

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 21st MAY 2024 AT 7.00PM AT HARGRAVE VILLAGE HALL

In Attendance: Cllr R Bird

Cllr F Halton

Cllr S Martin

Cllr C Nicholls

Cllr M Pilkington

Cllr M Roscoe

Cllr L Sackett (Chairman)

Members of the Public: 0

Cllr Bird opened the meeting as Chairman and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR 2024-25.

Nominations for Chair had been sought and Cllr Halton has proposed Cllr Sackett as Chairman for 2024-25, this was seconded by Cllr Nicholls.

Vote: Fore 6

Against 0

Abstains 0

RESOLVED 24/001 – that Cllr Sackett be elected as Chairman for period 2024-25.

Cllr Sackett signed her acceptance of office.

Nominations for Vice-Chairman had been sought and Cllr Sackett has proposed Cllr Nicholls as Vice-Chairman for 2024-25, this was seconded by Cllr Jones.

Vote: Fore 6

Against 0

Abstains 0

RESOLVED 24/002 – that Cllr Nicholls be elected as Vice-Chairman for period 2024-25.

Cllr Nicholls signed her acceptance of office.

Cllr Sackett thanked Cllr Bird for being Chairman for 2023-24 and continued with the meeting.

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Ratledge due to personal commitments, Cllr R Jones and Cllr M Jones due to work commitments.

DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS

Cllr Sackett declared a non-pecuniary interest in any planning applications relating to Hillside, Huxley Lane due to neighbouring the property and undertook not to vote on anything relating to this matter.

PUBLIC SESSION – Nothing raised.

MINUTES

RESOLVED 24/004 that the Chairman signs, as a true and correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 19th March 2024 proposed by Cllr Roscoe and seconded by Cllr Halton.



ACTIONS

Actions not otherwise on the agenda that had been completed:-

- Clerk had contacted Mid-Cheshire Footpath Society to ask if they would be willing to progress a PPO for the footpath between Gatesheath and Hatton Hall and whilst they had confirmed they could assist in providing evidence of use they would not be willing to progress a PPO.
- Residents had been asked to nominate stiles for possible replacements to kissing gates in a recent Down-our-Way – unfortunately the Clerk confirmed she had not received any response to this request.
- Cllr M Jones had reviewed the condition of the footpath on Huxley Lane.
- Withdrawal of Community Bus Services – Clerk had forwarded the information to Cllr M Jones.
- Clerk had emailed the PCSO regarding greater visibility of the PCSO but received no response back.
- Clerk had forwarded resident information about the local HomeWatch Group.
- Clerk had responded back to landowner about representation regarding a planning application for Williams Wood.
- Clerk had provided Catherine Morgetroyd's contact information to Cllr Sackett
- Clerk had emailed CWaC regarding if they offered support regarding FOI requests but received no response.
- Clerk had forwarded list of Community Groups to the Parish Council for them to review and confirm and provide email addresses.
- Clerk had put the Parish Meeting date and information in Down our Way.

Actions not otherwise on the agenda still outstanding:-

- Cllr Ratledge, Martin & Cllr Roscoe undertook to arrange for the relocation of the Beacon when the weather improves.
- Move the Beacon to the other side of the wall so it is less conspicuous.
- Cllr Nicholls has the plaque available to fix when the Beacon has been relocated.
- Cllr Pilkington to identify two possible further stiles to replace with kissing gates.

BUSINESS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Footpaths – Cllr Pilkington reported she had recently walked from Walk Mill towards Brereton Park and there is a kissing gate then if you walk towards Brereton Park Farm and then further along a stile has fallen into the ditch together with another stile in disrepair further along the footpath, these could be considered for the Parish Council to change to Kissing Gates.

Cllr Pilkington also reported there was also a stile on the footpath between Hargrave and Huxley that she suggested could be replaced after being damaged recently.

Cllr Halton reported upon a stile on the footpath opposite the school in Huxley and a footpath in disrepair.

ACTION: Cllr Pilkington undertakes to identify stiles that could be replaced in the area.

ACTION: Cllr Pilkington undertakes to identify the landowners and make contact.

ACTION: Cllr Halton to provide photograph evidence of the footpath in disrepair so that the Clerk can report to CWaC PROW Officer.

ACTION: All Parish Councillors to take pictures of any stiles in the area when they are out walking, so we can log them all.

Community Litter Picking – It was reported that the Community Litter Picking Events had been held on 6th April 2024 at Hargrave and 13th April 2024 at Huxley between 10.00am - 12.00 noon. Residents' attendance had been disappointing. Plan to do another Litter Pick end of September/October and one in March.

Cllr Nicholls suggested a joint Parish Council / Happy Days Community Litter Picking event that could also include some sort of family trail and refreshments could be trialled.

ACTION: It was agreed to explore this for the next litter picking event.

Review of Condition and Safety of Assets – It was reported that the Parish Council Beacon relocation remained outstanding until the weather improved and should remain on the agenda.

ACTION: Cllr Martin confirmed that he would organise the relocation of the Beacon within the next two months.

Footpaths/Pavements in Huxley – Following the last meeting, Cllr M Jones had reviewed the condition of the pavement in Huxley and reported back that he understood the cracks with grass growing in them up the footpath sadly does not satisfy the safety reasons for the CWaC to be spurred into action.

Cllr M Jones suggested that perhaps the residents would be interested in undertaking a community initiative to clean the footpaths to get rid of the detritus thrown up from the road and get the hedges properly cutting back to allow the full width of the footpath to be available.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain quotes from companies to look to repair the footpaths.

Councillors reported that there are several hedges in the area that are overgrown and it was agreed that Parish Councillors should report these and provide any reference codes to the Clerk for her to monitor.

Assets of Community Value – it was reported that further information in relation to this had been circulated since the last meeting. The Clerk had spoken with an Officer from CWaC and it had been highlighted that only Community Assets that were not currently owned by the community and considered to be in danger of being lost/sold that the Community would be prepared to purchase are eligible to apply for registration as an Asset of Community Value. Therefore, it was agreed at this stage not to take this forward.

Speeding and Road Safety within the Parish – it was reported that CWaC had undertaken their official Traffic Data Survey and whilst we are awaiting the receipt of a copy of the official speed limit assessment for Huxley Lane. Provisionally, CWaC had reported that it is expected to indicate a reduction to 50 mph for the entire extent of the proposed reduction. Mean speeds are low and only 5% of drivers are exceeding 50 mph. Consequently, a 50 mph speed limit may become a target for some motorists and may increase mean speed. CWaC was therefore recommending no change to the existing speed limit. The Parish Council undertook to wait on the official Traffic Data Survey results and CWaC recommendation.

Cllr Sackett reported that the SID that was owned by CWaC for PC's to use had now been relocated to the local PCSO's responsibility. It was agreed for the clerk to keep the Parish Council informed of any training she was aware of. Cllr Sackett suggested the purchase of either a VAS or SID machine.

ACTION: The Clerk was asked to seek quotes for a SID machine

Any other correspondence

A resident raised a concern about the location of telegraph poles that are being installed by Openreach. Cllr Sackett confirmed that she had looked at the planning register for the location of the poles and this had been decided by CWaC, the PC have no say in this and therefore directed the resident to the planning department at CWaC. According to the Openreach website, broadband was scheduled to be installed in Hargrave by June 2024.

PLANNING

The Planning Register dated 13/05/2024 was accepted and changes to the planning register from last meeting were noted.

It was reported that the following applications had been consulted upon since the last meeting:-
24/01126/FUL – Hillside, Huxley Lane, Huxley CH3 9BG – Erection of front storm porch, single storey side and first floor rear extension and alteration to elevation. The Parish Council submitted a '*No Objection*' response to this application.

It was reported that the following land had been reported to Planning Enforcement:-
EN608792464 – The Croft, Corner of Huxley Lane & Long Lane – this has had a barn on it for several years and in the past had ponies grazing on it. It has more recently become a scrap yard and residents had reported to the PC they believed that a business was being run from the site.

Cllr Bird reported upon a shed that had been built on a plot of unowned land in Faulk Stapleford. He undertook to provide pictures to the Parish Council.

ACTION: Cllr Bird to provide details.

Parish Councillors raised concern about the hedge on Green Farm that had been pulled up and replaced with a wooden fence. The Clerk reported that this had been reported to CWaC in 2022 and Planning Enforcement had confirmed that it was allowed under Permitted Developments.

ACTION: Cllr Nicholls to provide evidence she found with regards to established native hedges.

It was reported that the following applications had been decided since the last meeting:-

23/02880/FUL – Old Hall Barn, Church Lane, Hargrave, Chester CH3 7RH – Proposed replacement of internal first floor to outbuilding. Confirmation of residential use – *Approved*.

23/03151/FUL – Hargrave Farm, Church Lane, Hargrave CH3 7RH – Proposed additional access drive to serve farm – *Withdrawn*.

23/03812/FUL – Meadow Cottage, Old Hall Lane, Foulk Stapleford, Chester CH3 7RT – Erection of oak framed log store with hipped slate roof adjoining existing garage (retrospective) – *Withdrawn*.

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Cllr Nicholls reported that they have had advice from CWaC that due to the changes that are currently being proposed at National and Local plan Level, it may be better to review the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan once the new National Policy and Local Plans are in place. Therefore, the Parish Council agreed to review again once there is an idea of the proposed changes.

Cllr Nicholls suggested that the Parish Council should start to think about collecting evidence linked data and monitor the current Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council agreed that this monitoring should be undertaken.

The Clerk highlighted the Local Plan event that Cheshire West and Chester were running to consult with local communities on their proposed amendments to the Local Plan. Cllr Sackett agreed that it was important for Parish Councillors who are available to attend this.

AUDIT & AGAR

The Clerk provided the meeting with information regarding to the finances for 2023-24.

- Summary of 2023-24 – This was circulated to all Parish Councillors for information.
- Internal Audit Report - the Council noted the report dated 15/04/2024 from the Internal Auditor.
- Governance Statement RESOLVED 24/005 – That the council agree to all points on the Governance Statement Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 22-23.
- Accounting Statement RESOLVED 24/006 – That the council agree the accounting statement of the AGAR 24-25.
- Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return - the council agreed to publish the notice of Public Rights commencing 3rd June and ending 12th July 2024
- **ACTION:** Submit External Audit information to PKF LittleJohn.

ACTION: Post Audit Papers & Summary Report on website.

FINANCIAL ITEMS

Cashbook and Out-turn Forecast YTD

RESOLVED 24/007 Year to date cashbook and out-turn report dated 13/05/2024 was approved as a true and correct record.

Payments approved to be made in between meetings - RESOLVED 24/008 – to accept that the clerk could make payments, in between meetings, throughout the year in-line with budget for the following budgeted items:-

Clerk's Salary	Room Hire
Clerk's Expenses	CHALC Membership
Training	SLCC Membership
Payroll	Data Protection
Internal Audit	Refund Churchyard Grant Monies
Admin/Website Costs	

Internal Audit Report

The Council reviewed the comments provided by the Internal Auditor and agreed the following actions:-

1. Invoice number 15 Information Commissioners Office: the amount due was £40.00, I noted that was reduced to £35.00 as the invoice was paid by direct debit -*Noted*.
2. Invoice number 36 Clerk's expenses: On a 'mixed' receipt I suggest highlighting items pertaining to the Clerk's expenses so that these are easily recognisable – *Noted and Clerk to action*.
3. Invoice number 45 Clerk's expenses: Where items have been split between numerous parish councils, I suggest showing the details of the split on the line entry of the expense claim. – *Noted and Clerk to action*.
4. Invoice number 54 Clerk's expenses: Where items have been split between numerous parish councils, I suggest showing the details of the split on the line entry of the expense claim. – *Noted and Clerk to action*.
5. There appears to be a misfiled document in the current account section, this is indicated by a post it note – *Noted and Clerk had resolved this*.

Direct Debits

It was RESOLVED 24/009 that the Parish Council wished to continue to pay the ICO subscription for 2024-25 by Direct Debit.

Bank Reconciliation against Cashbook YTD – RESOLVED 24/010 – that Cllr Pilkington signed the Bank Reconciliation and Bank Statements.

Payments Made & Received since the last meeting:-

Income received since the last meeting:-

£29.16 & £32.68 in Bank Interest

£6,057.00 - Annual Precept Payment from Cheshire West and Chester Council

Payments made since the last meeting - for approval

Date	Payable to	Net Amount	VAT	Gross Amount	Comment
22/04/2024	CHALC	£156.94	0	£156.94	Annual Affiliation Fees
22/04/2024	Hargrave PCC	£28.00	£0.00	£28.00	Room Hire
22/04/2024	Mrs T Ryall-Harvey	£16.00	£3.20	£19.20	Website Domain Registration

22/04/2024	PQR Limited	£58.50	£11.70	£70.20	Payroll Processing for Apr-Oct 24
25/04/2024	Mrs T Ryall-Harvey	£689.03	£0.00	£689.03	Salary for Tax Month1
29-04-2024	Mid Cheshire Footpath Association	£8.00	£0.00	£8.00	Annual Subscription
29-04-2024	National Association of Local Councils	£50.00	£10.00	£60.00	LCAS Application Fee

Payments not yet made - for approval

Date	Payable to	Net Amount	VAT	Gross Amount	Comment
	Mrs T Ryall-Harvey	£288.95	£0.00	£288.95	Salary Tax Month 2
	Mrs T Ryall-Harvey	£95.73	£12.27	£108.00	Clerk's Expenses
	S. M Irlam	£50.00	£0.00	£50.00	Internal Auditor

RESOLVED 24/011 to accept the income and payments since the last meeting for approval.

PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

Policy Schedule Review

Following the circulation of policy schedule it was RESOLVED 24/012 to accept all policies as listed and review again in May 2025 it was however noted that NALC had circulated a set of revised Financial Regulations and it was agreed that the Clerk review these and provide the Parish Council with a summary of the changes against the Parish Council's current Financial Regulations and bring to the next Parish Council Meeting if the Parish Council wishes to update.

ACTION: Clerk to circulate amended Financial Regulations highlighting the changes to the Parish Councillors.

Schedule of Meetings for 2024-25

RESOLVED 24/013 that the Parish Council change their meeting dates and times to allow those Parish Councillors who work full-time and struggle to make the current date and times, the opportunity to attend meetings. Therefore for 2024-25 the meeting were agreed to be held at 5.00pm on the following dates:

Sunday 7th July in Huxley Village Hall

Sunday 5th January 2025 in Hargrave Village Hall

Sunday 1st September in Hargrave Village Hall

Sunday 2nd March 2025 in Huxley Village Hall

Sunday 3rd November in Huxley Village Hall

Sunday 4th May 2025 in Hargrave Village Hall.

Roles and Responsibilities

RESOLED 24/014 that the following responsibilities would be lead by:-

- Planning Matters – Lead Parish Councillor for two month period-:
 - May & June Cllr Bird and Cllr Roscoe
 - July & August Cllr Halton and Cllr Pilkington
 - September & October Cllr Sackett and Cllr Martin
 - November & December Cllr Nicholls & Cllr R Jones
 - January & February Cllr Ratledge & Cllr Sackett
 - March & April Cllr Bird & Cllr Roscoe
- Down our Way (monthly contributions to the newsletter) – Cllr Nicholls
- Moulson Trust Committee – Cllr Roscoe
- Online signatories – Cllr Roscoe, Cllr Bird
- Assets – to review and report back any maintenance requirements – Cllr Martin and Cllr Roscoe
- Footpaths – Cllr Pilkington
- Noticeboard (installation of Agendas and updated information) – Cllr Ratledge, Cllr Roscoe
- Highways - Cllr Ratledge, Cllr Pilkington & Cllr Bird.

Environmental Working Group- Cllr Nicholls proposed the creation of an Environmental Working Group with the purpose of addressing environment related issues, of interest and concern to local residents.

Topics are likely to include:

- Promoting biodiversity
- Flooding / Climate emergency
- Energy and energy efficiency projects – reducing the community carbon footprint
- Promoting positive action by residents

The starting point would be to identify priority areas perhaps by surveying or inviting the residents to share ideas/thoughts at a workshop.

Initiatives or projects would be developed as necessary from there.

It could involve identifying areas for tree planting. Helping residents to be more energy efficient, through awareness workshops.

RESOLVED 24/015 - Cllr Nicholls to seek volunteers to start this Working Group.

Future Projects Working Group – it was proposed that a Future Projects Working Group be created with the purpose of identifying and reviewing projects that the Parish Council could undertake to utilise the CIL Money received in and plan their roll out over the next five years.

RESOLVED 24/016 – to set up a Future Projects Working Group and bring any recommendations to a future meeting.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be the Parish Council Meeting and will take place on Sunday 7th July 2024 at 7.00pm in Huxley Village Hall.

Signed:... 

The meeting closed at 20:43
Dated: 17.7.2024