



HELMDDON PARISH COUNCIL



MINUTES

*of a meeting of the Council held in the Reading Room, Helmdon,
at 7.30pm on Wednesday 23rd September 2015.*

PRESENT: Cllrs Coatsworth, Adhemar (from item 7a), Garner, Hart, Moody, Vicars, Wheeler (from item 7b)

IN ATTENDANCE: 9 members of the public attended.

1) APOLOGIES were received from Cllr Duncombe (illness), Cllr Thorpe (holiday) and the Clerk (family illness). The apologies were accepted. In the absence of the clerk Cllrs Coatsworth and Moody took the notes.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Moody for assuming the role of temporary parish clerk during August 2015

2) DECLARATIONS of INTEREST: There were none.

3) MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

It was agreed that the minutes held on 22nd July 2015 were a true record of the meeting, except that Item 10 should be amended to reflect what was agreed and spelling errors needed correction. In the absence of the Clerk it was agreed that the Chairman would make the necessary changes and sign the amended document outside the meeting

Post meeting note: Corrections made and minutes signed 25th September 2015

4) MATTERS ARISING

Item 5.2. It was agreed that there is a need to fully identify the redundant electricity poles which will become PC property. Cllr Vicars agreed to prepare a list and advise the Clerk to enable the asset register to be amended. **Action: Cllr Vicars**

Item 11. It was agreed that the Clerk should obtain quotations for the playground equipment repairs identified in the recent ROSPA inspection report. **Action: The Clerk**

Item 14. Cllr Moody advised the meeting that Tove Valley Broadband ~~are~~is willing to provide free-of-charge broadband to non-profit-making organisations such as the Reading Room. He is awaiting a written proposal accordingly **Action: Cllr Moody**

Item 19.3 It was agreed that replacement of Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator would be an agenda item for the November 2015 PC meeting **Action: The Clerk**

5) To receive a report from the HR Committee on the appointment of Clerk

Interviews took place on 23 August 2015 and there had been a strong field to choose from. The HR Committee were unanimous in their selection of the preferred candidate and Mrs Helen du Bois had been appointed with effect from 1 September 2015.

6) OPEN FORUM

The Chairman invited questions on any subject except Blackpits and flooding related items as questions on these matters would be invited after the relevant agenda items. There were no questions from members of the public but Mr Sandilands highly recommended the services provided by Tove Valley Broadband

7) FINANCE

The Chairman explained that the Clerk had encountered some difficulty in producing a finance report in the usual detail because of lack of information and the fact that visibility of the bank account was not yet available to her.

The report, attached to the file copy of these minutes showed a current balance of £14,482.64 at 21st September 2015.

Payments of £22,808.00 in respect of the school field drainage project and £7,330.00, being second instalment of 2015/2016 precept were expected to be remitted into the account shortly.

A list of 15 invoices for payment was included in the finance report documents. Cllr Hart proposed and Cllr Vicars seconded that the finance report should be approved. All in favour Cllr Garner requested that the Clerk should revert to the format of previous documentation, that a review of expenditure against budget should be included and that the report should in future present the financial report in a spreadsheet format with complete visibility. After some discussion it was proposed by Cllr Hart, seconded by Cllr Moody that the above should be adopted from the next meeting onwards. All in favour. **Action: The Clerk**

The schedule of approved payments was:

Payee	Amount	Cheque No.
Linnell Bros Ltd	£456.00	300052
Brown & Barden	£234.85	300053
SNAST NHW	£10.00	300054
Helmdon PCC	£400.00	300055
Mrs S Lidgely	£62.48	300056

The chairman reported that Cllr Hart had been appointed as the Internal Controls Councillor at the Finance Committee held on 22 September 2015. At the same meeting the committee had received and reviewed the report of the internal auditor for the year ending 31 March 2015 and a number of areas for improvement had been identified and would be actioned by the finance committee.

It was **RESOLVED**: to renew the insurance cover with Came & Co. for a new three year period.

8) CORRESPONDENCE REVIEW

In the absence of the Clerk Cllr Hart presented the list of correspondence, a copy of which is attached to the file copy of these minutes. Attention was drawn to items of correspondence relating to a survey of allotments, salt for salt bins in the village and the AGM of Northants CALC on Saturday 17th October 2015. After consideration of a further communication from Northants CALC regarding electricity procurement, it was **RESOLVED** to review the electricity usage and supplier agreement at the next meeting of the finance committee. **Action: The Clerk**

9) REPORT OF VISIT TO BLACKPITS RECYCLING CENTRE

In the absence, due to illness, of David Powell, Chairman of the Blackpits Monitoring Group, the Chairman used the minutes of the meeting held on site on 14th September 2015 to communicate matters discussed with, and the response of, the management of this recycling facility. A copy of the document produced by David Powell is attached to these minutes.

After questions from councillors, the Chairman invited questions and comments from members of the public relating to the Blackpits operation. Four people made complaints about the odours that emanate from the site and the perceived lack of action by the operators to investigate or take action to resolve reports of odour. The Chairman responded that the parish council has been represented on the monitoring committee for at least the past two years and that the present representatives are himself and Cllr Vicars. He confirmed that the parish council is involved and will remain involved to seek a permanent solution to the problem but that in his opinion this could be best achieved through the current monitoring group.

In conclusion the Chairman encouraged the group to arrange an early meeting, away from the recycling site to discuss and agree a forward plan including easier reportage, a wider use of IT and a system to monitor the site response to odour reports.

10) PROPOSAL FOR TRANSFER OF LAND IN STATION ROAD

The communication from South Northants Homes (SNH) included a map on which the land proposed for transfer was annotated. It was noted that in addition to the areas of grass previously understood to be included, the road and pavements in Hintons Close were also included. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the proposal would be put in abeyance pending clarification from SNH.

It was **RESOLVED** to instruct the Clerk to write to SNH to seek clarification from SNH and to confirm whether or not the proposal is an "all or nothing" offer. **Action: The Clerk**

11) ARRANGEMENTS FOR DELIVERY OF VILLAGE WELCOME PACK

Cllr Adhemar described the format and content of the existing welcome pack and stated that this would be reviewed and updated. After some discussion about the appearance of the document and how to ensure delivery to all new residents, it was **RESOLVED** that

- a) The Clerk will make up 10 packs in a reasonably priced cover Action: **Cllr Adhemar/Clerk**
- b) Councillors will do their best to promptly identify new residents to the Clerk and agree delivery of the welcome pack. **Action: All**

12) TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE SCHOOL FIELD DRAINAGE PROJECT

On a recommendation from the Finance Committee it was **RESOLVED**: That a grant of £22,808 be made to Helmdon Primary School under section 19, Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 as a contribution towards the cost of the playing field drainage and improvement works. The grant will be paid from monies received from South Northamptonshire Council's Community Grant Scheme. Cllr Moody noted that there would be an increase in audit fees for the year ending 31 March 2016 as a result of the grant and that the council is not eligible to apply for the Transparency Fund in the current financial year as its turnover will exceed £25,000. However he expected the Transparency Fund to still be available in 2016/17 and the council could apply then. The Clerk to arrange payment to the school as soon as the funds are received from SNC. **Action: The Clerk**

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13) FLOODING UPDATE

The Chairman reported that Cllr Duncombe had visited Grange Lane in the company of the ground contractor responsible for the school field drainage project to obtain some advice. Because of the presence of the pressurised sewage pipe, some of the pipe trench will need to be hand dug and the contractor will need to have suitable insurance cover.

It has been previously established that Grange Lane is not adopted as a highway and this fact reduces the level and scope of work necessary to install the additional drainage. A verbal estimate of £3,000 has been given for the work and materials and Cllr Coatsworth will converse with Bulkhead Properties, who own that section of the road regarding funding and will report back as soon as possible. **Action: Cllr Coatsworth**

The Chairman invited questions from members of the public regarding flooding. There were none.

14) TO NOTE DECISIONS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE SINCE 22nd JULY 2015

In the absence of Cllr Duncombe the planning committee vice chairman Cllr Garner reported the following decisions of the planning committee

Application S/2015/1754/TPO – Proposed work to tree at 57 Church Street, Helmdon. The committee supported the application on the understanding that the work is undertaken by a qualified and experienced arborist

Application S/2015/1770/FUL - Single storey rear extension at 4 Church Street, Helmdon. The committee supported the application. It has since been withdrawn.

Application S/2015/1831/LBC – Single storey rear extension at 4 Church Street, Helmdon. The committee supported the application. It has since been withdrawn

Application S/2015/2065/FUL – Overbury House, Church Street, Falcutt. Variation of conditions applicable to previous application S/2004/0033/P to remove integral garage and changes to windows and doors of a new detached dwelling. The committee supported the application on the understanding that the remaining conditions of the previous application would be invoked.

15) TO RECEIVE UPDATE FROM PARISH HIGHWAYS WARDEN

Cllr Moody reported on three matters

a) He has recently requested NCC Highways Dept to remove temporary signs at Welsh Lane crossroads to preserve visibility for motorists. This had been done expeditiously but the next temporary signs again blocked views of the road. Cllr Moody has asked NCC to instruct their contractor to position signs appropriately in future.

b) He has the contact details for Western Power in the event that they need to be contacted about the reinstatement of the areas of the village where electrical cables are being installed underground

c) NCC Highways Dept have advised that they are not proposing any action regarding the condition of the wall alongside the pavement at the boundary of 27 Wappenham Road. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk should write to the occupants of the property indicating that expressions of concern have been received and asking for their intentions to rectify the issue. It was noted that the parish council has no authority or jurisdiction regarding private boundary walls adjacent to highways. **Action: The Clerk**

16) TO RECEIVE UPDATE FROM PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE

Other than a quotation for equipment repairs being outstanding, there was nothing else to report. **RESOLVED:** To obtain the necessary quotes for consideration. **Action: The Clerk.**

17) TO RECEIVE UPDATE FROM ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

Cllr Wheeler pointed out that the provision of a notice board is awaited. There was nothing to report other than resolution of rental payments and waiting list with the previous clerk. **Action: Cllr Coatsworth**

18) TO RECEIVE UPDATE FROM THE PARISH PLAN GROUP

There was nothing to report

19) TO RECEIVE UPDATE FROM THE READING ROOM COMMITTEE

There was nothing to report.

20) TO RECEIVE UPDATE FROM THE SCHOOL LIAISON COUNCILLORS

Cllrs Hart and Wheeler reported that the recent field drainage works had been successfully completed with the exception of one small area that is currently being investigated by the contractor. The grass is starting to grow, the playground is twice the previous size, tennis nets have been obtained and marking out of the hard surfaces will commence soon

21) TO REVIEW APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT FUNDING

The Chairman informed the meeting that two applications had recently been received from village organisations for grant funding. After a short discussion it was **RESOLVED** that no further applications would be considered until early 2016

22) TO CONSIDER TRAINING ARRANGEMENTS

RESOLVED: That the Clerk attend the New Clerks training course on 21 November and 5 December 2015. Cllr Moody noted that the council's Training Statement of Intent is due for renewal and that there were new councillors who had not yet attended training. **RESOLVED:** To include review of Training Statement of Intent and Training Plan on the agenda for the November meeting. **Action: The Clerk.**

23) TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO APPLY FOR REGISTRATION AS A FOUNDATION COUNCIL UNDER THE LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME

RESOLVED: To register now for Foundation level under the Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS). The Clerk to find out what the criteria are and to include a report on LCAS as an agenda item for the November meeting. **Action: The Clerk**

24).TO REVIEW COMPLIANCE WITH THE TRANSPARENCY CODE AND TO RESOLVE TO APPLY FOR A GRANT FROM THE TRANSPARENCY

Cllr Moody reported that the council is working towards compliance but there are several annual documents that are not available to load onto the web site because copies weren't taken before they were sent off for audit. Cllr Moody will report when full compliance has been achieved. The council is not eligible to apply for a grant from the Transparency fund because its turnover for 2015/16 exceeds £25,000. **RESOLVED:** To note progress towards compliance and to consider making a grant application in 2016/17.

25) REVIEW OF HELMDON VOICE AND A DECISION ON FUTURE EDITIONS

Very little content has been received for the autumn edition so it looks unlikely that an edition will be published. Cllr Moody noted that the newsletter costs £1,000 per year to produce and proposed conducting a survey to understand whether or not residents wanted it to continue. **RESOLVED:** To produce an online survey with paper copies available via the café and village groups such as the Fellowship. **Action: Cllr Moody**

26) TO CONSIDER RENEWAL OF ACRE AND CPRE MEMBERSHIP

RESOLVED: To renew both memberships for another year.

27) COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS

Cllr Coatsworth reported that the development of the pump garden would be on the agenda for the November meeting.

Cllr Coatsworth reported that judges for the Royal British Legion War Memorial competition had visited the village and the results are expected mid-October.

28) CLOSE

The meeting closed at 9:45 p.m.