

HELMDON PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the meeting of Helmdon Parish Council held on Wednesday 27th September 2006 in the Reading Room, Church Street, Helmdon at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Councillors Bearman, Brookhouse, Burns, Earl, England, Moody, Smith, Spendlove
Parish Clerk: Liz Hart

Three members of the public were present.

	Action
<p>1. Apologies</p> <p>None; note that Cllr Gittens had resigned on 20th September so was not due to attend.</p>	
<p>2 Approval and signature of the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th July 2006</p> <p>Cllr Moody proposed, seconded by Cllr Earl, that the minutes be signed as a true and correct record with the following amendments: 5c) – insertion of “the” before “value” 13 – later amended to latter All in favour.</p>	
<p>3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th July 2006</p>	
<p>a) Ref 5b) Cllr Bearman to approach Highways Rep re line marking on the Green. Carried forward.</p>	Cllr Bearman
<p>Ref 15a) Parish Paths Map - Letter of thanks to Mike Barnes. Cllr Moody proposed, seconded by Cllr Smith that the Clerk also send a letter of thanks to Mike Powell. All were in favour.</p>	Clerk
<p>4. Open Forum</p>	
<p>a) Mrs Forgham requested that a letter of thanks to Cllr Gittens should include the fact that he was instrumental in setting up the village website and receiving the award.</p>	Clerk
<p>b) Mrs Lidgley queried why the footpath markings over the bridge had not been reinstated after resurfacing works had been carried out. Cllr Moody confirmed that Tony McFadden at NCC had stated that the work was made more complicated as the old markings would have to be erased; the work was on the agenda when time and funding allowed. Cllr Bearman was actioned to ascertain predicted timescales.</p>	Cllr Bearman
<p>c) Mrs Lidgley asked whether anyone is prepared to tend the war memorial garden; Cllr Moody confirmed that the Quiney family are happy to take over.</p>	
<p>d) Cllr Burns confirmed to Mr Short that a meeting had taken place on 6th September 2006 with SNC, Robin Digby and Cllr Burns regarding the proposed sports pavilion; the meeting was a positive one and the next step will be a proposal in connection with the Village Plan which will be put to the SNC in January 2007.</p>	
<p>e) Cllr Burns confirmed to Mr Short that the cost of an election (if one is required) to fill the casual vacancy will be met by the Parish Council.</p>	
<p>f) Cllr Spendlove recorded her disappointment at the perceived lack of interest in the village at</p>	

the loss of 4 species of increasingly rare wild flowers which had been mown before being allowed to flower and seed for next year.

5. Finance

a) To receive the financial statement

Cash & Investments	
Current Account	14120.43
Deposit Account	8,222.94
Nottingham Bond	500.00
Total	22843.37

Cllr Moody proposed, seconded by Cllr England that the statement be received as a true reflection of the accounts. All were in favour.

b) Funding for Training Courses

Cllr Moody wishes to attend a Code of Conduct course; the Clerk wishes to attend a New Clerk's Surgery. Total cost for these courses included under the bills for payment was £35.

c) Bills for Payment

Accounts Payable		Cheque
ABB	110.92	580
Playsafety Ltd – annual inspection report	74.03	581
Mike Barnes – Parish Paths map	200.00	582
Northamptonshire Acre Support	32.00	583
NALC Courses – Code of Conduct (£25), Clerk's Surgery (£10)	35.00	584
Clerk's Wages (July and Aug)	313.84	585
Total	765.79	

Cllr Earl proposed, seconded by Cllr Moody that the accounts be paid. All in favour.

d) **Accounts Received**

Accounts Received	
Village of the Year Award	125.00
Precept	4737.50
Total	4862.50

e) **Report on New Bank Account**

The Clerk confirmed that the application forms have been sent off and we await our new account details.

6. **Correspondence**

The Council received the following correspondence:

South Northamptonshire Council

- Electoral Register – Monthly Updates for August and September
- Electoral Registration canvas – *poster displayed*
- Small Grants for the Development of New Youth Clubs Projects and Initiatives
- Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund
- Arts News and Visual Arts Festival information
- Council Seats Review – *response by end of Sept*
- Performance Plan 2006/7 and *summary copies for distribution at meeting*
- Animal Welfare Quarterly Report and notice on pet microchipping (displayed)

Northamptonshire County Council

- Playing Field - Letter from Philip Brawn anticipating receipt of Heads of Terms
- Medium Term Plan for 2006 - 2011
- County Wide Byway Survey – *forwarded to Mike Barnes*
- Bus Timetable Updates
- Northamptonshire Local Transport Plan- Accessibility Strategy 2006 -2011 – view here: http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Transport/TP/tp_home.htm
- Request for funding a Sustainable Transport Workshop for local primary school

NALC

- Village Viewpoint –summer 2006, autumn 2006 (contains article on our Parish Plan)
- Notice of AGM (17/10/06), delegate form, nomination form, resolutions
- Bi-monthly update – June/July including
 - Help Sheet on Village Halls and Insurance - *copied to Cllr England*
 - Local Government Employees – VAT and Petrol Element within NJC Car Allowances
 - Basic Charity Law – Legal Note 48 on Trustees
 - Briefing on Memorial Safety in Cemeteries
 - Training Course Applications
 - Budgets and Precepting (3rd Oct)
 - New Clerk's Surgery (10th Oct)
 - Code of Conduct (16th Oct)
 - How to Respond to Planning Applications (Wed 8th Nov)
- VOY Winners Report
- Parish Constables Event – *poster displayed and advertised on website*
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Miscellaneous

- Helmdon WEA – Talking About Gardens course (*notice displayed*)
- BDO – Audit Return 2005/6 – request for copy of internal auditor’s report and our response to it by 11/09/06 - *actioned*
- “Keep Horton General” asking for support via email (*forwarded due to short timescale*)
- “Keep Horton General” – flyers (*displayed*) and questionnaires
- Playing Field Newsletter – Northants ACRE
- The Miracle Times
- Northampton General Hospital – consultation regarding application to become a foundation trust with offer to attend a meeting and poster asking for views (*displayed*)
- Yorkshire bank – statement X 2
- Playsafety Ltd – Play Area Inspection Report – forwarded to *Cllrs Earl & Bearman*
- Playsafety Ltd – Response to letter re risk categories – forwarded to *Cllrs Earl & Bearman*
- Atkins – Annual Parish Questionnaire on Highways Services – respond by 23rd Oct – *forwarded to Cllr Bearman*
- SNVB – “Road to Retirement” Workshops
- SNVB – voluntary vacancies notices – for August and September - *displayed*
- SNVB – September newsletter
- Central Networks – grants available to local groups
- Northamptonshire ACRE – VoY prize money - £125.00 cheque (*banked*)
- Society of Local Clerks – benefits of membership and application form X 2
- Society of Local Clerks and NALC – survey of Clerk’s Terms and Conditions
- Civic Trust (email) – request for Green Flag entry figures
- Lo-comotion Support (email) – offering risk assessment and internal audit services
- Formal resignation from Cllr Gittens

Accounts Received

- Getmapping – Imagery for Parish Paths Map £200.00
- ACRE – Support form - £32
- Playsafety Ltd – fee for annual inspection – 74.03
- ABB Invoice for Lightening Maintenance - £110.92

Discussion:

Cllr Bearman queried the audience for the Small Grants. Clerk responded that we have received details of two separate funding schemes and asked the Cllrs to forward details of any interested parties to her for forwarding the information.

Regarding the membership of the Society of Local Clerks, Clerk confirmed that we already have the support of NALC and that she would wait to see if further support would be beneficial.

7 NALC AGM

Cllr Burns asked if anyone wished to attend the NALC AGM; there was no positive response. Cllr Moody reported that he felt last year’s AGM was poorly organised and did not inspire. No resolutions for motions were proposed.

8. Response to SNC document ref Number of Council Seats

Cllr Brookhouse commented that he felt the number was right and we are fortunate not to be in the position of many Councils who are unable to fill seats. Cllr Spendlove commented that this could be due to people moving house more often than previously and the meeting felt that a number of factors were involved. Cllr Smith maintained that nine seats was right for Helmdon.

9. Request from NCC to fund a Sustainable Transport Workshop

All Cllrs agreed that the workshop was expensive for what it consisted of and that it was not appropriate for Helmdon Primary School where congestion was not a bad as it once was. Cllr

All Cllrs

Clerk

Moody also reported that the school was already addressing the issues by the provision of a larger car park and a new bicycle rack.

10 Response to “Keep Horton General” campaign

The Cllrs considered at length what the most pertinent response would be; it was felt that the response should be measured and we should be clear what exactly we are supporting. Cllr Spendlove commented that we must not be against change per se as it can be positive. Cllr Mood expressed concern at the methods of the Campaign group whom he felt were responding emotionally and in a somewhat militant fashion.

Cllr Brookhouse proposed and Cllr Smith seconded that Clerk write a letter stating our concerns to the CEO, cc'ing the “Keep Horton General Campaign”. All were in favour.

Clerk

11 Resignation of Cllr Gittens

Cllr Burns informed the meeting that he had written a personal letter to Cllr Gittens. Cllr Burns proposed, seconded by Cllr Bearman that a formal letter of thanks be written by the Clerk. All were in favour.

Clerk

The meeting discussed the process for filling the casual vacancy; the Clerk confirmed that the notice of the vacancy had been put up on 27th September 2006 and that, once the notice period (14 days) had elapsed, we would receive confirmation from Electoral Services of whether an election needs to be called. If no election is called, a new Councillor will be co-opted. Cllr Burns proposed, seconded by Cllr England that should this be the case, a Special Co-optation Meeting should be held on Wednesday 1st November. All were in favour.

Clerk

12 School Playground

a) Meeting between all interested parties regarding lease agreement

Cllr Bearman reported that this meeting was to be held on 18th October 2006 and a report would follow.

Cllr Bearman

b) Consideration of RoSPA report

Cllr Bearman reported that most issues raised were already in hand.

Cllr Bearman proposed, seconded by Cllr Smith that the recommendations of the report be accepted by the Council. All were in favour.

13 Registration of Jenners Piece

Clerk reported that this matter was ongoing.

14 Decisions of the Planning committee on applications since 26th July

S/2006/1067/P - 20 Bell Close - Single Storey extension to rear – Supported

S/2006/1183P - Grange Farm Barn - Conversion Garage to Habitable rooms – Supported

S/2004/0520/P - Land adjacent 55 Church Street - Detached House, Garage – Observations made regarding the water courses

15 Allotments – condition of unmanaged plots

Cllr Burns stated that access was too narrow for farming equipment to gain entry. Cllr Brookhouse proposed, seconded by Cllr Burns that the plots be left to the new tenants to manage. 5 Cllrs were in favour.

Cllr Burns asked if anyone wished to become part of the Allotment Committee as it now

consisted of only two Cllrs, namely Cllr Spendlove and Cllr Smith. There was no response. The Clerk should let Cllr Smith know of any vacant plots so that the Allotment Committee can discuss an appropriate course of action.

Clerk

16 Risk Assessments

Cllr Earl confirmed that the tyre swing had been repaired and item 7 completed. Cllr Smith queried the next action regarding the fencing; this was felt to be dependent on the outcome of the meeting on 18th October 2006. Cllr Burns signed off the risk assessments.

17 Parish Paths

Cllr Burns reported that Roger Miles has volunteered to take over the role of Parish Paths Warden from Ren Gittens. Cllr Moody proposed, seconded by Cllr England that the Council support him in this role. All were in favour.

Cllr Burns requested that the Parish Plans Committee should be asked to investigate what progress there was on the information board.

Clerk

18 Notice Boards and benches

a) Repair Schedule

The Clerk reported that Bernie Wade would commence work in mid October. Cllr Spendlove commented that the discoloured Perspex on the board on the Green made reading the notices difficult. Replacement was not included in the tender by Bernie Wade as the glass had been broken subsequently. Council would await a response from Bernie Wade as to the likely cost.

Cllr Spendlove commented the Council notices took up half of each noticeboard space, leaving insufficient room to advertise local events. She questioned whether it was necessary to display each notice in triplicate. Cllr Brookhouse felt that it was important to do so.

19 Consideration of the re-introduction of "Councillors' Questions" as a permanent agenda item

Cllr Brookhouse commented that, whilst it was understood that no financial decisions could be made under this heading, it would be useful to have it in order to allow Councillors to raise an issue brought to their attention in the intervening time between the issuing of the Agenda and the meeting. Cllr Brookhouse proposed, seconded by Cllr Spendlove that the item be reinstated permanently. All in favour except Cllr Moody who abstained.

The meeting closed at 9:20 p.m.

**The date of the next meeting is
Wednesday 22nd November 2006**

