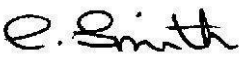


HALSALL PARISH COUNCIL

Members of the Parish Council are summoned to attend the Meeting of Halsall Parish Council on Wednesday 10th December at St Aidan's Hall, Renacres Lane, Halsall..

1.		Introductions and Apologies for Absence
2.		Declarations of Interest
3.		Open Forum
	3.1	West Lancs Borough Councillors
	3.2	Open Public Forum
4.		To confirm and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 12th November Minutes.
5.		Discuss and agree on any matters arising from Parish Clerk's Report
	5.1	To note St Aidan's new oven has now been fitted, an offer of £75.00 has been received from the repair company.
	5.2	Union Jack flags have been returned, along with traffic signs.
	5.3	To note progress on Open Actions . Closed C/Fwd
6.		To receive reports from Representatives to outside Bodies and agree on any actions arising;
	6.1	Lancashire Association of Local Councils (Cllrs R. Brookfield & M. Lyons)
	6.2	Ormskirk Foundation Trust (Cllr D. Adams)
	6.3	Shirdley Hill Community Association (Cllr N. McCarthy-Thomason)
7.		To receive reports from Working Groups and agree any actions arising;
	7.1	Finance (Cllrs M. Lyons, E. Wright, K. Wright, & D. Adams To review the first draft of 2026/2027 Budget and Precept proposal 2026-2027 Budget Book .
	7.2	Human Resources (Cllrs K. Wright, M. Lyons, & P. Barker)
	7.3	Traffic and Road Safety (Cllrs N. McCarthy-Thomason, R. Brookfield, & B. Roberts)

	7.4		Flooding (Cllrs E. Wright, D, Adams & R. Brookfield)
	7.5		Healthy Halsall (Cllrs M. Lyons & B. Roberts)
	7.6		Environment & Biodiversity Working Group (Cllr M. Lyons, P Barker)
	7.7		Halsall News (Cllr N.McCarthy-Thomason)
8.		<u>Planning Applications</u>	
	8.1	Applications	
			Application No: 2025/0998/PIP Date Valid: 24 November 2025 Proposal: Application for Permission in Principle for up to 3 no. dwellings at the land adjacent to Model Farm, Plex Lane, Halsall, L39 7JY.
	8.2		Any planning applications on the day of the meeting.
	8.3		To note recent Planning Decisions Application: 2025/0841/LDP Decision: Cert of Lawfulness (PROPOSED) Permitted Proposal: Lawful Development Certificate (Proposed) - Infill of existing garage door with windows and access door. New insulated floor to proposed bedroom. Location: 176 Renacres Lane, Halsall, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 8SQ
9.		Finance	
	9.1		To approve the <u>2025 Dec Schedule of payments.</u>
	9.2		To review the <u>2025 Dec Spend to date.</u>
	9.3		To approve the <u>2025 Dec bank reconciliation.</u>
	9.4		Independent Review of Bank Balances
10.			Woodland Project To discuss a name for the Woodland project.
11.			To review & approve new accounting package for April 2026 from Scribe at a cost of £448.00 set up fee, followed by monthly payments of £37, all plus vat.
12.			To approve six hours overtime for the cleaner, to enable a deep clean in both halls. Cost £86.43
13.			To approve a request from Memorial Trust for a S19/S137 to cover the infrastructure repair to the septic tank at a cost of £312.00 and £580.00 for the fitting of sockets, timers and isolators at the hall for outdoor

			electrical use.
14.			To note, Gov. emails addresses for all councillors will be added to devices from January 2026.
15.			To approve purchase of four strong boxes for the loft space to keep archived files in, to protect from rodents, at a cost of £48.00
16.			To Note, complaint from resident asking the parish Council to get involved to resolve issues from bonfire night.
17.			Notice of Information-Only Items
18.			Date and time of next meeting
			Next meeting will be on 14th January at Memorial Hall.
Authorised by  Cathy Smith, Acting Parish Clerk			
<p>All present will act respectfully towards every other person present and will not act in a manner that demeans, insults, threatens or intimidates him or her. All statements, questions and responses, challenges to statements, complaints or criticisms must be related to the facts of the matter and not personal in nature.</p> <p>Members of the public disturbing a Council meeting will be asked by the Chair to desist in disrupting the meeting. If the behaviour continues Council can resolve, without discussion, that the person(s) withdraw from the meeting or be removed. If a meeting becomes unmanageable because of interruption, or it is impossible to continue due to disturbance or disregard for the Chair's instructions, the Council can and will resolve to either close the meeting for a period or have the meeting recalled for another date.</p>			

HALSALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 12th November at 7:30 pm at Halsall Memorial Hall, Cross Lane, Halsall.

		Present: Cllr M. Lyons (Chair), Cllr N. McCarthy-Thomason (Vice Chair), Cllr. D. Adams, Cllr P. Barker, Cllr T. Atlay, C. Pyne (Clerk), C. Smith (Clerk Ag), Cllr B. Roberts, Cllr R. Brookfield and Cllr E. Wright, Cllr L. Stephenson.
1.		Introductions and Apologies for Absence
		Apologies received from Cllr K. Wright
2.		Declarations of Interest
		Cllr Mary Lyons declared interest in S137 frogs application.
3.		Open Forum
3.1		West Lancs Borough Councillors None.
3.2		Open Public Forum None.
4.		To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 8th October. Agreed.
5.		Discuss and agree on any matters arising From the Parish Clerks Report.
5.1		Noted. St Aidan`s oven was repaired at a cost of £150.00 but remains broken. L. Stephenson & N. McCarthy-Thomason to source prices of new oven up to £750.00, initially to ask the company who repaired the oven for a refund or discount on new oven. Agreed.
5.2		Local resident to use the hall for an event free of charge, the resident has given support to St Aidan`s for many years. Agreed.
5.3		Remembrance wreaths cost £20 more than agreed in the July meeting. Agreed.
5.4		CCTV in full working order on council mobile phone. Cllr B. Roberts to have Memorial Hall CCTV installed, and Cllr N. McCarthy-Thomason to have St Aidan`s CCTV installed, both for backup purposes. Agreed. Local resident has paid for a new projector screen in St Aidan`s, to be installed Thursday 13th November. Noted. <i>Local Government Act 1972 s111 power to perform subsidiary functions. Maintenance of council property and facilities.</i>
5.5		To note progress on HPC Open Actions 4 closed, 8 carried forward.

		Chair to contact previous Councillor, to request return of Union Jack flags and road closure signs, that belong to the council. To be kept at the Memorial Hall. Clerk to research if they are on the asset register.
6.		To receive reports from Representatives to outside Bodies and agree on any actions arising;
6.1		Lancashire Association of Local Councils (Cllrs R. Brookfield & M. Lyons) None
6.2		Ormskirk Foundation Trust (Cllr D. Adams) Cllr D. Adams reported that the meeting on 20.10.25 there is now a full complement of 18 trustees in place (there were 9) A total of eleven bids were received for funding. All granted to value of £12915.00
6.3		Shirdley Hill Community Association (Cllr N. McCarthy-Thomason) Cllr N. McCarthy-Thomason reported that the preparations for the Christmas meals are going well. St Aidan`s is registered as a warm space and was granted £560.00, residents will not be charged for eight Lunch club sessions.
7.		To receive reports from Working Groups and agree any actions arising;
7.1		Finance (Cllrs M. Lyons, E. Wright, K. Wright, & D. Adams) No business.
7.2		Human Resources (Cllrs K. Wright, M. Lyons, & P. Barker) Cllr M. Lyons reported that the vacancy for parish clerk will be advertised in the Halsall Parish news in December and on the website. Interviews are planned for January 2026. All HR actions, Local Government Act 1972 s112 power to appoint such officers as the Council thinks necessary for proper discharge of duties.
7.3		Traffic and Road Safety (Cllrs N. McCarthy-Thomason, R. Brookfield, & B. Roberts) Five car crash on Delf Lane A5147 Halsall, road closed for half a day.
7.4		Flooding (Cllrs E. Wright , D, Adams & R. Brookfield) No business.
7.5		Healthy Halsall None No Business.
7.6		Environment & Biodiversity Working Group (Cllr M. Lyons, P Barker) No Business.
8.		Planning Applications
8.1		Applications 2025/0835/PNP Consideration of Details for Prior Approval - Agricultural

		storage building. Land North of Plex Lane, Plex Lane, Halsall, L39 7JY 2025/0909/FUL Single storey side / rear extension and partial reconfiguration of ground floor layout. 110 Renacres Lane, Halsall, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 8SF.
8.2		Any planning applications published on day of the meeting None.
8.3		To Note Recent Planning Decisions
		2025/0349/FUL Decision: Planning Permission REFUSED Proposal: Erection of New Bungalow Location: 31 Renacres Lane, Halsall, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 8SF 2025/0698/FUL Decision: Planning Permission Granted Proposal: Erection of two-storey extension to front of dwelling house, new porch, first floor extension to side and rear. New windows and solar panels, alterations to driveway, and dropped kerb. Location: 27 Renacres Lane, Halsall, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 8SF
9.		Finance
9.1		To approve the Schedule of Payments for November Agreed.
9.2		To review the Spend to Date and Budget Allocations Agreed.
9.3		To approve the Bank Reconciliation Agreed.
9.4		Independent Review of Bank Balances Cllr E Wright had circulated bank balances. Agreed
10.		Payment of CIL £1692.75 received 5th November 2025.
11.		Clerk (Ag) explained the reversal of payments made to current account & CIL, a Payment of £5547.23 will be paid into the reserves account by 18th November 2025. Approved.
12.		To Approve, PDF Pro installed on Clerk Ag laptop, prior to Clerk leaving at cost of £60. Approved.
13.		Woodland project.
13.1		To approve. Formation of charitable incorporated organisation. Agreed.
13.2		To approve. Reserves money for solicitors fees, approx £5000. Agreed.
13.3		To approve an organisation name and form a working group. Agreed.

		Cllr's D.Adams, T.Atlay, P.Barker and L.Stephenson to form a working group. Agreed. Cllr D.Adams to look at criteria and propose a name for the working group. Agreed.
14.		To approve a quotation of £420.00 for the cleaning of the gutters at St Aidan's and the fitting of hedgehogs. Refused. Cllr's D.Adams & N.McCarthy-Thomason, to carry out the work. Clerk to check insurance policy to ensure HPC is covered for Cllr's carrying out maintenance. £100 proposed for the cost of hedgehogs. Agreed.
15.		To approve a S137 grant for the Frogs group, Shridley Hill, to pay for their insurance. Confirmed that WLBC are not responsible for this working group's Insurance. Agreed. Local Government Act 1972 s137, grants to local organisations providing a benefit to some or all of the residents.
16.		Notice of information-only items Cllr N.McCarthy-Thomason asked for extra £80 for colour to be added to four pages in Halsall Parish magazine. Agreed.
17.		Date and time of next meeting
		Next meeting will be on 10th December 2025 at St Aidan's Hall at 7.30pm. Memorial Trust meeting to follow at approximately 8.15pm.
		Meeting closed 20.34pm

Schedule of Payments									
HALSALL PARISH COUNCIL				November	for		10th December	meeting	
Chair	M Lyons			Signed					
Independent				Signed					
Received	Minutes	Bank	Expenditure		Amount	Payee Use Clerk & Cleaner for FOI redaction	Notes		
Date	Ref	Date	Category						
Changes since last month : Highlighted									
(Manual List) Direct Debits									
		1st Month	Easy Websites (Go Cardless)		36.96	Easywebsites	Monthly		
		3rd Month	Open Space maintenance		320.00	Forshaw	Monthly		
		3rd Month	Printing Halsall News		as claimed	Moulton	Monthly (standard £345)		
		8th Month	National Broadband (Go Cardless)		42.00	Nat Broadband	Monthly		
		9th Month	Electricity		as claimed	Octopus	Monthly		
		15th Month	Open Space maintenance		100.00	Connor	Monthly		
		21st Month	Gas		as claimed	EON	Monthly		
		monthly	Water		as claimed	Everflow	Quarterly		
		last day month	Bank Charges		6.00	Unity	Monthly		
		end of quarter	HMRC Tax & Employers N.I.		as claimed	HMRC	Quarterly		
		end of quarter	Hygiene/waste		102.59	WLBC	Quarterly		
		July	Hygiene/waste		as claimed	Millennium service	Annually (was 269.59)		
		15th October	Information Commissioner		47.00	ICO	Annually (was £35)		
(Manual List) Paid under Delegated Authority (not listed on the Agenda)									
		28th	27 Cleaner Salary		345.72	Cleaner	(Gross salary standard month)		
		28th	21 Clerks Salaries		1,595.13	AG Clerk	(Gross salary standard month)		
		28th	10 Salary Transfer from Trust		646.95	Trust	1/3rd Gross Salaries (0.3333)		
		28th	Window Cleaning		40.00	P Walsh	monthly via Clerk's expenses		
		28th	23 Clerk's Expenses		as claimed	Clerk	monthly		
		28th	15 Cleaner's Expenses		as claimed	Cleaner	monthly		
		28th	23 Member's Expenses		as claimed	as claimed	monthly		
(Automatic Filter) Payments Awaiting Approval									
Date	Minutes / Date	Bank Date	Amount		Payee				

Receipts & Payments 2025/2026 Spend to Date Summary (including Scheduled payments)						
Chair M. Lyons Independent		Date		Signed		
		Date		Signed		
Planned Budget		56,473.00				
Total Income to date		52,242.24				
Total Expenditure to date		35,702.78				
Code	Payments	Budget	Spend to Date	Available	Explanantions /Comments	Centre Totals
21	Gross Salaries	21,918.00	13,871.00	-8,047.00		16,832.76
22	inc Tax & NI	1,300.00	2,571.52	1,271.52		
23	Staff Mileage Expenses	150.00	0.00	-150.00		
24	Office Expenses	700.00	390.24	-309.76		
25	Staff Training	400.00	0.00	-400.00		
26	Staff Recruitment	0.00	0.00	0.00		
31	Chair's Allowances	100.00	200.00	100.00		200.00
33	Mileage	50.00	0.00	-50.00		
34	Expenses	50.00	0.00	-50.00		
35	Training	200.00	0.00	-200.00		
41	Audit fees	660.00	628.00	-32.00		
42	Subs LALC	470.00	0.00	-470.00		1,668.65
43	ICO	35.00	0.00	-35.00		
44	Reserve re elections etc	1,000.00	425.00	-575.00		
45	Legal Fees - Solicitor/Planning	1,200.00	0.00	-1,200.00		
46	Music Licence	600.00	450.65	-149.35		
17	Refunds / Transfers (Hire Fees)	0.00	165.00	165.00		
51	Rem Sunday / War memorial	1,000.00	600.00	-400.00		
52	Bus shelters	350.00	50.00	-300.00		4,150.68
54	Seats	0.00	0.00	0.00		
55	Noticeboards/ Web Hosting	800.00	391.68	-408.32		
56	Spids	300.00	0.00	-300.00		
57	Maintenance of open spaces	4,500.00	2,870.00	-1,630.00		
58	New Defibrillator Pads	300.00	239.00	-61.00	Pads from here. Cabinets from Reserves	
15	Reserves/grants	0.00	696.30	696.30	Approved additional spends from Reserves - Defibs	
61	Electricity	800.00	397.27	-402.73		4,698.45
62	Gas	1,100.00	447.06	-652.94		
63	Water	720.00	439.21	-280.79		
64	Internet	560.00	294.00	-266.00		
65	Mobile Phone	150.00	0.00	-150.00		
66	Insurances/inspections/Fire	3,000.00	2,375.55	-624.45		
67	Hygiene / Waste	1,200.00	577.36	-622.64		
68	Window cleaning	500.00	120.00	-380.00		
69	Bank Charges	110.00	48.00	-62.00		
72	Cleaning supplies	300.00	45.84	-254.16		
73	St Aidans Property	3,000.00	1,124.99	-1,875.01		
80	Grant	380.00	380.00	0.00	S144 Exhibition/Fair Grant (allocate from S19)	
81	S137 (Anyone)	3,000.00	2,642.88	-357.12		
82	S19 (only MH)	1,120.00	315.00	-805.00		
83	S142 Halsall News	4,300.00	2,564.00	-1,736.00		
84	VAT for CIL Grant	0.00	383.23	383.23	Funded from 2025/26 VAT 126	
85	S133 Meetings at MH	150.00	0.00	-150.00		
86	S19 Warm Spaces	0.00	0.00	0.00		
87	LCC Biodiversity	0.00	0.00	0.00		
88	CIL Projects	0.00	3,848.28	3,848.28	CIL projects not included in budget	5,905.11
89	Best Kept Village	0.00	0.00	0.00		3,848.28
	Payments to date inc Scheduled	56,473.00	39,551.06	-16,921.94		20,471.17
	Less CIL		35,702.78			57,775.10
	Difference (should be zero)		0.00		Pivot analysis same as Payments	
Code	Receipts	Budget	Rec'd to date	More/Less	Explanations for surplus	
10	MH Refund Salary Costs	7,233.00	5,034.61	-2,198.39		
11	CIL	0.00	5,078.25	5,078.25		
12	Precept	34,546.00	36,859.50	2,313.50		
13	Council Support	1,433.00	0.00	-1,433.00		
14	Concurrent Grant	1,761.00	880.50	-880.50		
15	Reserves / Received Grants	1,350.00	0.00	-1,350.00	Originally 1250. Extra £100 Transferred 27/5	
16	Hall Hire	4,000.00	3,665.00	-335.00		
17	Refund/Transfer from MH	0.00	425.00	425.00		
18	Interest Received	750.00	443.28	-306.72		
19	Other Income	0	200.00	200.00		
119	Halsall News Adverts	3,200.00	1,443.00	-1,757.00		
126	VAT Refund	2,200.00	3,291.35	1,091.35		
	Receipts to date inc Scheduled	56,473.00	57,320.49			
	Less CIL		52,242.24			
	Difference (should be zero)		0.00		Pivot analysis same as Receipts	
		3,194.00				

(after 36 lines)											
HALSALL PARISH COUNCIL				Monthly Bank Reconciliation							
Chair		Mary Lyons		Signed				Date			
Independent				Signed				Date			
Monthly Bank Reconciliation for				Payments		Receipts					
Bank Balances B/Fwd		November		Bank Date	Amount	Payee		Date	Amount	Payee	
Reserves account		20478586	13,567.80	3/11/2025	36.96	Easywebsites		3/11/2025	40.00	Gaskell	
CIL account		20471392	9,166.84	3/11/2025	150.00	S&D Ireland		3/11/2025	10.00	Norton	
Current account		20471376	2,485.81	6/11/2025	42.00	National broadband		3/11/2025	21.00	J Tinsley	
Precept account		20471389	22,850.86	10/11/2025	320.00	Forshaw		5/11/2025	1,692.75	WLBC	
Total at Bank		48,071.31		10/11/2025	385.00	Moulton Printing		10/11/2025	10.00	Norton	
Payments/Expenditure		4,553.09		13/11/2025	50.00	Asst Clerk		11/11/2025	60.00	Sarignama	
Receipts/Income		2,710.70		13/11/2025	253.40	Asst Clerk		12/11/2025	120.00	R Galang	
New C/Fwd		46,228.92		13/11/2025	7.80	SHRA		17/11/2025	10.00	Norton	
Bank Balances C/Fwd				13/11/2025	500.00	Bakehouse		24/11/2025	10.00	Norton	
Reserves account		20478586	19,115.03	14/11/2025	60.00	Lijo		24/11/2025	20.00	J Teasdale	
CIL account		20471392	10,279.71	17/11/2025	56.68	octopus		27/11/2025	646.95	M Trust	
Current account		20471376	1,930.55	17/11/2025	579.88	Currys		28/11/2025	70.00	Nadesan	
Precept account		20471389	14,903.63	17/11/2025	115.97	Currys					
Total at Bank		46,228.92		18/11/2025	49.88	Eon					
Difference (New C/Fwd - Bank)		0.00		21/11/2025	100.00	RBL					
Comments				26/11/2025	186.88	Frogs					
Checked as at 09:00 30/11/2025				27/11/2025	32.01	Everflow					
				28/11/2025	1,274.91	AG Clerk					
				28/11/2025	345.72	Cleaner					
				30/11/2025	6.00	Unity					
									</		



Business Case for Adopting Scribe Accounts

Prepared for: Halsall Parish Council

Prepared by: India Greenwood, Scribe

Date: November 2025

1. Executive Summary

Halsall Parish Council is already taking positive steps to modernise its finance function following the appointment of a new clerk. While existing spreadsheet-based processes have served in the past, they are now proving time-consuming and inefficient. As the council prepares for its year-end, there is an opportunity to streamline financial management, enhance reporting, and reduce compliance risks.

Scribe Accounts offers a purpose-built, cloud-based solution tailored for parish and town councils. By replacing manual spreadsheets with Scribe, HPC can save significant time — especially on budgeting, AGAR preparation, and reporting — while gaining better visibility and control. With unlimited support, training, and no contract tie-in, Scribe makes it easy to get started and stay compliant.

2. Current Situation

The newly appointed clerk took over the role approximately 6 weeks ago and inherited a spreadsheet-based system that is described as old-fashioned. While the clerk is experienced in using commercial software (Xero) for business, council finances have specific reporting and compliance requirements not handled well by general-purpose tools.

Clerk's Objectives

- Modernise and move away from spreadsheets
- Simplify budgeting and financial year rollover
- Prepare efficiently for AGAR and internal/external audit
- Improve transparency with councillors and residents

Current Tools and Practices

- Spreadsheets (used for cashbook, budget tracking, AGAR prep)
- Manual year-end preparation
- No integration between reports or audit trails
- Clerk handles budgeting manually; no access for councillors or auditors

Challenges Identified

- Transferring budget information year to year is time-consuming
 - AGAR and VAT reports must be manually compiled
 - Posting required public notices involves printing and physical distribution
 - Manual processes increase risk of oversight or error
-

3. Risks and Inefficiencies

Continuing with spreadsheets presents a number of operational and compliance-related risks:

Time and Resource Burden

- Manual rollover of budget data each year (1–2 days' work annually)
- Compiling AGAR manually increases workload and risk of errors
- Producing reports for council meetings requires duplication of effort
- Clerk has limited time capacity — finance is only one part of the role

Compliance Risks

- Lack of audit trail and user permissions may raise audit concerns
- No automatic checks for errors or inconsistencies

- Inability to provide remote access to auditors or councillors

Opportunity Costs

- Time spent manipulating spreadsheets could be used for more strategic clerk duties
- Delays in producing reports may reduce councillor engagement and oversight

4. Solution: Scribe Accounts Benefits

Scribe Accounts is a cloud-based finance system designed specifically for local councils. It includes the full functionality required for compliant council finance, with ongoing support and training included.

Features That Directly Address HPC's Needs

Identified Need	Scribe Feature	Benefit
Simplify year-end and AGAR	One-click AGAR generation with built-in checks	Cuts hours off AGAR prep, reduces risk of error
Faster budgeting	Annual budget rollover + Flexed budget reports	Eliminates repetitive setup, enables monthly variance tracking
Transparency for councillors	Summary reports and net position reporting	Easy-to-read formats support better decision-making
Auditor access	Remote read-only logins	No need for printing or emailing sensitive documents
Spreadsheet consolidation	Built-in cashbook, reserves, VAT, reporting	One system covers all finance functions
Support for new clerk	Unlimited 1:1 training, live sessions, help guides	Clerk can learn system at own pace with backup as needed
Asset management	Free asset import + register with photos and mapping	Helps maintain insurance compliance and supports AGAR Section 9

Quantifiable Improvements

- **Time savings:** Typical councils save 1–2 days per month on reporting and financial admin

- **Audit prep:** AGAR preparation time cut by up to 70%
 - **Error reduction:** Built-in checks, audit trails, and permission controls reduce risk
 - **Training value:** Ongoing access to training avoids need for external consultants
-

5. Conclusion

HPC has a unique opportunity to implement a modern, efficient, and compliant finance system ahead of the new financial year. Scribe Accounts will free up the clerk's time, reduce reporting delays, and provide better visibility for councillors and auditors.

With Scribe's proven track record — over 1,600 councils onboard and 100+ five-star reviews — HPC can be confident in a smooth transition and long-term value. Starting in the new financial year will give the council time to train and prepare without pressure, ensuring a seamless handover from spreadsheets.