

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF HOUGHTON-ON-THE-HILL
PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, VILLAGE HALL,
MAIN STREET, HOUGHTON-ON-THE-HILL ON WEDNESDAY 3rd MAY 2006
AT 7:30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Cllr. Mr M. Stevenson (Chairman)
Cllr. Mrs A. Sharman
Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan
Cllr. Mr S. Blackwell
Cllr. R. Davis
Dr. D. Campbell (Parish Clerk)

1. ELECTION OF A NEW CHAIRMAN

With the tenure of all of the officers of the Parish Council ended, the Clerk called the meeting to order and asked for nominees for the vacant position of Chairman. Cllr Mr M. Stevenson was proposed by Cllr. Mr R. Davis and seconded by Cllr. Mrs A. Sharman. There being no other nominations, a vote was taken and Cllr Mr M. Stevenson was elected Chairman for another year.

2. ELECTION OF A NEW VICE-CHAIRMAN

The new Chairman then took nominees for the vacant position of Vice-Chairman. Cllr. Mr S. Blackwell was proposed by Cllr. Mr R. Davis and seconded by Cllr. Mrs A. Sharman. There being no other nominations, a vote was taken and Cllr Mr S. Blackwell was elected Vice-Chairman for another year.

3. THE WELCOME FROM THE NEW CHAIRMAN

The new Chairman welcomed the councillors and members of the public to this annual meeting of the Parish Council.

4. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs. Mrs A. Sleath.

5. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were to be made when agenda items were being discussed and recorded accordingly.

6. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 4th MAY 2005

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 4th May 2005, were confirmed, and accepted as a true record of that meeting.

7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of the 4th May 2005.

8. ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF OFFICIAL BODIES AND WORKING PARTIES

The Parish Council maintains a number of representations and working parties and the election of representatives and co-ordinators were made to identify, confirm or re-affirm their involvement. The bodies are as follows with the elected Councillors or representatives.

1. **School Governors** – one representative (still awaiting response from school)
 2. **Village Charities** – one representative (re-affirmed as Mr P. Duke)
 3. **Village Hall**– one representative (re-affirmed as Cllr. Mrs A. Sharman)
 4. **LRAPLC**– one representative (re-affirmed as Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan & Cllr. Mr S. Blackwell)
 5. **Field Association**– two representatives (re-affirmed as Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath & Cllr. Mr M. Stevenson)
 6. **Billesdon Community Forum**– one representative (re-affirmed as Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath)
 7. **Houghton Garden Club**– one representative (identified as Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan)
 8. **Field Association Working Party**– two representatives (re-affirmed as Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath & Cllr. Mr S. Blackwell)
- 9. Parish Plan**
- Seating co-ordinator (re-affirmed as Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath)
 - ‘Welcome Pack’ co-ordinator - (re-affirmed as Cllr. Mr M. Stevenson)
 - Plastics recycling co-ordinator – (identified as Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath)
 - Web site co-ordinator (re-affirmed as Cllr. Mr S. Blackwell)

9. THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman presented his annual report to the Council. It is included here as Appendix 1. There were no questions for the Chairman and the Council accepted the report with thanks.

10. FINANCE OFFICERS REPORT

The outgoing Clerk was still preparing the accounts and none were yet available. As soon as they were completed, they would be presented to the Council.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 20:00 pm.

SIGNED.....
CHAIRMAN

DATE.....

APPENDIX 1

Houghton on the Hill Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report - Year Ending April 2006

It has been a busy and mainly productive year for the Parish Council, with many issues to deal with. My thanks to the Vice-Chairman Steve Blackwell, and to all councillors for their support during the past year. Our clerk, Kathleen Grundy was unable to continue her duties due to poor health, and has now retired after many years service. My thanks to her for all her work on our behalf.

Fortunately, our latest councillor Duncan Campbell was able to step into the breach as acting Clerk, a position now officially confirmed. I am very grateful to him for all his efforts, and am delighted he has taken up this role on a permanent and official basis the results of his thorough and professional approach to the position of Parish Clerk are already apparent. I am sure this will continue under the next Chairman.

The Council finally completed a tenancy agreement for the Allotment holders satisfactory to all parties, and although there are ongoing problems with vandalism, we hope to resolve these shortly. Discussions regarding charges for non-Houghton residents are continuing, and again should result in a satisfactory conclusion acceptable to all parties.

One of the main topics to occupy the council business revolved around the issue of travellers occupying open spaces in the village. This had been raised by a concerned resident, who had obtained over 400 signatures asking for a review of security in those areas considered vulnerable. I am pleased to report that the Parish Council acted swiftly to secure that as far as possible the land under their jurisdiction, namely the allotments and the Village Hall field. However, we are disappointed that the Field Association believes the risk is so low that no action is required. The Chairman hopes the Parish Council will continue exert pressure on the Field committee to take some preventative measures. A Parish Council policy on travellers has been adopted and is available to any interested parties.

During the year, continuing protests have been made regarding the East Midlands flight path, and the Council has been very active in making our voice heard. A letter to be sent to Parliament was delivered to every resident in the village. It is not known how many were sent, but the efforts of the council have not so far met with any success in stopping the increase in flights over the village.

We have agreed to fund a clearing operation of the churchyard, in order to make room for future burials.

The annual precept has again been held at £12000, Houghton being one of very few councils able to keep spending within budget, without compromising services to the community. Councillors can be justly proud of this record.

An ongoing problem concerns the village pump. This is of historical interest to the village, and whilst the pump housing has been replaced, major defects require a more extensive renovation programme. We are in discussions with Harborough District Council concerning the damage, as it would appear they might be responsible for some of the deterioration.

The continuing problems concerning traffic in Houghton is again coming under scrutiny, and members of the Council recently walked the village with officials of both Harborough District Council examining all problem areas. As a result, we are confident many traffic issues can be resolved.

Whilst the Parish Plan steering group has officially been disbanded, the Parish Council is committed to carrying out those projects identified as feasible and achievable. This is now under way.

I am also pleased to report the revival of Neighbourhood Watch under the new coordinator Mrs Woodcock. This important activity appears to be gathering pace, and we will give every support we can to protect the security of villagers.

In conclusion, I would like to re-iterate my thanks for all the Councillors support during the past year, and look forward to the challenges yet to come. Despite some difficulties, I have enjoyed my period as Chairman and I am sure the new Chairman will receive the same support as I have.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HOUGHTON-ON-THE-HILL PARISH
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, MAIN
STREET, HOUGHTON-ON-THE-HILL ON WEDNESDAY 3rd MAY 2006 AT
8:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Cllr. Mr M. Stevenson (Chairman)
Cllr. Mrs A. Sharman
Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan
Cllr. Mr S. Blackwell
Cllr. R. Davis
Dr. D. Campbell (Parish Clerk)

In attendance:

Cllr. Mrs A. Burell (District Councillor HDC)

11. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Mrs A. Sleath.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were to be made when agenda items were being discussed and recorded accordingly.

13. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 5th APRIL 2006

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 5th April 2006, were confirmed, and signed.

14. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

1. The issue of the negative response from PCs regarding contributions and the loss of the Garden Club's representation on the Parish Council was discussed with the Garden Club and it will discuss the matter at their AGM in a few days time.

Action Completed

2. The Clerk was asked, with the help of Cllr S. Blackwell, to look at higher interest accounts. As the accounts are not ready, little can be done. It was agreed to wait until the accounts are completed before looking at this issue.

Continuing Action - Parish Clerk and Cllr Blackwell

3. The Clerk wrote a letter to the grass cutting company about damage seen in the Churchyard. The response was non-committal. The Parish Council is unhappy about

the frequency and effectiveness of the grass cutting and would like the Clerk to find out more about the contract with the service providers.

Action Completed
New Action - Parish Clerk

4. The Clerk was asked to send some examples of plans not reaching the PC to Mr L. Wiggins at HDC to see if anything could be done to improve matters. A letter has been sent but no response has been received yet.

Action Completed

5. Payments of Cheques - the Clerk has paid all the cheques authorised by the Council.

Action Completed

6. The Council has asked the Clerk to send a letter to John Thompson in the Planning and Development Control at Glenfield to have the situation of Linwal Ave. footpath sorted out. A letter has been sent but no response has been received yet.

Action Completed

7. The Clerk was authorised to write to Bidy Small of the Public Transport Dept., Glenfield to initiate the move of the bus stop. A letter has been sent but no response has been received yet.

Action Completed

8. The Council asked the Clerk to contact the Head Teacher at the School to see what was included in the School's Travel Plans. A letter has been sent but no response has been received yet.

Action Completed

9. The Clerk was instructed to write to Michael Hay of TPI Department or Angie Dunn of Highway Transport and Waste management (both at Glenfield) to see what options were available to calm traffic entering the village. A letter has been sent but no response has been received yet.

Action Completed

10. Cllr Mr M. Stevenson undertook to co-ordinate and assemble a team together to start the process of the 'Welcome Pack'. The process has started with the involvement of Houghton News. Houghton News will have its AGM tonight and will respond back to the Parish Council.

Action Completed

11. The Clerk was asked to send a letter to the Field Association in time for its Monday meeting (10th April) informing them of the intention to provide a plastics recycling unit in the car park of the Playing field. A letter was sent – see item 10.(d).

Action Completed

12. The Clerk was asked to write to Houghton News outlining the idea of a village web site and seeking the response from them. A letter was sent, and after Houghton News' AGM tonight, they will respond back to the Parish Council.

Action Completed

13. Cllr Mr S. Blackwell undertook to co-ordinate the project of the web site. He suggested Mr S. Carding (RCC) and Houghton News Editorial staff be involved following the initial contact by the Clerk. The initial contact has been made and the parish Council now awaits Houghton News' AGM. They will then respond back to the Parish Council.

Action Completed

14. The Parish Clerk reported on the vandalism at the allotments and it was decided that a different solution to a close-boarded fence should be found. The Garden Club was going to be spoken to see what other solutions were available. The Garden Club has responded – see item 8.

Action Completed

15. The Clerk was asked to draft a second letter to the other Parishes concerning donations for the allotments. The Clerk has presented the letter and after discussion was given the go-ahead to send the letter - see item 8.

Action Completed

16. The Garden Club was to be asked to review their rules concerning the supply of plots to outside residents and to possibly increase the rent to these people. This has been done and will be discussed at their AGM in a few days time.

Action Completed

17. A replacement as the Parish Council representative for the Garden Club was to be found. This has been done and is confirmed to be Cllr. Mrs Anne Nunan.

Action Completed

18. The Clerk confirmed that a letter had been sent to HDC concerning the earth embankment against the well housing. A letter has been received and the matter is being discussed at HDC.

Action Completed

19. The Clerk presented a draft letter written to the Charity Commissioners. The Working Party was to meet within the next fortnight to discuss the letter. This has not yet been done but is re-scheduled for Thursday 11th May (See item 10.1).

Action Continuing - Field Association Working Party

20. The Clerk has written a letter asking for the removal of unauthorised advertising at 30, Main Street. There has been no response yet.

Action Completed

21. Cllr Mrs A. Sleath was to provide the relevant documentation concerning unauthorised advertising and would forward it to the Clerk. Cllr Mrs A. Sleath had looked for the papers but she no longer had them. She advised the Clerk to talk to the Planning Department.

Action Completed

15. CORRESPONDENCE

15.1 Rights of Way Improvement Plan

The above plan has been sent to the Parish Council for consultation. In view of the importance of paths and rights of ways to the Parish, it was decided to examine the document and respond accordingly. The report was passed to Cllr R. Davis to examine it and respond accordingly.

Action - Cllr Davis

15.2 Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document

This has been issued by HDC planning department and the Council thought it important enough to its future plans to acquire a copy. The Clerk was instructed to purchase a copy from HDC.

Action - Parish Clerk

15.3 Salisbury – Allotment Garden Conveyance

The Council had received notification from Salisbury solicitors that they hold the deeds of the Garden Allotment. The Clerk was instructed to now apply for land registration.

Action - Parish Clerk

15.4 Village Pump and Well Housing

A reply has now been received from the Highways department. They have confirmed that it is their responsibility and have passed the letter to the housing department for further comment.

15.5 Over flying of the Village

Two documents had been sent to the Parish Council – these being the deadline for the completion of consultation of the Master Plan of NEMA and a letter from ‘DEMAND’, a pressure group trying to stop night flying over Leicestershire villages or at least to have NEMA a ‘designated airport. The Clerk was asked to write a letter of support for the pressure group and to register the Parish Council’s objection to the over flying.

Action - Parish Clerk

15.6 Insurance Policy

The renewal for the Parish Council’s insurance policy was due on the 1/06/06 and the Clerk presented the renewal documents. It was agreed that the Clerk should go ahead and re-new the policy.

Action - Parish Clerk

15.7 Development of Day Services for Disabled People

The Parish Council had received a consultative document for the NHS’s development of day services for disabled people. The report and associated documentation was handed to Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan for consideration and to report to the NHS by the time indicated. She was asked to let the Clerk have a copy of the submission and to return the documents to the Clerk for filing when she had finished with them.

Action – Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan

15.8 E-Mails

- Lift sharing

The RCC has informed the council of a lift-sharing scheme. The Clerk was asked to include it in his notes for Houghton News.

Action - Parish Clerk

- Highway modifications

The highways department has given notice of the start of modifications to Main Street in accordance with the previously agreed scheme. The Parish Council noticed that no reference was made to the other more important aspects of the highway such as Stretton Lane and the A47 changes. The Clerk was asked to remind them that we are still awaiting their response in this area.

Action - Parish Clerk

Note: *other e-mails and letters were received but were taken with the relevant Agenda item. Other communications of a non-actionable nature are to be circulated in the 'black bag'.*

16. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

16.1 Discussions took place concerning the planning disputes at 25 Uppingham Road. The concern was that the applicants seem to be getting poor service from both their planning agent and from the planning department. Although applications were being refused, they were continually being re-submitted on advice from their planning agent and the planning officer at HDC. The refusal and resubmission cycle had gone on too long and with the help of HDC councillors, it was hoped that some intervention might resolve the matter. The Clerk was able to report that all planning applications had been withdrawn so that a meeting could be held on Monday the 8th May in an attempt to resolve the problem.

16.2 There were two applications that need consideration by the Parish Council and it was decided to have a site meeting on Thursday 4th May at 13:00 to examine the applications at that point.

17. FINANCIAL MATTERS

17.1 Membership of the Leicester and Rutland Playing Field Association - £15.00. It was decided not to re-apply for this and to pass the form on to the Field Association.

17.2 Membership of the Rural Community Council - £30.00. Approved and to be paid.

17.3 Market Harborough District Neighbourhood Watch Support Group – supply of signs - £42.32. Approved and to be paid.

17.4 Annual Subscription for 'aplc' carried over from the last meeting - £270. Discussion took place and it became obvious that no Councillor could

state the value of being a member. The Clerk was asked to determine the value to the Parish Council as well as identifying the level of past fees.

Action - Parish Clerk

17.5 Clerks fees for the month of March were submitted - £405.62.

Approved and to be paid.

17.6 The Clerk brought to the Council's attention the payment of the first half of the precept payment of £6,000.

18. ALLOTMENTS

18.1 Declaration of Interest

Cllr Mr S. Blackwell declared his interest in this matter, as he was an allotment holder.

18.2 Responses from four Parish Councils regarding donations

The Clerk had drafted a second letter to the four Parish Councils who had responded negatively to the first. A short discussion took place and it was agreed that the letters should be sent.

Action – Clerk

In the meantime, the Garden Club has been asked to review their rules concerning the supply of plots to outside residents and to possibly increase the rent to these people and they will discuss it at their next AGM in a few weeks time and report back through the PC representative.

Action Cllr Mrs A. Nunan

18.3 Vandalism

The Parish Clerk reported that he had received a list of options from the Garden Club concerning a fencing system that might stop vandalism and fly tipping. This was discussed with the Council favouring the idea of wooden post and chains. The Garden Club representative was going to attend the AGM and report on the discussion at the next Parish Council Meeting. The letter from the Garden Club is attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes along with an estimate for close-board fencing.

Action Cllr Mrs A. Nunan

19. CORE STRATEGY DOCUMENT

The Clerk had previously circulated details of this HDC initiative and a summary document describing its progress. HDC was now asking for comment and had started a consultative process and the Parish Council was invited to respond. After some discussion, the document and background information was passed to Cllr Mr S. Blackwell to lead the consultation process. He was to co-opt Cllr Mrs A. Sharman and Cllr Mrs A. Sleath (and any other member of the Council) in order to structure a response by the due date. He was asked to let the Clerk have a copy of the submission and to return the Clerk's files when he had finished with them.

Action – Cllr. Mr S. Blackwell and others

20. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON WORKING PARTIES

10.1 The Clerk presented a draft letter written to the Charity Commissioners. The Council wanted to study it in more detail and decided to discuss it in a Working Party meeting. Due to conflicts of timing, this has not been possible but it has been re-scheduled for Thursday 11th May.

Action Field Association Working Party

10.2 Action 6.5 Village Seating

The Working Party had concluded that extra seating in the village was both desirable and Cllr Mrs A. Sleath undertook to co-ordinate activity and to take the lead on this project. Due to time difficulties and her absence, no report of progress has yet been made on this subject.

10.2 Action 6.13 A 'Welcome Pack'

The provision of a 'Welcome Pack' for new arrivals would be an important introduction to village life. Cllr Mr M. Stevenson had spoken to Cllr Mr R. Davis and the Houghton News and it was decided that any progress should wait until Houghton News had completed their AGM and had discussed the matter.

10.3 Action 6.15 Re-cycling of Plastics

HDC is not going to recycling plastics until at least 2007/8 and there is a general feeling in the village that this is required now. RCC could provide a plastic recycle bin for village use and the Council suggested the Sports Field Car Park for its location. The Field Association had been approached and a response had been received asking for more information. The Clerk was tasked with responding to the Field Association's concerns. As no councillor was appointed to lead this project, yet it was thought appropriate to ask Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath to undertake this activity, as she has already been involved in its presentation to the Field Association. The Chairman was going to ask her if she would undertake this activity.

Action Cllr. Mr M. Stevenson

10.5 Action 6.23 Village Web site

The Clerk had written to Houghton News outlining the idea and the possible contents of the web site. The response was thought to be encouraging but it had to wait until the AGM of Houghton news when they had had a chance to discuss the matter.

(Clerk's Note: Mrs Ford, from the public, indicated that she had experience of web site development and would be happy to be involved in such a project. The Chairman thanked her and asked the Clerk to note this offer for Cllr Mr S. Blackwell to pass it on accordingly).

Action Cllr. S. Blackwell

21. REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVES

- School Governors – Nothing to report

- Village Charities – Nothing to report
- Village Hall – Nothing to report
- LRAPLC – Nothing to report
- Field Association – Nothing to report
- Billesdon Community Forum – Nothing to report
- Garden Club – Nothing to report

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 21:30 pm.

SIGNED.....
CHAIRMAN

DATE.....

APPENDIX 1

Letter from Garden Club

Houghton Gardeners' Club

Requirements for allotment fence:-

a) To prevent ingress by: -

- 1) Unwanted cars -already a case of a car left on car park for several weeks
- 2) Fly tipping & wheelbarrows – too many cases of woody garden waste being dumped in the compost bins and builders rubble fly tipped
- 3) Minimise risk of further vandalism

b) Minimise risk of defacement by graffiti

Types considered: -

- a) Replacement of damaged concrete posts with three strands of high tensile wire - wires too easily cut and posts kicked over (cost £420)
- b) Concrete bollards -would need to be placed at approx. 60cm pitch to prevent wheelbarrow entrance (cost unknown -more than above)
- c) 6ft close-boarded fence on arris rails and concrete posts -possible graffiti risk (cost £1200)
- d) Galvanised paling fence with galvanised posts -comes in 6m lengths need cutting to correct length and welding of brackets (cost approx £2500)
- e) 15cm square oak posts at 2m pitch with 3 strands of continuous 6mm chain-link galvanised chain fitted through holes (cost thought to be slightly less than c).

Item '(e)' above would seem to be the preferred solution -would appreciate positive comment from the Parish Council with max acceptable cost to permit provisional go-ahead subject to two estimates within budget.

John Chapman 2.5.06

Estimate for Fence

Richard Adkin
Stepping Stones
Hungarton Lane
Beeby
Leics LE7 3BJ

Houghton Parish Council

Houghton Allotment Association 20/03/2006

Dear Sirs

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a quotation for the work as detailed below:

Erection of 24 metres of feather edged board fencing six feet high in four separate stretches. All posts to be concrete with arris rails supporting boards. Boards to face outwards to deter climbing and strand of barbed wire on top if approved by you.

The total price for this work, materials and labour inclusive, is £1485