

Handforth Town Council Chair Statement

Handforth Parish Council becomes Handforth Town Council - Why?

1.

Handforth Town Council is seeking to engage more fully with the residents of Handforth.

Many residents have understandably believed that Handforth Parish Council is in some way attached to the church. For those of a certain age, the Vicar of Dibley comes to mind.

The parish element of the title refers only to the physical boundaries under the HPC control. These boundaries will not change.

It is felt that many Handforth residents will identify more with a secular Handforth Town Council rather than Handforth Parish Council with its religious connections. That is one of the reasons that as from 31st July 2021 we shall be styled Handforth Town Council. I should point out that as previously with Cllrs of Handforth Parish Council, Cllrs of Handforth Town Council are also unpaid.

2.

“The distinction between a 'village' and a 'town' is based on settlement form rather than population size.

Where property forms part of a village, there need only be another 35 dwellings within 800 metres to justify using the name “Village”.

Where a dwelling forms part of a town there must be at least 500 other dwellings within 800 metres to justify using the name “Town”.

There were approximately 3100 dwellings and a population of 6266 at the 2011 census.

I'm certain that Handforth residents will still refer to “Going to the village” when making a trip to the local shops.

3.

As most residents know by now, the YouTube video of the HPC meeting of 10th December 2020 was let loose on the world on 4th February 2021 by a teenager from Stoke with an interest in Parish Councils. The subsequent views have now reached around 6 million.

The unacceptable behaviour displayed by 3 HPC Cllrs ensured notoriety for HPC across many different media. 2 of the 3 Cllrs, Burkhill and Brewerton, have eventually resigned their positions as Parish Cllrs. The HPC Chairman at that time Brian Tolver, has resigned all his Chairman and Vice Chairman roles. He remains a Town Cllr.

Following the exit from the meeting of the 3 Cllrs, the remaining 3 Cllrs Moore, Samson and Smith voted a temporary chair for the meeting and proceeded to continue with the agenda for the 10th December meeting in order to get the business of HPC properly attended to.

These 3 Cllrs have now been joined by 3 new Cllrs. 2 elections were called for by residents in the West Ward to fill vacant council seats. Those successful were, Julie Smith on 6th May and Sam Milward on 22nd July. As no residents called for an election in the South Ward, a co-option took place. Of the applicants who applied, Kerry Sullivan was selected by the council on 13/07/21.

Ashley, the Town Clerk, has been completely exonerated by CEC of any wrong doing and Cllrs Moore, Smith and Samson reinstated Ashley to his rightful position.

We are now continuing the current business of the council. It is being attended to in a quiet and efficient manner.

Legal requirements, Financial Audits and more updated procedures are now in place.

Financial commitments of the council are being paid on time.

Equipment for use in Handforth is being purchased.

Requests for grants by organisations, which involve or help Handforth residents are being discussed and actioned.

Planning meetings and Finance meetings are being held.

A projects list has been produced to give the council targets to aim for which, are intended to improve facilities in Handforth.

We have a new name and 3 new Cllrs and along with the other remaining Cllrs are committed to improving Handforth. We are also moving away from the viral, toxic Handforth Parish Council as portrayed on YouTube and are leaving it behind.

Handforth Town Council will be contacting all residents soon to advise our position regarding the Cheshire East Council proposal to merge Handforth with Wilmslow and Chorley.

Cllr John Smith – Chairman

Handforth Town Council