

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 14th AUGUST 2014, AT 7.30 PM

PRESENT:

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

Clerk: Mr. S. Derry

Members of the Public: There were 14 members of the public present at the commencement of the meeting including county/district Councillor Simon Galton and district Councillor Peter Elliott.

		ACTION
01-08/14	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE None was received. It was reported that Cllr. Sims had tendered his resignation and this would be addressed under agenda item 14 (Councillor Vacancies).	
02-08/14	NOTIFICATION OF DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Councillors Francis, Sleath and McSweeney declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of agenda item 18 (Allotment Garden Tenancy Agreement) and would therefore ordinarily not vote or participate in discussions on the matter. However, the Councillors had each completed a Dispensation Request Form on the grounds that the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business. It was resolved that the dispensation be allowed.	Clerk
03-08/14	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 12 JUNE 2014 It was resolved that the minutes be confirmed. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.	
04-08/14	INFORMAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION Steve Goodman, Chairman – Houghton Field Association, outlined the progress that had been made following its Annual General Meeting on the 19 May 2014 and the first meeting of the 2014/15 committee on 16 June 2014. He looked forward to a productive working relationship with the Parish Council. A resident expressed views on a complaint concerning an alleged noise nuisance in relation to the Newscentre in St. Catharine's Way. Councillor Francis reiterated the Parish Council's previous resolutions, i.e. that it had no powers to intervene and the issues raised were not the responsibility of the Parish Council but were for the resident to pursue with Harborough District Council.	

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05-08/14 GRASS CUTTING

a) Leaflet

An anonymous leaflet had been distributed to residents accusing the Parish Council of:

- Actively seeking to takeover Chapel Close Open Green Space and St. Catharine's Green
- Funding this by planning to impose a 'Parish tax increase on each Houghton household, now and indefinitely'
- Railroading this decision through without following 'the usual democratic process : the calling of a public meeting to present the facts for consideration, followed by a village wide referendum' and 'without consideration or requests for our comments – although we have to foot the bill'

Councillor Francis:

- Invited the authors of the leaflet to make themselves known to the meeting – none did.
- Explained that if 'Concerned Villagers' had simply contacted the Parish Council with their concerns, this could have allayed their fears
- Countered the misleading and disingenuous statements in the leaflet and explained exactly what the Parish Council had been doing.

b) Grass cutting complaint

A resident had complained that the Parish Council, in responding to a previous communication, had not offered a solution as to how grass could be prevented from growing out of control.

It was **resolved** to write to the complainant explaining that the Parish Council was actively pursuing various options to improve grass cutting.

Clerk

c) Highway grass cutting

Leicestershire County Council had invited the Parish Council to undertake cutting of highway grass within the built-up area from 2015.

It was **resolved** to indicate to the County Council that the Parish Council would like to explore this issue further with them.

Clerk

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- d) An Email had been received from a recently constituted Friends Group notifying the Parish Council of its existence and requesting that it be kept fully informed of all relevant issues (environs, trees, wildlife etc.) by copying its committee into all matters arising that fitted its remit.
- It was **resolved** to:
- Agree to the request and to indicate that the Parish Council expected a reciprocal arrangement to apply.
 - Urge the group to adopt appropriate consultation arrangements with residents who would potentially be affected by any tree planting proposals
- e) Notification of the Rural Community Council's Seminar had been received. It was **resolved** that Cllr. Sleath would attend and would be reimbursed for travelling.
- f) An invitation had been received from Chief Constable, Simon Cole, to the Leicestershire Police Intercultural Evening. It was **resolved** that Cllr. Francis would attend and would be reimbursed for travelling and, if two places were available, Cllr. Sleath would also attend and would be reimbursed for travelling.
- g) An email had been received from a resident requesting that an additional dog bin be installed on Houghton Field. It was **resolved** to indicate to the enquirer that:
- Councillors agreed that the suggested location (beyond the pavilion at the far left hand corner of the playing field where there was access to the cropped fields) was a potentially suitable location.
 - She should consult with Houghton Field Association (it was understood that its chairman, Steve Goodman, would be agreeable to this).
 - Indicate that no budgetary provision had been made for an additional bin.
- h) An Email had been received from Hayley Cawthorne, Parish Liaison Officer, Harborough District Council announcing that HDC's Executive Committee had agreed to allocate £125,000 for its New Homes Bonus Locality Investment Fund and £125,000 for its District wide fund. The New Homes District Wide Grant Fund opened on Monday 4 August 2014. Closing Date for consideration in round one was Monday 13 October 2014 and for round two Monday 8 December 2014. It was **resolved** to forward the information to local organisations.

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk,
Cllrs. HF
and AS

Clerk

Clerk

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	<p>i) An article had been published in the August edition of Houghton News from a resident criticising the Parish Council's handling of issues connected with the condition of garages in Weir Lane. Councillors disagreed with the resident's version of events and, accordingly, it was resolved to submit a reply for publication in Houghton News.</p>	Clerk
	<p>j) An Email had been received from Hayley Cawthorne, Parish Liaison Officer, Harborough District Council providing information about HDC's Staying Healthy grant fund which was offering an opportunity for community and voluntary groups, not for profit organisations and social enterprises to apply for up to £2000 to deliver health and wellbeing projects within the Harborough District. It was resolved to forward the information to local organisations.</p>	Clerk
	<p>k) An Email had been received from Hayley Cawthorne, Parish Liaison Officer, Harborough District Council requesting completion of a Parish Council Profile sheet and attendance by the Clerk at a one-to-one meeting with her (and other officers if necessary) at HDC's offices. It was resolved that Cllr. Francis would complete the Profile sheet and that the Clerk would attend a one-to-one meeting and would be reimbursed for travelling.</p>	Clerk
09-08/14	<p>COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH Although efforts had been made to secure more pledges of support, only 118 (59%) of the required 200 had been received. It was resolved to discontinue participation in the scheme.</p>	Clerk
10-08/14	<p>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.</p>	Clerk

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b) Banking arrangements

At its meeting on 12 June 2014, the Parish Council had agreed to transfer funds to another bank and that bank had indicated that its accounts were suitable for Parish Councils and that it would be necessary to register with Companies House. The Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Council had been consulted and had advised that the advice being given was incorrect. Parish Councils were corporate bodies created by act of parliament and need not register with anyone in order to gain their status. As a result the resolutions of the Parish Council could not be enacted.

It was therefore **resolved** that:

- i) The sum of £10,000 be transferred to a Business 1 year Saver Account with Nationwide Building Society.
- ii) The sum of £10,000 be transferred to a Business Instant Saver Account with Nationwide Building Society.
- iii) The signatories assigned for Unity Trust Bank would continue in a similar role in relation to the new accounts with Nationwide Building Society.

Clerk

c) Quarterly Financial Progress Report

It was **resolved** that the report, comprising details of expenditure, income and bank reconciliations for the period from 1 April to 30 June 2014 be accepted.

d) Bank Account Signatory Unity Trust Bank

It was **resolved** that former Council Sims be removed as a signatory and internet banking user and that two out of three Councillors would in future be signatories.

Clerk

e) Houghton Field Association Grant

It was **resolved** that the following elements comprising part of the 2014/15 grant be paid:

- i) £384 relating to roof and gutter repairs.
- ii) £200 relating to plumbing repairs.

Clerk

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11-08/14	<p>PLANNING APPLICATIONS</p> <p>a) 14/00900/FUL - Erection of two storey extension to existing garage and erection of a detached single storey building to form a cattery (revised scheme of 14/00389/FUL) (21 Ingarsby Lane Houghton)</p> <p>Resolved to submit a ‘has NO COMMENTS’ response.</p> <p>b) 14/01079/FUL - Erection of a single garage to replace existing and erection of new dwelling with double garage (21 Uppingham Road Houghton)</p> <p>Resolved to submit the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parish Council is concerned that trees might be lost. • The Parish Plan states that new developments should sit comfortably with those adjacent to them. • No more of the pathway between the A47 and Linwal Avenue should be lost (Parish Plan refers) 	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
12-08/14	<p>FOOTPATH (C50A) FROM HOUGHTON ON THE HILL CHURCH, SOUTH EAST TO FIELD BOUNDARY ADJACENT TO FOOTPATH C50</p> <p>Leicestershire County Council’s Footpath Officer had advised that the inclusion of the footpath that runs a short distance east from School Lane before turning south-east and ending without any connection to any other path or right of way appeared to be an erroneous inclusion within the Definitive Map. As a result an application was being considered for a Definitive Map Modification Order upon which the Parish Council’s support had been requested. It was resolved to confirm that the Parish Council did not object to the footpath being stopped up.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
13-08/14	<p>SNOW WARDENS</p> <p>It was resolved to write to local organisations and include information on the Parish Council website to publicise Leicestershire County Council’s request to expand participation in the Snow Warden scheme and to invite volunteers.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
14-08/14	<p>HOUGHTON GAMES</p> <p>An update report was provided by Cllr. McSweeney and Councillors were satisfied with the arrangements being made.</p>	<p>Cllr. HMCS</p>
15-08/14	<p>CLERK’S REPORT</p> <p>The Clerk’s report was received and accepted.</p>	

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16-08/14	NOTICEBOARDS <p>At the Parish Council's meeting in June 2014 it was reported that Mr. Liquorish (the resident who had manufactured the Co-op noticeboard in 2012) had provided a quotation to manufacture a similar one, although on legs, to be situated close to the seat and litter bin at the junction of St. Catharine's Way and Linwal Avenue.</p> <p>It was resolved to write to Mr. Liquorish to thank him for his quotation and to indicate that it would be further considered when the 2015/16 budget was being set.</p>	Clerk
17-08/14	ALLOTMENT GARDEN TENANCY AGREEMENT <p>The agreement made on 9 August 2012 contained provision for both parties to undertake a review of the terms and conditions every two years to allow adjustments to be made in respect of changing conditions. The review had been undertaken and Houghton Gardeners' Club had been consulted. It was resolved to make no changes to the agreement.</p>	Clerk
18-08/14	APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE TO/OF OUTSIDE BODIES <p>a) PLANNING REPRESENTATIVE It was resolved that Councillor Hart would be the Parish Council's representative.</p> <p>b) PARKLIFE REPRESENTATIVE It was resolved that Councillor McSweeney would be the Parish Council's representative.</p>	Clerk, Cllr. PH Clerk, Cllr HMCS
19-08/14	REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON EXTERNAL BODIES <p>Councillor Sleath reported on a meeting of Houghton Village Hall which she had attended.</p>	
20-08/14	ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT AGENDA <p>The following items were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Remembrance Day arrangementsb) 2015/16 grant applicationsc) Village Walk arrangementsd) Councillor Vacanciese) Revision of Standing Orders	
21-08/14	ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2015 <p>It was resolved that the meeting would take place in either April or May 2015 in the Village Hall and that Councillor Francis would make the detailed arrangements.</p>	Cllr. HF

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22-08/14 | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 11 September 2014, commencing at 7.30 p.m. in the Methodist Church Schoolroom, Houghton.

Clerk

The meeting closed at 9.22 p.m.

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Chairman
11 September 2014