

HALSALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Halsall Parish Council meeting held on
Wednesday 14th May 2025 at 7:30 pm at St Aidan's Hall, Renacres Lane.

Present: Cllr M. Lyons (Chair), Cllr E. Wright (Vice Chair), Cllr N. McCarthy-Thomason, Cllr J. Ferguson, Cllr P. Barker, Cllr D. Adams, Cllr R. Brookfield, and C. Pyne (Clerk) & C. Smith (Asst Clerk), 2 members of the public.

1. **Introductions and Apologies for Absence**
Apologies received from Cllr B. Roberts and Cllr K. Wright
2. **Declarations of Interest**
None.
3. **Appointments and Acceptance of Office**
 - 3.1 **Appointment of Chair**
Cllr Lyons agreed to stand for Chair again. No other applicants. Cllr Lyons application was proposed, seconded and agreed.
Acceptance of Office was signed.
 - 3.2 **Appointment of Vice Chair**
Cllr E. Wright declined to stand again. Cllr McCarthy-Thomason was proposed, seconded and agreed.
Acceptance of Office was signed.
4. **Open Forum**
 - 4.1 **West Lancs Borough Councillors**
None
 - 4.2 **Open Public Forum**
Newly elected LCC Councillor Leon Graham had already introduced himself at the Annual Parish Meeting earlier in the evening. He later asked to be briefed on the New Cut Lane traffic problems as these had been mentioned in his canvassing.
5. **Appointments of Representatives to Outside Bodies**
 - a) **Ormskirk Foundation Trust**
currently Cllr D. Adams. Agreed
 - b) **Lancashire Association of Local Councils & NALC**
currently Cllrs R. Brookfield & M. Lyons. Agreed.
 - c) **Shirdley Hill Community Association**
currently Cllrs N. McCarthy-Thomason & J. Ferguson. Agreed

Signed Chair Date

5.2 Appointments to Committees and Working Groups

a) Finance

currently Cllrs M. Lyons, E. Wright, K. Wright, & D. Adams (4 signatures), Agreed.

b) HR

currently Cllrs K. Wright, M. Lyons, & P. Barker. Agreed.

c) Transport & Road Safety

Cllrs N. McCarthy-Thomason, R. Brookfield, & B. Roberts. Agreed.

d) Flooding

currently Cllrs E. Wright & R. Brookfield.

Cllr D Adams asked to be involved in any matters concerning Flooding. Agreed.

e) Healthy Halsall

currently Cllrs. M Lyons & B Roberts. Agreed.

g) Environment and Biodiversity WG

currently Cllrs M. Lyons, J Ferguson & Mr J. Ferguson. Agreed.

6. Confirm other S.O. Items Required at an Annual General Meeting (Standing Orders items 5 M i to xxi)

6.0 To confirm and sign the [Minutes of the meeting held on 9th April](#)

Minutes were proposed and seconded and Agreed.

6.1 Review of [Standing Orders](#) & [Financial Regulations](#)

SO and FR have both been amended within the last 3 months . No further changes were suggested. Agreed.

6.2 Review of [Asset Register 2025](#)

The advice to add the Trust's assets, with zero value was explained, otherwise no change to the value of assets.

6.3 Review of [Insurance Cover](#)

Council & Trust have joint £10M of Employer's Liability and Public Liability insurance until 30/9/2025 as part of a 3-year (until 30/9/2027) with Clear Councils (Aviva) so the policy will be automatically renewed this year, hopefully at no extra cost due to the storm damage claim.

6.4 Review of Subscriptions (LALC & NALC)

The Council paid £445.17 in subscriptions to LALC & NALC in 2024/25.

£470 has been allocated in the 2025/26 budget.

Membership is essential to obtain LALC & NALC copyright document templates

6.5 [Review of Council Policies](#) (all on Website)

Complaints Policy

Data Protection Policy

Halsall News Policy

Health & Safety Policy

Reserves Policy

Risk Management Policy
All agreed, no changes suggested.

New IT Policy as required for Internal Audit for 2025/26

New policy agreed.

6.6 Review of S137 Grants

The Council awarded a total of £3,365 in S137 Grants and £0 in S19 Grants. and £7,754 was allocated via S19 from WLBC CIL funds.

The budget for the S137 and S19 grants for 2025/6 is £4500

6.7 To agree Time and Place of Ordinary Meetings of the Council for 2025/26

Agreed. Website and noticeboards to be updated.

7. Discuss and agree on any matters arising from Parish Clerk's Report
Cost Variations

7.1 Re March Item 6.3(b). Hanging baskets cost £310, not £270 due to the moss needing to be replaced.

7.2 Re April Item 13. Orders placed for Locked Defib Cabinets (Insurance requirement to be locked) 2 x £348.15 + VAT and renewal of pads and batteries 2 x £89 from Northwest Ambulance. All items received by 18th May, waiting for installation.

7.3 Re Nov Item 15. Fewer applicants, so fewer prizes for VE Day celebration poster competition so £600 provisional budget reduced to £380 in prizes. Refund SHCA for awarding cash prizes. Agreed, payment made.

s144 LGA 1972 a local authority may encourage persons by advertisement or otherwise, to visit the area for recreation.

Other items

7.4 Hive Unit at St Aidan's hall requires attention, not controlling the boiler. Hive now back in operation but only available on 2 rather than 3 phones.

7.5 Refund SHCA £96 cost to replace the Sensory Garden information board on Shirdley Hill Village Green.
Agreed. Any non-urgent expenditure should be approved at a Council meeting before being ordered.

s144 LGA 1972 a local authority may encourage persons by advertisement or otherwise, to visit the area for recreation.

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

8.1 Lancashire Association of Local Councils (LALC)

No meetings.

8.2 Ormskirk Foundation Trust

Cllr Adams has been briefed by the Clerk of OFT. Next meeting is in June.

8.3 Shirdley Hill Community Association

Signed Chair Date

Cllr McCarthy-Thompson informed the meeting that the VE Day event on Sunday 4th May went very well. There was a Lighting the Beacon event on Thursday 8th May led by Rev. Salt. The SHCA are continuing to organise the fortnightly Luncheon Club, there is a Picnic in the Park event on last Sunday of the month and Shirdley Hill Olympics will be back on 19th July.

The SHCA currently has assets of approx. £3.500.

9. To receive reports from Working Groups and agree any actions arising;

9.1 Finance

No reports.

9.2 Human Resources

Adverts for Co-option of a new councillor have been placed in noticeboards, Halsall News and Facebook. Closing Date 31st May. June 11th Selection meeting.

9.3 Traffic and Road Safety

[Collisions on New Cut Lane](#)

2nd attempt at FOI request to Lancashire Constabulary [for information on speeding on New Cut Lane](#) was again rejected on grounds of prevention and detection of crime. Try appealing to the Information Commissioner. (Item 7.3 February).

LCC Cllr Leon Graham asked for copies of this correspondence. He would like to investigate a reduction to 40 mph for this road.

Wrote to Peter Bell, Highways Regulation manager on 14th April, regarding parking chaos at school times, acknowledged but no response, so far (20 working days).

9.4 Flooding

No reports.

9.5 Healthy Halsall

No reports.

9.6 Environment & Biodiversity Working Group

See Item 13.

10. [Planning Applications](#)

10.1 Applications

2025/0318/FUL Northmoor Lane, new building, Brain Injury Centre
2025/0349/FUL 31 Renacres Lane, new bungalow at rear

10.2 Any planning applications published on day of the meeting

None.

The Clerk will write to Planning dept regarding concerns from residents that Enforcement enquiries have not been responded to.

Signed Chair Date

- 10.3 To Note Recent Planning Decisions**
 2025/0075/FUL 3 Halsall Farm Grove, extension of garden, Approved
 T/2025/0020/TCA Gesterfield Barn, Halsall Road, Remove Oak Tree. Approved
 2025/0176/FUL, 165 Carr Moss Lane, rear extension, Approved
 2025/0084/LDP, 22 Elm Park Drive, garage to habitable room Permitted
- 10.4 Malt Kiln Barn Planning Appeal (2025/0012/)**
 No further comments.
- 11 Finance**
- 11.1 To approve the [Schedule of Payments for May](#)**
 Agreed.
- 11.2 To review the [Spend to Date and Budget Allocations](#)**
 Agreed. Some variations noted against budget allocations, but these were purchases allocated to Reserves and CIL, not included in the budget.
- 11.3 To approve the [Bank Reconciliation](#)**
 Agreed.
- 11.4 Independent Review of Bank Balances**
 Confirmed by Cllr E Wright.
- 11.5 To note the VAT126 Claim for 2024/25 of £3291.35**
 Noted. Completed for 2024/5
- 12. 2024-25 Internal and External Audits**
- 12.1 To accept the [report of the Internal Auditor](#)**
 Agreed.
- 12.2 To consider an [Action Plan for Auditor's Recommendations](#)**
 4 minor points raised, 2 already resolved.
- 12.3 To appoint [J. O'Donoghue as Auditor for 2025/6](#)**
 Agreed appointment letter.
- 12.4 To approve payment of [Internal Audit at a cost of £250](#)**
 Agreed.
- 12.5 To approve the submission of External Auditor's Reports**
- a) **[Section 1 AGAR Report](#)**
 Clerk identified the process of the RFO creating the accounts and processes, Council appointing an internal auditor to check them, Council agreeing the accounts to be sent to External Auditor.
 - b) **[Section 2 AGAR Report](#)**
 - c) **[Annual Internal Audit Report \(AIAR\) to External Auditor](#)**
 - d) **[Bank Reconciliation Report](#)**
 - e) **[Notice of Public Rights from 3rd June to 14th July 2025](#)**

Signed Chair Date

f) [Variances Report](#)

All External Auditor reports agreed as true account.

13. **To consider the [SLCC Consultancy proposal](#) for Woodland project at a cost of £812.50**

Agreed. The consultancy rate is reasonable. This is a unique change for the Council and Trust, and we should seek external professional advice.

s142 LGA 1972 for the purpose of benefit, improvement or development of their area, a parish council may acquire by agreement any land.

14. **To provide .GOV.UK email addresses for Parish Councillors**
(new external audit requirements for 2025/26).

Defer to the next meeting when there is more time for discussion.

15. **With reference to proposed IT Policy, the Council should purchase a laptop for the Clerk at a cost of approx. £245 from Stone Computers.**

Minimum requirements

Refurbished Windows 11 Laptop, 15-inch screen, 8GB RAM, 240 GB SSD

Exact price depends on availability. Windows 11 is needed to ensure access to security updates, after the end of Windows 10 support.

Agreed. Purchasing refurbished computer is cost effective and good for the environment.

16. **To approve [S19 Grant Request from Memorial Hall Trust](#)**

£280 for 5 small repair jobs; hosepipe tap, fence panel, replace loose flags, drain cover, repaint storeroom door.

Agreed.

s19 (3) LGA (Misc. Prov.) 1976. a local authority may contribute towards expenses incurred by any voluntary organisation providing recreational facilities.

17. **To consider a [S137 grant application from Bees & Butterflies Brigade](#) for £250 for planting a Faith Garden.**

Agreed.

s137 LGA 1972 local authority may incur expenditure which is in the interests of, and will bring benefit to some or all of its inhabitants.

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

17.1 To note a free 90-day free trial of a Parish Council finance system.

[Bank Reconciliation](#)

[Monthly Report on Payments and Receipts](#)

[Schedule of Payments ?](#)

Signed Chair Date

17.2 To note younger children's playground has been professionally cleaned as per original October 2024 S19 CIL funded project for Halsall Trust at a cost of £505. The Trust decided to delay the cleaning until the Spring, to get the winter leaf fall out of the way.

17.3 The Parish Clerk would like to take one week's annual leave w/c 16th June.

18. Date and time of next meeting

Next meeting will be 11th June at Memorial Hall

Meeting closed at 20:47