

**Minutes of the Meeting of Haigh Parish Council
Held Monday 25 March 2024
6:30pm St David's Parish Rooms**

Present: Councillors Paul Kenyon (Chairman), Andrew Keogh, Roberta Darbyshire, Ian Parker and Marie-Clare Kenyon
The Clerk to the Council: Mrs Krystyna Pilkington
One member of the public

130 Apologies for Absence

None

131 Declaration of Interests

None

Standing orders were suspended.

132 Matters Introduced by Members of the Public

Environmental Issues in Red Rock Lane

The resident present wished to bring to the attention of the Parish Council the lack of timely maintenance of Red Rock Lane from Bridge 63 to Meadow Pit Lane:

- During periods of heavy rain there had been problems with water being retained on the road, causing problems for pedestrians (ie being drenched by traffic) and damage to the hedges because of blocked drain covers.
- The reduction in regular road sweeping to a schedule where it had become a rare event had exacerbated the problems, especially during the Autumn when the leaves fell and the drain gratings regularly became blocked. This also meant that the leaves ended up on the pavement and, because there was no schedule for regular pavement clearing in place, created a hazard for walkers, as wet leaves were very slippery.
- Safety issues still existed with the positioning of the traffic lights and road markings on the eastern side of Bridge 63, resulting in vehicles trying to 1) beat the lights and 2) encroach onto the pavement, causing even more damage to the pavement and a hazard to pedestrians waiting to cross the bridge. Pedestrians were in danger of being hit by wing mirrors on vehicles which tended to overhang the pavement.

The resident had invited Wigan Council officers to take part in a site meeting at Bridge 63 during the morning or evening rush hours to observe the problems first hand with the intention of making much needed improvements, but so far his suggestion had not been taken up.

The issues raised by the resident were discussed at length. It was agreed that Cllr Andrew Keogh would draft a letter to bring attention to the issues. The Clerk would send the letter to the Director of Environment at Wigan Council.

Three Requests from a New Resident

A new resident of Mayflower Cottages had contacted the Clerk with three requests. Requests (a) and (b) had been put to the Director of Environment during the meeting with Wigan Council officers on 18 March. Request (c) had been forwarded to the Street Lighting Department.

- (a) The resident had asked whether the Parish Council could look into the possibility of a public litter bin being located somewhere near Mayflower Cottages to prevent unwanted dog fouling bags and rubbish littering the area as it was a thoroughfare for dog walkers. The resident had suggested that a litter bin might be best placed at the entrance to Trevore Drive from the cottages side.

The Director of Environment had written to the Clerk to let her know that he had been in touch with the resident and had arranged for a litter bin to be installed at a location selected by the resident.

- (b) The same resident had brought to the Parish Council's attention that there was no heart defibrillator within the area of Mayflower Cottages or 200 yards from where they lived. As Mayflower Cottages were located along a remote private road, the resident was of the view it might be worth looking into the possibility of a defibrillator being installed somewhere.

The Director of Environment had spoken to Dist Cllr Chris Ready regarding the provision of a heart defibrillator. Dist Cllr Ready had informed him that Wigan Council would soon be launching a funding initiative to supply community defibrillators. He had asked the Clerk to let the resident know and would forward further details once they became available.

- (c) There was a third issue in connection with Mayflower Cottages. The road had two lamp posts which were very old and did not work. The resident had asked whether, for safety, it would be possible for these to be replaced with solar lights.

The request had been passed on to Wigan Council's Street Lighting Department and a reply was awaited.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

133 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council (22 January 2024)

Resolved: The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Monday, 22 January 2024 were agreed to be a true and correct record.

134 Matters Arising

Wigan Local History & Heritage Society Project

The Wigan Local History & Heritage Society had recently started a new project. The project would focus on the lives of servants working at Haigh Hall and on the Hall's social history.

The Society's last project, which had focused on King Street, had involved three years of research and one year to write the report. It was now reaching its conclusion through the publication of the report in the form of a book.

A councillor who was a member of the above Society reported that AI&AI and Haigh Hall Heritage Matters had agreed to collaborate on the project and asked whether the Parish Council would be interested in supporting the project, which was still in its infancy. At the moment those involved were trying to identify living descendants of the staff of Haigh Hall.

The request was discussed briefly by the Council, who agreed to support the project.

135 Ratification of Decisions Taken at Meetings Held Virtually

Meetings of the Council held on 4 December 2023 and 22 January 2024 had been held virtually. The following recommendations made during those meetings were ratified:

4 December 2023

Minute 92

Resolved: The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Monday, 23 October 2023 were agreed to be a true and correct record.

Minute 98 – Plans for the Annual Parish Meeting

Resolved: It was agreed that Cllr Clare Kenyon would approach AI&AI about the possibility of their providing an update with regard to the Masterplan on a date in May, rather than in March. As Haigh Hall would not be available, the availability of the Stables would be looked into.

Minute 100

Resolved: The Asset Register for 2023-24 was approved.

Minute 101

Resolved: The H&S risk assessments for 2023-24 were approved.

Minute 102 – Accounts 2023-24

Resolved: items of expenditure numbered 37 to 39 were approved for payment.

Minute 102 – Quarterly Budget Monitoring

Resolved: To cover the overspend members approved a virement of £997 from the General Reserve to the 'Clerk Salary' cost centre.

Minute 108 – NJC National Pay Award

Resolved: The Council approved the NJC National Pay Award, which would be backdated to 1 April 2023.

22 January 2024

Minute 112

Resolved: The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Monday, 4 December 2023 were agreed to be a true and correct record.

Minute 118 – Grit Bin for Hall Lane

Resolved: The Council approved the project, which involved installing and maintaining a grit bin in Hall Lane retrospectively.

Minute 120 – Grant Awarding Policy Review

Resolved: Members agreed that paragraph 5 should be amended to read: "*The size of any grant awarded is at the discretion of the Parish Council.*"

Minute 121 – Community Grants 2024

Resolved: The Council agreed that local groups would be invited to bid for community grants. There would be no upper limit on the size of grant for which a group could bid. The deadline for bids was set at 31 March 2024 and the award of grants would be made at the Annual Parish Meeting (date to be confirmed).

Minute 124 – Bridge 63

Resolved: Cllr Andrew Keogh would draft a letter, which would be sent via the Clerk to the building's current owner, who would need to be identified via a Land Registry search.

Minute 125 – Accounts 2023-24

Resolved: Items numbered 40 to 42 were approved for payment.

Minute 126 – 2024-25 Budget & Precept

Resolved: The Council approved a budgeted expenditure of £13,929 (including an expenditure contingency of £500) and set a precept of £8,400 for the financial year ending 31 March 2025. The total reserves were estimated to stand at £17,107 on 1 April 2024.

136 Planning Applications

A/21/92629/MAJOR	Leyland Mills Leyland Mill Lane Wigan WN1 2SB	Residential development of 17 two & three storey detached dwellings following demolition of former mill buildings	<i>Objection sent – decision deferred subject to submission of revisions by September 2023 deadline – revisions still awaited</i>
A/22/94184/FULL	Rothwell's Stud Sennicar Lane Wigan WN1 2SN	Erection of four detached dwellings, following demolition of indoor riding arena, stables and store	<i>Objection sent - awaiting decision - non determination appeal dismissed by Planning Inspectorate</i>
A/23/96328/VAR	Mowpin Lodge New Road Haigh Wigan WN2 1PF	To vary condition 2 of Planning Permission Reference A/23/94895/LA - to alter the extent of the new hard and soft landscaping adjacent to Mowpin Lodge gate	<i>Approved with conditions</i>
A/23/96413/VAR	Mowpin Lodge New Road Haigh Wigan WN2 1PF	To vary condition 2 of Listed Building Consent Reference A/23/94896/LBLA - to alter the extent of new hard and soft landscaping adjacent to Mowpin Lodge gate	<i>Approved with conditions</i>

Members noted the current status of the above applications. No new applications for consideration had been submitted since the last meeting.

A/21/92629/MAJOR

Following the submission of an enquiry by the Parish Council the Planning Officer advised that there was no further update on the application – it was still pending determination. The applicant had advised they would be submitting additional revised information. However, this had not yet been submitted.

In January it was brought to the Chairman's attention that trees had been cut down and a large sewage disposal tank has appeared on site. Clarification was sought about why trees had been cut down and preparations had been made to install a septic tank system. The Trees & Woodlands Officer had advised that permission had been granted to remove four trees in total. One was a sycamore, which was on a former raised bed and had started to lean, and three trees were to be removed to allow for the installation of a new septic tank to stop effluent leaking into the river. All of the trees were to be replaced with oak trees.

Tent Pegging Arena

In January it was reported that to date nothing had been removed from the field in Pendlebury Lane. The Clerk was asked to write to the Planning Department to ask them why the enforcement process had not been escalated.

In early February the Planning Enforcement Officer at Wigan Council had replied to the Clerk's email and provided an update on the owner's non-compliance with the enforcement notice. The matter had been referred to Wigan Council's Legal team, who would list the proceedings with the Court and a first hearing date would be set in the coming weeks. The Enforcement Officer had not been sure how long all this would take before the case was fully heard in Court and a judgment was made. Once a date was known the Planning Enforcement team would provide a further update.

137 Meeting with Wigan Council Officers

(a) Feedback

The minutes of the meeting with Wigan Council officers on 18 March 2024 had been circulated and were received. Members who had attended provided feedback.

The general view was that it had been a very useful meeting, as agreement had been reached with respect to a number of issues.

Cllr Clare Kenyon had received enquiries from the Joined-Up Bridleway working group and had requested an update on progress with the project and confirmation of the paths that it would include. A resident had observed that work had started on the upgrade of the Whelley Loop Line and had heard that a disabled ramp was to be provided. The resident had wanted re-assurance that a designated bridleway would still be included in the plans.

In 2023 a planned survey of the bridleway route had been abandoned because heavy rainfall and flooding had created ground conditions which had made it difficult to distinguish the official pathways from needle trails. During the meeting on 18 March the Director of Environment had agreed that the team would revisit the area to survey the site and establish the correct route for the bridleway. As agreed, he had sent an update in relation to the timeline involved in designating the Whelley Loop Line as a bridleway and also the associated map to the Parish Council. These had been circulated to members.

A public consultation about the proposals had been carried out in 2023 and the Clerk was asked to contact the Director of Environment and ask if the Parish Council could be provided with the results.

A member reported that in July 2023 he had met with the Rights of Way officer to discuss the way forward with footpath No.37. The Clerk was asked to contact the RoW officer and request feedback on the matter.

(b) Dates of Future Meetings

The following dates had been proposed for future meetings with Wigan Council officers:

- Monday, 17 June @ 4pm
- Monday, 2 September @ 4pm
- Monday, 9 December @ 4pm
- Monday, 10 March @ 4pm

All meetings would be held via MS Teams.

Resolved: The above dates were approved.

138 Annual Parish Meeting 2024

(a) Presentation by AI&AI, Date & Venue of APM

During the Council meeting in December it was agreed that Cllr Clare Kenyon would approach AI&AI about the possibility of their providing an update with regard to the Masterplan on a date in May, rather than in March. As Haigh Hall would not be available, it was agreed that the availability of the Stables would be looked into. It had now been confirmed by AI&AI that they would be happy to provide an update on progress with the Masterplan at the Annual Parish Meeting and had made arrangements for it to be held at 7pm on Tuesday, 21 May in the School Room at the Stables Courtyard.

Resolved: It was agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held at 7pm on Tuesday, 21 May in the School Room at the Stables Courtyard.

(b) APM Agenda

Resolved:

It was agreed that the agenda for the 2024 APM would be as follows:

1. Welcome by the Chairman
2. Apologies
3. Matters Introduced by Members of the Public
4. Minutes of the last Annual Meeting (7 March 2023)
5. Clerk's Report
6. Update on Masterplan from AI & AI and Appraisal of Work so far

(c) Advertising and Admission to the APM

In 2023 admission to the APM was by ticket only and it was advertised approximately a month before the event. Light refreshments were also served at the end of the meeting. This was discussed briefly.

Resolved: It was agreed that the status quo would be maintained with regard to admission, advertising and refreshments. Cllr Clare Kenyon would design the posters and tickets.

139 Community Awards

The Clerk reported that three nominations for a Community Award would have been received by the date of the Annual Parish Meeting. In January the date agreed as the deadline for nominations was extended to 24 March. An appeal for nominations had been included in the newsletter, which was due to be published shortly.

The date and possible venue for the presentations were discussed.

Cllr Clare Kenyon would find out from AI&AI if there was a room larger than the School Room at the Stables Courtyard that could be used for the APM. If there was

such a room and it was available, the presentations would be made during the Annual Parish Meeting – after the Clerk’s Report. If such a room were not available, the presentations would be made at St David’s Parish Rooms during the Council meeting in early July.

140 Bubblefest 2024

To date working party meetings had been held in January and February. A date for the meeting in March had not been set during the meeting in February. Several recommendations that needed to be approved by the full Council had been made during the meeting in February. The recommendations were reviewed.

Resolved: The Council approved the following:

- (a) The appointment of Cllr Paul Kenyon as Event Leader and Cllr Andrew Keogh as Deputy Event Leader.
- (b) That volunteers would be offered a meal voucher (value to be agreed) plus FREE entry to the Bubblefest for three other persons accompanying or joining them on the day.
- (c) That the Clerk was delegated to discuss with Mr Keith Bergman the possibility of Haigh Woodland Park’s providing two experienced members of staff to cover the entrance on the day. The Council were willing to cover their salaries for the time that they would be required.
- (d) That posters would be prepared by Cllr Clare Kenyon and printed by Digital Impressions.

Members discussed a date for the next Working Group meeting.

Resolved: The next Bubblefest working group meeting would take place on Tuesday, 16 April at 7pm via MS Teams.

Tickets would go on sale from mid-May. The price of tickets would be decided at the working group meeting in April.

The Clerk withdrew from the meeting, which was adjourned briefly.

The Clerk returned and the meeting was resumed.

141 Canal Towpath

Cllr Paul Kenyon provided an update on progress with the project to restore the canal towpath in Haigh. The subject had been discussed during the meeting with Wigan Council officers the previous week and the Director of Environment had been receptive to progressing the towpath repairs.

The Area Operations Manager from the Canal & River Trust had estimated that £10,000 should be enough to cover the repairs to the potholes along the stretch of towpath in Haigh. He was of the view that the Canal & River Trust might have some funds available later in the Summer to put towards it. The Director of Environment was also willing to contribute some funds towards the repairs and also to sound out local Wigan ward councillors to find out whether they would be prepared to contribute some of their Brighter Borough funds. It had been suggested that the Community Payback Scheme could be approached about providing the workforce.

The size of a potential financial contribution from the Parish Council was discussed. The ‘Canal Towpath Reserve’ currently stood at £804.

Resolved: The Council agreed that the ‘Canal Towpath Reserve’ should be increased to £4,000 and approved a virement of £3,196 from the unallocated reserves to the ‘Canal Towpath Reserve’.

More information about the costs of the project was needed from C&RT’s Area Operations Manager. The Clerk advised that he would also need to provide a specification for the work required before the Community Payback Scheme could be approached. Cllr Paul Kenyon agreed to look into this.

142 Bridge 63

Following the Parish Council meeting in January the owner of Bridge 63 (the former Crawford Arms) was identified via a Land Registry search and a letter inviting them to meet with the Chairman to discuss the Parish Council’s concerns was sent to them. A holding reply was received from the owner advising the Council that they were in discussion with Wigan Council’s Planning Department about the building’s future and would update the Parish Council about progress with this once more was known.

Since then the Chairman had heard from a reliable source that the owner of the former pub was consulting other agencies informally via the Planning Department about plans for the future of the property. Subsequently an enquiry about what was happening was submitted to the Planning Department. A reply was awaited.

The matter was discussed briefly. It was agreed that it would be kept on the agenda for the foreseeable future.

143 Christmas Decorations

It was reported that an enquiry had been sent to the Street Lighting officer to establish whether he was yet in a position to address the Council on the matter of Christmas motifs for lamp standards in Haigh Road and what it involved. The Clerk had advised him of the dates of the meetings in March and May. A reply was awaited.

The matter was deferred.

144 Accounts 2023/24

Income: **£Nil**

Expenditure:

No	PAYEE	NARRATIVE	NET	VAT	PAYMENT
43	Employee No.1	Salary (Feb & Mar) (net)	£632.72	N/A	£632.72
44	HMRC	Tax (Feb & Mar)	£158.20	N/A	£158.20
45	Employee No.1	Mileage	£ 5.20	N/A	£ 5.20
46	Digital Impressions	Newsletter printing	£203.00	N/A	£203.00
47	Employee No.1	Land Registry fees	£ 6.00	N/A	£ 6.00
TOTAL:			£1005.12	£0.00	£1005.12

Resolved: The above items were approved for payment.

Balance at bank on 31 January 2024 = **£22,910.21**

Estimated balance at bank following payment of Items 43 to 47 = **£21,905.09**

145 Quarterly Budget Monitoring

The budget monitoring report was received and discussed. It was reported that most cost centres were online. The one exception was the 'Community Engagement' cost centre, which was showing an overspend of £177. This was because both the 2023 and 2024 newsletters had been printed during the 2023-24 financial year.

Resolved: The Council approved a virement of £177 from the 'Contingency' cost centre to the 'Community Engagement' cost centre to balance the overspend.

146 Review of Reserves

The Parish Council still had £3,804 in unallocated reserves which needed to be ring-fenced for other projects. The way forward was discussed.

Resolved: The Council approved the following virements:

- £500 from the above un-allocated reserves to the 'Grants & Donations' cost centre;
- £3,300 to the 'Participatory Budgeting' cost centre.

147 Asset Register 2023-24

The Asset Register had been updated since the meeting in December 2023 to include the grit bin in Hall Lane.

Resolved: The updated Asset Register for 2023-24 was approved.

148 Text for Council Tax Letter

The text about the 2024 Precept for inclusion in the Council Tax letter to be sent to residents was agreed informally by members in February and sent to Wigan Council for publication.

Resolved: The text for the Council Tax letter was approved retrospectively.

149 Clerk's Report

The Clerk informed the Council that there were no additional matters to report.

150 Date of Next Meeting

7 May 2024 at St David's Parish Rooms.

The meeting closed at 9:12 pm
Chairman