



HALE PARISH COUNCIL of the Halton Borough in the County of Cheshire



MINUTES of the **EXTRA ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** held on
Thursday the 3rd October 2019 at **HALE VILLAGE HALL, HIGH STREET, HALE VILLAGE, L24 4AE**
COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllrs Trevaskis, Williams, Anderson, Spargo, Wright, Mitchell, Kierman and Hunter

There were 36 members of the public present

1. To receive Apologies

Cllrs Cleary and Healey

2. To receive Declarations of Interest

None

3. To adjourn the meeting for a period of public participation

The meeting was adjourned

It was confirmed that an amended recommendation had now been received from ACRE in the light of a copy of the old VHMC minutes of a meeting on the 26th September 2017 which had in the presence of 11 residents duly dissolved the existing Committee. The revised advice recommended that the Charity Commission should be made aware of all the facts and asked to make a ruling concerning the ongoing management of the village hall in accordance with charity law.

It was confirmed that the 2015 and 2017 Annual Return for the Village Hall has not yet been submitted to the Charity Commission and that any further documentation they might require would be produced as required.

A resident suggested that members of the public should form a new VHMC if they were dissatisfied with the Parish Council management of the Village Hall. In response it was pointed out that the old VHMC had been dissolved in 2017 (see above) and as such no Trustees currently existed. This meant that there were no Trustees enabled to call any meeting and that was why clarification was to be sought from the Charity Commission.

A question was asked concerning the latest position in respect of the Vat refund highlighted in the recent Internal Audit – it was stated that the Parish Council were to decide whether to obtain professional advice in order to clarify and if necessary, protect their position.

It was confirmed that following the dismissal of the VH Manager an HR Consultancy Company had been engaged at a cost of £600 to undertake grievance and dismissal appeal hearings.

It was confirmed that should the parish Council be established as the Trustee to the Village Hall conflicts of interest may occur in certain circumstances. It was confirmed that training had been undertaken with all members concerning the Code of Conduct of which the disclosure of interests was part.

A question was asked as to why the Parish Council wanted to be the Trustee of the Village Hall. In response it was pointed out that this had arisen as a result of the grant application to the National Lottery which has been undertaken by the Parish Council. The terms of the grant submission clearly showed that the Parish Council would be managing the VH and it was on this basis that the grant was approved.

The meeting was reconvened

4. To consider the advice from ACRE (enclosed) and decide what (if any) action should be taken

Please note that ACRE have since apologised and stated that inadvertently they did not take into account the minutes of a meeting held on the 26th September 2017 (which they had in their possession) which indicated that the old VHM Committee had been dissolved. Their advice may change in the light of this.

It was resolved that this item was adequately covered in items 5 and 6 below.

5. To consider what (if any) representation should be made to the National Lottery following the correspondence received from ACRE

It was resolved that no action was required at this time and until clarification has been sought from the Charity Commission

6. To consider what representation should be made to the Charity Commission and which documents should be submitted to them in order to obtain a ruling concerning the management of the Village Hall

It was resolved that representation should be made to the Charity Commission requesting clarification as to who was currently deemed to be the Trustee to the Village Hall and that the original grant application business plan to the National Lottery, the dissolution minutes of the old VHMC and any Parish Council minutes relating to the setting up by the Parish Council of their own VH Committee should be sent to them to aid their decision making process.

7. To consider whether or not to acquire the services of a Vat specialist to provide indemnified advice on the reclaims made in relation to the Village Hall

It was resolved that this Council did wish to acquire the services of a Vat specialist as above and that Steve Parkinson who manages such a specialist company and is also advisor to SLCC should be asked to provide a quotation for the work which would be accepted if below £1000

8. To approve that the VH financial records on the Charity Commission web site should be updated as below;

2015 Opening Balance £11131.48 Receipts £15804.35 Payments £23022.43 Closing Balance £3913.40

2017 Opening Balance £2286.79 Receipts £60336.81 Payments £61184.18 Closing Balance £1439.42

It was resolved that the financial records should be updated as detailed above.