

Houghton on the Hill Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE METHODIST CHURCH SCHOOLROOM, MAIN STREET, HOUGHTON ON THE HILL, ON THURSDAY 9th JANUARY 2014, AT 7.30 PM

PRESENT:

Members: Cllr. Mr. H. Francis (Chairman), Cllr. Mrs. A. Sleath (Vice Chairman), Cllr. Mrs. R. Hamilton, Cllr. Mr. S. Sims, Cllr. Paul Hart.

Clerk: Mr. S. Derry

Members of the Public: There were 4 members of the public present including county/district Councillor Simon Galton and district Councillor Amanda Burrell.

		ACTION
01-01/14	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Mrs. H. McSweeney.	
02-01/14	NOTIFICATION OF DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Councillor Sleath, as a committee member of Houghton Field Association (HFA) declared an interest in respect of agenda item 6c (consideration of the annual precept for 2014/15 which included grant provision for HFA) and agenda item 17 (letter from an HFA committee member). Councillors involved in a position of general control or management of organisations but not appointed or nominated by the Parish Council have no such disclosure obligations in accordance with the Parish Council's Code of Conduct. The declaration was made voluntarily. Councillor Sims, as the Parish Council's deputy representative for HFA, declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in respect of agenda item 6c (consideration of the annual precept for 2014/15 which included grant provision for HFA) and agenda item 17 (letter from an HFA committee member). Councillor Sims remained in the meeting as his impartiality obligations or any other obligations set out in the Code of Conduct would not be compromised.	
03-01/14	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2013 It was resolved that the minutes be confirmed. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.	
04-01/14	INFORMAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION County/District Councillor Simon Galton outlined the County Council's savings and tax proposals for the next four years.	

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05-01/14 GRANTS POLICY

It was **resolved** that:

- Paragraph 6 be amended by the addition of 'if a grant was not awarded the previous year or if this is the first application for a grant, the latest set of accounts should accompany the application'.
- Paragraph 10 be amended by adding after 'At its meeting in November', '(and again in December if appropriate)'.
- Paragraph 10 be amended by replacing 'At its meeting in December' with 'At its meeting in January (or earlier if Harborough District Council's timetable permits)'.

Clerk

06-01/14 FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Invoices received and approval of payment.

It was **resolved** to approve the payments detailed in the Schedule of Payments as circulated by the Clerk with the agenda.

Clerk

b) Quarterly Financial Progress Report

It was **resolved** that the report, comprising details of expenditure, income, expenditure and bank reconciliations for the period from 1 October to 31 December 2013 be accepted.

c) Precept 2014/15

It was **resolved**:

- a) To approve a gross precept of £21,420 and advise Harborough District Council accordingly.
- b) To approve a net precept of £20,478.42 comprising the gross precept from which the government grant of £941.58 as advised by Harborough District Council on 17 January 2014 would be deducted.
- c) To transfer £3,650 from reserves.

Clerk

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- d) to approve grants as follows and to explain to applicants that the amount of the award did not mean that any future applications would necessarily be of similar amounts.

Houghton Field Association	Maintenance to pavilion	£3,000.00
Methodist Church	Replacement window	£400.00
Parklife	Help towards equipment for completion of youth area	£1,500.00
St. Catharine's Church	Works to trees to provide more burial space, ensure parishioners' safety using churchyard and paths and enhance churchyard appearance	£845.00 ⁽¹⁾
Village Hall	Subsidy for hire of hall by Houghton organisations and residents	£2,400.00 ⁽²⁾
Village Hall	Improved gutter and drainage	£500.00
Village Hall	Replacement chairs	£700.00

Clerk

⁽¹⁾ Grant award conditional on St. Catharine's Church 'match funding' the grant, i.e. the Parish Council will provide a grant of 50% of the cost of the project subject to a ceiling of £845. The application was for a grant of £1690.

⁽²⁾ The cost in 2012 was £2000 and a similar amount had been expected in 2013. In the event of £400 of the £2400 not being required, the grant will be reduced accordingly.

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07-01/14	<p>PLANNING APPLICATION</p> <p>a) 13/01641/OUT - Erection of 16 houses and bungalows (all matters reserved) (2 Uppingham Road, Houghton).</p> <p>It was resolved to support the application and to submit the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) The dwellings should comprise smaller homes as opposed to executive style ones, i.e. starter homes/bungalows.ii) No more than 16 dwellings should be permitted.iii) Dwellings should be constructed to a maximum of 2 storeys.iv) Access to the allotments should be maintained. <p>It was resolved to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• support off-site contributions in principle.• convene a working party to consider the detailed aspects of off-site contributions.	Clerk	
08-01/14	<p>CLERK'S REPORT</p> <p>The Clerk's report was received and accepted.</p>	Clerk	
09-01/14	<p>NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN</p> <p>Despite a public meeting and other forms of publicity, no more expressions of interest had been received.</p> <p>It was resolved to invite expressions of interests on the Leicestershire Villages website.</p>	Clerk	
10-01/14	<p>COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE</p> <p>It was resolved to adopt a procedure as advised by the Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils.</p>	Clerk	
11-01/14	<p>NOTICEBOARDS</p> <p>It was reported that the noticeboards on the A47 and Linwal Avenue were in a poor state of repair and needed renovation or replacement.</p> <p>It was resolved to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ascertain what a licence would cost from Leicestershire County Council to site a noticeboard at the junction of St. Catharine's Way and Linwal Avenue.• enquire as to whether the homeowner would permit a noticeboard to be attached to the wall adjacent to the post office	Clerk	Cllr. HF

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12-01/14	<p>ROADSIDE SEATS As only one quotation had been received for cleaning and treating the village seats with wood preservative or similar, it was resolved to defer consideration to the Parish Council meeting in February.</p>	Clerk
13-01/14	<p>HOUGHTON GAMES It was resolved to defer consideration to the Parish Council meeting in February.</p>	Clerk
14-01/14	<p>PARISH COUNCIL COMPUTER The computer had developed a fault and an engineer had advised that a repair would cost £80. The computer was purchased in August 2012 and the warranty had expired although the Clerk was liaising with the supplier with a view to some or all of the cost being met by them. It was resolved to support the actions of the Clerk and to approve expenditure of up to £80 in the event of the supplier not paying for the repair.</p>	Clerk
15-01/14	<p>REPORTS FROM VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVES ON EXTERNAL BODIES Councillor Sleath reported on two meetings of Houghton Field Association which she had attended in December 2013.</p>	
16-01/14	<p>CORRESPONDENCE The list of correspondence, as circulated by the Clerk with the agenda, was received and accepted. The following issues for action were considered:</p> <p>a) An Email had been received from Nim Mawee on behalf of Leicestershire Forums announcing the launch of a Green Plaque Awards scheme in Leicestershire to recognise and celebrate the county's rich cultural and historic heritage. Local residents could nominate and vote for people/places/events that they thought were worthy of commemoration based on a set of criteria. Nominations would close on 24 January 2014</p> <p>It was resolved to place the invitation on the Parish Council's website.</p> <p>b) An Email had been received from Hayley Cawthorne, Parish Liaison Officer, Harborough District Council requesting completion of the Harborough Parish Communication Survey.</p> <p>It was resolved that Councillor Francis would complete the survey.</p> <p>c) An Email had been received from Tony Barrowcliffe, a representative of Houghton Field Association, expressing concerns over the Parish Council's handling of HFA's request to release the 2012/13 grant.</p> <p>Councillors felt that the resolutions made at the Parish Council meeting in December 2013 including an apology had concluded the matter. However in response to Mr Barrowcliffe's email it was resolved to send a letter of apology to Mr and Mrs Barrowcliffe.</p>	Clerk
		Clerk, Cllr. HF
		Clerk, Cllr. HF

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- d) Zurich Municipal (the Parish Council's insurers) had responded positively to the claim for a replacement salt bin following damage to the bin in Scotland Lane and had indicated that the replacement could be sited elsewhere. The Parish Council could therefore enact the resolution made at its meeting in November 2013 to 'site the replacement bin at the junction of Chapel Close and St. Catharine's Way'.

It was **resolved** to:

- Write to nearby residents following a visit to the site by Councillors to explain that the Parish Council intended to install the bin in the vicinity of the south-west corner of the junction.
- Instruct Leicestershire County Council accordingly.

Clerk,
Cllr. AS

- e) An Email had been received from LRALC notifying the Parish Council of a free one-day training event which would include a number of specialist trainers and facilitators from across the country speaking on matters designed to assist local councils become more effective in addressing rural issues.

It was **resolved** that Cllrs. Sleath, Hamilton and Hart would attend and would be reimbursed for travelling.

Clerk,
Cllrs. AS,
RH, PH

- f) LRALC had provided notification of a consultation in connection with the European Commission review of VAT treatment of public bodies and exemptions in the public interest.

It was **resolved** that Councillor Sleath would respond to the consultation.

Clerk,
Cllr. AS

16-01/14 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT AGENDA

It was **resolved** to include the following in the agenda for the Parish Council meeting to be held on 13 February 2014:

- a) Councillor Vacancy
- b) Houghton Games
- c) Cleaning and painting roadside seats
- d) Contractors and Public Liability Insurance
- e) Noticeboards
- f) Severn-Trent required works

Clerk

17-01/14 CLERK'S CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT

It was **resolved** that having taken into account confidential information of a personal nature, provisions in accordance with paragraph 14 of the Contract of Employment would be enacted.

Clerk,
Cllr. HF

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18-01/14 | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 13 February 2014, commencing at 7.30 p.m. in the Methodist Church Schoolroom, Houghton.

The meeting closed at 9.07 p.m.

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Chairman
13 February 2014