

Minutes of the Meeting of Hale Parish Council

Hale Village Hall

Monday 20th November 2023 – 8.00pm

In attendance

Cllr Mitchell (Chair)

Cllr Healy

Cllr Williams

Cllr Anderson

Cllr Lewis

Cllr Brown

Cllr Roberts

Cllr Cleary

Cllr Trevaskis

In addition there were 36 members of the public present.

Apologies

Cllr King

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mitchell declared an interest in the 'Vote of no confidence' motion as she was named in the motion and an interest in the approval of payments as she would be a recipient of one.

Cllr Anderson declared an interests in the item 'payments to staff' as it was her motion.

Public Participation

The Council was invited to note with regard to the makeup of the current cohort only 2 members are new to the Council. Members were asked what progress had been made with regard to fundraising or grant applications for the running of the Village Hall. The Chair responded that this was a matter for the Village Hall Committee and should be addressed there. It was agreed that the Council would produce a list of Councillors and their length of service.

A request to view the correspondence between the gas supplier Cadent and the Village Hall Committee was made and the Chair advised that this should be brought up at the Committee meeting not at the Council meeting.

A request was made that the forthcoming Finance Committee Meeting be well advertised in advance of the meeting.

Vote of No Confidence

Cllr Roberts spoke to this motion expressing disappointment that the Chair had been unsuccessful in moving the Council forward and cited a number of issues of concern

including a lack of transparency; bullying of staff; lack of financial continuity following the suspension of the Clerk; inability to control meetings and fostering an environment within the Council that allowed in-fighting and fractionalisation.

Cllr Roberts spoke of the considerable amount of good and positive work the Chair had done in the community of Hale but concluded that the Council could not function fully under the current chairmanship.

The Chair responded by refuting the claims made by Cllr Roberts and adding that the behaviour of the Council was not the sole responsibility of the Chair.

The motion to pass a vote of no confidence in the Chair was put to the meeting.

Proposer: Cllr Roberts

Seconded: Cllr Williams

The vote was 4 for; 4 against; 1 abstention – the Chair used her casting vote against

The motion was lost

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th October were circulated prior to the meeting.

It was agreed that the minutes be approved as a correct record subject to the clarification that a named vote does not have to be made prior to the vote taking place.

Proposer: Cllr Lewis

Seconded: Cllr Anderson

All votes were in favour

Finance

The Council was asked to approve the following payments:

Civic Service Expenses	£164.54 (payment to Cllr Lewis)
Cllr Mitchell	£45.50
ChALC (Training)	£25.00 x 2 (ChALC)
Election Costs	£3093.06 (Halton BC)
Poppy Wreath	£25.00(Cllr Mitchell)
Christmas Tree	£120.00 (Wellbeing Fund)

It was proposed the payments be approved except for the £120.00 (Christmas Tree). The status of this payment is to be checked and if necessary brought back to the Council for payment.

Proposer: Cllr Cleary

Seconded: Cllr Brown

All votes were in favour

Payments to Staff

Cllr Anderson asked that the Council express its thanks to the Staff for their patience and loyalty to the Village Hall and the Community. She added that the Council should apologise to those Staff.

It was agreed that the Council would apologise and thank the staff for their continued support.

Proposer: Cllr Roberts

Seconded: Cllr Trevaskis

All votes were in favour

Jubilee Celebrations

The Council requested an update on the allocation of surplus funds and were advised on behalf of the Freemen that the surplus had been used for two picnic benches which have been situated in Hale park.

Accounts

Members were invited to note that the current account balance stands at £46,209.91.

Bank Signatories

Members reviewed correspondence from the Bank and confirmed the active signatories as set out below.

	Name	Permissions
Authorised Signatories	B Hargreaves	V + S
Village Hall Account	C Anderson	V + A
	M Roberts	V + A
	P Lewis	V + A (added)
	C Williams	V + A

Authorised Signatories	B Hargreaves	V + S
Parish Council Account	C Anderson	V + A
	M Roberts	V + A
	P Lewis	V + A (added)

The signatories above were agreed by the Council.

It was further agreed that G Wright be removed from the account.

Proposer: Cllr Trevaskis

Seconded: Cllr Anderson

In addition the Council also agreed to add Cllr Lewis to the list of authorised signatories.

Proposer: Cllr Roberts

Seconded: Cllr Trevaskis

Land on Town Lane

Cllr Anderson asked about the current status of the land and was advised by the Chair that a planning application had been submitted and would be considered by Halton Borough Council on the 5th December.

A member of the public wanted to raise an objection to the application as the environmental report submitted made no mention of the old pond that was on the land. The Chair mentioned a meeting held some time ago with the Developers and the issue of the pond had been raised there.

The Council agreed that Cllr Trevaskis would make representations to the planning department on their behalf.

Proposer: Cllr Mitchell

Seconded: Cllr Lewis

2024 D Day Celebrations

Cllr Roberts stated that he was awaiting an update from the new Lord Mayor so that any diary clashes with other groups could be avoided and so asked that this item be deferred until the January meeting.

Location of Christmas Crib

Permission was sought from the Council to site the Christmas Crib in the 'coffee shop' area of the Village Hall. The Chair pointed out that this was really a matter for the Village Hall Committee to consider but members understood the time sensitivity of the issue.

It was proposed that the Council book the space and pay a hire fee of up to £100 for 1 month subject to the appropriate Risk Assessment being undertaken.

Proposer: Cllr Roberts

Seconded: Cllr Trevaskis

The proposal was carried with 8 votes for and 1 abstention

Request from Hale Bank Parish Council

Hale Bank asked Hale Parish Council to support their media release with regard to the proposed development 22/00423/OUTEIA – Land at Halebank.

It was proposed that Cllr Roberts would draft a letter of support, share it with fellow councillors and then send it to the clerk at Hale Bank.

Proposer: Cllr Williams

Seconded: Cllr Brown

The proposal was unanimously agreed.

Extra-ordinary meeting date

Members needed to arrange a further meeting to agree the budget and subsequent precept request. However, it was felt that it would be useful to have a meeting of the Finance Committee to draft proposals first.

It was proposed that a meeting of the Finance Committee would take place on Monday 11th December.

Proposer: Cllr Roberts

Seconded: Cllr Trevaskis

A named vote was requested by Cllr Trevaskis

The proposal was agreed with Cllrs Brown and Healy voting against

The meeting was then closed to the press and public due to the confidential nature of the business to be conducted as defined in Schedule 12 of the LGA 1972.