

HALSALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Open Meeting of Halsall Parish Wednesday 24th May 2023 at 7.30 p.m. at St Aidan's Hall, Renacres Lane, Halsall.

PRESENT: Cllr. E Wright (Chair), Cllr, M Schofield, Cllr. A Timon, Cllr. K Wright, Cllr. M Lyons, Cllr. K Pyne, Cllr, N McCarthy-Thomason, Cllr, B Roberts, C Pyne (Clerk) , and 9 members of the public.

01/05/2023 Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 25th May 2022

These were approved at the regular Parish Council meeting of 8th June 2022

02/05/2023 Annual Report from Parish Council

Annual report presented by the Chair.

03/05/2023 Financial Report from Parish Council

Report presented by the Clerk.

04/05/2023 Reports by Local Representatives and Organisations

Cllr K Wright read a report submitted by LCC Councillor O'Toole.

Cllr Lyons read a report from Mr Scholes Headmaster at St Cuthbert's School

Rev. Susan Salt thanked all those people who had worked hard to support the Church while waiting for her appointment. There are 126 People on the Church's Electoral roll. Regular services are held on a Sunday and more mid-week services are being introduced. Rev Salt thanked those people who maintain the Church Yard. The Church is a Grade 1 listed building and needs significant investment to maintain it and provide for its regular running costs. Providing disabled access is a challenge, the current entrances to the church have ancient historical burials and these cannot be exhumed. It is a challenge to find solutions that can improve the building and recognise the Grade 1 requirements. We have to protect and cherish the building for future generations.

Vince William from Shirdley Hill Friends of Village Green (FROG) thanked the Parish Council for providing a Tool Shed and for covering the cost of Green Waste disposal. Cllr McCarthy-Thomason was also thanked for his fundraising on behalf of FROG and Village Green activities. The group have extended the woodland path, removing some Willow bushes to introduce a wider variety of shrubs. A new bed for flowering plants has been built and other beds are being replanted. Four picnics are planned for the summer months to raise funds for FROG.

Eleanor Wroe from Halsall Proud & Tidy (HPAT) thanked the many individuals who supported their activities in association with Lancashire Best Kept Village competition. Halsall is a previous winner of the Best Kept Medium Village. This year improvements have been made to the appearance of the Snooker Hut, the Memorial Hall car park, and land around Gregory's Garage. Brian Lloyd was thanked for constructing the planters and the many other individuals who support the litter picking, both special events and taking responsibility for their local lanes. The Cricket Club do an excellent job maintaining the playing fields. Sue Beacon is a member of the RHS and is opening her garden this year to raise funds for charity. HPAT provided catering which generated £600 for the group.

05/05/2023 Open Public Forum

A question was asked about what areas of open space maintenance are managed by the Council so that this work could be integrated with HPAT activities. The Clerk will supply the contract details which are currently being reviewed.

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Comments were made about congestion on Heathey Lane caused by long runs of parked cars making it difficult for farm tractors and cars to pass. Feedback was provided that several houses had recently committed to major projects and tradesmans' vans were a contributing factor. There were other traffic related problems in the village and the Council will comment in the next edition of Halsall News.

There were also reports of households dumping garden refuse in drainage ditches adjoining their properties. The network of drainage ditches is very important in preventing flooding in the Halsall Moss area. The Council will publish a comment in Halsall News.

6/05/2023 Date & Time of Next Meeting

Date and time of next Council meeting: Wednesday 14th June 2023 at 7:30 pm at Memorial Hall.

Meeting Closed 8:50 pm.

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Chair's report on 2022/23 activities (01/04/2022-31/03/2023)

Halsall Parish is blessed with so many volunteers in various groups doing their bit. There are Halsall Proud and Tidy, who tirelessly maintain, broadly, the area around the Memorial Hall and the centre of the village, FROGS (Friends of Shirdley Hill Village Green), who maintain the Village Green and surrounding area, Shirdley Hill Residents' Association, a long standing group who organise social activities and also Shirdley Hill Hub, an association of local residents who have recently formed to organise events/ liaise with the newly formed St Aidan's Hall Committee to maintain the Hall itself, supported by HPC.

Also HPC Councillors are volunteers too and we support both hands on and financially if we can, the various activities, to the best of our abilities.

We have one employee, the Parish Clerk who is the Responsible Finance Officer and administrator, who ensures all Council financial and other matters comply with legislation, prepares accounts, submits returns and even acts as caretaker/ bookings manager/ advisor to the residents of Halsall / makes referrals to WLBC and LCC/ and is in effect general factotum and is the first point of contact in local government matters.

The Parish Council maintains St Aidan's Hall and supports many issues around Halsall Parish directly from revenue Precept received, such as four bus shelters, grounds maintenance at Shirdley Hill, notice boards, benches, and so on but also indirectly supports the Memorial Hall, which is a charity, via capital grants for infrastructure projects and repairs.

The Parish Council has had significant changes and activities in the previous 12 months to 31/03/2023, including:-

Administration

- Resignation of Dave Bond as Parish Clerk on 30/11/2022
- Appointment of Chris Pyne into the role at 01/05/2023
- Cllrs Chris Pyne, Joe Farley, Dave Corfield and Brian Young left us, plus an long standing open vacancy (5 councillors)
- Welcomed Cllrs Mary Lyons, Kim Pyne, Keith Wright, Noel McCarthy-Thomason and in April 2023 Beth Roberts (5 councillors)
- Banking change from RBS to Unity Bank enabling dual online payment authorisation

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- More user friendly accounting system developed - enables clearer information presentation.
- Intranet developed, for Cllr's to access history and ongoing matters
- Funded 50% of Halsall News costs not covered by adverts receipts
- Made donations to support various voluntary groups and funded the Church's insurance excess after Church flagstones were stolen

Events and St Aidan's related matters

- St A Hall Management Committee set up by HPC.
- Projector and screen donated to St A by a local resident.
- To be installed at St A when BT install wifi.
- Leaking gutters fixed at St A, cleaned out and drains unblocked by Councillors and local residents
- New signs for St A donated and installed by a local resident
- Electric upgrade and new lights installed at St A by a local resident FOC
- St A decorated inside and out. Joint voluntary effort by Councillors and local residents
- Memorial Coronation rose bushes purchased and planted.

Events and Memorial Hall related matters

Halsall Parish Council (HPC) is the sole Trustee of Memorial Hall

- Memorial Hall hosted a thank you event, for all the volunteers who do so much in Halsall, **funded by HPC**
- Memorial Hall hosted Remembrance Day refreshments **funded by HPC**
- WWII plaques at the Memorial Gates cleaned and re-lettered. **funded by HPC**
- Quote received to refurbish the War Memorial monument plaques and fix chains..ongoing to be **funded by HPC**
- New projector and wi-fi installed at MH, **funded by HPC**
- Completed new path in the field to the Memorial gates, replaced wire netting along the hedgerow adjoining the road for child safety. **Funded by HPC**
- Access Gate provided next to the Memorial Gates **funded by HPC**
- New saplings to thicken road hedgerow awarded **FOC** by Woodland Trust for Autumn 2023 planting
- Grants received for 2 Coronation Events one at MH and one at Shirdley Hill Village Green on 6/5/2023 and 07/05/2023 from LCC via Cllr O'Toole's discretionary scheme,

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as well as Go Fund me initiated by Cllr McCarthy-Thomason. Joint community effort by Trust/Church/School and residents of Shirdley Hill area.

- Gazebos purchased for each event.
- Coronation memorial plaque to be placed adjacent to the 1911 one in the wall opposite the War Memorial. Oak Tree to be planted.
- Snooker Hut – new windows installed, **partially funded by HPC.**
- Car Park partly resurfaced by generous donation from a resident
- Jointly funded electricity upgrade in the Bakehouse. **Grant from HPC**

Ongoing considerations/matters

- Considering re-lettering/cleaning WWI plaques on Memorial monument.
- Additional car parking
- Archiving past documents

Liz Wright

24/05/2023

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Financial Report - Revenue Spending

2022 to 2023

Halsall Parish Council budget	£31,307
Spending on Budget was	£27,073
Underspend was	£4,234

but actually overspent as only received £20,000 in funding

Funding for Budget came from

West Lancs Borough Council Precept + Grants	£20,461
Halsall Parish Council Reserves	£6,611

End of Year Balance of Parish Council Reserves £8,856
(Required to hold minimum 25% Reserves = £8994 so close to minimum)

Major Expenditure in 2022/23

Parish Clerks Salary	£11,217
Open Spaces Maintenance	£2,884
Insurance	£2,496
Parish Clerks Tax, NI and Expenses	£2,155
Utilities (Gas, Electric, Water)	£1,824 (expecting a 3 to 5 times increase in cost)

2023 to 2024

Proposed Budget	£35,977
WLBC Precept	£32,783
Band D Council Tax	£37.09

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

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Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen

My annual report on behalf of Lancashire County council .

I realise that many people across the country are very fed up with politics and unfortunately with my party in particular. In fact just a couple of days ago I lost my Borough seat. I had held the seat of Aughton and Downholland for over thirty-three years. The public are unhappy with the central government and are showing their frustration by blaming local councillors . As your representative on Lancashire County Council I have as much input into what is decided in Downing Street as anyone in this room .

Libraries

So what about Lancashire County Council which is under the control of my party and of which I am a prominent member . You may remember a few years ago that our opposition aided by the Lib Dems closed half the public libraries in Lancashire .

Well I'm delighted to say we have reopened dozens of them including three in West Lancashire . We still have more to open, You may ask why haven't we reopened them all . Quite simply because many of the sites were sold off and the books destroyed . Nevertheless we are determined to open as many as we can.

Education .

After inheriting a dismal Ofsted report on many schools in Lancashire seeing some on the verge of special measures we have fought to bring them back to a high standard which resulted in an excellent Ofsted. We are encouraging many organisations to offer apprenticeships and we have seen a significant uptake in young people taking up the offers . We have built new primary schools across the county and are continuing to improve school standards wherever possible . LCC also are responsible for children looked after and for the placing of foster children

Health

We work closely with our NHS colleagues and have created a new Health Scrutiny Management board which is cross party and has representatives from outside bodies from across Lancashire

Development Control

This extremely important function is responsible for ensuring Lancashire maintains its magnificent greenbelt while at the same time controls or encourages development across the county whichever the case may be.

Waste

Although the local councils collect your domestic , recycling waste and garden waste it is the County Councils job to sort it for recycling, to grade it and to dispose of it . We also manage waste disposal sites across the county .

Adult social care .

LCC manages a number of care and nursing homes in every Borough and District in Lancashire where we deal with a massive number of issues and problems in a caring and empathetic way . We also inspect private care homes to ensure they meet the required standards apart from the homes we employ a large number of carers who visit elderly and infirm people in their homes

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Transport .

We manage bus routes across the county working with private operators to provide a county wide service that not only serves Lancashire but also takes residents to neighbouring towns such as Manchester and Liverpool . We provide and maintain bus stops and Bus Shelters in every town and village in Lancashire

Highways

Now the one everybody mentions. We inherited over 30 years of neglect on our highways . Immediately we started repairing and improving roads across the thousands of miles across the county . We spent millions on the latest equipment .

In the first six months of our administration we filled in over fifty thousand potholes and are continuing to do so at the rate of thousands each month .

But I must point out that many of the complaints I receive are as a result of the many different organisations who are allowed to dig up the road . Utility companies such as British Gas. Electric and Phone companies suppliers of Wi-Fi cables , Water and Sewage in fact the list is almost endless . These firms and organisations have Permitted Development Rights so LCC has no control over them .

As I represent a mostly rural Division I am not happy to tell you that legislation advises that preference for highway repairs will in fact must be given to main arterial and urban roads as a result of TAMP (TRAFFIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN) in fact our government funding depends on us exercising the plan . We would be financially penalised if we didn't comply with the TAMP .

In Halsall I have been able to ensure that a number of highway matters have been dealt with within the constraints of the TAMP . However I must explain that a number of road works are carried out by other agencies such as UU , Virgin and power supply companies under PERMITTED POWERS and LCC have to allow. It's often the case that such disruptions are reported to me when I have no power or influence in the matter.

Above is a brief report on the activities of the County Council.

Finally I can report that neighbouring authorities are in great financial trouble. WLBC has a massive deficit has does Chorley Council , Blackburn and Blackpool all feature in the list of councils with large debts. At LCC the outgoing administration left us with a debt of over 200 million . We have reduced that considerably whilst improving services and even putting money into reserves.

I would like to thank your very able Clerk who keeps me informed on your behalf.

David O'Toole

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Halsall St Cuthbert's

Admissions : September 2023

Initial school offers, for reception places in September, were recently sent out to parents via e-mail. Parents who have been unsuccessful in accessing a place for their child, have the right to follow an Appeal Process. Appeal forms can be accessed from the LEA.

If there is anyone who requires further information about the Appeal Process, please do not hesitate to contact the school. (01704-840253) Many thanks for your interest.

Atlantic Crossing Adventure

Mr Andrew Bedwell, one of our parents, will be shortly undertaking an immense challenge. He will be hoping to achieve a World Record Atlantic Ocean Crossing.

It will be a solo trip, in the smallest-ever craft to cross the Atlantic. The craft measures a mere 1 metre in length. He will be sailing from Newfoundland to England. Unbelievable! For further information, search for Andrew Bedwell on youtube. There are some fascinating clips about this incredible challenge.

For inspiration and to keep Mr Bedwell's spirits up in the 90+ day journey, the children have been drawing a few pictures and writing some good luck messages. Many have written on the inside of the vessel.

Bikeability : Fabulous Experience

The year 5 children had a fabulous time on the recent Bikeability course. They practised in the playground and then spent lots of time learning how to cycle safely on the roads.

Everyone passed a skills test and received a certificate. The instructors praised the children for their good listening, effort and excellent behaviour.

Well done to all the year 5 children and a big thanks to the instructors for all their hard work and the parents for helping drop-off and collect the bikes so punctually.

County Finals : Indoor Athletics

Having won the small schools' indoor athletics competition for West Lancashire, Halsall St Cuthbert's represented the district at the county finals in Blackpool. Competing against 16 other district-winning schools, the children did brilliantly, finishing 8th on the day. A big thanks to Mrs Dunne, Mrs Neale and Mrs Crilly, for supervising the team and giving the children this wonderful opportunity. Well done to everyone.

Kenyon Shield Winners : Spring 2

Our special winners for this half-term were :

Reception : Chloe McGaw

Year 1 : Brooke Kenningley

Year 2 : Paul Barrett

Year 3 : Isla Murphy

Year 4 : Oliver Major

Year 5 : Prateik Reddy

Year 6 : Poppy Skinner Congratulations and very well done to them all.

Busy Summer Term

A few things to look forward to over the next few months :

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

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Coronation Party Thurs 4th May
PGL Year 5 8 th to 10 th May
PGL Year 4 10th to 12 May
SATS Week 9th to 12th May
Strawberry Teas Thur 25th May
Llandudno Holiday 12th to 16th June
Summer Carnival Sat 8th July
Sports Day Wed 12th July
Leavers' Service Thur 20th July
Break-Up Frid 21st July
School trips Various dates
Inter-School sports Various dates

Doug Scholes (Head Teacher)

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

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