



HELMDON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES



of the Ordinary meeting of Helmdon Parish Council, held in the Reading Room,
Church Street, Helmdon on **Wednesday 25th November 2015 at 7:30pm**

PRESENT: Cllrs Coatsworth, Moody, Hart, Wheeler, Thorpe, Vicars and the Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: 3 members of the public attended.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Garner (holiday) and Cllr Adhemar (prior engagement) and Cllr Duncombe (unwell). The apologies were approved.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Hart declared an interest in items 13. and 17. as she is a Governor at Helmdon School. Cllr Moody declared an interest in 6 d) as one of the invoices for payment was to NCalc and 18. as NCalc are involved in the accreditation process for the Local Council Award Scheme.

3. Approval and signature of the minutes of the meeting of 23rd September, 2015

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman

4. Matters arising

11a. The Clerk presented the Council with one of the new Village Welcome packs.

15c. Cllr Vicars confirmed that the owners of 27 Wappenham Road had been written to, and had since responded that they hoped to be in a position to instruct for repairs by Christmas 2015.

25. Cllr Moody confirmed that he had begun work on an online survey regarding the future of Helmdon Voice.

5. Open Forum

The Chairman invited questions on any subject except flooding related items as questions on these matters would be invited after the relevant agenda items.

- The new Village Welcome Packs were thought to be a good idea and suggested that they should be advertised on www.helmdon.com. **Action: Cllr Moody** to add information about the packs to the Parish Council area of the website.
- A resident suggested that one of the Welcome Packs could be given to a new family who has moved in recently on Church Street. **Action: Clerk** to deliver a welcome pack.
- It was asked if flowers are to be planted in front of the Helmdon Wall in the spring - the Chairman confirmed that this was already in order.

6. Finance:

a. To receive a report from the Finance Committee meeting held on 24th November, 2015 and to consider any recommendations arising from it

The Clerk gave a summary of the meeting and it was proposed by Cllr Hart, seconded by Cllr Wheeler that all recommendations be approved.

b. Financial statement

The Clerk presented the latest financial statement. The report showed a current balance of £18,561.48 at 25th November, 2015. Cllr Coatsworth noted his thanks to the Clerk for the work involved in bringing the financial records up to date.

c. Payments received

A list of four payments received was included within the financial statement.

d. Invoices to be paid

The following receipts were recorded:

1	SNC	School Drainage Project	BACS	£22,808.00
2	SNC	Precept Part 2	BACS	£7,330.00
3	Unity	Interest	BACS	£3.36
4	HMRC	VAT Refund	BACS	£528.48
			Total	£30,669.84

The following invoices for payment were presented:

1	Brown and Barden	Grass Cutting	BACS	£234.85
2	SNC	Election Expenses	BACS	£39.00
3	BDO LLP	External Audit	BACS	£120.00
4	Clare Nash Architecture	Pump Garden Plans	BACS	£450.00
5	E.On	Electricity Repairs	BACS	£56.33
6	Brown and Barden	Grass Cutting	BACS	£234.85
7	Reading Room	Room Hire	300058	£127.50
8	NCALC	NCALC Training	BACS	£11.33
9	CPRE	Subscription	300057	£36.00
10	Salaries		BACS	£648.26
11	Office expenses		BACS	£40.74
			Total	£1998.86

It was proposed by Cllr Hart, seconded by Cllr Vicars that the finance report should be approved.

7. Correspondence review

The Clerk presented a list of all correspondence received. The Clerk mentioned an additional Press Release had just arrived regarding a reduced price offer on blue recycling bins. It was confirmed that Helmdon Parish Council had responded to the Rough Sleeper survey.

8. To consider a proposal received from South Northants Homes for transfer of land in Station Road to Helmdon Parish Council.

Cllr Coatsworth presented the latest plans from SNH regarding the Green area of Station Road. SNH have confirmed that although Helmdon Parish Council will own the entire land marked in red on the plan, the highway and pavements in Hinton's Close and in front of the green are adopted by NCC who are therefore responsible for maintenance. Cllr Moody felt that it would be prudent to have this confirmed by NCC themselves and it was agreed to contact them.

There was some discussion as to the benefit to Helmdon Parish Council of owning the land but it was agreed that on balance there would be a benefit as it would give the Council control over the area. Assuming that NCC support SNH's statement about the highway and pavements it was resolved to move forward. The next stage will be to investigate possible legal fees and costs. **Action: The Clerk** to contact Steve Barber at NCC regarding ownership of the Hinton's Close highway and pavements.

9. To note decisions of the Planning Committee since 22nd September, 2015

The Clerk reported the following decision of the Planning Committee: Application S/2015/2564/FUL – Weston Hill House, Weston Road, Helmdon. After considering the information contained in the documentation and drawings it was resolved to support the application on the understanding that adequate drainage is provided.

10.To receive a Flooding update

The Chairman informed the Council that he had written to Andy Grant at Bulkhead Properties asking for confirmation that he was prepared to carry out the work of installing 2 pipes under the road but that he had not yet had a response.

The Chairman also informed the Council that the NCC Flood and Water Management Team are visiting Helmdon on Thursday 26th November and that he plans to take them down to Grange Lane to discuss the issue with them, as it is possible that they may be able to provide some funding towards the work required.

A member of the public questioned whether there was an alternative plan to waiting for Bulkhead Properties to do the work, as the issue had been dragging on for so long - could the work be funded another way? The Chairman explained that one option would be that payment for the works could be covered by a 25% increase in the Precept for 2016 if necessary. A member of the public asked for the Parish Council to press for a decision to be made by Bulkhead Properties in time for the next Main meeting of the Parish Council in January. **Action: Cllr Coatsworth** to follow up with Bulkhead Properties.

A member of the public queried if there had been any progress made in investigations regarding a black water pipe that runs down Church Street. This was first discussed by the Parish Council in March 2014 at the time of the village walkabout. It was agreed that the paperwork for this issue should be revisited. **Action: The Clerk** to review status of this issue.

11.To receive update from the Parish Highways Warden

Cllr Moody informed the Council that the completion of recent works by Weston Power Distribution (WPD) had been delayed but were due to be finished shortly. Some redundant poles and wires are still to be removed. He confirmed that WPD were leaving the completed areas in a tidy state and that grass verges had been re-seeded.

Cllr Moody updated the Council on the road closure along the Falcutt track and mentioned that Oliver Sibley from KierWSP had contacted the Clerk to say that letters about road closures had been delivered to residents of Station Road in error. Cllr Moody raised the point that the Parish Council should have received advanced warning that the track was due to be closed and traffic diverted – there is no mention of the works on the KierWSP website which suggests that these works were unplanned.

On a separate note, Cllr Moody informed the Council that the road has now re-opened at Astwell and all equipment has been removed. He is concerned about some large stones that have appeared on the verge near the culvert and has agreed to find out why they are there. **Action: Cllr Moody** to enquire about the reason for the new stones on the verge at Astwell

12.To receive update from the Blackpits Monitoring Group

The Chairman reported that in a meeting of the group held on 3rd Nov, 2015 David Powell stepped down as Chairman and Phillip Ward was appointed. The group have resolved to set up a reporting tool on www.helmdon.com to make it easier for villagers to report odours and for Blackpits to respond more quickly. The group is scheduled to meet again in January.

13.To receive update from the Playground Committee

The missing sections of the latest RoSPA inspection report were discussed and the Clerk informed the Council that the charge for RoSPA to make another visit to inspect the missing areas would be £218 +VAT. It was suggested that it might be more cost effective to instruct a different inspector to visit the playground in its entirety and it was agreed to investigate other suppliers. **Action: The Clerk** to review other Playground Inspection suppliers.

The Clerk reported that they had received 4 quotes for the repairs. Cllr Wheeler proposed that he could purchase bark and secure the hard standing at the top of the slide as he felt that was the most urgent repair. This was approved by all. **Action: Cllr Wheeler** to repair the hard standing and replenish the bark at the top of the slide.

It was agreed that the Playground Committee should meet to review the repairs quotes and any alternative Playground Inspectors. Cllr Hart reminded the Council that any meeting must be publicised 3 full days in advance and an agenda posted to the village notice boards. Cllr Moody mentioned that the Playground Committee should strive to be pro-active rather than re-active. **Action: The Clerk** to arrange a meeting of the Playground Committee.

14. Review of Allotment tenants details and waiting list

The Chairman proposed that he and the Clerk will revisit the tenant records and bring it up to date. **Action: The Clerk** and **Cllr Coatsworth** to update the Allotments Tennant list.

15. To receive update from the Parish Plan Group

Cllr Coatsworth has contacted SNC and asked for a progress report on Part 2. They confirmed that they are still working on the plan and that there will be a meeting of the Planning, Policy and Regeneration Strategy Committee on 20th January. Cllr Coatsworth and Cllr Moody both plan to attend this meeting. After this meeting Part 2 will go to consultation with Parish Councils for 6 weeks. SNC have confirmed that they will give us advanced notice of when this Consultation period will occur.

16. To receive an update from the Reading Room Committee

There was nothing to report but there is a meeting scheduled for 4th Dec 2015

17. To receive an update from the School Liaison Councillors

Cllr Moody reported that they are seeking a meeting with the Head teacher in the New Year. Cllr Hart updated the Council on the progress of playground improvements including a new outdoor teaching space and benches around the playground. It was agreed that the playground was much improved.

18. To decide whether or not to apply for registration as a Foundation Council under the Local Award Scheme

The Chairman suggested that following the work that had already been done to achieve the previous Quality Council Award, Helmdon Parish Council should apply for the Foundation Award. There were discussions as to how the Clerk can accumulate the required number of CPD points and Cllr Moody reassured the Council that this was very possible. It was agreed as a whole to actively work towards achieving the award in 2016. This was proposed by Cllr Hart and seconded by Cllr Vicars.

19. Review of architect's plans for access to the Pump Garden and consideration of further action to be taken

The plans for the Pump Garden were reviewed and approved. It was agreed to move forward and investigate how much the work would cost. **Action: Cllr Coatsworth** to obtain an accurate estimate of cost for the building work from a local contractor and present to the present to the Council at the next main meeting.

20. Conclusion of Audit documents from BDO

The Clerk confirmed that the Notice of Conclusion had been displayed in the village for the required time and that the final Audit was unqualified. Cllr Hart enquired as to whether the Issues Arising had been reviewed by the Finance Committee and the Clerk confirmed that this had been done at the Finance Committee meeting on 22.09.15. The Council noted the completion of the audit.

21. Replacement of neighbourhood watch co-ordinator

Cllr Vicars asked for clarification of the role and the Neighbourhood Watch website was recommended. The Chairman proposed to speak to Bill England for his feedback on the role

requirements and Cllr Wheeler and Cllr Vicars agreed to consider the role further. If they decide against it, it was agreed to advertise for a replacement through the village.

Actions: Cllr Coatsworth to speak to Bill England for more details. **Cllrs Wheeler and Vicars** to consider the role.

22. Review of Training Statement of Intent and Training Plan

The Chairman explained that the Training Plan was out of date and needed to be reviewed. Cllr Hart volunteered to review the plan and circulate amongst the Councillors. It was agreed that the Training Statement of Intent was fine. Cllr Moody explained that the Clerk would be starting training for the CILCA qualification in 2016 and that the Council would need to approve the expenditure. It was agreed to add this to the draft Training Plan.

Action: Cllr Hart to update the Training Plan and circulate.

23. To consider the resurfacing of Gravel Path

Cllr Moody reported that Gravel Path has been visited by Highways in the recent past and had considered the footpath to be in a good state, but he also mentioned that he had gone to inspect the path himself and agreed that the surface is uneven. Roger Miles, the Parish Paths Warden, has confirmed that Gravel Path is a footpath, not a pavement and as such was owned by and the responsibility of the landowners adjoining it.

The Clerk confirmed that the complaint had been passed on to Helen Howard at KierWSP and a visit from the Rights of Way officer from Northamptonshire Highways is scheduled. The Council will await the report from this visit before deciding on a further approach.

Action: The Clerk to respond to complainant with a status update.

24. To consider the re-painting of lettering on the Helmdon Wall

It was agreed that this needed to be done. **Action: Cllr Coatsworth** to speak to Les Finn and ask for it to be done as a matter of urgency.

25. To consider any celebration for the Queen's birthday

It was agreed that the best approach would be for the Council to support celebrations being held by Village Groups through the Grants process.

26. To inform the council of new district authority powers regarding dog mess

Cllr Hart updated the Council on the new powers given to Daventry District Council regarding dog mess – they have the power to fine a dog owner for not carrying a poo bag with them. Cllr Hart had asked SNC if they were considering applying the same power but SNC have no plans to do this as yet.

27. To consider the purchase of a speed radar for the village

There was a discussion regarding the possible need for a speed radar in the village, particularly on Station Road and nearby the School. Cllr Hart explained the process that Wappenham Parish Council had gone through to acquire their speed radar and that the cost was likely to be in the region of £2,500. Cllr Hart explained that NCC like to see that applications for a speed radar have backing from the residents and it was agreed to ask for feedback on this proposal via www.helmdon.com and the village Facebook groups. **Action: Cllr Moody** to ask for feedback through the website and **Cllr Hart** to ask for feedback via Facebook, with a view to reporting back at the Main meeting in January.

28. To consider the repairs to the War Memorial including:

a. clarification of the listing status

Cllr Vicars confirmed that the post and chain fence are not part of the listing status and so could be removed/replaced if necessary.

b. removal/replacement of post and chain fence

It was agreed that we should ask for feedback from residents as to whether to replace the fence or remove it altogether. **Action: Cllr Moody** to ask for feedback via www.helmdon.com

c. repair to rear of memorial where stone is flaking

It was agreed that the repair work needed to be done and to ask Les Finn for a quote. It was suggested that Mr Finn is accredited with the Association of Memorial Masons and as such is considered competent by the War Memorial Trust. **Action:**

Cllr Coatsworth to approach Les Finn for a quotation for the repair work and check his accreditation.

d. repair to pointing of base

As for point C

e. resetting of USAF memorial stone as it has become detached from its base

As for point C

The Chairman confirmed that he had not had a response from the Royal British Legion about the recent competition.

29. To confirm dates for meetings in 2016:

a. January 27th

b. March 23rd

c. May 25th

d. July 27th

e. September 28th

f. November 23rd

These dates were approved.

30. Councillor questions

Cllr Thorpe mentioned that he had been approached a couple of times with complaints about parents parking at school drop off and pick up times, including a parent who is parking their entire car on a grassy verge at the top of Grange Lane. There was also some discussion about dangerous parking by parents at the bottom of Church Street. **Action: Cllr Hart** to raise the concerns with the Head Teacher.

Cllr Coatsworth informed the Council that Mr Peter Burns had purchased and gifted this year's Poppy Wreath to the village and the Council expressed their thanks.

Cllr Coatsworth mentioned that he was planning on inviting Adam Simmonds, the Northamptonshire Police and Crimes Commissioner to next year's Annual meeting but Cllr Moody explained that Mr Simmonds was retiring and it was agreed to wait until his replacement was announced.

There were no further questions for Councillors.

31. Close

The Chairman expressed his best wishes to all present for Christmas and the New Year. The meeting was closed at 9.47pm

The next ordinary meeting of the Council will take place on Wednesday 27th January, 2016 in the Reading Room.

Signed _____ dated _____

Councillor John Coatsworth, Chairman