

**HALE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of Hale Parish Council Meeting held at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 6 November 2018 in**  
**Hale Village Hall, Hale**

**Present:**

Cllr Lucas – Chairman, Cllrs Hartas, Aitken-Sykes, Templeton, Mangan

**In attendance:**

Miss K Cleary – Clerk

Mr S Whitmarsh – Tree Warden

14 members of the public

1. **To receive apologies for absence** – none. Cllr Mangan apologised for his late arrival
2. **To receive any Declarations of Interest** – Declarations of interest were made as recorded in Appendix 1 of these minutes.
3. **To consider and approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 Oct 2018** – Minutes having been circulated in advance were approved unanimously and signed by the Chairman.

**Matters arising from the minutes**

- 3.1. Clerk reported that following correspondence from a Parishioner concerned about hedges scratching cars due to restricted passing space, the Chair had contacted Mr Tim Orchard about cutting back his hedge at the Hale Rd end of the garden and Mr Orchard had agreed to do so.
- 3.2. Clerk reported that Mr Sykes' fence had been repaired prior to any contact being made by HPC.
- 3.3. Clerk reported that she had sought advice about Martin Harrington's email resigning as a councillor. The Clerk advised that the email contained allegations of failings in the workings of the Parish Council which should be properly and thoroughly investigated by the Council through the complaints policy. In the absence of a complaints committee, the Clerk will write to Mr Harrington to invite him to submit evidence which would be considered in a closed session of the full Parish Council as soon as possible (Mr Harrington to be invited to attend).

In response to a written request from a Parishioner, the Clerk confirmed that (1) as general correspondence and (2) whilst the email was being considered under the complaints procedure it would not be published on HPC website. The full text of the email would be released after the process and the complaint had been resolved. Clerk to follow up conflicting advice re publication that had been given to a Parishioner by the NFDC monitoring officer.

- 3.4. Clerk reported that following requests from Parishioners a letter had been sent to National Grid requesting that they clarify the position of HPC as set out in the letter from Bruton Knowles to residents of 26<sup>th</sup> Sept and highlighted the safeguarding concerns raised by a Parishioner around meetings held in people's homes. A follow up letter had been received from a Parishioner requesting details of the numbers of meetings where the presence of a Councillor had been requested. Clerk to write to National Grid to request the information to answer the Parishioner's question.
- 3.5. Clerk reported that concerns raised by a Parishioner about comments allegedly made by Councillor Lucas at the Sept New Forest Consultative Panel meeting had been

followed up. Cllr Lucas (who had not been present at the Oct meeting) had explained to Councillors that she had been stating a personal opinion as requested by another attendee. Draft minutes of the meeting produced confirmed that Cllr Lucas had stated that HPC maintained a neutral stance. Clerk advised that no further action was necessary.

**4. Members of the public are invited to address the council on agenda matters and to raise any matters not otherwise on the agenda. – None**

**5. To receive annual tree report from Tree warden**

The Tree warden presented the conclusions of his annual tree inspection. £500 needs to be budgeted in case the Ash tree in the woods next to the hall (with suspected Ash die back) needed to be proactively taken down. Clerk to include in 2019-20 budget.

**6. To review first draft of the Parish Council budget and precept request for 2019/20 including consideration of Neighbourhood Watch funding**

6.1. The Clerk presented analysis expenses incurred to date and noted that estimated by-election costs of £2000 were unbudgeted and represented a big percentage of the Parish precept. Clerk identified areas of potential saving in relation to discretionary expenditure which had been provided for, most particularly the HPC website update. Clerk recommended that going forwards, annual budget should include an amount towards future by-elections.

6.2. Cllr Mangan observed that the potential savings identified by the clerk were relatively small and that as an exceptional occurrence in the year reserves should be depleted to pay for the by-election. To be reconsidered as part of full budget process.

6.3. Clerk explained that the previous donation to Neighbourhood Watch of £250 in 2013 meant that there was no regular s.137 amount budgeted and the 2013 donation had now been fully spent. Cllr Lucas noted that Neighbourhood Watch provided an important service for the benefit of all residents and the Parish Council should continue to support. It was proposed by Cllr Lucas and seconded by Cllr Templeton and therefore **RESOLVED**: that a £50 donation for the budget year 2018/19 be sent and a donation 2019/20 to be considered as part of budget process. All agreed. Clerk to check with Neighbourhood Watch coordinator that this approach was acceptable.

6.4. Other s.137 requests have been received from organisations supported in previous years. Consideration to be deferred to December meeting once by-election costs confirmed.

6.5. Cllr Hartas had identified a considerably discounted noticeboard as a possible replacement at Woodfalls Cross. Only two are available. Currently there are two large notice boards in place which are more space than is needed. Proposed noticeboard c.15% smaller surface area. Clerk advised that as 'Clearance', it may not be able to purchase a second one to match at a later date. It was proposed by Cllr Lucas and seconded by Cllr Mangan and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the Clerk purchase one noticeboard to allow lengthsman to fix on Fri 9<sup>th</sup> Nov. Lengthsman to be asked if he can fix the board in the bus shelter, but if not, to affix. Existing boards to be left in situ for residents to use, which would hopefully reduce the general fixings to the nearby fence. All agreed.

6.6. Cllr Mangan requested that the Clerk notify the Council in writing as soon as possible of any overtime payment claim, to avoid previous experience of a large backdated claim being presented. Clerk hours to be discussed at a closed session of the Council at the December meeting.

## 7. To determine next steps in relation to the National Grid Visual Impact Project including correspondence received

- 7.1 Clerk reported that she had still not heard from National Trust rangers in relation to their requested statement on works planned on Hale Purlieu. Tree Officer to chase as well as Clerk.
- 7.2 Cllr Hartas reported that following the feedback sent to National Grid in relation to commoner identified issues, National Grid had offered a meeting with commoners to discuss the feedback further. Cllr Hartas had declined to chair this meeting to avoid potential conflict of interest issues. No date had been finalised for this meeting, Cllr Hartas to continue to chase.
- 7.3 Cllr Hartas requested that the Council ask National Grid to reconsider the option of tunnelling along the original line of the pylons. It was understood that the option had originally been discounted on grounds of cost.

It was unanimously agreed that the Purlieu could be considered as a unique situation, given the ongoing practice of commoning, and that this, together with the environmental risks and level of disruption to residents may be enough to persuade National Grid to reconsider the option.

It was proposed by Cllr Lucas and seconded by Cllr Hartas and therefore **RESOLVED**: that a letter be sent to National Grid formally asking for the tunnelling option to be reconsidered. Clerk to draft. Cllr Hartas to inform Verderers and CDA of HPCs proposal.

- 7.4 Cllr Lucas reported that the next SRG meeting would be held in December. Date to be finalised, currently 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> were under consideration. Cllr Hartas to attend in place of Cllr Lucas, who will be overseas. Clerk to prepare a list of questions for National Grid and stakeholders which will be agreed at Dec meeting and submitted to National Grid in advance of the meeting.
- 7.5 Cllrs discussed range of potential options to seek Parishioner views if and when National Grid submit any planning permission. Cllr Lucas advised that any form of Parish Poll, organised through NFDC would need to be arranged c. 3 months in advance. All Cllrs agreed that the council had a duty to discover what the electorate thought of any application submitted. Cllr Mangan stated he would oppose any poll as defining the question would be difficult and he felt that the Councils' ability to appraise any application using the rules of planning would potentially be inconsistent with any commitment to follow the results of any poll. Cllr Templeton agreed. Clerk to check with NFDC that all parish households would be informed by post if planning permission was submitted.

## 8. To determine next steps in relation to Affordable Housing including correspondence received

*(Cllrs Templeton and Aitken-Sykes stepped away from the Council table and sat in the public seats throughout the period of discussion of Item 8)*

- 8.1. Cllr Lucas reported that she had attended a CPRE (Council for Protection of Rural England) conference on affordable housing provision. The conference offered further statistical evidence of unaffordability of housing in small rural villages. CPRE could be a potential source of advice to HPC in considering any affordable housing project; ensuring affordable housing projects are suitable for small villages in the countryside and covering both building design and ancillary concerns such as isolation issues for the elderly.
- 8.2. Cllr Mangan noted that previous surveys had demonstrated a general level of support for affordable housing in Hale and the HCG had been tasked with considering what might be an appropriate vehicle to deliver any affordable housing in the village. He felt that a balanced population was of benefit to the village and necessary for the health

and survival of the village but also recognised that some residents felt strongly that no additional support should be made available to those who could not afford to buy or rent property at open market values.

- 8.3. A parishioner had written to request that the Council require Hale CLT to hold a public meeting with an independent chairman and a full Q&A session. The Clerk advised the Council that as a separate body, the Council could not compel Hale CLT to do this. Cllr Mangan noted that the council could support and encourage the CLT to become more visible in the community, to actively seek to increase membership numbers and to accept membership requests from those who were generally supportive of affordable housing provision but who had expressed concerns about the locations proposed to date. Cllrs Hartas and Lucas agreed. It was proposed by Cllr Lucas and seconded by Cllr Mangan and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the Council send a letter to Hale CLT encouraging them to become more visible in the community. All agreed.

***The meeting was briefly adjourned to allow most members of the public to leave the room***

#### **9. To receive an update on Hatchett Green restoration – car park repairs**

- 9.1. Cllr Aitken-Sykes reported that he had contacted Earlcote about the proposed car park works to be carried out in Spring 2019. The works were estimated to take approx. one week. Earlcote had indicated that their quote may be capable of reduction if they could leave some or all of the material on site. This may be possible.
- 9.2. The level of work proposed and associated cost was considered in light of the budget discussions and the unexpected by-election expenditure. The council can reclaim any VAT paid. Contributions of £1400 have been promised. Lottery funding may be available for projects up to £10,000; Cllr Hartas and Clerk to apply. Cllrs agreed that the work was necessary. It was proposed by Cllr Mangan and seconded by Cllr Aitken-Sykes and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the Council should seek to agree a contracted scope with Earlcote for works commencing in Spring 2019. Cllr Hartas and the Clerk to coordinate an application for lottery funding to fund, but if this is not forthcoming, reserves will be used to fund a reduced scope of works. All agreed.

#### **10. To receive the Clerk's report**

- 10.1. Policies: Following the Freedom of Information requests received, the clerk noted that the current e-communications protocol could be revised to better facilitate response within the statutory deadlines. Clerk to issue amended wording for formal consideration at the next meeting. Similarly, the Clerk had also noted that HPC did not currently have a vexatious complainant policy. Draft to be circulated for consideration at the next meeting.
- 10.2. Cemetery – Susan Witt needs assistance with planting. Cllr Lucas to email those who had previously offered help with cemetery planting.
- 10.3. Cemetery – a parishioner had written to the Council requesting CCTV in the cemetery - highlighting theft of flowers and knocking over of pots in the cemetery and theft from cars of grieving relatives. Clerk to follow up car theft reports with Neighbourhood Watch as this was the first that anyone was aware of any such problems. Clerk to write and advise that damage to flowers was as a result of deer/badgers.
- 10.4. The election for a new Councillor was scheduled for 8 November 2018; Clerk to arrange an 'induction' meeting with the new Councillor before the next Parish Council meeting

**11. Correspondence – other than dealt with in relevant sections above**

Notice had been received of an election of two verderers of the New Forest. If contested, the poll will be held on 30 November. The Clerk has posted these notices on the noticeboards.

**12. To consider and approve the following payments:**

06.11.18	Jeff Butt (Internal Audit)	£ 205.00
23.11.18	Clerks Salary	£ 330.17

It was proposed by Cllr Lucas and seconded by Cllr Hartas and therefore **RESOLVED:** that the payments be approved. All agreed.

**13. To approve the accounts for Oct 2018 and to record the bank balances – approved.****14. Any other business**

14.1. Cllr Lucas requested that the date of the Annual Parish Assembly be moved forward to Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April. Clerk to approach Village Hall booking clerk to request.

14.2. Cllr Templeton requested that a letter be sent to Mr Sykes thanking him for repairing the fence at Oakfield Farm

14.3. Cllr Aitken-Sykes noted that the location of the recently installed speed detection measures was not optimal as they were not in the places where most vehicles tended to speed. Cllr Lucas to check with National Grid if in fact these are traffic monitoring devices before any approach to Highways is made.

**15. To note the date of the next meeting is Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2018 at 7.00pm at Hale Village Hall**

There being no further business to discuss, the Meeting closed at 9:54pm

Signed:  
Chairman

Date: 4 December 2018

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