on behalf of this Council as required from time to time – cost quotations will be obtained in advance for any works proposed to be undertaken, such works currently including the cutting of Hale Park hedges and the maintenance of various borders within the village whilst ground works around the Village Hall will be included on a specific hourly basis as defined in his existing employment contract.

***It was resolved that Scott Harris should be engaged as a self-employed sole trader to undertake open space works on behalf of the Parish Council and Village Hall as outlined above. A service contract for 4 hours per week at a rate of £15 per hour to be drawn up to cover VH Groundworks and Hale Park hedges which would also incorporate provision to offer other specific works at the same hourly rate provided such works including the specification and hours to be paid for were agreed in advance. The contract to be fixed term to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.***

10. To approve that Scott Harris should continue as the cleaner and caretaker for the Village Hall on an extended employment contract for a further period of 6 months for 14 hours per week at a rate of £9.00 per hour to coincide with item 9 on this agenda.

***It was resolved that the above employment contract should be varied and extended to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 for 14 hours per week at the existing rate of £9 per hour.***

11. To consider whether to appoint John Henry to undertake a full review of and implement all necessary policies and privacy statements in relation to GDPR and thereafter act as this Council's Data Protection Officer at a first-year cost of £600 and annual fee (subject to review) of £400 per annum thereafter.

***It was resolved that the proposals mentioned above should be implemented***

12. To consider the appointment of Steve Parkinson to investigate and establish the legal position concerning recent Vat reclaims made in respect of the building of the new Village Hall and advise this Council on any necessary actions to protect the Council's position by providing indemnified advice at a cost of £2000.

***It was resolved that the proposals mentioned above should be implemented***

13. To approve the following policies which have already been circulated to members in advance of this meeting
- Disciplinary Procedure
  - ACAS Dignity in the Workplace Policy
  - Social Media Policy
  - Volunteer Policy
  - Risk Management Policy
  - Risk Management Register

***It was resolved that the policies mentioned above should be adopted***

14. To consider the draft budget proposals (enclosed) and taking into account any financial decisions made previously at this meeting and any amendments that may be put forward by members agree and set the Precept for 2020 / 2021

*The RFO went through the proposals and the following amendments to the outturn and budget were made:*

*The Guildswomen outturn should be reduced to £100 since all expenditure for this year had been made*

*The Legal / Consultation Budget should be increased to £3100 to take account of the decisions at items 11 and 12 above*

*The Budget for Guildswomen should also be reduced to £100 for 2020 / 2021*

*The Grants budget should be reduced to £1500 for 2020 / 2021*

*Following amendments to the draft budget by the RFO motions below were considered:*

*A motion was then put to decrease the Wellbeing budget from £5500 to £2500*

***The motion was defeated***

*A motion was put that the amended Grants Budget should be reinstated at £3000.*

***The motion was defeated***

***It was then resolved that in the light of the budget now agreed that the Precept for 2020 / 2021 should be set at £49000.***

15. To note that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2019

***It was noted that the next scheduled meeting is on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2019***