

# HALSALL PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of Halsall Parish Council held on  
Wednesday 13th March 2024 at 7.30 p.m. at Memorial Hall, Halsall Road, Halsall**

**PRESENT:** Cllr. M Lyons (Vice Chair), Cllr. K Wright, Cllr. R Brookfield, Cllr. N McCarthy-Thomason, Cllr. J Ferguson, Cllr. M Schofield, Cllr. J Ridley, Cllr. B Roberts and Cllr. A Timon, C Pyne (Clerk), and no visitors.

**1. Introductions and Apologies for absence**

Cllr. E Wright (Chair) apology accepted.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr. Ridley, non-pecuniary interest in item 8 Planning Permission 20 Gregory Lane.

**3. Open Forum for 15 minutes for matters raised by members of the public**

**3.1 West Lancs Borough Councillors**

No report.

**3.2 Open Forum**

No Questions

**4. To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14th February 2024 as a correct record.**

The minutes were **Agreed** and signed.

**5. Discuss and agree on any matters arising from Parish Clerk's Report**

Cllr. Timon reported that none of the 3 companies responded to a request for a quotation for cleaning the War Memorial. Cllr. McCarthy-Thomason has contacts with a company and agreed to chase this up with that company.

Cllr. McCarthy-Thomason will speak to Cllr. O'Toole (LCC) about pedestrian footpaths in Shirdley Hill.

Planning permission for the football container has been approved.

The PPL/PRS Music Licence quotation was higher than expected but it was **Agreed** to purchase it at a cost of £354.96 + VAT. This will be reviewed annually.

**6. To receive reports from Representatives to outside Bodies and discuss and agree on any actions arising;**

**6.1 Lancashire Association of Local Councils (LALC)**

- Cllrs. R Brookfield, J Ridley, E Wright

No recent meetings.

## **6.2 Ormskirk School**

**- Cllr. A Timon**

Next meeting is later in March.

## **6.3 Shirdley Hill Community Association**

**- Cllr. McCarthy-Thomason**

The building work at St Aidan's Hall was completed today ; external brickwork repairs, new cupboard for storage of chairs and an extractor fan for the oven.

Expenditure of £77 was **Agreed** for decorating materials, to be used by volunteers to paint new cupboards and redecorate the toilets.

Expenditure of £29 was **Agreed** for a vegetable peeler to support the fortnightly luncheon club.

## **7. To receive reports from Working Groups and agree upon any actions arising;**

### **7.1 Finance - Cllrs. E Wright, A Timon, M Schofield and K Wright**

Nothing to report.

### **7.2 Human Resources – Cllrs. A Timon, K Wright, M Lyons, M Schofield**

See Item 12 on appointment of a new Cleaner.

### **7.3 Traffic and Road Safety – Cllrs. N McCarthy-Thomason, R Brookfield, B Roberts and M Schofield**

Cllr. McCarthy-Thomason noted construction lorries using Heathey Lane and contacted the Site Manager. New drivers/company advised to use the correct route.

Lots of dissatisfaction over potholes, a serious problem for LCC Highways, keep pressing Cllr. O'Toole (LCC) for funding and priority to get local ones fixed.

School Crossing patrol is still being advertised.

More children at the school than before, more crossing the road, more traffic on the road.

There have been serious incidents before, but these are now out of statistical reporting periods, so the location has no perceived priority for a crossing.

### **7.4 Flooding – Cllrs. E Wright and A Timon**

Evidence everywhere of exceptional wet weather this season, many fields are flooded or too soft to work. No reports of any flood damage to properties.

### **7.5 Healthy Halsall – Cllrs. M Schofield, J Ridley, M Lyons, B Roberts**

Nothing to report, See item 22.

### **7.6 Planning & Development – Cllrs. M Schofield and B Roberts**

Cllrs. are concerned about reports from residents about delays and inaccuracies in the planning process. Cllr. Ridley to draft a letter for circulation. Clerk informed the meeting that he had attended a training session with the WLBC Planning department. The department has vacancies, some new staff and some agency workers. The new manager is optimistic that performance and efficiency is improving and will continue to do so.

### **7.7 Environment & Biodiversity Working Group - Cllrs. M Lyons and J Ferguson**

Some voluntary work on footpaths was completed in Autumn at no cost. The £500 budget will be carried forward to next year. Cllr. Schofield will speak to some farmers as the money

can be spent on improving signposts and field markers to ensure walkers stay on the footpaths.

## 8. Planning Applications

No comments were raised on ;

2023/0491/FUL, 20 Gregory Lane, variation in condition 6 Parking

The Council submitted a neutral comment on  
2024/0009/PNP, Gorse Hill Farm, new agricultural track  
which WLBC determined has to be resubmitted as a Full Planning application.

### 8.2 To Note Recent Planning Decisions - all granted

2024/0008/FUL, Gesterfield Barn, Halsall Road, removal conditions 6 & 12

2023/1092/FUL, Renacres Hall Farm, demolition & new steel framed building

2023/1152/FUL, Sports Pavilion, Halsall Road, Football Container

Withdrawn - 2024/0003/TCA, White Lodge, The Runell, tree pruning

## 9 Finance

a) The Schedule of Payments was **Agreed**. Changes included moving payment of salaries and HMRC tax to direct debit and paying monthly ground maintenance by direct debit.

b) Financial Statement for February was **Agreed** and Bank Reconciliation was signed.

c) Cllr. Timon reported independently that the bank balances quoted in the accounts were correct.

d) It was **Agreed** to appoint Jo O'Donoghue from IA-ODONOGHUE.COM as our internal Auditor for 2023-2024 as per the Letter of Engagement at a cost of £250.

e) It was **Agreed** to pay for an annual service of St Aidan's Central Heating system at a cost of £65.

f) It was **Agreed** to pay HMRC Employer's NI for 2023/2024 at a cost of £128.03

g) It was **Agreed** to pay the £25 Entry fees for Lancashire Best Kept Village competition for Shirdley Hill and Halsall ( £50 in total) .

## 10. To Consider Hire Agreement Conditions and Hire Charges for St Aidan's Hall

The proposed Hire Agreement document with comments was **Agreed**. Clerk to publish the final version.

## 11. To defer approval of a new version of Financial Regulations

Started the annual review of Financial Regulations at January meeting but NALC have since advised that a new version will be published in late March 2024 , so we will wait to adopt this latest version.

## 12. To Agree arrangements for an employed Cleaner

The interview panel recommended Louise Fessey for the position of Cleaner, start date 1st April 2024 and this was **Agreed**. Clerk to contact Ms Fessey and the second candidate who was not successful on this occasion. Contract for the cleaner's post will be developed by the HR group and an induction process will need to be developed.

**13. To Consider an upgrade to St Aidan's CCTV at a cost of £ REDACTED**

The submitted quotes and options were discussed but no decision was reached. Still awaiting one quote from the third company. Defer to the next meeting for discussion of further options.

**14. A review of the Parish Plan**

Completed. No comments made.

**15. To appoint a representative to St Cuthbert's Church Committee**

Three councillors volunteered for the role. Cllr. Ridley was appointed by voting. The Council believes it would be useful to have a deputy representative so that we have a representative at every meeting. Clerk to write to Rev Salt. If agreed, Cllr. Schofield will be the deputy representative. Feedback reports to be provided under Agenda item 6.

**16. Annual Pre-Audit Review of Key Documents**

A Revised version of Standing Orders was adopted in Nov 2023. No further changes needed.

Waiting for a new version of Financial Regulations to be published by NALC in late March 2024.

Revisions to the Asset Register for expenditure in 2023-24 were considered and **Agreed**.

The Clerk has conducted a review of the Risk Register as part of the CiLCA training and the suggested edits were **Agreed**.

**17. To consider S19 Funding for an upgrade to Memorial Hall Fire Alarm system.**

Withdrawn. The specifications and quote are not ready.

**18. To consider S19 Funding of £335 to Halsall Trust for repairs to the Football pitch and further exploration of drainage problems.**

It was **Agreed** to fund £335 cost of immediate repairs to the drainage of the football field. And it was agreed in principle to support the cost of further investigations into drainage problems.

**19. To Consider S137 Grant request of £500 from Halsall Proud & Tidy for Information Board**  
**Agreed.**

**20. An Update on Learning Tree Nursery**

Cllr. Schofield gave an update on the Nursery. They have to change locations, and are finding it difficult to recruit staff, as a consequence, the provision of an independent nursery could be at risk.

The Council will offer whatever support it can. It cannot currently provide any financial support to a business although this may change in 2024/25. There are a number of different options available for supporting a community service. Advice can be sought from the Plunkett Charity.

**21. Proposed Parish Meeting on 20th March**

This has been on the Council’s public schedule of meetings since the start of 2024. It was **Agreed** to confirm the meeting. Having the meeting at the traditional time of May may not be feasible this year due to the local council elections. We can organise the meeting at any time after the 1st March and before 1st June, so we will try an earlier meeting this year.

**22. Reply from School Governors**

The Council noted the reply received via the Headmaster. There are some positive points which will be followed up after receipt of a formal reply.

**23. Notice of Information-Only Items**

Councillors can review the changes to the Documents and Information section of the Council website. New layouts for Minutes, Agendas, Finance, Transparency and Halsall News. Sorted entries by dates, duplicates removed. 2024 is the current year, Archived documents for previous years.

There was discussion about the rumours circulating about a proposed Glamping site. Unofficial notices have been posted in the Shirdley Hill area.

No planning application has been submitted, if one is published then the Council will consider commenting.

There is no evidence of any start of development work. Parties have been made aware of the official process for raising development complaints with WLBC.

There is no action for the Parish Council to take.

**24. Date and time of next meeting:**

Parish Meeting on 20th March, Memorial Hall, 7:30pm

2nd Wednesday Council Meeting, 10th April 2024 at 7.30 pm St Aidan’s Hall

Meeting finished at 9.15 pm.