



# HELMDON PARISH COUNCIL



## MINUTES

*Of a meeting of the Council held in the Reading Room, Helmdon,  
at 7.30pm on Wednesday 28 January 2015.*

**PRESENT** Cllrs Burns, Coatsworth, Garner, Moody, Valentine, England, Barnes, Duncombe.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Simon Loake (Clerk)

10 members of the public were also present

**1 ) APOLOGIES:** Cllr Adhemar had notified the Clerk that she would be late arriving.

**2) DECLARATIONS of INTEREST:** Cllr Moody declared an interest in item 7.5 as an employee of NCALC

**3) MINUTES:** It was proposed by Cllr Moody, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Cllr England, and unanimously agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2014 were a true record of the meeting. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman

### **4) MATTERS ARISING:**

4.1 It was noted that there had been no further development with Western Power handing over title to the poles to the Parish Council. Cllr Moody asked for this to be an agenda item at the next meeting.

4.2 Two provisional dates have been suggested for a meeting with Bulkhead Properties – 17 or 24 February 2015. It was agreed that 24<sup>th</sup> February at 12.30 would be the favoured time.

4.3 Cllr Moody noted that it had been agreed that mention of filming/recording entitlement be included on the notice of meetings. The Clerk apologised for this oversight.

**5) HELMDON & DISTRICT RAILWAY SOCIETY:** The Council received a presentation regarding the proposals. Helmdon has one of the last platforms still in suitable condition for renovation. The eventual aim is to have a small railway museum in the reconstructed buildings, and one or two working locomotives that would give short break-van rides. It was stressed that communication with the residents was regarded as paramount in the development, and proper archeological and ecological research has to be completed before any progress can be made. The landowner has agreed in principle to a 99 year lease, and SNC, who would make the final planning decision, has said that there may be approval in principle following completion of surveys and research. There were several questions from members of the public, regarding the size of the venture. The frequency of running of the trains, how rights of way might be affected, which were all answered on a “provisional basis” as there are as yet no definite plans. There was also discussion about the Roman Road which is reported to be in the area, and there were grave concerns expressed by the residents of Station House, which is adjacent to the proposed railway development. Concerns were also expressed about the potential noise of locomotives, the problems likely to be caused by construction and delivery vehicles, the restricted access to the site, and the possible impact of footpaths and rights of way. Assurance was given that an open meeting would be held in the village before any definite plans were submitted.

The Chairman expressed his thanks for the openness of the presentation, and the hope that any proposal would be circulated to the residents of the village and that there would be a proper flow of information before any decisions were made.

Cllr Adhemar joined the meeting

**6) OPEN FORUM:** Mr C Harold commented that the discussion of a 20mph speed limit had not been included in the minutes of the previous meeting. It had been agreed at that meeting that, because of the parking situation this was not a feasible option.

Ms L Hart circulated a map of the area of the proposed railway development which indicated the proximity to her residence (Station House)

## **7) FINANCE:**

**7.1 Finance Report:** The Clerk presented the Finance Report, showing a balance of funds at £8401.06. A copy of the report is attached to the file copy of these minutes.

**7.2 Payments:** It was proposed by Cllr Moody, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cllr Garner, and agreed that the payments listed by the Clerk be approved, and the cheques were duly signed

**7.3 Budget:** The Clerk presented the draft budget to the meeting. This had been discussed in considerable detail by the Finance Committee. The Clerk explained the adjustments that had been made, and the transfers to reserves that had been recommended. The draft budget includes an increase in the grants to village organisations to £1350, and the sum of £960 for the labour and printing costs for the newsletter. It was proposed by Cllr Valentine, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cllr Duncombe, and unanimously agreed that the draft budget should be adopted.;

**7.4 Precept:** The Clerk reported that, in the light of the result predicted in the draft budget, the Finance Committee had suggested that there should be no change in the precept for the year to 31 March 2015. It was proposed by Cllr Moody, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Cllr Garner and agreed that the precept should remain unchanged at £14660

**7.5 NCALC/ACRE Subscriptions.** Cllr Moody left the meeting.

After some discussion of the considerable increase in the subscription for NCALC, it was agreed that the training and legal advice that is available from NCALC was worthwhile, but there was considerable disquiet expressed at the size of the increase in subscription and the failure of NCALC to publicise details of any attempts made to reduce costs. The Chairman is to write to NCALC expressing the views of the Council

Cllr Moody rejoined the meeting, and the decision was conveyed to him.

**8) REVIEW of CORRESPONDENCE:** The Clerk presented a list of the correspondence that had been received and sent. A copy of the list is attached to the file copy of these minutes.

**9) PLANNING:** The Clerk reported on the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 30 December 2014, at which no objections were raised to the application for a single storey extension and the addition of roof lights to the existing porch at Bailiff Cottage, Church St, Falcutt. However, the planning committee felt that the proposed construction of a "farmworker's dwelling" at South Farm, Wappenham Road, was not acceptable, and was not commensurate with the size of the agricultural business,, and is outside of the line of the village.

**10) REPORT of HIGHWAYS ISSUES:** No comments

**11) REPORT of PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE:** It was reported that the Clerk had agreed to carry out regular safety inspections in accordance with the requirements of the risk analysis.

**12) TRANSFER of LAND in STATION ROAD:** The Clerk commented that there has been no further development, and he will pursue South Northants Homes on this matter.

**13) REPORT from ALLOTMENT COMMITTEE:** The notice board is to be erected.

**14) REPORT from PARISH PLAN GROUP:** The Broadband Cabinet is now functional after a few teething troubles. The number of connections is restricted to 100, and there have already been 70 applications, so those residents requiring fast broadband are advised to submit their application in the near future. Once the 100 connections have been made, a second cabinet will have to be installed.

The PCC is continuing discussions regarding the installation of a mobile phone transceiver on the church roof.

**15) REPORT of SCHOOL LIASON GROUP:** It was proposed by Cllr Adhemar, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cllr England, that a suitable trophy should be purchased with the Best Village prize money, and that this should be awarded each year as a prize for a community-based competition undertaken by the students at the school.

**16) REMOVAL of PROTECTED TREES IN RADSTONE FIELDS EDEVELOPMENT:** The Clerk reported that he had contacted the Planning Manager for this project at SNC, who had said that the trees had been removed in order to create drainage sumps in case of flooding on the new housing estate, but he was not aware if any of these trees had been subject to TPOs. The Clerk will check the register of TPOs before the next meeting.

**17) SELECTION of the WINNERS of the RECYCLING POSTER COMPETITION**

The selected entrants from the Recycling Poster competition were presented to the meeting, and a winner from each age-group was chosen, together with an overall winner. It was agreed that Cllr Moody and Cllr Adhemar should visit the school to announce the prizes and to present the awards.

**18) LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME** It was agreed that the Parish Council should register at the Foundation level, which will carry through until September 2015.

**19) TRANSPARENCY CODE for SMALLER AUTHOTITIES:** It was noted that the Council already publishes the majority of the documentation required, and the Clerk will consult with Cllr Moody prior to the next meeting to discuss the most appropriate way of publishing the finance information.

**20) IMPACT of STAFF REDUCTION at NCC:** It was reported that NCC has proposed a reduction in its staff from 4000 to 1502 by becoming a commissioning authority. It was noted that the only council to have taken this step before had failed. The Clerk is to invite the representative on NCC to attend the next meeting and the annual parish meeting to provide further information on this.

**21) GRIEVANCE & DISCIPLINARY POLICY:** It was noted that the Council has not adopted such a policy. The Clerk is to submit a draft policy prior to the next meeting, when this will be an agenda item.

**22) COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS/ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**22.1** It was agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting should be held on Wednesday 22April

**22.2** Cllr Coatsworth reported that there appears to have been no action at Tanks A LOT, and the business is continuing to operate even though planning constraints have not been met. The Chairman stated that he would write to SNC regarding this. The Clerk stated that he was aware that Greatworth Parish Council has also contacted the SNC Planning Enforcement Team regarding this.

**22.3** Cllr Moody suggested that the County Councillor, SNC Councillor and PCSO be invited to the Annual Parish Meeting.

**22.4** Cllr England requested that as much notice as possible be given for booking of the Reading Room for meetings.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.29pm