



## HALTON WITH AUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2016 7:15pm at The Centre @ Halton

**Present:** Cllrs: Brian Jefferson, Barbara Duffy, Karen Gibson, Bob Bauld, City Cllr Woodruff,  
Members of the public: C.Coates, C.Ainger

**Clerk:** Luke Mills

**Chair:** Cllr Carol Slinger

**16/05/2347 Apologies for absence:** were received from Cllr Sandi Haythornthwaite

**16/05/2348 Approval of Minutes of the 2015 Annual Parish Meeting**

**It was resolved:** that the approval of the minutes will be deferred to the next Parish Council meeting.

**16/05/2349 Matters arising from the Minutes**

None

**16/05/2350 HCA & Recreation Area Report**

**a) HCA**

HCA has been re-structured to become a Community Interest Organisation which retains charitable status but provides greater protection for the Trustees and limits their personal liability. The new Board of Directors have put in a great deal of work to ensure the success of the Centre in this last year. This has been one of consolidation following the completion of the new annex with work on the new kitchen which has proved a tremendous success. Since then a review of the existing building and the new annex has led us to conclude that work on the flat roof toilet block and the lighting in the main hall is now a priority. Running throughout this has also been the difficulty we face with the plant room which has not functioned as originally conceived as there has not been the carbon and financial savings originally envisaged. We are hoping that we are nearing a process that will effectively review that problem and recommend changes to the systems to drive out better efficiencies.

The business of the Centre continues to grow with new user groups and a growth in numbers visiting. The Publicity has been particularly effective due to the Manager and Publicity Secretary's effective promotions and profits comfortably sustain running costs. We are working with the PC to create a new tourism signage proposal through LCC Highways.

The new kitchen has now been completed and is fully furnished with pots and pans. The cost of the new kitchen was in excess of £25,000 which was funded in part by a £10,000 grant. One of the conditions of qualifying for the grant was to provide a Luncheon Club which has now commenced and is proving successful.

The hall has been fully re-decorated and this has led to an increase in the hire of the hall for private functions.

**b) Recreation Area**

Support for the surrounding area has been good with the new gardening group making a significant impact and the employment of Carl to join Garry, Kyle has had an immediate impact in the past month. The revised litter picking arrangement is particularly successful and is no longer seen as a problem.

The Recreation Area has had some minor instances of damage, notably to the shelters, and whilst this is irritating we are lucky to retain the co-operation of the vast majority of visiting young people and graffiti and nuisance are extremely low level compared to other recreation areas in the district. The airwalker is now damaged for the third time and we may need to conclude that it is not a suitable piece of equipment for this area.

In the next year we need to continue to improve the planting scheme, the disabled access to the football field and look to the play areas at St Wilfrid's and Mill Lane for enhancement and improvement.

**16/05/2351 Charity Report - Burton & Rigby Educational Foundation**

The Burton & Rigby Educational Foundation provides grants to local students from the ages of 11-18. Over the course of the year it provided grants to 13 children from Aughton, 11 children from Halton and £80 to the Prattle.

**16/05/2352 Parish Accounts for year ending 31/3/2016**

The parish accounts for the year ending 31st March 2016 were presented by the Parish Clerk.

Overall, this year has been a quiet year. Income totalled £40,743 vs a budget of £29,510, but this was due to £5,500 in donations and the reclaiming of an extra £5,300 in VAT.

Expenditure totalled £30,999 which was under budget by £3,600, mainly due to lower than planned salary costs.

Reserves have increased from £9,103 (2015) to £16,671, though the council has agreed to spend £3,000 of this on repairs and renewals of play equipment.

The only asset acquired was a new strimmer/mower to enable the grounds maintenance team to more efficiently deal with undergrowth.

**16/05/2353 Chair's Report**

This last year has been a challenging year for Halton. We suffered the threat of unwanted development on Forgewood of 60 houses, Storm Desmond in December 2015, road closures and diversions during the M6 construction works and cuts to bus services. However as a result of this we have:

- Resolved to produce a Neighbourhood Plan to define the Strategy for planning within the parish to help influence future development of Halton. We won a disagreement with City Council over the boundary of the Local Plan. In the end they agreed to include the whole parish as the boundary. We have since found that the City Council already had plans for the area in dispute from the motorway to the Canal for potential future development. However it is important to the future of our parish that we see this through to completion within the next 12 months.
- Following Storm Desmond and being completely cut off for several days we realised how vulnerable we were as a community and are in the process of developing a disaster plan to ensure that everyone in the parish is cared for should any unfortunate incident ever happen again.
- Following the withdrawal of funding from the government, bus services came under threat and a huge thanks to Jon Sear who did an enormous amount of work on this. The result is that we still have a weekday service from Lancaster until 7pm, and a direct bus to Carnforth which we have never had before.

On a more positive note:

- Halton Hydro doing well despite the setback from the floods and The Halton Lune Trust have issued grants of over £5k this year from the profits.
- A vote of thanks to Halton Gardening Group who continue to improve areas around the parish and Kath Bryne for all her work in the Memorial Garden.
- I would also like to thank my fellow Councillors: Bob Bauld, Barbara Duffy, Karen Gibson, Sandi Haythornthwaite and Brian Jefferson
- We currently have 2 vacancies on the Council which we hope can be filled soon.
- Thanks to Luke Mills who took on the challenge of Clerk in July and continues to do a sterling job for us.

This year we can look forward to:

- B4RN - the fastest, cheapest and most reliable hyperfast broadband in the world being extended into the centre of the village.
- Opening of the M6 link Road
- Completion of the Disaster Plan
- Completion of the Neighbourhood Plan
- Traffic calming measures in Aughton and Church Brow
- Hopefully a new recreation area in Aughton.

The Council thanked the Chair, Cllr. Slinger for all her work over the last year.

**16/05/2354 Matters of interest raised by electors**

No matters of interest were raised.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19:25.

Signed..... (Chair)

Date .....

Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting.