

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 TUESDAY 11th JULY 2006 AT
8:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Cllr. Mr M. Stevenson (Chairman)
Cllr. Mrs A. Sharman
Cllr. Mr S. Blackwell
Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath
Dr. D. Campbell (Part-time Parish Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were to be made when agenda items were being discussed. They will then be recorded accordingly. Councillor's attention was drawn to the information presented to them in their meeting pack concerning declarations of interest.

3. Parish Clerk

The Parish Clerk had discovered that there may have been a technical error in his appointment and he had brought this to the attention of the Chairman. The Chairman obtained legal advice and confirmed that the appointment of the Clerk was contrary to the regulations and the appointment by necessity was terminated. The technical error concerns the situation that a Parish Councillor who is appointed as a new Parish Clerk (after resigning his councillorship) cannot be remunerated until 12 months has elapsed following his resignation from the Council.

As the new Clerk's position had remuneration, the appointment was disallowed under the regulations and the position was terminated on the 5th July 2006. No payment to the Clerk had been made this financial year and so the Council had stayed within the legal requirements.

Following further advice, the Council then decided on what basis a new Clerk should be appointed and the following resolution was passed unanimously:

*It is **RESOLVED** that the Council would like the Clerk's position to be a temporary non-paid part time appointment.*

Following this resolution the Parish Council appointed Dr D. R. J. Campbell as the new Clerk under the temporary non-payment conditions. He had volunteered for the role and the advice given allows a non-paid appointment to be made without advertisement if the Parish Council wishes.

4. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THE 3rd MAY 2006

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on Wednesday, 3rd May 2006, were confirmed, and signed.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THE 7th JUNE 2006

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 7th June 2006, were confirmed, and signed.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

6.1. The letter of complaint to Leicestershire County Council concerning the cutting of the verges had been sent but there has been no response yet.

Action Complete

6.2. Core Strategy Document – Due to a mix-up over the submission dates this was not done in time. It appears that most of the points and issues are going to be addressed in the “*Planning Applications and Local Development Framework – Planning for Future Homes, Jobs, and Affordable Housing*” document and a response will be made through that route.

Action – Suspended

6.3. The headmaster of Houghton School was informed that the school could use the Committee Room for the school concert.

Action Complete

6.4. The Clerk has received an undertaking that the signs will be removed from 30 Main Street as soon as the work is complete.

Action Complete

6.5. The Clerk has contacted the tree warden of the village to help with a tree-planting scheme (see item 10.2 below)

Action Complete

6.6. The Clerk has comment upon the regrettable loss of Houghton losing its last industrial area to the planning committee during the consultation process on a change of use application and the planning permission has been refused on this basis.

Action Complete

6.7. The Clerk has disseminated the “*Planning Applications and Local Development Framework – Planning for Future Homes, Jobs, and Affordable Housing*”, and a special public meeting to discuss the documents was held on the 5th July.

Action Complete

6.8. The Clerk has prompted the Highways department on the progress of safety of the A47 and Stretton Lane and a partial response has been obtained. The situation and information will be monitored.

Action Complete

6.9. The Clerk has contacted Mr H. Bartlet concerning the Linwal Avenue Footpath situation and has discovered that nothing can be done by the authorities. Any discussion and action needs to be undertaken by Linwal Avenue residents affected by the situation and the owners of the land upon which the footpath lays.

Action Complete

6.10. Cllr M. Stevenson has looked at the School Travel Plans and comments will be reserved until the speed a safety check is made on Stretton Lane.

Action Complete

6.11. The Clerk has written to LCC to ask for more bollards to be placed on the corner opposite the War Memorial to stop vehicles using the footpath as extra road space.

Action Complete

6.12. The Working Party has responded to the draft Charity Commission letter and sent corrections. The Clerk will now send the amended letter on behalf of the Council.

Action Complete

6.13. Cllr Mr M. Stevenson has contacted Houghton News and discussed the 'Welcome Pack'. It appears that they are not interested in helping the Parish Council with this activity.

Action Complete

6.14. Cllr. Mr S. Blackwell has tried to arrange a meeting with Houghton News concerning a possible web site but has found difficulties. This item is to be reviewed under item 10 of this agenda.

Action Complete

6.15. The Clerk has put a notice in the next Houghton News advertising the situation of the vacancy of a councillor.

Action Complete

7. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 A letter had been received from the Ministry of Transport concerning over flights into NEMA. The response is a little negative. The Parish Council asked the Clerk to let Houghton News be aware of the Ministry's response.

7.2 The letter from St Catharine's Church concerning some financial help to re-lay a path was discussed. It was decided, that in view of the money being donated this financial year, any help should be considered for next year's budget.

7.3 Leicestershire County Council has sent a letter requesting a Consultation on Leicestershire Statement of Community Involvement. The Council considered the documents and decided to decline to respond.

7.4 Leicestershire County Council has sent a letter advising of a traffic survey in response to the Parish Council's request for additional traffic calming features for Stretton Lane. Following the survey a decision will be made by LCC on options for extra traffic calming.

7.5 E-mails were read but there was no discussion required.

8. FINANCIAL MATTERS

8.1 The Clerk presented the first quarter financial details. He pointed out that the expenditure was running well below budget whilst income was slightly above budget. The financial year was 'back-end loaded' and there was some danger in under spending our precept again this year. The details were as follows: -

Expenditure – Budgeted	£2,416.00
Expenditure – Actual (actual and committed)	£1,293.96
Underspend/Overspend	£1,222.04
Available expenditure for the rest of the year	£20,038.04
Income – Budgeted	£6,275.00
Income – Actual (actual and invoiced)	£6,330.22
Over budget income/Under budget income	£55.22

Note: Accounts as of 27 June. These include projections until 30th June. Income does not include £8458.00 carry over and excess from reserves. This will be confirmed by audited accounts and before any commitment to spend.

8.2 The Parish Clerk currently does not have control of the Council's bank account. A letter will be prepared authorising the Clerk access.

8.3 A spreadsheet of the revised budget was presented to the Council.

9. DOG FOULING

9.1 Discussions took place concerning dog fouling in the village. It was resolved:

Resolution: That as a measure of the effectiveness of supplying 'dog waste bins' a trial bin system should be undertaken on the 'Field' providing permission from the Field Association is obtained.

The Clerk was asked to approach the Field Association with the plan and to seek their response.

10. PARISH PLAN PROJECTS

10.1 Seating around the Village. Cllr Mrs A. Sleath suggested that a village ‘walk around’ would identify sites for seats. A working party of those interested is to be identified by the attendance for the ‘walk around’. This was planned for Tuesday 18th July at 19:30 outside the Co-op.

10.2 Tree planting. The village tree warden had indicated her support for the scheme and it was decided to involve two councillors and one other in a working party to undertake this activity. It was further decided that bulb planting should be included in this activity. The councillors chosen were Cllrs. Mr R. Davis and S. Blackwell and the other two would be the tree warden Mrs F. Wall-Bray and the garden club chairman Mr McSweeney. Cllr S. Blackwell undertook to convene a meeting of the working party as soon as possible.

10.3 Plastic recycling. The Field Association had lost the letter sent by the Parish Council. Upon the receipt of a copy, they informally raised some more questions concerning insurance, vandalism, and rubbish. When their formal response is sent the Clerk was asked to comment and to ask Harborough to send the recycling man to talk to them and address their concerns.

10.4 Web site. Houghton News is having problems understanding what is going to be required of it in undertaking editorial control. A meeting with the whole Parish Council has been asked for by Houghton News. The Clerk has been asked to respond to their concerns and offer a meeting as soon as possible.

10.5 Village Well Housing and Pump. The Clerk has tried to contact Mr P. Smith from HDC concerning the cost of putting in a retaining wall on the embankment, but he was informed that Mr Smith has left HDC. Someone else has been trying to pick up the pieces and will get back to us as soon he can.

11. REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVES

- School Governors – Nothing to report
- Village Charities – Nothing to report
- Village Hall – Nothing to report
- LRAPLC – Nothing to report
- Field Association – Cllr Mrs A. Sleath attended the quarterly meeting. Her written report is given in Appendix B.
- Billesdon Community Forum – Cllr Mr S. Blackwell attended the last Forum and reported that it was a ‘carbon copy’ of the public meeting held last week in Houghton-on-the-Hill. A copy of the notes of the Houghton meeting is given in Appendix A.
- Garden Club – We now have three estimates for fencing. However, when they were examined it was found that only two were comparable, as the specification had varied. Cllr Mrs A. Sleath then added another consideration, which further confused the situation. Reluctantly it was decided that the whole process should be undertaken again with a professional approach i.e. a

specification generated, the specification sent to a selection of local builders and fencing specialists and a short list prepared and presented to the Parish Council. This was to be done by the Garden Club Parish Council representative.

There being no further business to transact the meeting was closed at 22:00 pm.

SIGNED.....
CHAIRMAN

DATE.....

APPENDIX A

NOTES ON A PUBLIC MEETING HELD IN THE CRICKET PAVILION,
DIXON FIELD, HOUGHTON ON THE HILL ON WEDNESDAY 5 JULY 2006

PRESENT:

Cllr. Mr M. Stevenson (Chairman)
Cllr. Mr S Blackwell
Cllr. Mr R Davis
Cllr. Mrs A Sharman
Cllr. Mrs A Sleath
District Councillor Mrs A Burrell
Members of the Public

NOTES:

Cllr. M Stevenson introduced DC Amanda Burrell who briefly explained what the Residential and Employment Allocations Development Plan was about and said that the discussion document was the first stage of the process. She explained that plots of land had been put forward by landowners or other interested parties to HDC for consideration. The plots had not been selected by HDC, in fact 4 times the amount of land had been put forward than was actually required. There was a criteria for assessing sites and also an order of priority for that would be used when allocating land for development. She encouraged members of the public to obtain copies of the document and to fill in the questionnaire.

At this point members of the public were invited to ask questions. Various questions were asked but the general feeling appeared to be that villagers were against any large scale development in the village.

Cllr. M Stevenson thanked DC Amanda Burrell for the presentation and also members of the public for attending.

APPENDIX B

REPORT OF THE FIELD ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE PAVILION 10th JULY 7:30 PM

There were 11 people present out of a Committee of 21.
Finance £5357.00 in the Field Accounts

Reports

1. Sports and Social

- Dave Wood is Chairman
- John Hancock is Secretary
- Craig Harris will be treasurer.
- The Sports and Social accounts are in confusion and Dave Wood is trying to sort them out.

2. Football report

- New Chairman Terry Harrison
- The boys will use the outdoor play area at the school and the football club is financing the lighting.

3. Tennis Report

- Membership April 2006 is 217 although L T A rules state that with three courts there should only be 180 members.
- Reports were given about team activities.
- Hog roast on Friday July 14th.
- Planning permission for a new pavilion has been applied for.
- A letter detailing their plan has been sent to householder who is likely to be affected. No one has got in touch with Geoff Thomas regarding the proposal.
- Assuming planning permission is granted then the base will be laid in September. The building is already on order.

4. Scouts

- Vandalism to scout store roof reported and the theft of tents. The second time this has happened recently. a new roof has been fitted and vandal proof paint applied.
- Permission to hold a bonfire on Sat. Nov. 4th requested and granted.

5. New Pavilion

- Little progress as Dave Wragg has been seriously ill.
- Health and Safety - new regulations require a fire risk assessment to be carried out and fire extinguishers to be installed. Carol Davis advised the name of the firm that deal with this for the Village Hall.
- Seat Outside Pavilion badly damaged by vandals - £200 for Adrian Hubbard to repair so price to be sought to buy a new one.

6. Plastic Recycling Bin

- PC letter passed round and comments invited
- They felt the letter was wordy but did not address the issues.
- After much discussion it was resolved that Dave would write to the PC about the following points, insurance and who pays if the bin catches fire and causes damage to neighbouring trees fences homes etc. Will there be a telephone number to ring if this happened.
- Vandalism, rubbish and insurance seem to be the main issues.

7. Field Security

- They have a gate post and in due course it will be fitted
- Insurance in place should the field be invaded by travelers it will cover the legal costs and also provide protection for officers of the Field Association.
- Summer holiday problems
- Should the 'dug-out' be removed to stop youths meeting there and using drink and drugs. Decided not to remove as at least we know where the kids are.

8. AOB

- I asked about a wasps nest in the hedge.
- The green bin contains lots of bags of dog mess from when people clean up after their pets
- Comments on the car park surface - the surface is thought to be OK as it slows down bad drivers on the car park.

9. Date of AGM is Monday Sept. 25th 7:00 pm.