

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF HOUGHTON-ON-THE-HILL PARISH
COUNCIL, HELD IN THE METHODIST CHURCH SCHOOLROOM,
MAIN STREET, HOUGHTON-ON-THE-HILL,
WEDNESDAY 6th MAY 2009, AT 8:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Cllr. Mr. M. Stevenson (Chairman)
Cllr. Mrs. A. Sharman (Vice Chairman)
Cllr. Mrs. E. Bent
Cllr. Mr. P. Duke
Cllr. Mr. W. Scott
Cllr. Mrs. A. Sleath
Cllr. Mrs. S. Swann

Ms A. M. Davies (Clerk)

2 members of the public

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 2009/10

Chairman, 2008/09, Cllr. Mr. Mort Stevenson called for nominations for the election of Chairman 2009/10.

Having been proposed and seconded:

- ***It was RESOLVED that Cllr. Mr. Mort Stevenson be elected Chairman for 2009/10.***

Cllr. Mr. Mort Stevenson signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chairman.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN 2009/10

Having been proposed and seconded:

- ***It was RESOLVED Cllr. Mrs. Ann Sharman be appointed Vice-Chairman for 2009/10.***

Cllr. Mrs. Ann Sharman signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Vice-Chairman.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2008/09

Chairman Cllr. Mr. M. Stevenson, also Chairman 2008/09, gave the Chairman's Annual Report 2008/09. The report is filed with these minutes. (See Appendix 1, Chairman's Annual Report 2008/09.)

It was moved by Vice Chairman Cllr. Mrs. Ann Sharman that a vote of thanks be given to Chairman Cllr. Mr. Mort Stevenson for his services as Chairman for 2008/09.

- ***It was RESOLVED that a vote of thanks be given to Chairman Cllr. Mr. Mort Stevenson for his services as Chairman for 2008/09.***

4. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN ON PROGRESS OF DEBATED ISSUES

The Chairman read out a report, primarily detailing the progress of issues already debated. The report was for information only. Issue arising out of this report that requires a decision from the Parish Council will be raised as agenda items as necessary (See Appendix 2, Chairman's Report to the Parish Council 06/05/09).

5. APOLOGIES

None received.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

7. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THE 1st APRIL 2009

The Minutes of the Meeting of the 1st April 2009 were confirmed and signed.

8. FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. Annual Return 2008/09

All councillors had been circulated with a copy of Houghton on the Hill Financial Statement 2008/09 and a copy of the Internal Auditor's Report 2008/09. The Financial Statement 2008/09, is confirmed and verified as accurate by internal audit 16/04/09. Copies of the Financial Statement 2008/09 and the Internal Auditor's Report 2008/09 are filed with these minutes.

- ***It was RESOLVED that, having received and considered the Internal Audit Report 2008/09, the Financial Statement 2008/09 of the accounts of Houghton on the Hill Parish Council be approved by full council and be signed by the Chairman.***

The Financial Statement 2008/09 of the accounts of Houghton on the Hill Parish Council was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/RFO.

- ***It was RESOLVED that Section 1, the Statement of Accounts, of the Annual Return 2008/09 of Houghton on the Hill Parish Council be approved by full council and be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.***

Section 1, the Statement of Accounts of the Annual Return 2008/09 of Houghton on the Hill Parish Council, was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/RFO.

- ***It was RESOLVED that, full council having answered "yes" to questions 1-8 of Section 2 of the Annual Return 2008/09, full council approval be given for the Chairman and the Clerk to sign the Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return 2008/09.***

Section 2, the Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return 2008/09, was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/RFO.

The clerk advised the Council that the "Notice of Inspection Period" and the "Summary of Public Rights" will be displayed from Monday 11th May to Wednesday 12th June. The actual Inspection Period will be from Monday 1st June to Monday 29th June. During the Inspection Period, any member of the public has the right to see and/or make copies of the accounts. Local government electors and their representatives have the opportunity to question the External Auditor, Clement Keys, in writing about the accounts from 13th July until the audit completion.

2. Clerk's Variable Expenses

Since appointment, 15/11/06, the clerk has presented invoices for the reimbursement of payment for office consumables. These expenses are in fact the expenses of the PC, incurred in the daily running costs of the PC Office. The PC now has purchasing facilities with ESPO, therefore payment can be made after receipt of goods supplied. Payment can be made directly to the suppliers, not to the clerk as reimbursement for payment made personally by the clerk for essential PC Office consumables. Payment for any consumables not included on the ESPO lists, can be paid directly to suppliers who have offered the PC an account whereby payment is settled after receipt of goods.

- ***It was RESOLVED that, as of 01/04/2009 expenses incurred in the purchase of essential office consumables, expenses previously recorded as "Clerk's Variable Expenses", be recorded in Houghton on the Hill Parish Council accounts as administration expenses incurred by Houghton on the Hill Parish Council.***

3. Revision of 2009/10 Budget

All Councillors had been circulated with a copy of the Spreadsheet, "Budget 2009/10, Revised Budget and Forecast to 31st March 2010", presented by the Clerk/RFO. A copy of the spreadsheet had been included in the meeting pack for this PC Meeting.

- ***It was RESOLVED that the revised Houghton on the Hill Parish Council Budget 2009/10, presented 06/05/2009 by the Clerk/RFO, be approved.***

Copies of the Revised Budget 2009/10, approved by Council 06/05/09, and the Revised Budget 2009/10 Forecast to 31st March 2010 are to be filed with Council's records.

4. Parish Council purchase of IT Office Equipment as per “LCC/LRALC Service Level Agreement Information Technology Project” grant.

The HP G70-212EM 17" laptop is not available through ESPO contracts; it can only be purchased from retailers.

The HP G70-212EM 17" laptop cannot be purchased directly from HP.

HP referred the Council to PC World, Currys, Dixons and a variety of online retailers.

Council having considered quotations from PC World, Currys and Dixons for the purchase of a laptop computer and associated necessary accessories:

- ***It was RESOLVED that, the quotation received from PC World, £497.96 (Gross) for HP G70-212EM 17" laptop computer and associated necessary accessories, be approved as best value for the purchase of a Parish Council laptop computer and accessories.***

5. Accounts presented for payment:

Supplies Team (ESPO contract), PC Office consumables – 3 ink cartridges	£ 48.27
PC World, laptop computer and associated necessary accessories	£ 497.96
Cuttlefish.com Ltd., registration of PC domain name and e-mail address	£ 46.00
Allianz Insurance Plc., policy renewal	£ 575.03
Mr. C. V. Bagshaw, internal audit fee 2008/09	£ 140.00
Cllr. Mr. William Scott, planning training travel expenses. (Claim form submitted)	£ 8.00

- ***It was RESOLVED that all accounts presented for payment 06/05/09 be paid in full.***

9. CORRESPONDENCE

1. LRALC Newsletter April 2009. Noted.

2. Letter from Leicestershire County Neighbourhood Watch Association seeking any financial support that the PC may be able to provide.

The clerk was asked to do some research on this request and to report back at the next PC Meeting.

3. E-mail, 24/04/09, and letter, 27/04/09, from HDC in reply to the Parish Council seeking clarification on what would appear to be some degree of failure by HDC Development Control Team and LCC to adequately monitor the development at Elizabeth Close, Planning Application 07/00529/FUL (Revised Scheme 02/00545/FUL), from its conception up to the present. Noted.

4. E-mail, 29/04/09, from the Co-operative Group Eco-Town Team in reply to the Parish Council's letter of opposition to the Pennbury proposal. Noted.

10. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO/OFF OUTSIDE BODIES 2009/10

The Parish Council maintains a number of representations to outside bodies and the appointment of these representatives was made to identify their involvement.

The bodies, with the appointed Councillor or representative, are as follows:

Village Charities - Cllr. Mr. Peter Duke

Village Hall - Cllr. Mrs. Susan Swann

Gardeners' Club - Cllr. Mrs. Ann Sharman

LRALC - Cllr. Mrs. Ann Sleath

Field Association - Cllr. Mr. William Scott

Rural East “Have Your Say” - Cllr. Mrs. Ann Sleath

HDC Planning - Cllr. Mr. William Scott

CASCET - Cllr. Mrs. Eileen Bent

School Governors - School Governor Representatives to the PC, appointed by the school, may wish to attend and report at monthly PC Meetings.

11. TREE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME

Owing to circumstances beyond her control, Mrs. Francesca Wall-Bray, Houghton Tree Warden, had sent apologies for absence at the PC Meeting.

Subsequently, Council consideration of village tree maintenance/planting related matters was deferred pending the receipt of a verbal and/or written report from Mrs. Francesca Wall-Bray.

12. HOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL WEB SITE

No new issues were presented for Council consideration or decision.

13. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Clerk reported:

1. Planning Applications WITHDRAWN:

1. Planning Application 09/00235/CON

Proposal: Demolition of garage and partial demolition of boundary wall

Location: 26 Main Street, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9GD

Date received by PC: 06/03/2009

Planning Application 09/00235/CON permitted 23rd April 2009 but subsequently withdrawn by the applicant.

2. Planning Application 09/00234/FUL

Proposal: Erection of two storey rear extension

Location: 26 Main Street, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9GD

Date received by PC: 06/03/2009

Planning Application 09/00234/FUL withdrawn

2. Planning Application PERMITTED:

1. Planning Application 09/00275/FUL

Proposal: Erection of a carport

Location: 8/8A St Catharine's Way, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9HE

Date received by PC: 16/03/09

Planning Application 09/00275/FUL permitted 30th April 2009

3. Planning Applications REFUSED:

1. Planning Application 09/00194/CON

Proposal: Demolition of front wall and outbuilding (revised scheme of 08/00993/CON)

Location: Land Rear of 49 And 51 Main Street, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9GE

Date received by PC: 26/02/2009

Planning Application 09/00194/CON refused 09/04/2009

2. Planning Application 09/00193/FUL

Proposal: Erection of 4 detached dwellings and triple garage including demolition of front wall and outbuilding (revised scheme of 08/00992/FUL)

Location: Land Rear of 49 And 51 Main Street, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9GE

Date received by PC: 26/02/2009

Planning Application 09/00193/FUL refused 09/04/2009

4. Planning Application TO BE CONSIDERED BY PC:

1. Planning Application 09/00478/LBC

Proposal: Erection of first floor rear extension and pitched roofs over existing flat roofs (revised scheme 06/00913/LBC)

Location: Eaton House, 57 Main Street, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9GE

Date received by PC: Not yet received, plans downloaded from HDC Planning website.

Date of End of Consultation: 02/06/2009

Having considered the plans, the Council's comments were as follows:

Eaton House is one of the most historically important houses in the village; consequently the Council would like to see the planned building proposals to be in keeping with the Georgian style of this old house, especially in terms of building materials sympathetic with both the house and the conservation area in which it is located.

The Council considered that the introduction of the proposed pitched roofs, replacing the existing flat roofs, would be an improvement. The Council has no objection to the design of the proposed first floor extension. However, the Council is still concerned that the mass of the revised building proposal may result in an unacceptably overbearing house, especially in relationship to No.55 Main Street, and the overdevelopment of this corner plot.

The clerk was instructed to inform HDC Development Control Team accordingly

2. Planning Application 09/00477/FUL

Proposal: Erection of a first floor rear extension and pitched roofs over existing flat roofs (revised scheme of 06/00911/FUL)

Location: Eaton House, 57 Main Street, Houghton on the Hill, Leics. LE7 9GE

Date received by PC: Not yet received, plans downloaded from HDC Planning website.

Date of End of Consultation: 02/06/2009

The Council's comments on Planning Application 09/00477/FUL were identical to those made on Planning Application 09/00478/LBC, the accompanying planning application for this plot.

The clerk was instructed to inform HDC Development Control Team accordingly

3. Planning Application 08/00935A/REM

Proposal: Erection of two storey detached dwelling and detached garage (reserved matters of 07/01050/OUT)

Location: 8/8A St Catharine's Way, Houghton on the Hill Leics. LE7 9HE

Date received by PC: 05/05/2009

End of Consultation: 14/05/2009

Having considered the plans the Council instructed the Clerk to inform HDC Development Control Team of Council's reasons for objection to Planning Application 08/00935A/REM.

14. VERBAL REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES IN RESPECT OF:

- **School Governors**
- **Village Charities**
- **Village Hall**
- **Allotments**

When received, the minutes of the HGC Committee Meeting 25/04/08 will be filed with Council's records.

- **LRALC**
- **Field Association**
- **Rural East "Have your Say"**
- **HDC Planning**

Cllr. Mr. William Scott gave an extensive report on the training event for Parish Council Planning Representatives which he had attended at the District Council Offices 21/04/09.

Council agreed to form a Planning Working Party to consider any major planning proposals received for Parish Council consultation, this working party to report back to the Parish Council at a subsequent PC Meeting.

Council agreed that this working party would consist of any number of Councillors, fewer than full Council, available at the relevant time.

- **CASCET**

Minutes of the CASCET Committee Meeting 15/04/09 and various Eco Town related e-mail updates had been circulated to all Councillors.

Minutes of the CASCET Committee Meeting 15/04/09 are filed with Council's records.

Cllr. Mrs. Eileen Bent gave an extensive verbal report on the CASCET Committee Meeting 15/04/09, current CASCET issues, progress, potential legal actions to be undertaken and crucial forthcoming fund raising events.

The CASCET response to the draft PPS on eco-towns consultation was sent to Henry Cleary and the eco-towns team at DCLG on the 29th April. Acknowledgement of receipt of the CASCET response by DCLG was also confirmed on the 29th April.

An eco-town update article will be submitted for publication in the June Issue of Houghton News. The CASCET AGM is scheduled for Wednesday 13th May – Stoughton Village Hall, 8:00pm. The next CASCET Committee Meeting will be held immediately after the AGM on the 13th May.

There being no further business to transact the meeting was closed at 9:15 pm.

SIGNED.....
CHAIRMAN

DATE.....

Appendix 1

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2008/09

2008/09 has been a very busy year for the Houghton Parish Council.

The Council called three PC Meetings in addition to those which had been scheduled for the year. I think all our councillors have made a very committed and valuable contribution to the community and demonstrated a serious and responsible attitude to the challenges that have faced us.

It has been a pleasure to be chairman of this Parish Council.

However, my role and that of all members of the Council, has been made considerably easier by the administrative work undertaken by our clerk Anita Davies.

It is impossible to overestimate the amount of time and attention to detail that needs to be made to the varied duties that have to be undertaken by a parish clerk.

Not only does Anita cope with all that is thrown at her, but will also go the extra mile to ensure the Council has the proper and correct information and can therefore make sensible informed decisions. She has been a dedicated and extremely professional member of the team. Everything she has been asked to do has been carried out in a very thorough manner and her advice to the Council on all procedural matters has always proved very sound.

I think we are very fortunate to have a clerk of this calibre, and I am very grateful to her.

I would particularly like to thank our vice-chairman Ann Sharman, whose long experience in local government and wise counsel has continued to help me enormously. It also gives me great satisfaction that for the whole year, we have had a full complement of councillors, all of whom have made very valuable contributions.

We are very fortunate to have Eileen Bent not only as a valuable and committed member of the Parish Council but also as a CASCET Committee member being able to keep the PC, and the village, fully informed and updated on all Eco Town issues. The Council is very grateful for the consistent, tireless work and effort willingly contributed by Eileen Bent.

Thanks to Peter Duke who, although having undergone knee surgery in the autumn of 2008, still managed to co-ordinate Remembrance Sunday events and missed only two PC Meetings.

I would also like to acknowledge the contribution made by Sue Swann and Bill Scott, PC Representatives on the Village Hall and Houghton Field Association Committees respectively, who have carried out their duties in connection with these two vital village organisations with laudable reliability and commitment.

Thanks also to Bill Scott for agreeing to be the PC Planning Representative to HDC.

Ann Sharman, PC Representative to Houghton Gardener's Club, who although not eligible for a Gardeners' Club Committee vote, has regularly attended and reported on HGC Committee Meetings. Ann's presence has, I am sure, helped the committee run a very efficient operation. I thank her for her continued interest.

I am grateful to Ann Sleath for agreeing to be the site administrator for the Parish Council website. The website, with its direct link to Harborough District Planning Department, receives a substantial number of visits per month. The Parish Council will continue to consider the possibility of including additional relevant information on the PC website.

The clerk is currently making arrangements for the adoption of a PC website domain name and PC e-mail address.

Between 1st April 2008 and 31st March 2009, the Parish Council has considered and reported on 38 planning applications.

Everyone has seen the results of Phase1 and Phase2 of the Village Tree Planting Programme and the ongoing Tree Maintenance Programme. The village should be proud of the enormous improvements made to the village environment.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the tree warden, Francesca Wall-Bray, who continues to oversee the whole project with great enthusiasm and dedication, and I'm very grateful to her. Many thanks also to her team of volunteer village helpers who work tirelessly, often in extreme conditions. However, for reasons of financial priorities, the Parish Council's implementation of Phase3 of the Village Tree Planting Programme has been put in abeyance pending the final outcome of the Pennbury Eco Town proposals.

The programme for the installation of additional seating around the village has been completed with many complimentary comments from residents. I thank Ann Sleath for her efforts in driving forward this programme.

I congratulate the Village Hall Committee on achieving the Hallmark Scheme Level 1 Award for the village hall and facilities, and wish them success in their current endeavours to achieve the Hallmark Scheme Level 2 Award. Council fully appreciates that there has been greatly increased expenditure owing to the employment of contract cleaners and the necessity for village hall replacement windows. Council is also aware that further large expenditure is imminent for the provision of the redesigned and refurbished new kitchen.

At the request of the Field Association, an additional dog waste bin has been installed on the playing field.

On the subject of the Field, I am anxious that we recognise the Field as being an important village amenity and, when funds allow, I would like us consider what help we can give to the improvement of the facilities, particularly the children's play area, that due to the considerable efforts of the committee planning is at an advanced stage.

There has been considerable progress made in fund raising for this project and the members of the Field Committee responsible are to be congratulated for their innovative and enthusiastic efforts.

The Council was pleased to make a contribution of £1,500.00 towards the restoration of St. Catharine's Church tower. St. Catharine's Church is not only a beautiful place of worship but also a building of great historical significance.

Neighbourhood Watch, under Co-ordinator Mrs. Mary Woodcock, has proved to be a valuable asset to the village. This important activity appears to be gathering pace, and we will give every support we can to protect the security of villagers.

Following a barrage of complaints to LCC Highways about the unacceptable standard of LCC Highways grass cutting last year, this situation appears to have been resolved with the appointment by LCC Highways of a new Grass Cutting Contractor for the current grass cutting season.

In October 2008 the Leicester to Uppingham 747 Bus Service was under threat. After much protest, from both Council and villagers, this vital service was retained with the 747 still being diverted through the village at off peak times. County Cllr. Mr. Simon Galton is to be thanked for his efforts and support on this issue on behalf of the village.

The proposed Co-op Eco Town development has again overshadowed the whole of the Parish Council's year. If successful, this huge project which will change our and other communities' way of life for ever.

In April 2008 the Council ratified its strong objection to this proposal and committed itself to supporting CASCET in their efforts to have this project abandoned. To this end the Council resolved to donate £4,000.00 to the cause. This was gratefully received by CASCET. However there is still a long way to go.

As I have already said, the Parish Council implementation of Phase3 of the Village Tree Planting Programme has been put in abeyance pending the final outcome of the Pennbury Eco Town proposals. Council funding support towards costly legal challenges necessary in the opposition to the Pennbury proposal is likely to take priority.

I have greatly appreciated all councillors' support over the last 12 months and I am confident that this support will continue. I look forward to the challenges yet to come.

Appendix 2

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE PARISH COUNCIL 06/05/09

Eco Town.

Any new information received will be considered by Council under Agenda Item 14, CASCET.

Parish Council Website

As resolved, 01/04/09, the parish Council has adopted a Houghton on the Hill Parish Council website domain name and a new Parish Council e-mail address.

As of 14/04/09, the registered Parish Council website domain name is:

houghtononthehillpc.org.uk

The Parish Council's new e-mail address is:

clerk@houghtononthehillpc.org.uk

Further expenditure on the improvement of the Parish Council's IT facilities will be considered by Council under Agenda Item 8. Financial Matters, Sub-heading 4:

Parish Council purchase of IT Office Equipment as per "LCC/LRALC Service Level Agreement Information Technology Project" grant.