



HALE PARISH COUNCIL

Of the Halton Borough in the County of Cheshire



**MINUTES OF HALE PARISH COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING
HELD at 7:30pm ON MONDAY 21 JANUARY 2019 IN HALE VILLAGE HALL**

Opened at 7.30pm

Part 1

Members Present

Cllr L Trevaskis (Chair), Cllr C Williams, Cllr G Wright, Cllr P Platt, Cllr B Cleary, Cllr P Healey, Cllr Spargo, Cllr Hunter

Also present:

Clerk to the Council C Wyna, PCSO Marnick
Public 22 members of public

1. **Apologies** – Cllr Kierman

2. **Declarations of interest** – There were no declarations of interest

3. **Hale Police Report** – The report from PCSO Marnick was noted with core issues raised on speeding, HGVs and motorbikes

10. **Brought forward – Childe of Hale Walking Stick**

a) **Council to consider and approve whether or not to add the walking stick to the Council's insurance and display it within the Village Hall**

Verbal report from Simon Griffiths was received and noted. The item was deferred pending the cost of valuation for insurance which Simon is to obtain.

4. **To confirm and sign as a true record the minutes of the council meeting held on 19 November 2018**
RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parish Meeting of 19 November 2018 be accepted subject to a minor change at item 10a – ALL AGREED.

5. **To confirm and sign as a true record the minutes of the extra-ordinary council meeting held on 2 November 2018**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the extra-ordinary Parish Meeting of 2 November 2018 be accepted – ALL AGREED.

6. **Financial Report**

a) **Receipts** – No payments received - Noted

b) **Payments approved - Agreed**

- C.Wyna – Salary	£290.17	BACS
- HMRC – Tax	£66.40	BACS
- William Stephens – Maintenance	£60.00	BACS

c) **Balance of account** - £13,314.84 - Noted

7. **Budget and Precept**

a. **To consider and approve budget recommendations of Resource Executive Committee for 2019/20**

Cllr Trevaskis updated those present on the report presented by this committee. Cllr Cleary questioned the rationale to the request of the Wellbeing Committee of £7000 this year to last. Cllr Trevaskis responded that whilst in the absence of the Chair it wouldn't be appropriate to fully comment but principally the budget was formed following consultation with residents last year – feedback forms were made available for those present to view.

It was noted that disappointingly no budget had been presented by the Civic Service Committee.

Cllr Platt questioned the value of £3000 towards adult learning stating that adults should contribute and pay for this whereas children are different as events had been successful so far should remain as free. He stated that £2500 for a picnic in the park event was excessive. Cllr Hunter commented that children events held for which attendees out of the village attend should pay a donation. Cllr Platt proposed reduction in this budget to £5500 this was seconded by Cllr Spargo. Taken to the vote 3 Cllrs voted FOR with 5 Cllrs voting AGAINST – proposal CARRIED.

Training budget – Cllr Platt proposed a reduction from £2000 to £1000 with more inhouse training being delivered. This was proposed by Cllr Platt and seconded by Cllr Cleary. Taken to the vote 5 Cllr FOR with 3 Cllrs AGAINST – proposal CARRIED.

Staffing budget – Cllr Cleary questioned the rationale of the increase in hours and other contractual details of the Clerk. The Clerk at this point expressed concern that Employment matters could not be discussed in a public forum and were for Part 2 only. Cllr Cleary continued to discuss confidential matters despite the Clerks advice. Clerk advised the Chair that this was in breach as Cllr Cleary would not take onboard the advice offered. Cllr Cleary proposed an overall reduction in the staffing budget to £6100 which was seconded by Cllr Wright. The Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer to the Council advised that such as reduction would see the council not meeting its agreed contractual pay obligations. Despite the advice of the Clerk this was taken to the vote with 4 Cllrs voting FOR (Cllr Cleary, Cllr Healey, Cllr Hunter and Cllr Platt) and 3 Cllrs AGAINST (Cllr Trevaskis, Cllr Williams and Cllr Spargo), 1 ABSTAINED (Cllr Wright) – proposal CARRIED.

Village hall – Cllr Spargo updated those present on the proposed budget for the village hall. Cllr Wright suggested that certain items which were put in the draft budget could be removed e.g. kitchen equipment, car park, cutlery and proposed the reduction of the village hall budget by £7947.

Caretakers – Cllr Platt proposed that the village hall manager appointment be made as soon as possible and reduce the budget to £6387. In appointing the manager they could also take on the additional duties of the caretaker and as such the council could make two staff redundant. Clerk advised that this was against employment law and could not be done. The proposal was taken forward by Cllr Platt and seconded by Cllr Cleary. This was taken to the vote with 5 Cllrs voting FOR (Cllr Cleary, Cllr Hunter, Cllr Healey, Cllr Wright, Cllr Platt) and 3 Cllrs AGAINST (Cllr Trevaskis, Cllr Williams, Cllr Spargo) – proposal CARRIED.

Contingency budget – Cllr Platt proposed to reduce this to £1000 which could include adhoc grass cutting on a 'sunny day'. This was seconded by Cllr Cleary. Taken to the vote 4 Cllrs FOR and 4 Cllrs AGAINST, 1 ABSTAINED – Chair cast overriding vote to KEEP original budget – proposal REJECTED.

b) To consider and approve precept recommendations of Resource Executive Committee for 2019/20

Cllr Cleary proposed a reduction in the precept to £26250 the same as 2017/18, this was seconded by Cllr Healey. Taken to the vote with 2 Cllrs FOR (Cllr Cleary, Cllr Healey) and 4 Cllrs AGAINST, 2 Cllrs ABSTAINED (Cllr Hunter, Cllr Platt) – proposal REJECTED.

Cllr Wright proposed that the increase in the budget be in line with inflation or same as Halton BC. Cllr Trevaskis provided an overview of the revenue costs. In considering the proposal made this would increase the precept to £45386.25 which was proposed by Cllr Wright and seconded by Cllr Williams. Taken to the vote 3 Cllrs FOR (Cllr Trevaskis, Cllr Williams, Cllr Wright) and 5 Cllrs AGAINST (Cllr Spargo, Cllr Platt, Cllr Hunter, Cllr Healey, Cllr Cleary) – proposal REJECTED.

Cllr Platt proposed to retain the precept value as 2018/19 £43225 which was seconded by Cllr Spargo. Taken to the vote 3 Cllrs FOR with 2 Cllrs AGAINST, 3 ABSTAINED – proposal CARRIED. The Chair advised that the precept v's proposed budget left a deficit value of approx. £20000 which would have to be raised via grant funding from Cllrs or sub-committees would have to reevaluate their proposed budgets for further agreement at a future council meeting.

8. 2019 Meeting Dates

a. To approve schedule of 2019 meeting dates for Hale Parish Council

Cllr Cleary, Cllr Hunter and Cllr Wright objected to a meeting schedule being implemented as they had not agreed to this. The Clerk advised that they had been requested since October to put a schedule of meetings in place for 2019. The public wished for this item to be on the agenda and Committees can meet to change dates. The schedule was approved.

9. St Mary's Church

a. To consider and agree whether the parish council will take ownership of maintenance for St Mary's Churchyard

Cllr Trevaskis provided an overview of the request to take over maintenance of the Churchyard. Cllr Cleary questioned whether residents from Halebank should also contribute prior to making contact with Halton BC to taking ownership. Deferred pending the outcome of this decision.

11 To discuss and note the following points as requested by Cllr Platt:

a) Dog fouling on public rights of way

Noted the issues of fouling within the village and that it had increased but nothing being done. Suggested putting up a polite notice at park entrance as a pilot and monitor impact.

b) Speed enforcement through the village

Dealt with at PCSO – item 3

c) Hale PC newsletter

Questioned why this hadn't been distributed. Chair sought response from Clerk with that being that there hadn't been enough time in contracted hours to achieve and distribute.

12 Hale Village Hall

a) To consider and approve terms of the lease

Item deferred with approval offline.

13 Boundary Commission

a) To consider and agree for the Clerk to write and object to the recommendations from the Boundary Commission

Agreed

14 Buy a Brick

a) To consider and agree costs of £445 for full colour printing for Buy a Brick wall

Proofs circulated and cost agreed by those present.

15 Training

a) To consider and agree attendees/cost for identified training courses

Clerk to circulate dates to those who missed finance training in December. Agreed date for CHALC Good Cllr training is 14 March 2019

16 Committee Reports

a) To consider and agree report of the village hall committee

The report of the village hall was noted. Written report to be presented for Council for future meetings.

b) To note verbal update from Cllr Spargo on village hall developments

Verbal update was noted. Noted also that the recruitment of manager was on hold pending legal. Once lease agreed this could then proceed pending an outcome from the lottery. proceeding.

c) To consider and approve the following payments for the village hall

The following payments of the village hall were approved;

- M.Platt – Salary	£501.67	BACS
- W.Stephens – Hale VH maintenance	£55.00	BACS

17. Planning

a) 19/00002/FUL – No comments

b) 19/00005/FUL – No comments

18. Correspondence

a) No correspondence for discussion.

19. Urgent items

a) There were no urgent items for discussion.

20. Public forum

a) Bernie Mitchell requested to know how many children attend activities in the village and to advise that correspondence from the Chair had been received that she was not happy with.

b) Matters raised about the hall and the waivering of fees for chosen hirers.

c) Raised that there are opportunities to increase hall use for dance clubs and have a variance of rates when hall is empty or if music is used due to licence.

d) Opportunities to explore for adult training (Speke training) and language providers. Also, a charities buying group which can support negotiation of costs. Village hall committee to investigate.

e) Commented on the lack of harmony in the committee which would create a loss of trust within the community – there appears to be a disconnect between the parish council and its residents.

21. Next meeting

a) No items raised for the next agenda.

b) Date and time of next meeting being Monday 18 February 2019 at 7:30pm - AGREED

Meeting closed at 10:35pm.

22. Exclusion of Public and Press

AGREED that due to the nature of discussion for part 2 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting.

Part 2

Items of a "confidential or other special nature" during which it is likely that the meeting will not be open to the public and press as there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The matter of the Clerks package as agreed in a part 2 extra-ordinary meeting was raised for discussion and Cllr Cleary again questioned about the value for money and stated that the clerk had 'failed to evidence' the increase in hours. Cllr Trevaskis stated that this had been resolved by those present at the meeting held on 2 November and as such was resolved with Cllr Cleary stating that no contract was in place therefore it was non-binding.

The Clerk had presented earlier in the meeting his resignation to the Chair sighting that he could not work for an employer that endorses changes which are clearly in breach of its statutory and contractual obligations and furthermore go against its standing orders and code of conduct. The Clerk also sighted matters of behaviour as a concern in which Cllr Cleary responded in a heated manner towards to the Clerk. Cllr Cleary stated that his volunteer hours were worth ten times the hours of the Clerk and that he would not be bullied. Cllr Cleary stated that in his profession if he came across employees who took advantage of their employers he would happily "take them outside" himself to resolve a dispute.

The Clerk departed the meeting.

The Council then unanimously approved to advertise the Clerk's vacancy at 10 hours per week, at £14.50 per hour.

Signed as a true record


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Councillor I. Trevaskis
Chairman
21 January 2019