



HALE PARISH COUNCIL
OF THE HALTON BOROUGH IN
THE COUNTY OF CHESHIRE



**MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
OF HALE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN HALE VILLAGE HALL
ON WEDNESDAY 26th MAY 2021 AT 7.30pm**

Present: Cllr Kierman, Cllr Healey, Cllr Wright, Cllr Spargo, Cllr Banks

In attendance: Mr. Brian Hargreaves (Proper Officer) and 6 Members of the public

- 1. Introduction** – The Vice Chairman Cllr Spargo chaired the meeting and gave a brief introduction welcoming attendees and outlining the purpose of the meeting.
- 2. Apologies** – Cllr Trevaskis and Cllr Williams registered their apologies
- 3. Annual Report** – The Clerk gave an overview of the work done by the Parish Council in the year ending 31st March 2021. He outlined the progress made in the previous year's Annual Governance and Accountability audit and expressed his belief that the current systems in place are appropriate and satisfy all legal requirements. He informed the attendees that the documentation for this year's audit is almost ready for submission. Although planned activities have been difficult in the past year due to the Covid-19 pandemic and its associated restrictions the Clerk said he was happy that the Parish Council has been able to stage three safe family events during the previous year and went on to say that current Councillors are excited at the prospect of being able to plan more events and programs to include a wider demographic in the near future.

It was noted that all finalised financial information had been approved at the previous full Parish Council meeting on 17th May 2021 and that all relevant information was available on the Parish Council website. In addition the information would be published officially in due course.

Cllr Spargo outlined some of the current aspirations of the Village Hall committee including the improvements in facilities and in the overall offering. In particular the collective hope is that a café/coffee shop can be re-established for local residents and visitors to meet and socialise in a comfortable modern setting. A programme of refurbishment is currently being considered with emphasis on the décor and aesthetics being a priority. A quantity of café style chairs and tables have been purchased to give a more relaxed and atmospheric quality.

Parking problems within Hale Village have been intensified as a result of increased visitors during the Covid – 19 pandemic. Cllr Spargo re-iterated the Parish Council's commitment to improving the situation and engaging with residents to seek a suitable solution to what is now a significant problem. He informed the meeting that he has been recording the problem on film for review at a suitable opportunity and hopes for an occasion where we can address matters formally with Halton Borough Council.

4. Reports From Local Organisations

i/ Cheshire Police - PCSO Steve Marnick gave an account of the current and recent policing activities within Hale Village. He stated that matters currently are “Good as Always” and that crime rates are minimal. A recent spate of 5 burglaries was addressed and the perpetrators were subsequently arrested and charged. However, these incidents apart there were no serious incidents to address in recent months.

There was an acknowledgement that parking was an ongoing issue and that speed awareness is always a concern particularly on High Street. However PCSO Marnick stated that he would continue to lobby the new police and crime commissioner (PCC) on behalf of the residents of Hale in order to help protect people. He went on to praise the measures taken by Halton Borough Council in respect of the parking problems experienced by residents of Church Road and into Lighthouse Lane. The temporary measures installed appear to have alleviated a serious problem until a more permanent solution can be established.

PCSO Marnick registered some frustration at the changes to current local police staffing arrangements and expressed his hopes for a swift resolution in order to offer a more comprehensive support package to Hale Village and to the Halton area as a whole.

PCSO Marnick acknowledged that he had been advised of Halton Borough Council’s intention to designate Baileys Lane in the village as an “Access Only” route and that it is a welcome move wholly supported by Cheshire Police.

ii/ Merseywave Choir – Resident Paul Turton chairman of the Merseywave Choir gave an account of the formation of the Merseywave Choir and its growth in subsequent years. The choir was originally the brainchild of a small group of local residents who enjoyed singing and who regularly graced the microphone at the Wellington Hotel’s Friday night karaoke. Collectively six of the singers agreed to meet regularly at local farmer Bill Webb’s house to sing socially and to collate a list of suitable songs. Coincidentally around the same time an accomplished local pianist and musical director Jason Ellis decided that he would like to create a local choir and it now appears that the fusion was inevitable. Merseywave choir now has around 70 members consisting of 90% local residents. Its popularity has expanded to such an extent that followers from as far afield as Australia and Canada now take part in the electronic broadcasts to enjoy the choral music. Jason Ellis has recently produced a series of online videos of some of the Choir’s renditions which are available on Youtube. One such rendition has been viewed over 163,000 times.

Mr Turton raised an issue regarding the Hall hire fees currently being charged to the choir and asked whether there could be a review at the next Village Hall committee meeting. He was advised by the vice chairman to contact the Clerk formally so the item can be included on the Agenda at the next official meeting.

iii/ Matters of Interest – Cllr Banks gave a short appraisal of the situation regarding Liverpool Airport’s expansion plans and her views on the motives and aspirations of Peel Holdings.

The Vice Chairman thanked those present for their attendance and closed the Meeting at 8.30pm