

HAUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer: Debbie Sellick-Fellows

www.haughton-staffs.org.uk

[Email: clerk@haughtonpc-staffs.org.uk](mailto:clerk@haughtonpc-staffs.org.uk)

Minutes of the Meeting of Haughton Parish Council held at Haughton Village Hall at 7p.m. on Monday 28 November 2022

Attendees:

Parish Councillors: Ian Sunley (Chair), Michael Allen (MA), Gill Anslow (GA), Mark Burgess (MB), Peter Prokopa (VC [Vice Chair]), Stuart Taylor (ST), Jane Woodcock (JW)
County Cllr. Mark Winnington (MW), Borough Cllr. Ray Sutherland (RS) – Majority of meeting
Parish Clerk: Debbie Sellick-Fellows

1. To receive apologies and accept and record any reasons for absences

PCSO Rebecca Moores not in attendance. Clerk did not receive any apologies.

2. To receive declarations of interest from members regarding items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest.

3. To receive and confirm minutes of meeting held on Monday 24th October, 2022

Clerk to correct typos on October minutes. These were accepted as a true and accurate record and were unanimously approved for the Chairman to sign.

4. To receive reports from Borough, County Councillors, Clerk, SPCA and PCSO

- No Police report received.
- Clerk's Briefing Notes received and read. **Council to advise Clerk on matters for HPC website relating to "Frequently Asked Questions".**
- No SPCA report.
- RS reported concerns and severe restrictions with Stafford Borough Council budget for 2023. He advised Council that he is working with planning officers on Haughton House Farm regarding two new barns and that with guidance it will move forward in spring 2023. There was nothing to report on the appeal for Church Eaton Lane. S.106 monies from SBC are active and await invoices prior to remittance. Council notified RS of issues and difficulties arising from ownership of Jim Jarvis playing fields. **Clerk to forward RS email conversations regarding this matter.**
- MW reported that issues in the County were quiet. The Government has allowed a 1% increase in the council tax for Health and Social Care. The Community Speed Watch is active, weather permitting, as it can only operate in daylight when it is not raining. An application for HS2 monies of £30k for speed buffer zones and electronic warning signs has been raised as it is predicted that A518 traffic will increase. £250k for average speed cameras in Gnosall and Haughton.

5. To consider planning matters, including planning decisions, notifications of appeals and updates

None to report.

6. Local Plan Consultation Report 2020-2040

Three thousand to six thousand new houses planned to be built and this may impact on surrounding villages. This averages out at seven hundred to nine hundred new homes per year. These numbers will not change as it is a Government requirement. It is estimated that it will take four years for work to begin. New properties are proposed for Gnosall but at the moment no new builds in Haughton as there is no Doctors Surgery and the village is in the second tier. Meecebrook, Garden Village also have new properties planned for the future.

7. To discuss Clerk's tools: PC upgrade to laptop and mobile phone

Clerk's P.C. is not running at full capacity (slow/error messages) and this is impacting on the number of hours Clerk is spending on the job. A unanimous vote approved for the **Chairman to research a suitable replacement**. A laptop being more favourable, as this will allow Clerk to work remotely. Estimated cost between £500.00 - £600.00

Clerk is not keen to use personal mobile phone for public duty. Playing field signage requires amending since former Clerk resigned. Future costs regarding this signage could be avoided should Council agree to a dedicated HPC Clerk phone. **Chairman to gain quotes** on a pay-as-you-go or sim contract with data and investigate prices for a basic mobile phone.

8. Consider the creation of wild meadow areas to reduce the frequency of grass cutting

MW suggested that specific areas are left natural and during July and August which will encourage wild flowers and reduce environmental costs. GA expressed interest in this matter and Council discussed various areas for potential sites. Pedestrian safety and road safety were highlighted, as heavy machinery and cutting equipment would not be required. RS mentioned that wild meadow areas are popular with surrounding villages and suggested contacting Roy Wood at Millennium Green and The Wildlife Trust for seed donations.

9. To consider matters of finance including:

Discussions were held regarding the need to consult Council regarding leaving gifts and a majority vote carried. It was noted that this years' accounts would require external audit.

a) The following expenditure was approved for payment

DESCRIPTION	NET	VAT	GROSS
Wages and Expenses inc. back pay (NALC 2022)	£1878.41	£3.66	£1882.07
Haughton Village Hall (Oct mtg & CSW)	£50.00		£50.00
JR Landscaping	£431.25	£86.25	£517.50
HAGS-SMP Ltd (Park equipment)	£124.50	£24.90	£149.40
Royal British Legion Wreath Donation	£50.00		£50.00
TOTALS	<u>£2534.16</u>	<u>£114.81</u>	<u>£2648.97</u>

b) Financial reports were received and accepted

See Appendix A

10. To discuss highways, public rights of way issues including those requiring reporting

a) Highways including grass cutting:

- ST mentioned that an overhanging branch is a potential hazard and because of its height, requires a ladder to cut from tree. **MW to escalate this issue.**
- A work schedule compiled by Clerk, gathering data from invoices received from JR Landscaping, suggests that there are a number of cuts missing from this fiscal year. ST suggested a meeting with JR Landscaping to discuss options or possible refund. **Clerk to check the cut dates with JR Landscaping and set up a meeting with management of JR Landscaping.**

b) Public Rights of Way:

- Footpath 47 - VC reported that the landowner has objected to stiles being moved. Therefore, no stiles will be moved, until the definitive map in contention is clarified.

11. To receive report from Councillors/Clerk on:

a) Park: All park hedges are looking neat and a branch has been taken down which was a potential hazard. Routine inspections by the Park Warden (Phil Michie) revealed a fence pale was off. Park Warden replaced and reported now intact. It was noted the brook that the Park Warden cleared is again filling with mud, due to large tractors breaking up the brook edges which are now collapsing. **ST to action a discussion to try to prevent this from occurring.**

b) Football Pitch: Matches were cancelled due to soggy pitch and lines have been washed away. Clerk has requested fixtures lists from football users in order to co-ordinate with JR Landscaping on usage/work requirements.

12. Dale Common update – to verify/review Staffordshire Wildlife Trust documentation

Contract has been reviewed by Mr Ian Forrester which highlighted Council responsibilities under S2. Appendix 2 which could be onerous, expensive to implement and time and labour consuming in the future. The conditions to the grazing of the common are also considered onerous and may prevent future grazing use and HPC would be responsible to ensure that any grazier complied with the conditions set out in this section. **Chair to contact Peter Case to discuss these issues and amend contract to incorporate a Wayleave agreement.** Concerns were also raised regarding **Public Liability Insurance, Clerk to investigate and report.** Solicitor charges were unanimously agreed.

13. Grant applications/projects update – thermal imaging camera and composter initiative

- ST queried delays to composter bins for two outstanding villagers **and Chair agreed to place order as banking for Clerk has been delayed.**
- Thermal Imaging grant approved but awaiting receipt of monies. **ST to investigate price differential and evaluate like-for-like on each camera quote received.**

14. To convene a meeting of the Policy Review Working Group to review documentation including draft appraisal procedure

Apologies given by Chair as this action has been on hold. **Chair to organise in January 2023.**

MW and RS (County and Borough Councillor) departed the meeting, at this stage.

15. Matters of consideration for 2023/2024 budget

An initial estimate of the itemised budget was discussed and amended as necessary. It was decided that two Civic Amenity Visits would be planned for in 2023. **Clerk to liaise with Village Hall and Stafford BC regarding dates.** The 2022/23 Precept of £24k was unanimously agreed, therefore, **Clerk to notify SBC of the tax base calculation.** Any further budget matters that occur will be discussed at HPC meeting on 23rd January 2023.

16. Correspondence/Communications received:

- Regarding hazardous pavements near the church and A518. Also, Prince Avenue pothole and Watery Lane tree debris were addressed and actioned.
- Regarding public rights of way (PROW) and Footpath 47 which is with County Council legal department as digitised line is disputed.
- The Parish Church of St. Giles, Haughton thanking HPC for their contribution of £1000.00 towards the cost of mowing around the church.

17. To advise notice of annual leave – Chairman

Council informed Clerk that the Chairman is not a paid member and therefore, does not have an annual leave allocation and this item should not be on the agenda. Clerk accepted this correction. Leave of duty dates were advised, nevertheless.

18. To devolve powers to The Chairman and Clerk (probationary period) until the next Parish Council meeting and to confirm the scope of these powers

MA reported that officially the Chairman does not have powers to act for the Council and that Clerk regardless of probationary period will manage any issues arising, with the support of the Chair or any other Councillor, as required.

19. To receive any future agenda items

To be submitted to Clerk by 14th January, 2023.

20. The date/time of next meeting was confirmed as Monday 23rd January, 2023 at 7p.m.

21. Meeting closed at 21:07 (9:07pm).

APPENDIX A

<u>Haughton Parish Council - Bank Reconciliation</u>					
-	-				
<u>As at 31st October 2022</u>	-				
					£
Balance Brought forward	30/09/2022				16,441.60
Income (cumulative)			11,094.92		
Less: Expenditure (cumulative)			1,857.01		9,237.91
Balance Carried forward					25,679.51
<u>Bank Balances (31/10/22)</u>	-				
Lloyds Reserve (Playing field)			4,501.03		
Lloyds Current Account			13,595.35		
SRBS Reserve Account			7,583.32		
					25,679.70
Unpresented cheques			0.00		
Total			0.00		16,441.60