



HALE PARISH COUNCIL

OF THE HALTON BOROUGH IN
THE COUNTY OF CHESHIRE



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HALE PARISH COUNCIL
ACTING AS SOLE TRUSTEE OF HALE VILLAGE HALL
HELD ON MONDAY 12TH FEBRUARY 2024
AT 7.30pm IN HALE VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr McNamara, Cllr Trevaskis, Cllr Lewis, Cllr Roberts, Cllr Anderson, Cllr Williams Cllr Wright, Cllr Healey

In attendance: Mr. Brian Hargreaves (Proper Officer) & 18 Members of the Public

In the absence of the deputy Chairman of the Parish Council it was resolved to deal with Agenda items 1, 2 & 6 together.

Proposed by Cllr Roberts and seconded by Cllr McNamara

The Motion was approved

A motion was submitted and seconded by Cllrs Roberts, Trevaskis, Anderson, Wright, Williams and McNamara requesting the suspension of standing orders (under section 26a) and for the current Councillor to be relieved of his position as Vice Chairman of Hale parish Council

- i. To Elect a new Chairman of Hale Parish Council
- ii. To Elect a new Vice Chairman of Hale Parish Council & to rescind the resolution appointing Cllr Cleary as vice Chairman

The Motion was approved

1. **Election of Chairman** - Cllr Wright was Proposed for the position of Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee by Cllr Roberts and seconded by Cllr Trevaskis
2. **Election of Deputy Chairman** - Cllr Anderson was Proposed for the position of Deputy Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee by Cllr Roberts and seconded by Cllr McNamara

Both Motions were approved unanimously

6. **Election of Hale Village Hall Management Committee** - It was noted that the Village Hall Management Committee should ultimately consist of 6 members of the current Parish Council plus up to 4 Non-Council Members in accordance with clause 6.4 of the Trust Deed Document..

The following Members were proposed by Cllr Trevaskis and seconded by Cllr Healey to join the Management Committee

- i. **Cllr Roberts**
- ii. **Cllr Lewis**
- iii. **Cllr Wright**
- iv. **Cllr McNamara**
- v. **Cllr Williams**
- vi. **Cllr Anderson**
- vii. **Paul Turton**
- viii. **Noreen Thompson**
- ix. **Ann McNamara**
- x. **Karl Atkinson**

The Motion was approved unanimously

3. Apologies – No apologies were received by the Clerk

The Chair welcomed new Councillor's Cllr Joe McNamara and Cllr Gary Wright and wished them well in their work for Hale Parish Council.

4. Declarations of Interest – No declarations of interest were received

5. Public Participation – Alderman Sutton thanked local residents and those who helped the Freemen of Hale to set up the Christmas crib. He announced that plans were in process to revert back to the previous format for Christmas when a lantern parade will process to the Village Hall for a carol service and then back to the Wellington Hotel to meet Father Christmas. PCSO Steve Marnick has promised to assist in 2024 and it is hoped that a good number of volunteers will help to ensure the safety of all.

Cllr Anderson informed the meeting that the Heating for the Village Hall can now be addressed as the accounts can be submitted to the Charity Commission.

7. Minutes – The draft minutes of the Meeting of Hale Parish Council as Trustee of Hale Village Hall on 27th June 2023 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

The motion was proposed by Cllr Healey and Seconded by Cllr Anderson

The Motion was approved unanimously

8. Accounts –

- i. The end of year accounts for 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023 were received and approved as an accurate account.
Proposed by Cllr Roberts and seconded by Cllr McNamara

The Motion was approved unanimously

- ii. The Income & Expenditure account for Hale Village Hall for the period 1st January 2022 – 31st December 2022 were accepted as a

true and accurate account

Proposed by Cllr Roberts and seconded by Cllr McNamara

The Motion was approved unanimously

- iii. The Income & Expenditure account for Hale Village Hall for the period 1st January 2023 – 31st December 2023 were accepted as a true and accurate account

Proposed by Cllr Roberts and seconded by Cllr Wright

The Motion was approved unanimously

9. **Budget** – The proposed budget submitted by the Clerk was discussed comprehensively by the Council. The Chair felt that the impact of the support required for Hale Village Hall could be absorbed if the overall precept request was reduced and the retention of reserves is spread over two years. He said that various conversations he had had with other members of the Council came to a similar conclusion. He commented on the Yo-Yo type of accounting over previous years which has resulted in uncertainty and pressure being put on the Parish Council to become responsible for the short fall in funding going forwards. Cllr Lewis questioned the value of “meetings behind closed doors” and asked why only certain Councillors had been consulted about budget matters. Cllr Roberts explained that it was simply a way of him obtaining the thoughts of councillors and it was not cynical or counter-productive. Cllr Trevaskis noted that there had clearly been consultation between certain Councillors before the Parish Council meeting of 18th September when the Clerk was illegally suspended and said that if discussion are appropriate it isn’t a problem.
- A member of public enquired where the money from the Village Hall had gone as previous budgeting had appeared to have been working successfully. Cllr Trevaskis explained that the retained reserve had been used to fund the Hall over the past year as no allowance had been made for supporting the Village Hall in the previous year’s budget
- It was generally recognised that an increase in the Hall’s usage is required and that a strategic approach will be required once the Village hall management Committee meet shortly. The Chair stated that this situation appeared to have been looming for 2 or 3 years but that a clear focus could encourage extra funding and promotion of the Hall moving forward.
- The Chair asked the members of the public present to support the new Village Hall management committee and although the increased requirement for funding will not be popular stated that we are trying to progress and secure a less troubled future. Cllr Lewis asked whether an explanation of how the Precept is calculated and how the budget factors impact it. She suggested that a “Newsletter” should be produced to inform all residents in the Village. She noted that there are a large number of Village Residents who do not have access to the internet.
- A member of the Village Hall management Committee suggested that Hire rates and tariff’s for use of the Village Hall should be reviewed as they have remained static for two or three years.
- Another member of the public was keen to encourage the reinstatement of the Village Forum which has lapsed due to a series of derogatory comments received by one of the founder members. He felt that it gave a platform for residents to meet in a

relatively informal setting and to discuss any issues of concern or to promote any future village events.

The meeting was reminded by the current Lord Mayor Freeman Bill Webb that it is common practice for Councillors to be lobbied by local residents to address any issues they may feel is important.

Cllr Lewis noted that she is a member of a number of local groups and different organisations and as such is often asked for information or advice.

It was proposed by Cllr Trevaskis to request a contribution of £31,000 from the Parish Council Precept to fund the Village Hall's requirements. This was seconded by Cllr Roberts

In a named vote Cllrs McNamara, Williams, Anderson, Roberts, Trevaskis and Wright voted in favour of the proposal.

Cllr Healey voted against the proposal and Cllr Lewis abstained from voting

The Motion was approved

10. Gas Connection – It was agreed that the Clerk and Cllr Anderson will contact British Gas and seek to arrange for the supply to be re-instated as soon as possible.

11. Trust Deed update – It was agreed that the Clerk will contact Louise Beaton and get a quote for work to restore parity between the Trust Deed and the current standing Orders.

12. Date of Next Meeting – It was agreed that the next meeting of Hale Parish Council acting as Trustee of Hale Village Hall will take place on 8th April 2024 at 8pm.