

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HOUGHTON-ON-THE-HILL PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN THE METHODIST CHURCH, MAIN STREET, HOUGHTON-ON-THE-HILL,
WEDNESDAY 4th JULY 2007, AT 8:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Cllr. Mr. M. Stevenson (Chairman)
Cllr. Mrs. A. Sharman (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr. Mr. P. Duke
Cllr. Mr. W. Scott
Cllr. Mrs. A. Sleath
Ms A. M. Davies (Clerk)

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all new councillors with a special reference and warm welcome for the return of Cllr. Mr. P. Duke, a previously long serving ex-Chairman of the PC. The Chairman also gave some guidelines to all Councillors on the manner and procedures expected in the debate of issues presented for Council deliberation.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies from Cllr. Mrs. E. Bent had been received and accepted.
Cllr. Mrs. S. Swann was not present. Belated apologies from Cllr. Mrs. S. Swann were received and accepted.
Apologies from District Cllr. Mrs. A. Burrell had been received and accepted.

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THE 13th JUNE 2007

The Minutes of the Meeting of the 13th June 2007 were confirmed and signed.

It was noted at the request of Cllr. Mrs. A. Sleath that her suggestion, the collection of parishioners' contributions of surplus, potted small trees and shrubs to be temporarily stored on the allotments prior to being planted in village locations, be forwarded by letter to Mrs. Francesca Wall-Bray, Houghton's Tree Warden, as agreed at the PC Meeting 13th June.

5. FINANCIAL MATTERS

Accounts to be settled:

Houghton Methodist Church – room hire for PC Meeting 04/07/07	£8.00
Clerk's standing (£74.01) and variable (£22.88) expenses for June 2007	£96.89

- ***It was RESOLVED that the invoices presented for Houghton Methodist Church room hire and the clerk's standing and variable be paid in full.***

(The vote was unanimous from all those present)

The Clerk presented cheques for signature.

The cheques were signed in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

6. GRANTS

Grants to Houghton Field Association:

The clerk reported that the payment of the 2006/07 grant, £2300.00, has been earmarked in the Council's accounts and in the Council's Annual Return to the external auditor. The Council is in receipt of HFA's audited accounts but is still not in receipt of the audited accounts of the Sports and

Social Club. When these have been received and considered by Council then the payment of the 2006/07 grant can be made.

With regard to the ring fencing of grants, the clerk informed the Council that restrictions of this type cannot be applied retrospectively.

7. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO/OF OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr. Mr. Peter Duke was appointed Councillor Representative of Village Charities.

It had been suggested that villagers might like to know about the current activities and efforts of the Council on behalf of the village. This was considered by Council and it was decided that as a public relations exercise this might be achieved with a monthly article in the Houghton News. This article would be a report on relevant topics of interest from monthly PC Meetings.

Cllr. Mr. P. Duke volunteered to write such a monthly article. Cllr. Mrs. A. Sharman and the clerk offered their monthly assistance to Cllr. Mr. P. Duke who was appointed to head this project. Cllr. Mr. P. Duke welcomed their offer. A copy of the report is to be submitted to the Chairman prior to publication.

It was suggested that Houghton News be consulted for advice on the length of any articles to be submitted to ensure sufficient space in any particular issue of the publication.

Mr. J. Siddons, Member of Houghton News Editorial Committee, was present as a member of the public.

The Chairman temporarily closed the PC Meeting so that Mr. J. Siddons could advise the Council accordingly.

Council heard Mr. J. Siddons.

The Chairman, having thanked Mr. J. Siddons for his helpful advice, re-opened the PC Meeting.

Council agreed that the advice received from Mr. J. Siddons would be given due consideration prior to the submission of any article submitted to Houghton News.

8. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Conservation Area Consent GRANTED:

Planning Application 07/00511/CON - Conservation Area Consent –Demolition of existing first floor extension

Location: 34, Main Street, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9GD

Conservation Area Consent granted 13th June 2007.

Planning Permission GRANTED:

Planning Application 07/00570/FUL – Erection of two dwellings (existing bungalow to be demolished)

Location: 23, Ingarsby Lane, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9JJ

Planning permission granted 15th June 2007

Planning Permission GRANTED:

Planning Application 07/00672/FUL – Construction of pitched roof over existing flat roof on single storey extension to side

Location: 1, Firs Road, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9GU

Planning permission granted 21st June 2007

Planning Applications CONSIDERED BY COUNCIL

1. Planning Application 07/00929//FUL

Proposal: Erection of porch to the front and pitched roof over existing flat roof on garage

Location: 2, Dean Gate Drive, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9HA

Date received by PC: 23/06/07

Date of End of Consultation: 16/07/07

Having considered the plans the Council instructed the Clerk to inform HDC Development Control Team that the Council has no comment to make on this application.

2. Prior Notification of Telecommunications Development

Planning Application Ref. 07/00913/TEL

Applicant: Arqiva

Proposal: Installation of telecommunications equipment

Location: Redvers Farm, Uppingham Road, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9HG

Date received by PC: 23/06/07

Date of End of Consultation: 16/07/07

Having considered the plans the Council instructed the Clerk to inform HDC Development Control Team that the Council has no comment to make on this application.

3. Planning Application 07/00908/TCA

Proposal: Felling of trees

Location: 34A, Main Street, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9GD

Date received by PC: 29/06/07

Date of End of Consultation: Not notified

The Council had no specific objection to this application but the clerk was instructed to inform HDC Development Control Team that the Council continues to oppose any unnecessary felling of trees.

4. Planning Application 07/00941/TCA

Proposal: Work on trees

Location: 31, Scotland Lane, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9GH

Date received by PC: 30/06/07

Date of End of Consultation: Not notified

Having considered the plans the Council instructed the Clerk to inform HDC Development Control Team that the Council has no comment to make on this application.

5. Planning Application 07/00941/TCA

Proposal: Replace roof light with slate and replace ceiling.

Location: 13A, Main Street, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9GE

Date received by PC: 30/06/07

Date of End of Consultation: 23/07/07

The Council had no specific objection to this application. However, since this property is in the conservation area, the Clerk was asked to request of HDC Development Control team that appropriately sympathetic building materials be used.

6. Planning Application 07/00976/FUL

Proposal: Erection of two storey side and single storey rear extension alteration to access.

Location: 5, Ingarsby Lane, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9JJ

Date received by PC: 30/06/07

Date of End of Consultation: Not notified (Presumably 23/07/07)

Since Highways will need to sanction the proposed alteration to access the Council decided to make no comment on this aspect of the plans. It was considered that the proximity and bulk of the two storey side extension might have a detrimental effect on No.9, Ingarsby Lane in terms of oppression and restriction of access to light. The clerk was instructed to inform HDC Development Control Team accordingly.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

[a] Letter from HDC Re: Future Cemetery Provision in Harborough District (copy for all councillors had been included in the meeting pack)

The clerk had spoken with Mr. Matthew Bills, Parks and Facilities Manager HDC, and had been told that this project is being undertaken with a fifty year over-view. It would seem that shortage of burial land is a potential national problem. Although Houghton may not have a future problem other local parishes may not be so fortunate. HDC wish to establish if parishes without this problem might be willing to make future provision for non-parishioners.

The Council expressed considerable concern about the proposal for the accommodation of non-parishioners but feel that the PCC, being *au fait* not only with any exact future possibilities in respect of additional land destined to be bequeathed to or to be acquired by PCC for additional burial space but also with all the relevant governing policies and regulations, are the most qualified and appropriate body to reply to this letter.

The clerk was instructed to forward the letter to the PCC with the request that the letter might be considered at the next PCC Meeting. Cllr. Mr P. Duke offered to consult with Mrs. B. Butler, Churchwarden.

[b] Letter from HDC Re: Local Development Scheme update. Letter gives an extract from the Local Development Scheme that timetables each of the different consultation and adoption dates. This letter was presented at the meeting.

All Councillors present requested individual copies of the letter.

[c] Letter from the Charity Commission in reply to PC letter, 25/06/07, re: HFA's proposed lease for Houghton Tennis Club. Copies of the CC reply had been included in the meeting pack.

[d] Letter from HFA in reply to PC letter, 25/06/07, re: HFA's proposed lease for Houghton Tennis Club. Copies of the HFA reply had been included in the meeting pack.

10. DOG - WASTE BINS

As approved by Council, Service Team's pole secured and earth anchored, green, steel, 45litre bin to be emptied once per fortnight (as a trial run) has been ordered by the clerk. Council is awaiting notification of delivery date.

11. VILLAGE SEATING

All Councillors had received copies of the following:

[a] Various estimates for six seats and one wooden bench, the cost variation being dependent on the method of installation to be chosen.

[b] Suggested installation methods for each specific seat location – as advised on the site visit of Caroline Averill from HDC, 26/06/07, (see Minutes 13/06/07 VILLAGE SEATING)

[c] Estimates for the advised methods of installation submitted by The Quick Response Team, approved HDC contracted labour force.

Cllr. Mrs. A. Sleath reported:

The existing village seats are 1800 Allington seats by Orchard Street furniture. These seats are also widely used by HDC throughout the county (tried and tested for suitability and durability), can be delivered to the HDC storage depot at Foxton and can be stored there, free of charge, until the day the Council schedules their installation in the village. The cost of the six seats and one bench vary depending on the method of installation chosen – whether with or without pedestal base. The most

cost effective way of installing the seats is to have all seven seats installed in the village on the same day.

Having considered all presented variables and giving due consideration to advice received on the site visit of Caroline Averill from HDC, 26/06/07, (see Minutes 13/06/07 VILLAGE SEATING) the following methods of installation were proposed and seconded:

Position 1

- ***It was RESOLVED that the seat on the corner of Scotland Lane and Linwal Avenue be of the type with pedestal base and that the feet be bolted to concrete footings in the existing tarmac.***

(The vote was unanimous from all those present)

Position 2

- ***It was RESOLVED that the seat, on the small green area on the Linwal Avenue side of the Newsagents in St. Catharine's Way, be of the type with pedestal base and that this base be bolted to an edged, concrete slab foundation.***

(The vote was unanimous from all those present)

Position 3

- ***It was RESOLVED that the seat, on the small Green in St Catharine's Way approximately opposite Nos. 28 and 30 St Catharine's Way, be of the type with pedestal base and that this base be bolted to a concrete slab foundation.***

(The vote was unanimous from all those present)

Position 4

- ***It was RESOLVED that the bench on St Catharine's Green, close to the back edge overlooking the Green and the fields, be of the type without pedestal base and that the feet be concreted into the existing ground surface.***

(The vote was unanimous from all those present)

Position 5

- ***It was RESOLVED that the seat, near to the bus stop outside the Village Hall, be of the type with pedestal base and that this base be bolted to a concrete slab foundation.***

(The vote was unanimous from all those present)

The cutting back of the vegetation in the immediate area to be occupied by the new seat fronting this section of Flagpole Spinney is included in the HDC installation estimate.

Council had also received an estimate from the HDC contactors The Quick Response Team for the cutting back of the rest of Flagpole Spinney, the area of vegetation on Main Street from the telephone Kiosk to the corner of St. Catharine's Way. Council considered this estimate to be excessive. Council agreed to seek three estimates for the work and to consult Mrs. Francesca Wall-bray, Houghton's Tree Warden, for advice on the most appropriate manner and degree of cutting back of this vegetation. Concern was expressed that radical cutting back might threaten the retention of the well established old village characteristics of Flagpole Spinney, a site of historic village significance and within the conservation area on Main Street.

Position 6

- ***It was RESOLVED that the seat, outside the Rectory and close to the Pharmacy in Main Street, be of the type with pedestal base and that this base be bolted to concrete insert foundations set flush with the tarmac footpath.***

(The vote was unanimous from all those present)

Position 7

- ***It was RESOLVED that the seat, replacing the broken existing seat on the small Green in Field Close, be of the type with pedestal base and that this base be bolted to the existing concrete slab foundation.***

(The vote was unanimous from all those present)

Cllr. Mrs. A. Sleath had also requested potential estimates from the HDC contracted labour force, The Quick Response Team, for annual maintenance for seven seats. These are filed for future reference.

Having been proposed and seconded:

- ***It was RESOLVED that the estimate for £2,031.97, net of VAT, submitted by Orchard Street Furniture Ltd., for 6 x 1800 Allington seats with pedestal base and bolts, 1 x 1800 Allington bench without pedestal base and the carriage cost, be approved as best value for the purchase of these supplies for the Village Seating Plan which is part of the Parish Plan.***

(The vote was unanimous from all those present)

Council decided that the height of the seats to be ordered with pedestal base is to be 18.5 inches from ground to the top surface of the seating planks. This is to comply with recent new seating regulations. The bench without pedestal base will have legs of a sufficient length to facilitate it being concreted into the existing ground surface leaving the same seating height, 18.5 inches from ground to the top surface of the seating planks.

Having been proposed and seconded:

- ***It was RESOLVED that the estimate for £682.75, net of VAT, submitted by HDC contracted labour force, The Quick Response Team, be approved as best value for the installation cost of six wooden seats and one wooden bench, these all being part of the Village Seating Plan which is part of the Parish Plan.***

(The vote was unanimous from all those present)

Two copies of the contract for License Consent for the five seats on Highways verges had been received from LCC. (Positions 1, 2, 3, 5 & 6.) Both copies were signed by the Chairman and Cllr. Mrs. A. Sleath. One copy is to be returned to LCC, the second copy is to be filed.

The Council is in possession of written permission granted by HDC for the installation of the bench, Position 4, and the seat, Position 7, on HDC land.

The clerk was instructed to order the seats to be delivered to the Foxton storage depot and, when notified of their delivery, to schedule a suitable date for their installation.

12. VILLAGE PUMP

Cllr. Mrs. A. Sharman reported:

Mr. Clive Howe, Highways District Engineer, has confirmed by email that Highways agree to cover the cost, to the value of £140, of the HDC contractor taking down the vulnerable sections of the pump housing and setting aside the materials prior to the beginning of HDC remedial work. There are to be discussions between Mr. Clive Howe, Highways, and Mr. Peter Clipstone, HDC Sheltered Housing Manager, in reference to who will pay for securing and making safe the site and set aside materials whilst HDC remedial work is in progress and whilst the pump housing is awaiting restoration. Mr. Peter Clipstone has already agreed that HDC will make safe, board up, what will be the exposed access to the pump.

13. VERBAL REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES IN RESPECT OF:

- **School Governors**
- **Village Charities**
- **Village Hall.**
- **Allotments**
- **LRAPLC**
- **Field Association**

Following Council’s serious concerns in respect of the Field Association’s proposed lease to Houghton Tennis Club these concerns, as agreed by Council 13/06/07, had been communicated to both HFA and the Charity Commission. The clerk had sent letters, detailing the Council’s concerns, to both HFA and CC. Replies from both HFA and CC had been received and copies of these replies had been circulated to all Councillors in the meeting pack for this PC Meeting.

Following further discussion on the matter, having been proposed and seconded:

- ***It was RESOLVED that a small working party be formed, consisting of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman and Councillor Mrs. A. Sleath, to meet with three representatives of Houghton Field Association.***

(The vote was unanimous from all those present)

Council considered that at this stage a small informal meeting would be advisable in order to facilitate a sensible discussion on the way forward and also to explain the position of the P.C. regarding grants etc. It may be useful, in the future, to enlarge this meeting to bring in the skills and opinions of other Councillors.

A mutually convenient date for this informal meeting is to be scheduled.

- **Have Your Say**

14. CLERK’S EXPENSES

Amendment to method of payment of clerk’s expenses.

Having been proposed and seconded:

- ***It was RESOLVED that the resolution recorded in the Minutes 07/02/07, No. 10. Ratification of the Clerk’s Terms of Employment and Service, that from February 2007 onwards the standing monthly expenses claimed by Ms. A. M. Davies, Parish Clerk/RFO, will be included and presented on the same expenses claim form as that for any variable monthly expenses be amended to that the standing monthly expenses claimed by Ms. A. M. Davies, Parish Clerk/RFO, be paid monthly by Bank Standing Order from 31/07/07 and the last working day of each month thereafter and that these expenses be reviewed annually but that the clerk’s variable monthly expenses continue to be claimed on an expenses claim form supported by receipts / invoices and presented to the Council for payment at monthly PC Meetings.***

Carried by majority vote 4:1

Clerk’s note: Standing Orders. 35. Alteration of Resolution.

In accordance with Council’s Standing Orders a bank Standing Order Mandate form to this effect was signed by two Councillors.

There being no further business to transact the meeting was closed at 21:45 pm.

SIGNED.....

CHAIRMAN

DATE.....