

HAUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer: Jonathan Brumwell

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**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Haughton Parish Council held at Haughton Village Hall at 7.00pm on
Monday 26th May 2025**

Present:

Parish Councillors: Michael Allen, Suzanne Beatty, Mark Burgess, Melvyn Cotterill, Peter Prokopa (Vice Chair), Ian Sunley (Chair) and Stuart Taylor.

In attendance:

Clerk: Jonathan Brumwell

Public Open Forum: No members of the public were present.

Minute	Action
2025/001 Election of Chairman	
The outgoing Chair, Councillor Ian Sunley, invited nominations for Chair for the municipal year 2025/2026.	
Councillor Allen proposed, Councillor Taylor seconding, Councillor Sunley for Chair. There being no other nominations, and on a vote, Councillor Sunley was elected as Chair for 2025/2026.	
Councillor Sunley signed a declaration of acceptance of office.	
2025/002 Election of Vice Chairman	
The Chair, Councillor Ian Sunley, invited nominations for Vice-Chair for the municipal year 2025/2026.	
Councillor Allen proposed, Councillor Cotterill seconding, Councillor Prokopa for Vice-Chair. There being no other nominations, and on a vote, Councillor Prokopa was elected as Vice-Chair for 2025/2026.	
2025/003 Apologies for Absence	
Apologies were received from County and Borough Councillor J Rose.	
2025/004 Declarations of Interest	
There were no declarations of interest.	
2025/005 Election of Representatives to other bodies	
Staffordshire Parish Council Association – Councillor Allen Village Hall – Councillor Burgess	
2025/006 Appointment of Members to Working Groups	
Public Rights of Way – Councillors Beatty and Prokopa Playing Fields – Councillors Prokopa and Taylor Allimore Green / Dale Common – Councillors Allen and Sunley Personnel – Councillors Beatty, Prokopa and Sunley	
Continued...	

Minute**Action****Appointment of Members to Working Groups cont/...**

Procedures Review and Standards – Councillors Allen, Beatty, Prokopa and Sunley
Communications – Councillors Burgess and Prokopa
Finance – Councillors Allen, Sunley and Taylor
Local Parish Liaison – Councillor Sunley
Information Technology – Councillors Cotterill and Sunley

2025/007 To review the start time of Parish Council meetings

RESOLVED to retain a 7.00pm start time for meetings of the Parish Council.

2025/008 Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 30th April 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 30th April 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

2025/009 Items to be taken with the public excluded

There were no items to be taken in closed session..

2025/010 Reports from Borough and County Councillors, SPCA, PCSO, Chair, Village Hall and Clerk

Borough – Councillor Rose had provided an update report via email which the Clerk read to the Council:

- 'Dale Lane, still awaiting confirmation that the enforcement letter has been given the green light by the legal department and is on route to the owner to prevent the waste burning ect.
- 'Ash Drive, I was able to push for a meeting with Homes Plus, who have since repaired the potholes and I have spoken to residents who confirm it is a major improvement.
- 'For interest, we have placed funds to one side to step up enforcement action on the old Job Centre at Greyfriars and the Navigation Inn pub in Stafford – hopefully we will see these commercial properties given new life.'

County – Councillor Rose had provided an update report via email which the Clerk read to the Council:

- 'I had the Highways introductory session on Friday 23rd May, I will be meeting the local community highways teams soon and discuss local priorities and persistent issues.
- 'I have the expenses and funds session on Thursday 5th June – this will include the funding I have for highway matters and for the environmental grant that was previously discussed regarding the water butts. I believe the Warmer Homes grant is included in this session but am awaiting confirmation.
- 'I will soon be holding a public consultation on speeding/speed mitigation and on local bus services across my division (I know Haughton is well connected by buses so that section will be less pertinent to yourselves) so something to bare in mind.
- 'At the first Full Council meeting I submitted a motion to have a discussion on the state of the roads and to discuss what solutions as a council we thought would benefit our residents, unfortunately this was voted down by the Reform administration.
- 'The new Reform administration has removed climate change and the environment from the cabinet portfolio, it is yet unclear which cabinet member will be responsible for flooding/flood mitigation. As a rural community that suffers from persistent yearly flooding, I am concerned that their ideological refusal to accept climate change will only worsen our flood defences and proactive responses to this.

Continued

County cont/...

- 'For interest, the new Reform Cllr for Eccleshall and Gnosall stepped down after just two weeks, the by-election is expected to cost the County Council £27,000 and will happen sometime in July.'

SPCA – Councillor Allen informed the Council that the Executive met on 6th May and discussed a review of fees and local government reform. With all areas to be parished this is expected to result in around 40 new parishes within Staffordshire.

Chair – Councillor Sunley informed the council that the Village Market had been well-attended and a number of residents took the opportunity to request water butt kits.

Councillor Sunley informed the Council that attendance at the most recent Village Tidy-Up had been disappointing.

Village Hall – Councillor Burgess reported that the Village Hall Annual General Meeting was held on Monday 12th May 2025 and new officers appointed.

Clerk – The Clerk had circulated an update report on 20th May confirming that the Internal Audit visit had been successfully completed. The Clerk reported that all of the initial batch of 8 x 100 litre and 10 x 210 litre water butt kits had been distributed and thanked Councillors Taylor and Burgess for their assistance in distributing these (a further report would be given at Item 18).

2025/011 Financial Report

- (a) Expenditure incurred under the terms of Financial Regulation 4.1:
 30/04/2025 AA batteries (Annual Parish Meeting – wireless microphones) £4.08
 20/05/2025 10 x Fence pales (Play Area) £15.00
RESOLVED that the expenditure incurred under Financial Regulation 4.1 is ratified.
- (b) Previously approved expenditure (Paid – for information):
 10/05/2025 Water Butt Kits (inc. delivery) £506.67
- (c) Bank reconciliation as at 30th April 2025:
 The bank reconciliation was checked and approved by Councillor Taylor.
- (d) Payments for approval
RESOLVED that the following payments are approved:

DESCRIPTION	NET	VAT	GROSS
Salaries			914.88
SPCA (Councillor training)	30.00	6.00	36.00
Haughton Village Hall	50.00	0.00	50.00
Kim Squires (Internal Audit)	206.10	0.00	206.10
Acer Garden Landscapes Limited (Inv 8311)	700.00	140.00	840.00
Direct Debit Payments	NET	VAT	GROSS
EE Mobile	£14.28	£2.86	£17.14

- (e) Income Received:
- | | |
|---|------------|
| Lloyds Bank (Lloyds Reserve – interest April) | £ 10.64 |
| Stafford Borough Council (precept) | £12,631.10 |
| Government Grant | £ 543.90 |
| Concurrent | £ 866.00 |
| HMRC (VAT refund) | £ 1,481.51 |
| TOTAL RECEIPTS (APRIL 2025) | £15,533.15 |

2025/012 Internal Auditor's Report

The Council received the report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended 31st March 2025.

RESOLVED that the Internal Auditor's report is approved.

Minute		Action
2025/013	Annual Accounts 2024/2025 The Council received its accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025. RESOLVED that the accounts are approved.	
	APPROVAL OF ANNUAL RETURN	
2025/014	Section 1: Annual Governance Statement The Council completed the Annual Governance Statement. RESOLVED that the Chair is authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement on behalf of the Council.	Clerk
2025/015	Section 2: Accounting Statements The Council considered the Accounting Statements. RESOLVED that the Accounting Statements are approved and the Chair is authorised to sign the Accounting Statements on behalf of the Council.	Clerk
2025/016	Internal Auditor Appointment The Council considered the appointment of its internal auditor for 2025/26. RESOLVED to appoint Kim Squires as its internal auditor for 2025/26.	Clerk
2025/017	Highways, public rights of way and related issues a) Highways: councillors identified continuing issues with deteriorating road surfaces at Dale Lane due to traffic to and from the unauthorised waste site and run-off from the poly tunnels on the other side of the road. b) Public Rights of Way: no new issues were reported regarding rights of way. However, councillors reported horses being ridden on the Greenway, which is not a bridleway. The Clerk will request signage to clarify permitted use. c) Village gateway sign: Councillors Burgess and Cotteril provided sketches of proposed signage and wording. The Clerk will obtain costings for the June meeting.	Clerk Clerk Clerk
2025/018	Reports from Councillors a) Park: the Clerk reported that 10 replacement fence pales had been purchased from EFC. b) Football Pitch: Councillor Taylor reported that there is little sign of mole activity currently.	
2025/019	Asset Register The Council reviewed its Asset Register. The LCD projector was to be added. RESOLVED that the amended Asset Register is approved.	Clerk
2025/020	Risk Assessment and Management Plan The Council reviewed and amended its Risk Assessment and Management Plan. RESOLVED that the Council's Risk Assessment and Management Plan is approved.	
2025/021	Insurance Renewal The Council quotes for insurance provided by three insurers (two quotes provided by brokers and one provided directly by an insurance company). RESOLVED to accept the insurance quotation provided by Ecclesiastical Insurance through Clear Group at an annual cost of £851.99 (including fees and tax) as part of a three-year arrangement for insurance.	Clerk

Minute		Action
2025/022	Water Butt Initiative – Update Councillor Taylor reported that all of the initial stock of 18 water butt kits had been distributed to residents. The Clerk reported that a further 12 x 210 litre kits would be required to meet current requests, which at £28.50 per kit would require further expenditure of £345.33 (exclusive of VAT) including delivery. RESOLVED to purchase a further 12 x 210 litre water butt kits at a cost of £345.33, to be funded from the Green Initiatives ear mark reserve. No further kits would be purchased unless grant funding is available.	Clerk
2025/023	Review of Parish Council Strategy The Chair requested that all members consider the Parish Council’s strategy for 2025/2026 and provide costed proposals for consideration by the Council at its meeting on Monday 23rd June 2025.	All
2025/024	Parish Council Mobile Telephone The Council considered options for transferring the Council’s mobile phone to a SIM-only contract. RESOLVED to transfer the Council’s mobile phone to an EE SIM-only contract (1GB of data, Unlimited mins & texts) at a cost of £8.00 per month (exclusive of VAT).	Clerk
2025/025	Future agenda items Councillors were requested to submit future agenda items, included costed proposals for 2025/2026, to the Clerk by Monday, 16 th June 2025.	All
2025/026	Date and Time of Next Meeting The next meeting will be held on Monday 23 rd June 2025 at 7.00pm. The meeting closed at 8:57pm Signed: (Chair) 23 rd June 2025	