

# **ST. NICHOLAS HURST PARISH COUNCIL**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD IN ST NICHOLAS CE PRIMARY SCHOOL  
ON MONDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER AT 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors W. Smith (in the Chair),  
Beauchamp, Curry, Ewart, Lyon, Palmer, Robinson,  
I Smith and Stephenson.

OFFICERS: Mrs. M. Bradshaw (Clerk).

PUBLIC: Four Members of the Public.

## **PART I**

### **9190 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Holdstock.

### **9191 Prejudicial Interest**

There were none to declare.

### **9192 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **9193 Matters Arising**

The following matters were noted:

- Howard Larkin's memorial bench would be unveiled at a quiet ceremony on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2021, 11am at the Tape Lane allotments. This respects the requests of his Wife and family who want the ceremony to be low key inviting only close friends and colleagues;
- the Police will be undertaking radar gun testing in the village. This was due to happen last week but was delayed due to Police resources being redeployed to the M25 climate change protests;
- painting of the Village gates has been commissioned – timescales for work is not known but will be scheduled by Volker; and

- verges in parts of the Parish remain overgrown with Councillor Stephenson requesting that parts of Davis Street be cut back.

RESOLVED: the Clerk to send invitations to friends and colleagues of Howard Larkin.

### **Public Forum**

9194 The Chairman welcomed four members to the public forum and invited questions.

Mr John Osborne expressed his aggrievement at having been asked to leave the Parish Council meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021 to enable a Part II item to be confidentially discussed. He felt that he and other members of the public were removed without knowing what the topic for discussion was and without a resolution having been passed. The Clerk and Chairman agreed that the public had been made aware of why they were being asked to leave. The topic for discussion was stated by the Chairman as “future strategy”. Mr Osborne asked what this meant and why it would necessitate being a Part II item. He stated that he had been approached by parishoners who were suspicious of what was being discussed. The Chairman stated that no one had queried this with either the Clerk or himself. The Clerk read aloud the words of the resolution which appear in the minutes of the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

He went on to question the governance of the Parish Council and why papers and reports are not made available to the public ahead of all Parish Council meetings.

The Clerk said she would happily explain to Mr Osborne, as she had previously done so on the telephone, what papers were made available to Members and the Public ahead of a meeting. She believed that Mr Osborne was very aware of the type of briefing papers that Borough Councillors would receive compared to those of Parish Councillors. For Parish Council meetings, both parties are supplied with the agenda and details of all planning applications to be discussed ahead of the meeting. These details are posted on the village noticeboards for information. Additionally, Councillors are supplied with minutes arising from the previous meeting and a finance paper. Both of these papers remain confidential until they are approved at the Parish Council meeting. They are then posted on the Parish Council website usually within 24 hours of the meeting.

Mr Osborne disputed the unavailability of minutes until they had been approved. The Clerk reiterated that she knew of no such cases where Town/Parish minutes would be freely allowed to be circulated until approved by Members of the Parish Council. Mr Osborne disputed that he wasn't interested in precedents set by other Councils.

Councillor Beauchamp offered clarification saying that the purpose of the public forum is to oversee how Members conduct the business of the Parish Council. Her opinion was that the Clerk's minutes are exceptional and reflect all business as it is conducted. She agreed with the Chairman and Clerk that it is right and proper for draft minutes not to be publicly circulated ahead of Member agreement at the Parish Council meeting.

Mrs Carr Osborne added that when Members of the Public take time to attend a meeting she would expect papers to be available for them upon arrival.

Mr Osborne explained that he intended no criticism of how the Clerk operated.

Councillor Lyon explained that Part II items occur rarely, and sometimes at very short notice, and he did not believe the Parish Council abused the right to exclude Members of the Public and Press to discuss any confidential matters. He again, supported the Clerk's previous explanation and concurred that, as a Parish Councillor, he receives no further papers or reports ahead of the Parish Council meetings.

Mr Osborne referred to the standing agenda item of "Correspondence" and "Information Reports" both of which indicated, on the agenda, items "to follow". The Chairman explained that very limited paper correspondence is now circulated and that the reference "to follow" could be best removed in light of most correspondence and any information reports occurring electronically and being circulated via e-mail. The Chairman added that, as a small Parish Council, all business is conducted under one monthly meeting. Unlike larger Councils, Hurst does not have separate meetings to discuss items such as planning or amenities.

Mrs Maggie Sanderson remarked about the verge cutting in the Parish. She recognised that some verges need to be cut back to maintain sight lines. However, manicured verges in country lanes is not in keeping and does not preserve the rural feel of these roads. The Chairman agreed that the balance is difficult to achieve and the Parish Council can only ask WBC to do what they are responsible for. When vegetation/verge issues relate to homeowners/landowners, WBC will write to them and request that within 7 days they are cut back. At present, the Chairman is aware of at least three live cases where WBC requests have been ignored.

Additionally, Mrs Sanderson asked if Volker was responsible for clearing ditches and gullies of leaves. The Chairman confirmed that Volker has a schedule of works and that he had received a letter that week complementing Volker on their excellent clearance of Hinton Road.

Mrs Jo Newbold asked for an update regarding the painting of the village gates and queried when the work would likely commence. The Chairman confirmed that Volker had been given the go ahead to complete the work and that it would be scheduled into their program. At present, he did not have an exact start date.

## 9195 Neighbourhood Planning

The Chairman reported that a lengthy meeting of the Neighbourhood Planning Working Group had been held on the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021, namely to discuss the emerging Biodiversity Report. This is a significant evidential document which is being constantly changed and updated.

## 9196 Planning Applications

Members discussed the applications attached to these minutes. They had no adverse comments relating to applications 212977 and 212852. They objected to application 212800.

The Chairman confirmed that a backlog still exists at the Planning Inspectorate and to date no further information has been forthcoming regarding the appeals lodged in respect of Sawpit Lane (211532) or the 5G telecommunications mast (211667).

With regards to the Land West of Lodge Road, a public exhibition will be held by Mactaggart and Mickel in the Village Hall on the evenings of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

RESOLVED: the Clerk to communicate the Parish Council's planning comments to WBC.

## 9197 Finance

The following accounts were presented for approval this month:

Oct-21								
					Main Fund	CIL*	Neighbourhood Planning	Total
Previous Balance				£	47048.86	125996.05	-2898.12	170146.79
The following accounts are presented for approval this month:								
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Expenditure - Payee</b>							
7.1	M Holdstock	(reimbursement for building sundries)			18.00			
7.2	5G	(monthly telephone)			29.62			
7.3	M Bradshaw	(reimbursement for IT backup/cloud storage)			50.00			
7.4	J Earley	(watering)			30.00			
7.5	Lyreco	(stationery)			55.32			
7.6	M Bradshaw	Salary (Sept 2021)		1037.98				
		(Income Tax)		-8.40				
		(National Insurance)		-28.92				
		(Pension)		-41.52				
		Office		40.00	999.14			
7.7	NEST Sept (Employee pension £41.52 + Employer pension £31.14)				72.66			
7.8	HMRC Sept (Employee's Income Tax £8.40 & National Insurance £28.92)				37.32			
	<b>Total Expenditure</b>				1292.06	0.00	0.00	1292.06
	Precept (50%)				22350.00	0.00	0.00	22350.00
	<b>Total Income</b>				22350.00	0.00	0.00	22350.00
	<b>Revised balance c/f</b>				68106.80	125996.05	-2898.12	191204.73

RESOLVED: all payments were approved.

9198 **Correspondence**

Speed device in Hinton Road

The Chairman reported that the speed device which has been located in Hinton Road for some time has now been moved to Lodge Road. All data collected from Hinton Road has been passed to the Police and they will be coming out with a speed gun imminently to this location. Residents of Hinton Road report that the device has acted as a good warning to drivers and they are disappointed that it has now been relocated.

To this end, the Chairman stated that he felt a least three devices are required in the village to target the known hot spots; namely, Hinton Road, Lodge Road and the A321. He believed that it would be worth speaking to WBC to ascertain whether economies of scale could be achieved by purchasing devices through them.

The Chairman informed Members that one of the original speed watch volunteers, who still lives in the village, has now undertaken two years of full training. He is currently liaising with the Police and will revert back to the Chairman with an update as to how the Parish Council can support him. The aim would be to have a group of approximately 5 volunteers who could operate a speed gun under the supervision of a Police Officer. The presence of a Police Officer is essential in the eventuality, for any reason, a disputed case went to appeal. The Chairman was aware that the new Police and Crime Commissioner has budgeted for the purchase of more speed guns which is pleasing news.

The traffic going through Tape Lane of a morning, in particular, was also discussed. Councillor Curry reported first-hand experience of residents, who do not live in Tape Lane, using the access only road. Problems are particularly prevalent during school drop off/pick up times. The Chairman believed that Police enforcement was the only deterrent. He felt it essential that the Police, Parish Council and School work together on this issue. Councillor Beauchamp queried whether the child size cardboard signs which can be placed outside schools would be a visible reminder.

RESOLVED: the Chairman to contact WBC to ascertain the cost of purchasing further speed devices.

Pond

The Chairman reported that it had been confirmed that weed can be removed from the village pond. The work will, therefore, be commissioned as previously discussed.

Defibrillator at Hurst Village Halls

It was noted that a defibrillator is not available at the Hurst Village Halls complex. The Chairman suggested that with pending defibrillator training taking place on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021, it would be worth asking the Lilly May Page Trust if they would assist in such a project and support funding.

RESOLVED: the Clerk to follow up with the Lilly May Page Trust.

Benches in School Road playpark

The Chairman reported that requests had been made for two benches to be located in School Road playpark (near to the goalposts) to enable parents to watch their children whilst playing. The Youth shelter provides unusable seating for this purpose as it does not face the pitch.

RESOLVED: the Clerk to seek quotes for two new benches.

Christmas tree

The Chairman reported that, despite best endeavours, it looked increasingly unlikely that a real Christmas tree of a suitable size could be planted at the site of the St Nicholas Night. The ground is poor, utilities run underground and the cost is prohibitive for a tall, rooted tree. Alternative options are being explored but it is likely that a cut Christmas tree will be purchased.

**9199 Information Reports**

There were no information reports to bring to this meeting

RESOLVED: that by virtue of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business ("Future Strategy") under Section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. Unanimously agreed.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm.

Signed.....

Date.....