

Houghton on the Hill Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGⁱ ON THURSDAY 12th NOVEMBER 2020, AT 7.30 PM

PRESENT:

Members: Cllr. I. Hill (Chairman), Cllr. R. Hamilton (Vice Chairman), Cllr. A. Sleath, Cllr. R. Roberts, Cllr. S. Pegg (co-opted member 12/11/20) (from 7.45 p.m.).

Clerk: S. Derry

Members of the Public: One member of the public was in attendance at the commencement of the meeting.

		ACTION
01-11/20	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received and approved from Cllr. N. Joyce.	
02-11/20	NOTIFICATION OF DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Councillor A. Sleath declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of agenda item 10 (allotments) and a disclosable interest other than a pecuniary interest in respect of agenda items 11 (Asset of Community Value - Houghton Field Association) and 20b (grant application – Houghton Field Association). Councillor R. Hamilton declared a disclosable interest other than a pecuniary interest in respect of agenda items 11 (Asset of Community Value – Houghton Field Association) and 20b (grant application – Houghton Field Association) Councillor I. Hill declared a disclosable interest other than a pecuniary interest in respect of agenda items 11 (Asset of Community Value – Houghton Village Hall, 20b (grant application – Houghton Village Hall) and 20c (release of 2020/21 grant – Houghton Village Hall).	
03-11/20	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 8 OCTOBER 2020 It was resolved that the minutes be confirmed. On 9 April 2020 it was announced that minutes could be signed electronically, by the person presiding at the meeting at which they were approved for signature. The minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2020 will contain the typed name of the Chairman of the Parish Council in lieu of an actual signature.	Clerk
04-11/20	INFORMAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION Deb Tull, Chair, Houghton Village Hall, commented on the request for payment of the 2020/21 grant in respect of subsidy on hire charges.	

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05-11/20

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- i) **20/01550/FUL** - Erection of a single storey side/rear extension (57 Uppingham Road, Houghton).

It was **resolved** to submit a '**has NO COMMENTS**' response.

Clerk

- ii) **20/01656/FUL** - Erection of a single storey rear extension and two storey front extension (5 North Way, Houghton).

It was **resolved** to comment that the proposed front extension extended significantly beyond the building line resulting in an adverse effect on the street scene.

Clerk

- iii) **20/01669/FUL** - Erection of an infill porch with dual pitch roof and rooflight, cladding and render external wall finish to the external facade of the building, erection of single storey rear extensions, erection of a single storey side extension, conversion of garage to habitable accommodation and erection of a car port. (Homelands, Uppingham Road, Houghton).

It was **resolved** to submit a '**has NO COMMENTS**' response.

Clerk

06-11/20

PLANNING APPEAL

APP/F2415/W/20/3259402 - Non-determination of planning permission in respect of variation of conditions 2 (materials), 3 (obscure glazing), 4 (levels), 5 (window, door, rooflight, other openings details), 9 (landscaping), 10 (landscaping appropriate planting season) and 11 (drainage) of 06/00971/FUL (part retrospective) (Ashgrove And The Oaklands, Uppingham Road, Houghton).

An appeal had been made against Harborough District Council's non-determination of planning permission in respect of planning application 20/00854/VAC.

Comments made at the application stage would be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate although the Parish Council could make representations or add to earlier comments. Representations made to the Planning Inspectorate after 26 November 2020 would not normally be seen and would be returned to the originator.

The Parish Council had made no comments when the application was considered at its meeting on 16 July 2020 (minute 05-07/20 ii refers).

It was **resolved** to take no action.

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07-11/20

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER – 29 UPPINGHAM ROAD, HOUGHTON

At its meeting on 8 October 2020, the Parish Council had resolved:-

- To hand deliver a letter to the applicant to seek their views on a TPO application being submitted by the Parish Council. The letter to express the Parish Council's concerns about the negative environmental effects of reductions in the numbers of mature trees and to express a willingness to discuss the possible TPO application with the resident.
- That a selection of Parish Councillors should visit the resident if they expressed a willingness to discuss the matter of a possible TPO application.
- To ascertain likely costs to employ a qualified arboriculturist to prepare an arboricultural report on the specific tree and an assessment of the tree's worthiness of the suggested TPO designation from:-
 - Beddow Tree Specialists.
 - Hunter Tree Care Ltd.

Since the Parish Council meeting, four Parish Councillors had submitted a Notice of Motion in accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders to enable the resolution approved at the Parish Council meeting on 8 October 2020 in relation to the Tree Preservation Order (minute 06-10/20 refers) to be reversed if necessary.

In hindsight Parish Councillors felt that addressing the single tree on its own was perhaps missing the real issue on the overall street scene of the combined effect of many trees being felled and felt that it would be useful to receive expert advice on the preservation of the street scene on the south side of Uppingham Road, particularly in relation to trees.

Attempts made to contact Leicestershire County Council's Team Leader, Forestry and Arboriculture Officer had been abortive and reminders had not elicited a response.

It was **resolved** to communicate the Parish Council's request to LCC by the most effective means including referral to County Councillor Simon Galton if necessary.

Clerk,
Cllr. IH

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08-11/20

COUNCILLOR VACANCIES

It was resolved that, with immediate effect, Simon Pegg be approved as a co-opted member of the Parish Council. He had previously signed his 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office' which had been witnessed by the Chairman and commenced active duty as a co-opted member.

It was **resolved** that Cllr. S. Pegg would attend online Councillor training being organised by Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils at a cost of £40.

Clerk,
Cllr. SP

09-11/20

CORRESPONDENCE

The list of correspondence, as circulated by the Clerk with the agenda, was received and accepted. The following issues for action were considered:

- a) An email had been received from Jessica Lancod-Frost, Policy Officer, National Association of Local Councils, inviting responses to a Public Consultation and Public Sector Survey on institutions, processes and structures in place to support high standards of conduct.

It was **resolved** that Cllr. I. Hill would respond to the consultation.

Cllr. IH
Clerk

- b) An email had been received from Nada Hankin, Parish and Community Facilities Officer, Harborough District Council, inviting attendance at the Annual Parish Liaison Virtual Event.

It was **resolved** that:-

- Cllr. S. Pegg would attend.
- Cllrs. I. Hill, R. Hamilton and A. Sleath would attend if sufficient places were available.
- Cllr. N. Joyce would attend if she so chose.

Clerk,
Cllrs. SP,
IH, RH,
AS, NJ

- c) An email had been received indirectly from Andy Williams, Chief Executive Officer, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Groups, providing an opportunity to discuss proposals to spend £450 million transforming acute and maternity services and to participate in the public consultation.

It was **resolved** that Cllr. I. Hill would attend the virtual event and participate in the public consultation.

Cllr. IH
Clerk

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- d) An email had been received from Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils offering an opportunity to take part in a 'Virtual Climate Emergency Action Day'.

It was **resolved** that Cllr. N. Joyce would attend if she so chose. It was noted that the fee for the training was on a sliding scale ranging from £15.39 to £38.47 per delegate depending on numbers attending.

Cllr. NJ
Clerk

10-11/20

ALLOTMENTS

Transfer of Land

The new wooden fence between points 13 and 20 which had been erected by Davidsons did not conform to the boundary which had previously been agreed. Davidsons had suggested two alternative options to provide a remedy, namely:-

- i) Davidsons would remove the fence from points 13 to the end of the site (points of fence to be checked on site) and reinstall along the agreed boundary with either the wire mesh below or concrete gravel boards. The tree in question would be in Davidson's ownership
- ii) The fence would remain in its current location between points 13 to the end of the site (points of fence to be checked on site). The timber gravel boards would be sufficient along this fence where the wire mesh remained in the ground on the Parish Council's land. The fence location would be independently surveyed again and the coordinates and plans would be updated with the legal teams. This would provide the Parish Council with approximately an additional 400mm of land along these points. The tree in question would be in the Parish Council's ownership. Davidsons would also remove any posts above the ground on the Parish Council's land, whilst still retaining the mesh below ground.

Other practical installation aspects had been discussed on site with Davidson's Urban Design Manager and there were no outstanding issues in that respect.

Houghton Gardeners' Club's Chairman had contacted the Parish Council to explain that as the fence had been erected $\frac{1}{2}$ foot inside the Davidson's site, this left a long 'no man's land strip' east to west of the allotment site. He could not envisage Davidsons being able to maintain that area since they would have no access and was consequently requesting the Parish Council's permission for the Gardeners' Club to assume responsibility for the strip.

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Strimming up to the existing boundary fence was problematic since the chicken wire fence was intertwined with brambles, nettles, ivy and long grass. Many of the perimeter weeds were growing on the Davidson's side of the boundary and through the mesh fencing. The Gardeners' Club wanted to remove that boundary fence, cutting it to ground level therefore still protecting allotment holders' plots from the intrusion of animals underground. That would make maintenance and strimming of the new wider path easier.

If the Gardeners' Club's proposal was not approved, it assumed that the Parish Council would request Davidsons to relocate the fence along the previously agreed boundary line.

It was **resolved** to:-

- Adopt the suggestion detailed at ii) and to notify Davidsons accordingly.
- Delegate acceptance of revised coordinates and plans to the Clerk to the Parish Council.
- Notify Johnson Astills accordingly.
- Notify Houghton Gardeners' Club that Davidsons would remove the mesh boundary fence and would cut it to ground level thereby still protecting allotment holders' plots from the intrusion of animals underground.
- Notify Davidsons that the Parish Council expected both sides of fencing to be faced with vertical boards where appropriate to help to prevent unauthorised access to the allotments.

Clerk,
Cllr. IH

11-11/20

ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE

Following the meeting on 8 October 2020, nominations had been submitted to Harborough District Council (HDC) in respect of seven buildings or land.

HDC's Neighbourhood and Green Spaces Officer had raised queries in respect of the nominations, in particular those for the Old Black Horse public house and the Rose and Crown public house.

It was **resolved** that:-

- Cllr. I. Hill would draft a response which would be distributed to other Parish Councillors with particular input from Cllr. R. Hamilton in respect of the Rose and Crown Public House. The final response would be submitted by the Clerk.
- In response to the Neighbourhood and Green Spaces Officer's request for a list of users and a sample of a typical 2019 month in respect of the other five nominated sites, to indicate that the areas were well used although precise numbers were not available.

Clerk, All
Cllrs.

Clerk

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ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

12-11/20	<p>2021 URBAN WILDFLOWER VERGE PROJECT</p> <p>Following the Parish Council meeting on 8 October 2020, a Wildflower Verge request had been submitted to Leicestershire County Council (LCC) in respect of locations on the A47 (minute 07-10/20 refers).</p> <p>LCC's Senior Technician – Environmental and Preventative Maintenance had acknowledged the request and would be organising a group discussion with Parish Council representatives to answer questions and share ideas and suggestions.</p> <p>It was resolved that Cllr. A. Sleath would participate in the group discussion on the Parish Council's behalf.</p>	Clerk, Cllr. AS
13-11/20	<p>20 MPH SPEED LIMIT</p> <p>Pneumatic road tubes had been positioned at four locations for one week to record vehicle speeds and volumes.</p> <p>It was resolved to notify Leicestershire County Council's Senior Technician – Environmental and Preventative Maintenance, of the Parish Council's appreciation of the steps being undertaken and to enquire as to when the survey results would be available.</p>	Clerk
14-11/20	<p>VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGN</p> <p>It was reported that the sign on the A47 approach to the village from Thurnby was out of commission.</p> <p>It was resolved to report the matter to Leicestershire County Council.</p>	Cllr. RR
15-11/20	<p>SELFISH PARKING CAMPAIGN</p> <p>Harborough District Council was supporting the British Parking Association's Selfish Parking Campaign that aimed to remind local drivers to make sure they parked properly and responsibly.</p> <p>It was resolved to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Print and laminate 20 'Don't be a selfish parker' posters with a view to placing in locations including Houghton on the Hill CE Primary School, Post Office and Co-op Store.• Make reference to the campaign in the regular monthly Houghton News report.	Cllr. IH, Clerk Clerk

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16-11/20

MAIN STREET SILVER BIRCH TREE

On 15 July 2020 LCC's Team Leader, Forestry and Arboriculture Officer had notified the Parish Council that the Silver Birch tree near to the Old Black Horse Public House had died and needed to be removed for health and safety reasons. The officer indicated that he would be happy to keep the Parish Council updated as matters progressed, would be pleased to receive the opinion of the Parish Council and would like to work with it to achieve a positive resolution.

However, since then, attempts had been made to contact Leicestershire County Council's Team Leader although these had been abortive and reminders had not elicited a response.

The Parish Council understood that a replacement Silver Birch tree would be planted.

It was **resolved** to notify the Team Leader, Forestry and Arboriculture Officer that:-

- The Parish Council was consulting with the County Council's Highway Officers concerning traffic calming and that the area should not be landscaped whilst these discussions were continuing.
- In the spirit of his email of 15 July 2020, the Parish Council wanted to be kept informed and have an input into how the area was sorted out.
- The Parish Council would be sympathetic to providing funds subject to further discussion.
- Planting another tree should not be considered without proper clearance of the area to remove any fungal remains.

It was **resolved** to copy County Councillor Simon Galton into correspondence with the County Council.

Further to LCC's request for the Parish Council's opinion as to the use of the timber from the felled tree, it was **resolved** to enquire with HOT Friends as to the location of the timber.

Clerk

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VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

17-11/20 VILLAGE MAINTENANCE – INFORMATION KIOSK

It had been noticed that some residents had misunderstood the purpose of the kiosk and were depositing large quantities of old magazines and books which were spilling on to the floor and were unlikely to be attractive to potential borrowers. Additional shelving could help to alleviate the problem of overstacking of books.

It was **resolved** to:-

- Invite quotations from local tradesmen for the installation of additional shelving.
- Defer consideration of the provision of notices for the kiosk until a later meeting.

Cllr. AS

Clerk

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

18-11/20 DEFIBRILLATOR

It was confirmed that the defibrillator and cabinet had been received and were being installed at Houghton Field.

The non-rechargeable battery in the defibrillator had an expected life of five years and Houghton Field Association had enquired as to whether the Parish Council would underwrite the cost of replacing the battery.

It was **resolved** that the Parish Council would finance the provision of both replacement batteries and pads.

Clerk

OTHER MATTERS

19-11/20 COVID-19

It was reported that due to the further national Covid restrictions effective from 5 November 2020, it was not possible to hold the eulogy which normally formed part of the Remembrance Day commemorations.

The Parish Council received a complimentary copy of Houghton News each month although Covid-19 had presented logistical problems. Houghton News's treasurer was willing to post copies to the Clerk to the Parish Council and he had accordingly requested either a supply of envelopes and stamps or a payment of £10 with subsequent payments depending upon how long the Covid restrictions continued.

It was **resolved** to make an immediate payment of £10 with further payments as the need arose.

Clerk

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20-11/20 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk's report was received and accepted.

21-11/20 WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY

An update on the regulations was provided to the Parish Council at its meeting in September 2020 (minute 07-09/20a refers). The Clerk had since prepared a report on the implications of the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations and the implications for the Parish Council.

Consequently, it was **resolved** to:-

- Approve the Accessibility Statement as shown at Appendix 1.
- Approve the approach suggested by the Clerk to achieve compliance in his report and to receive an update at the Parish Council meeting in March 2021.

Clerk

22-11/20 FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Invoices received and approval of payments.

It was **resolved** to approve the payments detailed in the Schedule of Payments as circulated by the Clerk with the agenda and as itemised in appendix 2.

Clerk

b) 2021/22 Precept

At its meeting on 8 October 2020, the Parish Council had considered a grant application from the Methodist Church for preparing and finishing the west gable wall of the chapel and advice was awaited as to whether the Local Government Act 1894 prevented such a grant being awarded.

The National Association of Local Councils had advised:-

Unfortunately, this request is made on the basis of a misunderstanding in that it refers to a ban in section 8 of the Local Government Act 1894 in respect of work on 'fabric of a church building'. Actually, the ban in the 1894 Act is in respect of work on 'property relating to affairs of the church or held for an ecclesiastical charity'. Thus, it covers not just work on the fabric of the church but anything that the church uses as part of its operation, including things like work on the churchyard or on hymn books. Clearly the wall of the chapel is property relating to the affairs of the church.

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It was **resolved** to advise the Methodist Church that:-

- It was unable to approve the grant request.
- It was prepared to consider an alternative request which was not in respect of 'property relating to affairs of the church', e.g. the Schoolroom.

Clerk

It was **resolved** to:-

- Hold a workshop on 7 January 2021 to consider detailed precept aspects subject to Cllr. N. Joyce being available.
- Defer determination of the precept to the Parish Council meeting on 14 January 2021.

Clerk, All Cllrs.

At its meeting on 8 October 2020, the Parish Council had resolved to invite two or three Houghton Field Association representatives to meet with two Parish Councillors to consider the grant applications in more detail prior to further consideration. That meeting had taken place and had provided an improved understanding of the association's future plans, particularly in relation to the pavilion.

c) Release of the 2020/21 Village Hall grant for subsidy on hire charges.

A 2020/21 Village Hall grant of £2000 had been approved at the Parish Council meeting on 9 January 2020 and a claim for payment was considered at the meeting on 11 June 2020 at which it had been resolved to indicate to the Village Hall that:-

- Since no hirings had been made in the financial year and there was uncertainty as to when they could recommence, it would be inappropriate, at least for the time being, to release the grant which had been awarded for the specific purpose of a subsidy on hire charges.
- The Parish Council was prepared to reconsider a similar request which would need to be submitted in time for consideration at the Parish Council meeting on 12 November 2020. The request would need to contain details of hirings made in the 2020/21 financial year.

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The Village Hall had again requested payment and had accordingly provided details of actual subsidy amounts which were for only £103.20 for two hirings in September and October as not all regular hirers had decided to use the hall during that period. Because of restrictions introduced from 5 November, the Village Hall had again been forced to close and would remain so until at least January 2021.

The Village Hall had enquired as to whether there was a way of reallocating any of the subsidy grant not paid as a way of supporting the hall and its hirers and it had been explained that any use needed to conform to the Parish Council's Policy on Grants.

It was **resolved** to:-

- Pay £103.20 in respect of subsidies for September and October.
- Defer further consideration to the Parish Council meeting in March 2021.

Clerk

d) Unity Trust Bank signatories

It was **resolved** that former Council Alves be removed as an internet banking user.

It was **resolved** that Cllr. Pegg be added as an internet banking user.

Clerk

23-11/20 REPORTS FROM VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVES ON EXTERNAL BODIES
Cllr. I. Hill reported on a virtual meeting of the Scraftoft North SDA Community Partnership Group which he had attended.

24-11/20 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN NEXT AGENDA

The following items were agreed:

- a) Clerk's Contract of Employment.
- b) Community Activities.
- c) Covid-19.
- d) Emergency Plan.
- e) Information Kiosk.
- f) Items to be included in the 2021/22 precept including grants.
- g) Neighbourhood Plan
- h) Parish Councillor vacancy.
- i) Silver Birch Tree – Main Street.
- j) Summer Sports Scheme 2021
- k) Tree Preservation Order – 29 Uppingham Road.
- l) Wildflower Verge Scheme.

Clerk

Houghton on the Hill Parish Council

25-11/20 | **NEXT MEETING**

It was **resolved** to hold the meeting scheduled for 10 December 2020 virtually at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.52 p.m.

Ian Hill
Chairman
10 December 2020

Clerk's Note

On 9 April 2020 it was announced that minutes could be signed electronically, by the person presiding at the meeting at which they were approved for signature. The approved minutes of this meeting contain the typed name of the Chairman of the Parish Council in lieu of an actual signature.

Houghton on the Hill Parish Council

Appendix 1

Accessibility Statement

We want as many people as possible to be able to use this website. For example, that means you should be able to:

- Change colours, contrast levels and fonts
- Zoom in up to 300% without the text spilling off the screen
- Navigate most of the website using just a keyboard
- Navigate most of the website using speech recognition software
- Listen to most of the website using a screen reader (including the most recent versions of JAWS, NVDA and VoiceOver)

We've also made the website text as simple as possible to understand.

AbilityNet has advice on making your device easier to use if you have a disability.

How accessible this website is

Some parts of this website may not be fully accessible:

- Some PDF documents may not be fully accessible to screen reader software.
- Some video and audio streams may not have captions.
- Some text and links may have poor colour contrast.
- Maps may be difficult to navigate using screen reader software.

How to request content in an accessible format

If you need information in a different format contact us and tell us:

- The web address (URL) of the content.
- Your name and email address.
- The format you need, for example, audio CD, braille, BSL or large print, accessible PDF.

Reporting accessibility problems with this website

We're always looking to improve the accessibility of this website. If you find any problems not listed or think we're not meeting accessibility requirements, contact us using the details at the bottom of this website.

Enforcement procedure

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is responsible for enforcing the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 (the 'accessibility regulations'). If you're not happy with how we respond to your complaint, **contact the Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS)**.

Houghton on the Hill Parish Council

Technical information about this website's accessibility

The Parish Council is committed to making its website accessible, in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

This website is partially compliant with the **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 AA** standard, due to the non-compliances and exemptions listed below.

Non-accessible content

The content that is not accessible is outlined below.

Non-compliance with the accessibility regulations

We may have some scanned PDF documents on our website e.g. our Annual Governance and Accountability Returns (AGARs). Scanned PDF documents do not comply with the Accessibility Regulations 2018 but these documents can be provided in an alternative format or on alternative media, on request.

Disproportionate burden

Not applicable.

Content that's not within the scope of the accessibility regulations

3rd party products

- We use Google maps. These may not be accessible to some people. We will always provide the information by alternative means on request.
- Social media share bars may not meet the required colour contrast levels.

We do not plan to add captions to live video streams because live video is exempt from meeting the accessibility regulations.

The accessibility regulations do not require us to fix PDFs or other documents published before 23 September 2018 if they're not essential to providing our services.

Preparation of this accessibility statement

This statement was prepared on 30 July 2020. It was last reviewed on 14 August 2020.

We used the methodology described in 'Website Accessibility Requirements' produced by [NALC](#). This website was tested using the Microsoft [Accessibility Insights for Web](#) tool recommend in that publication.

This website was last tested on 14 August 2020. The test was carried out by [2commune Limited](#).

Houghton on the Hill Parish Council

Appendix 2 **Schedule of Payments**

Harborough District Council Emptying dog bins and replacing liners, July to September 2020	£	79.87
Harborough District Council – Grounds Maintenance for July to September 2020	£	472.55
Cllr. R. Hamilton – Remembrance Day Flowers	£	22.25
ESPO – Multi-purpose labels	£	11.04

ⁱ The meeting was held remotely in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 ('LAPCP Regulations 2020') which came into force on 4 April 2020. Broadly speaking, the 2020 Regulations enable local councils to hold remote meetings (including by video and telephone conferencing) for a specified period until May 2021.