



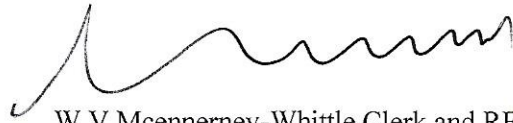
HALE PARISH COUNCIL

of the Halton Borough in the County of
Cheshire



NEXT MEETING

Members of the Council are summoned to the **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** to be held on
Monday the 23rd September 2019 at **HALE VILLAGE HALL, HIGH STREET, HALE VILLAGE, L24 4AE**
COMMENCING AT 7.30PM



W V Mcennerney-Whittle Clerk and RFO

Note to Councillors:

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please notify the clerk of your apologies either by e-mail
clerk@haleparishcouncil.gov.uk or telephone 01772 733829

Note to Public:

Members of the public wishing to address the Council should note that they must advise the clerk before 10am on the day of the meeting both of their wish to participate in the public forum and their topic. If residents fail to inform the clerk prior to the meeting, permission to speak at the meeting will be at the discretion of the Council. All participants are restricted to a maximum of three minutes. If the public wish to ask the Council questions, please note that the Council may not be able to answer the question if the council has not considered or resolved the question on an agenda item at a prior meeting. Should this be the case, the Council will advise correspondence with the clerk to request the item be discussed at a future parish council meeting. If the question is considered outside the remit of Hale Parish Council, residents will be referred to Halton Borough Council.

MEETING AGENDA

1. To receive Apologies
2. To consider and approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 11th July 29th August and 2nd September 2019 enclosed
3. To receive Declarations of Interest
4. To receive and note (if available) the police report on crime statistics

Please also note that the report whether in writing or given verbally is FOR INFORMATION ONLY and no decisions can be made in respect of any of its content.

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

Please note that the report whether in writing or given verbally is FOR INFORMATION ONLY and no decisions can be made in respect of any of its content.

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

Please note that the Council may not make any lawful decision during this session – any items raised by members of the public may be considered for a future agenda. Members of the public are defined as any persons present other than parish council members or officials. This session will be conducted by the Clerk as it is not part of the official Council meeting.

7. To receive and ratify the list of payments enclosed made between 4th June 2019 and 3rd September 2019 being payment numbers 32 to 73 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
8. To receive and approve a summary of expenditure to the 3rd September 2019 against original budget headings and consider the proposed revised budget drawn up by the RFO which negates the deficit position by re-aligning expenditure headings and will if approved provide a small reserve position of £2455.
9. To approve the Contract of Employment terms for the Clerk agreed at the meeting on the 29th August 2019 which have already been circulated to members.
10. To approve renewal of the current insurance policy which expires on the 30th September 2019 at a cost of £2615.93 for one year.

It must be noted that it is essential that the Asset Register is now completed as a matter of urgency so that insurance cover can be reviewed to ensure it is adequate but not excessive.

11. To consider whether this Council is agreeable to the Childe of Hale walking stick being displayed in the Village Hall and that insurance cover should be provided as an addition to the existing policy at a figure of £2000 (see attached request)
12. To consider whether the existing VH cleaner, caretaker and grounds person should now be offered a permanent contract since his temporary contract will expire at the end of this month.

Please note that there is no lawful requirement to advertise any job position.

13. To receive an update following a recent meeting with ACRE concerning the legal position in respect of the management of the Village Hall

Please note that this item is for update only and no lawful decisions may be made at this meeting

14. (1) To approve that all Committees should now be disbanded (apart from the Village Hall Committee) and replaced with working group arrangements thereby saving a significant amount of time and resource in compiling agenda and minutes which are not currently undertaken lawfully.

The new ways of working will mean more flexibility in the meeting arrangements that can be undertaken by the working groups without any need for published agenda or minutes. The working groups whilst being allocated financial resources will not however be able to commit that funding without the formal agreement of the full council or the RFO (under delegated authority up to an agreed limit suggested at £500 per project, item or event)

(2) To approve that the Village Hall Committee continue in its present format awaiting the outcome of the investigations into future management arrangements except that all future meeting agenda and minutes must be compiled by the Clerk to the Parish Council, the meetings conducted in a lawful manner and major items of expenditure referred to the full Council before implementation.

15. To note that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday the 28th October 2019



HALE PARISH COUNCIL

of the Halton Borough in the County of
Cheshire



MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on

Thursday the 11th July 2019 at HALE VILLAGE HALL, HIGH STREET, HALE VILLAGE, L24 4AE
COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllrs Trevaskis, Williams, Spargo, Wright, Healey, Hunter, Cleary, Anderson, Mitchell and Kierman

There were 17 members of the public present

1. To receive Apologies

None

2. To consider and approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 17th June 2019 enclosed

It was resolved that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 17th June 2019 should be approved and that the Chairman should be authorised to 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

An electronic report had been received shortly before the meeting – it will be printed and made available in the Village Hall for those who wish to read it.

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

A report from the VH Manager had been prepared and was available to residents after the meeting

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

The meeting was adjourned

Bernie Mitchell was congratulated on winning the recent by election.

A prepared statement was read out by a representative of the 'Friends of Hale Village Hall' an organisation formed to support the Village Hall. It was hoped that this new organisation would be welcomed by the Parish Council and would be able to assist in supporting activities in the hall by providing practical support and possibly fundraise for items the hall might need.

A resident complained regarding statements made by councillors and the apparent bias towards one of the candidates. Another resident asked if councillors were bound by a Code of Conduct – the Clerk confirmed the latter and explained to both residents that they must speak to the monitoring officer at Halton Borough Council if they felt that there had been any breach since this Council had no jurisdiction in these matters.

A resident asked that seating be installed in the village – it was confirmed that a new seat was to be installed shortly

It was confirmed that the Annual Return had now been finalised and was being sent to the auditors – once the audit is completed it will be published and any recommendations considered by the Council.

It was mentioned that a notice board in Baileys Lane was not being utilised by the Parish Council to display Parish Council notices as had apparently been previously agreed

The meeting was reconvened

7. To authorise/ratify payment of the following accounts:

To receive and ratify the Cash Book Record which has been produced from the Bank Statements from 1st April to 3rd June 2019 and which details all payments made up to 3rd June 2019 under Financial Regulation 6.4

It was resolved that the Cash Book Record referred to above should be ratified

8. To agree an addendum to this Council's Standing Orders as follows as authorised under the Local Government Act 1972 Section 101(a) - this is to ensure that the business of the Council may lawfully continue between ordinary meetings.

The Council shall delegate to the Clerk the authority to make routine decisions on its behalf as and when required including routine planning decisions subject to those planning decisions being taken only after consultation with the Chairman of the Council or the Vice Chairman in his absence.

It was resolved that the Council's Standing Orders should have the above addendum added

9. To appoint John Henry (JDH Business Services Ltd) a specialist Internal Auditor as the Internal Auditor for the year ended 2018/19

It was resolved that John Henry (JDH Business Services Ltd) should be appointed as the Internal Auditor for the year ended 2018/19

10. To consider the enclosed report which has been put together under the advice of our insurers and approve the future method for access to the Village Hall

It was resolved that option three (as below) of the report referred to above should be adopted with immediate effect and that the only key holders should be the VH Manager, the VH Caretaker, the Parish Council Chairman, Parish Council Vice Chairman and the Village Hall Committee Chairman.

Remove external code box and have VH manager and one or two members as key holders - they would then control access and exit and be responsible for locking up properly. This is obviously the safest method and reduces risk and is how most village halls normally operate. The control then rests with us alone and our insurance will pay out since key access will no longer be possible without the compliance of a key holder.

11. To ratify the appointment of Scott Harris who has accepted the employed post of temporary part time caretaker, cleaner and grounds person for 18 hours per week from 8th July to 30th September 2019 at a rate of £9.00 per hour

It was resolved that the appointment referred to above should be ratified and confirmed that it was the intention to advertise the post on a permanent basis in due course

12. To approve that this Council should purchase a colour laser printer to be located inside the Village Hall which will allow the VH Manager to be able to work from the Village Hall more frequently than at present and will in the longer term save the costs of using printing companies to produce agenda copies and such. The benefit of a colour printer will also save money on village hall and event notices. Estimated cost £220.00

It was resolved that a suitable printer should be purchased as referred to above.

13. To note that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday the 23rd September 2019

It was noted that the next meeting is scheduled for the 23rd September 2019



HALE PARISH COUNCIL

of the Halton Borough in the County of
Cheshire



MINUTES of the **EXTRA ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** held on
Thursday the 29th August 2019 at **HALE VILLAGE HALL, HIGH STREET, HALE VILLAGE, L24 4AE**
COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllrs Healey, Trevaskis, Cleary, Mitchell, Hunter, Spargo, Wright, Anderson, Williams and Kierman

There were 56 members of the public present.

1. To receive Apologies

None

2. To receive Declarations of Interest

None

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

The meeting was adjourned

A member of the public made a statement commenting on how concerned and unhappy he was with regard to the internal audit report which highlighted many failures and called for councillors to resign.

A further member suggested that he thought a public meeting might be appropriate however given the public attendance tonight perhaps this was it.

A further resident expressed his concern at the catalogue of failure but expressed some sympathy with councillors concerning the role they had undertaken on a voluntary basis. He further commented that the National Lottery must have been satisfied with the accounts of the Parish Council back in 2015 when they agreed a substantial grant to rebuild the village hall and wondered what had gone wrong.

A resident suggested that the price of failure would be an increased Precept to pay for putting things right.

There was a general consensus that the audit report was totally unacceptable and that residents were seeking to know what was to be done to rectify matters.

The Clerk then made a general statement concerning the internal audit. He said that current failings did not just arise from 2018/19 – many had been there previously, and it was wrong to condemn some current members of the council who had been there only a short period of time and had no real training for their role. He alluded to the lack of documentary information which was in many cases held by past members and not in the Parish Council records thus making management more difficult and also the lack of the completion of documentation when applying for the National Lottery Grant which had proposed a new way of managing the village but had not involved the Charity Commission or the completion of proper documentation. It was also true he believed that previous Clerks had been grossly underpaid and provided with insufficient paid working hours which meant they could not possibly have sorted out previous issues hence the problems had escalated. It could be no coincidence that previous clerks had resigned, the latest after only one

meeting. So, errors in previous years, changes in membership without adequate training, total under resource of the clerks position and lack of knowledge of clerks has led to the current situation. He expressed the hope that residents and members would not engage in a witch hunt but would support the Parish Council in the actions it now needed to take to put matters right something that might take many months. He also confirmed that the accounts of the Parish Council were sound despite lack of governance and that having looked at the position for this year the deficit budget could now be addressed and that there was funding available for the remainder of this year. A new budget would be presented to Council probably at the September ordinary meeting.

The Chairman thanked members of the public for their representations - many of which he agreed with. The Chairman accepted there were a number of issues to resolve and reiterated that by releasing the full audit to the public, the Council wished to be as transparent as possible in relation to the current position of its affairs, some of which even predated his tenure as a Councillor and have existed for over a decade.

It was explained that many of the more recent issues that relate to the accounts have primarily occurred due to inconsistencies in staff and changes to the membership of the Council - with past employees and members not handing over all documentation on their departure leading to gaps in the records of the Council and presenting a backlog for new staff who then have had to spend many months chasing their tails on inadequate hours and inadequate pay.

The Chairman advised that a number of these items have been discussed historically and it was reassuring to see so many new faces who would be able to hear the work that has already been done to address a number of the issues in the audit report.

It was clarified that at the end of each closing year, there has always been a full set of accounts and there is a full list of all transactions that the auditor is satisfied with. The Chairman confirmed these were the only documents that were required to be sent to grant providers such as the National Lottery and the issues do not necessarily rest with the final accounts, but rather the inconsistency throughout the year with the governance behind the accounts - most of which has failed in the audit due to the high turnover of staff not being able to present the accounts to the Council on a regular basis.

Notwithstanding the above issues, no fraud or corruption has been found and all payments made by the Council relate to resolutions of meetings. It was acknowledged that while not ideal, in order for business to carry on as usual in the absence of a Clerk, the bank accounts were placed in the name of the Chair. It was noted that whilst the Council has historically always contracted the services of an accountant as opposed to an auditor, this is the first time the Council has undertaken a full audit upon the recommendation of the Chairman from a fully qualified independent Parish Council auditor. This, alongside the appointment of an experienced and CILCA (distinction) qualified clerk who is an approved NALC/SLCC trainer as the new Clerk, also recommended by the Chairman, should ensure the Council is in a much stronger position moving forward than it ever has been before.

The meeting was re convened

4. To approve and authorise the Chairman and Clerk to sign Section 1 (Annual Governance Statement) being part of the AGAR for the year ending 31st March 2019 (papers enclosed)

It was resolved that the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) being part of the AGAR for the year ending 31st March 2019 should be approved and that the Chairman and Clerk should be authorised to sign same.

A recorded vote had been requested:

Those in favour: Cllrs Healey, Trevaskis, Hunter, Spargo, Wright, Anderson, Williams and Kierman

Those against: Cllrs Mitchell and Cleary

5. To approve and authorise the Chairman and RFO to sign Section 2 (Accounting Statements) being part of the AGAR for the year ending 31st March 2019 (papers enclosed)

It was resolved that the Accounting Statements (Section2) should be approved and that the Chairman and RFO should be authorised to sign same.

A recorded vote had been requested:

Those in favour: Cllrs Healey, Trevaskis, Spargo, Wright, Anderson, Williams and Kierman

Those against: Cllrs Mitchell, Cleary and Hunter

6. To receive and note the Internal Auditors Report as required by Audit Regulations (papers enclosed)

The Internal Auditors Report was formally received

7. To consider the Internal Auditors Report comments and receive from the Clerk an update on some of the issues and agree in principle the actions that now need to be taken over the coming months to address the failures highlighted and agree the required action plan.

The Clerk went through all the items on the Internal Audit Report and updated members as to the current position and what further actions were required. The report showing this is attached.

It was resolved as follows:

1. That new banking facilities should be arranged with Unity Trust Bank who used a dual on line authorisation system for on line payments which met statutory requirements (in the meantime the existing system with Nat West would have to continue in order that business could be conducted until the change had taken place)

2. That the Clerk would scope the use of a pre-payment card or similar with Unity Trust Bank to be used instead of the debit card currently in operation.

3. That Cllrs Trevaskis, Spargo, Anderson, Mitchell and Kierman should be signatories on the new bank account and authorised to release online payments

4. It was resolved that a small discrepancy of £15.31 in the accounts of 2018/19 should be written off as it would not be cost effective to try and locate this error at this time.

8. To consider and agree how to implement the specific recommendation below as contained in the Internal Audit report

Therefore, to ensure the council can effectively implement the action plan and embed the changes required, we recommend there is a period of consistency in the officer resources that will be tasked with supporting the council with implementation of the internal audit action plan.

To consider appointing the present Clerk on a replacement permanent contract for 16 hours per week in order to comply with and achieve the internal audit action plan above at a rate of £19.17 per hour (SCP 34) with existing travel and telephone expenses.

It was resolved that the present Clerk should be appointed on a permanent basis in order to bring stability to the officer role at the remuneration rates, hours and expenses quoted above with immediate effect.



HALE PARISH COUNCIL

of the Halton Borough in the County of
Cheshire



NEXT MEETING

Minutes of the **EXTRA ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** held on
Monday the 2nd September 2019 at **HALE VILLAGE HALL, HIGH STREET, HALE VILLAGE, L24 4AE**
COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllrs Trevaskis, Williams, Anderson, Spargo, Wright, Healey, Hunter, Kierman and Mitchell

Before the meeting was opened a letter was read out from two residents suggesting that the meeting should be postponed since this Council had no jurisdiction in matters relating to the Village Hall. It was noted however that this meeting was about an employee of the Parish Council who was funded by the National Lottery as part of a funding agreement with the Parish Council. The meeting was then opened.

1. To receive Apologies

Cllr Cleary

2. To receive Declarations of Interest

None

3. To approve the Minutes of the extra ordinary meeting held on the 12th August 2019 which are enclosed

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on the 12th August 2019 should be approved and that the Chairman should sign them as a true and accurate record.

A recorded vote had been called.

Those who voted in favour of the resolution were Cllrs Trevaskis, Williams, Anderson, Spargo, Wright, Healey, Hunter and Kierman

Those who voted against the resolution were Cllr Mitchell only

4. To resolve to exclude the public and press under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 on the grounds of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

It was resolved that the public and press should be excluded under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

5. To consider the terms of and confirm that a letter of dismissal should now be issued following the resolution of the extra ordinary meeting held on the 12th August 2019

It was unanimously resolved that a letter of dismissal as circulated for approval during the meeting should be issued immediately to the incumbent Village Hall Manager

HALE PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS EXPENSES 2019/2020

DATE	DETAILS	CHQ NO	MINUTE NO	PYT NO	TOTAL
04/06/2019	HIRE HVH	ON LINE		32	150.00
04/06/2019	G SUITE	POS		33	29.70
04/06/2019	HIRE HVH	ON LINE		34	105.00
04/06/2019	HIRE HVH	ON LINE		35	200.00
04/06/2019	CHALC WORKSHOP	ON LINE		36	337.50
04/06/2019	CHALC GOOD CLLR GUIDES	ON LINE		37	45.90
04/06/2019	CCA SUBSCRIPTION	ON LINE		38	50.00
04/06/2019	LCU SUBSCRIPTION	ON LINE		39	60.00
04/06/2019	GRANT MAYORS FUND	ON LINE		40	500.00
04/06/2019	BAKER ROSS HARLOW	DR CARD		41	125.99
04/06/2019	VIKING UK	DR CARD		42	238.80
05/06/2019	ASDA	DR CARD		43	90.00
06/06/2019	HANDY JACKS	DR CARD		44	15.00
06/06/2019	WILKO	DR CARD		45	8.50
06/06/2019	DENNY ENTER	DR CARD		46	380.80
10/06/2019	HMRC	ON LINE		47	319.66
18/06/2019	GARY WRIGHT REIMBURSEMENT	ON LINE		48	358.14
18/06/2019	SAB PRINT	DR CARD		49	6.50
19/06/2019	SIMPLY 4 BUSINESS	DR CARD		50	138.00
01/07/2019	W STEPHENS	ON LINE		51	80.00
01/07/2019	PAUL DALY SALARY	ON LINE		52	681.28
01/07/2019	HMRC	ON LINE		53	815.43
01/07/2019	W V MCWHITTE SALARY	ON LINE		54	970.00
01/07/2019	B AND Q	DR CARD		55	28.76
01/07/2019	B AND Q	DR CARD		56	86.23
02/07/2019	GOOGLE G SUITE	DR CARD		57	37.26
30/07/2019	W VMCWHITTE SALARY	ON LINE		58	970.00
30/07/2019	PAUL DALY SALARY	ON LINE		59	681.28
30/07/2019	HMRC	ON LINE		60	815.43

HALE PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS EXPENSES 2019/2020

DATE	DETAILS	CHQ NO	MINUTE NO	PYT NO	TOTAL
02/08/2019	HALTON BC ELECTION COSTS	ON LINE		61	3004.70
02/08/2019	GOOGLE SUITE	DR CARD		62	37.26
13/08/2019	ARGOS - IRON AND IRONING BOARD	DR CARD		63	53.98
13/08/2019	CURRYS - SUPER DRIVE	DR CARD		64	65.00
13/08/2019	CURRYS - LEAD	DR CARD		65	9.00
27/08/2019	VIKING PRINTER FOR PC	DR CARD		66	400.80
02/09/2019	JOHN HENRY INTERNAL AUDITOR	ON LINE		67	831.60
02/09/2019	W V MCW - AUGUST SALARY AND EXPENSES	ON LINE		68	970.00
02/09/2019	PAUL DALY	ON LINE		69	681.28
02/09/2019	HMRC	ON LINE		70	815.43
02/09/2019	GOOGLE SUITE	DR CARD		71	37.26
02/09/2019	DHF PRODUCTS ROAD SIGNAGE	DR CARD		72	159.84
03/09/2019	CHALC SUBSCRIPTION	ON LINE		73	559.08

BUDGET 2019 2020				
		POSITION	END YEAR	
BUDGET	INCOME	3RD SEPTEMBER	FORECAST	NEW BUDGET
6235	Balance b/f 1st April 2019	6235.15	6235	6235
43225	Precept	43225.00	43225	43225
	Bank Interest			
	V A T Recovered		2500	2500
17000	Grant Neighbourhood Plan		17000	17000
10857	Grant for VH Manager		10857	10857
	Other	199.00	199	199
77317	Total	49659.15	80016	80016
	LESS EXPENDITURE			
	Asset Purchase	587.17	600	600
5500	Well Being Committee	871.12	5500	5500
500	Guildswomen Committee		500	500
133	Liverpool Airport Committee		133	
1286	War Memorial Committee		1286	1286
500	Civil Service Committee		500	500
17000	Parish Plan Committee		17000	17000
1000	Legal Fees		1000	1000
1000	Village Hall Reserve		1000	
100	Deibrillator Reserve		100	
1500	Green Belt Reserve		1500	
5500	General Maintenance Reserve		5500	
2000	Contingency		2000	
3350	Grants	950.04	3350	3350
1000	Training	383.40	1000	1000
2000	Insurance		2700	2700
550	Web Site	45.02	550	550
1000	Newsletter		1000	1000
1500	Audit	693.00	1500	1500
750	Subscriptions	810.56	1100	1100
13000	Staffing include NI exc Pension	6789.06	15000	15000
325	Administration	285.08	700	700
1000	Allowances / Expenses	700.79	1600	1600
374	Payroll and Scribe		380	400
12438	Village Hall Support Costs	910.59	12438	6000
3004	Election Costs	3004.70	3000	3000
10500	VH Manager	4375.00	10500	10875
	Rent	455.00	1200	1200
	Vat	606.10	600	1200
86810	Total	21466.63	93237	77561
-9493	Balance in hand	28192.52	-13221	2455
	Bank Balance	28192.52		
	Net Balance	28192.52		

Hi Shiela/Luke

Regarding the Childe of Hale's walking stick. Could this issue be addressed at the next Parish council meeting.

1. The Freeman have written to Lord Grey. And agreed to be custodians of the stick and stated as per Parish council agreement that it would be insured to the sum of £2000.

And displayed in the village hall.

2. Please can the Freeman have written confirmation that the walking stick is covered on the Parish council insurance.

3. Once we have that can the PC agree to the stick being displayed in the village hall. As I suggested high on the wall between the main hall doors and the toilet entrance.

4. Also can the PC agree to the bronze bust of the Childe being moved to the same location.

5. I will site the stick and move the Bust free of charge.

6. The Freeman will provide a plaque regarding both. And a framed explanation of how we came to be in possession of the stick.

7. The walking stick is now mounted in a bespoke oak case with polycarbonate glass front. This was made by Terry Colquit.

Kind regards

Freeman Simon Griffiths