



# HALE PARISH COUNCIL

OF THE HALTON BOROUGH IN  
THE COUNTY OF CHESHIRE



**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
OF HALE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN HALE VILLAGE HALL  
ON MONDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2022 AT 7.30pm**

Present: Cllr Cleary, Cllr Brown, Cllr McNamara, Cllr Healey, Cllr King, Cllr Anderson, Cllr Spargo, Cllr Williams, Cllr Mitchell

In attendance: The Clerk and Fifty Four members of public were also present

1. **Apologies** – Apologies were received by the Clerk from Cllr Trevaskis
2. **Declarations of Interest** – No declarations of interest were recorded by the Clerk
3. **Public Participation** – The Chair allowed the Lord Mayor to address the meeting. He said that he was very happy with the attendance at the recent Remembrance Service and that it was nice to see those Councillors who attended & laid wreaths. He notified residents that the Christmas tree will be installed on the memorial green at the beginning of December and that the Annual Christmas parade will take place on Sunday the 11<sup>th</sup> December. The crib will be in its usual position at the old Post Office this year where a Christmas Carol Service will take place.

A local resident asked that in preparation for the new Budget & Precept the Parish Council will take the current recession into consideration and be mindful of the extra financial pressure on residents when setting the Precept.

4. **Minutes** – Cllr McNamara proposed that the Minutes of Hale Parish Council Ordinary meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022 should be accepted as a true and accurate record. Cllr Healey seconded the motion

**The Motion was approved**

5. **Payments & Receipts** – Cllr Spargo proposed that all payments and receipts for the period 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022 are a true and accurate record. This was seconded by Cllr McNamara.

**The Motion was approved**

6. **Accounts** – Cllr McNamara proposed that the accounts presented for the period 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022 are a true and accurate record and Cllr Spargo seconded the proposal.

**The Motion was approved**

7. **Planning** – The Chair allowed Cllr Spargo to make a representation to the meeting in which he made it known that he was fully in favour of improvements in technology and in particular the upgrading of the existing broadband system within Hale Village. However he made it clear that this was not at any cost and that any upgrading would need to both fit in with the aims and aspirations of residents and also the considerations of the historic Village values and the protected qualities within the area. He made it clear that the original narrative from representatives of Factco indicated that the upgraded system would use the current infrastructure and would not need additional hardware to achieve the improved results. Cllr Spargo finished with a request that Factco re-consider the proposed plan and considered alternatives which do not rely upon the installation of 10/11mtr high wooden telegraph poles.

Managing Director of Factco, Lee Murphy addressed the meeting at this point and started by apologising for the lack of communication and consultation with residents of Hale and with the Parish Council. He agreed that as a company Factco should have done better with their interaction and said there were no excuses. He acknowledged that paper notices posted on existing lamp posts was not adequate and that they need to learn from this whole experience. Mr Murphy went on to say that as a community Hale Village should not have been informed that there would be no changes to the infrastructure and that there were a number of factors which have to be taken into account such as the condition of the existing underground ducting. He said that ideally they would prefer to use the existing routing but that wooden poles are their preferred alternative in the event of the ducting being irreparable. Mr Murphy explained that the existing copper network will be phased out in a few years and that any cabling which can be put underground will be put under ground. Two current Councillors who have building experience questioned Mr Murphy's rationale regarding the replacement of damaged ducting in favour of wooden poles and questioned why duct replacement was not the accepted solution. They suggested that the cost implications to the contractor might be a contributing factor. Mr Murphy stated that although cost consideration was important "In a nutshell if the duct is ok to use we will use it if not the cheapest alternative will be a wooden telegraph pole." A local resident asked whether a survey had been undertaken to establish the condition of existing ducting and what portion of the existing structure could still be used. Mr Murphy did not have that information available but said he would find out and let the Clerk know. It was agreed that some areas of Hale Village do struggle with internet access and that a more reliable system should be available. It was also noted that many people currently work from home but that other options offered by BT are currently available even though it may only have an existing short term lifespan. Cllr Cleary asked Mr Murphy about the positioning of new wooden poles and the logic behind their locations. He went on to suggest that the proposition was not in keeping with technology deemed acceptable in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Another resident suggested that when he moved to the Village in 1973 over ground installations such as TV ariel's and Satellite dishes were against the law and wondered whether there are any remaining restrictions in force currently.

Mr Murphy concluded by informing the meeting that he would check the current status of the work in progress and report back to the Clerk. He said that Planning permission had been granted by Halton BC and he listened to a number of impassioned requests by different residents asking him to try to find alternatives to the installation of wooden poles. He agreed to review matters in due course.

A proposal to submit an official objection to the planning application Ref 22/00563/TEL recently submitted by Factco using the additional weeks grace afforded to the Clerk by Halton Borough Council planning dept. was made by Cllr Mitchell and seconded by Cllr Cleary

**The Motion was approved**

- 8. Village Forum** – It was agreed that a local resident will supply the Clerk with a model scope & terms of reference to use for this group. It was noted that this has to be a largely informal body which encourages village involvement and collaboration with the Parish Council.

It was agreed that a meeting should be planned for January 9<sup>th</sup> 2023

Proposed by Cllr Mitchell and seconded by Cllr Cleary

**The Motion was approved**

- 9. King's Coronation** – As the Coronation of King Charles III is planned for Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2023 it was agreed that the Village Forum might use this as their first discussion topic and put forward any proposals or ideas to help celebrate the event on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May or on the bank holiday Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May as appropriate.

Proposed by Cllr Mitchell & Seconded by Cllr Brown

- 10. St Mary's Graveyard** – It was agreed that a contribution of £700 for the calendar year can be paid to St Mary's Church to assist with funding the upkeep of the Graveyards and surrounding church grounds. It is hoped that Halebank Parish Council can match this contribution and the Clerk will contact Halebank for their consideration.

It was agreed that a scope of works be obtained from the Church to establish exactly what specific work the joint contribution will fund

Proposed by Cllr Mitchell and seconded by Cllr Brown

In a named vote Cllrs Mitchell, Cleary, Brown, King, Spargo, Anderson, Healey were in favour. Cllrs McNamara and Williams were against the motion

**The Motion was approved**

- 11. Payroll Contract** – It was resolved to approve the new contract for DM Payroll Services

Proposed by Cllr Spargo and Seconded by Cllr King

**The Motion was approved**

- 12. Queens Canopy** – It was agreed to defer this item for discussion at the Village Form when a choice of trees and a possible site for the installation can be agreed upon.

Proposed by Cllr Spargo and Seconded by Cllr McNamara

**The Motion was approved**

- 13. Benches** – Pending a definitive approval from Halton Borough Council it was agreed that the four new benches will be installed in the following positions throughout the village.

- i. Church Road outside St Mary's Church Nr the Lych gates.
- ii. 2 Benches on the kerbside of the Memorial Green
- iii. At the Junction of High Street and Ramsbrook Lane on the grass verge adjacent to Arran Close.

The Lord Mayor volunteered to help with the installation and fixing of the benches which will be delivered on Tuesday 22nd November to the Village Hall. Cllr McNamara thanked Cllr Wharton for his assistance in having the areas chosen by the Council surveyed in preparation for a formal decision.

- 14. Personnel Committee Terms of Reference** – It was resolved to approve the addition to the responsibilities of the Personnel Committee Terms of Reference as follows:-

- **To ensure that appraisals are undertaken for all employees at least annually, based upon job description**

Proposed by Cllr McNamara and seconded by Cllr Spargo

**The Motion was approved**

- 15. Annual Civic Service** – It was agreed that the Clerk should contact Rev Harvey to propose a date in early October 2023 for the Annual Civic Service. It was agreed that a return to its former date at the beginning of October each year is appropriate following the change during Covid-19 restrictions. It was agreed that the current format including an afternoon service and afternoon tea is fitting.

Proposed by Cllr Mitchell and seconded by Cllr Williams

**The Motion was approved**

- 16. Parish Council Meeting Dates**

It was confirmed that the arrangements made in 12<sup>th</sup> May's Parish Council meeting are applicable as organised.

**The Chair closed the Meeting at 9.45pm**