

**HOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting**  
**held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 19.00**  
**at Houghton Village Hall**

Present: Parish Councillors: A Young (Chairman), L Adams (Vice Chairman), L Middleton, A Dougall, J Coombes.  
County Cllr Drew – arrived 20.15

Members of the Public: 8

Minutes: Mrs C L Cotterell (Parish Clerk)

The meeting started at 19.00

**Item Minute**

- 1. Chairman's Welcome and Public Participation**  
Cllr Young welcomed all to the meeting.
- 2. Apologies for Absence**  
Apologies were received from Parish Cllrs Battey and Chant.
- 3. Declarations of Interest**  
To declare an interest in any items of business on this agenda – **None**.
- 4. Borough and County Cllrs**  
To receive reports. Cllr Drew gave brief report later in the meeting (see below).
- 5. Flooding/Drains**  
To receive an update – a discussion was held about the blocked drain causing flooding. Cllrs agreed to write to Cllr Drew and Jonathan Bambridge at HCC to arrange a meeting on site. Cllr Dougall agreed to draft the letter requesting a site meeting, asking about risk assessments and informing HCC about a child falling into flooded ditch as it was not visible.
- 6. Planning**
  - a) 23/02446/FULLS & 23/02447/LBWS - Single storey rear extension – Wallgarden Cottage, Houghton Road, North Houghton – **Resolved - Objection** due to the conservation officer's concerns about the heritage assessment lacking in information – Proposed Cllr Middleton, seconded Cllr Dougall.
  - b) 23/02456/FULLS - Construct double garage ancillary to dwelling – Blue Haze, Stevens Drove, Houghton – **Resolved - Objection** on the grounds that this application will change the character of the area, concerns about possible damage to trees and the proximity to the boundary - Proposed Cllr Dougall, seconded Cllr Adams.
  - c) 23/02557/TREES - T1-T3 - Willow- Reduce canopy by up to 4m and lift canopy to no more than 3m from ground level, T4-T5 – Willow - Lift canopy to no more than 3m from ground level, T6 - Alder - Fell, T7- Willow-reduce canopy by up to 5m – Freemantle Farm House, Houghton – **Resolved – Support**, voted 4 for and 1 against, proposal carried – Proposed Cllr Dougall, seconded Cllr Young.
  - d) 23/02562/TREES - T1 - Ash - Fell, T2 and T3 - Alders - Fell, T4 - Spanish Chestnut - Fell, T5 - Field Maple - Fell, T6 - Acacia - Fell, T7 - Oak – Fell – Test Lodge, Horsebridge Road, Houghton – **Resolved - Support** with the comment that Council would like to see replacement trees planted – Proposed Cllr Young, seconded Cllr Adams.
- 7. Minutes**  
To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on:
  - a) 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 – Full Council Meeting – **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Adams, seconded Cllr Coombes.
  - b) 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023 – Extraordinary Meeting – **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Adams, seconded Cllr Coombes.

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**8. Updates**

To receive any updates – Cllr Young has received a quotation for remedial work on the trees in recreation ground but the work has yet to be carried out.

**9. Finances**

- a) To propose acceptance of the financial statement for the period 1<sup>st</sup> September – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 – **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Coombes, seconded Cllr Middleton.
- b) To consider a grant payment for village hall refurbishment from CIL funds £2,734.00 – **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Adams, seconded Cllr Dougall. It was noted that plans for refurbishment are moving forward and it is hoped that the building work will take place in the spring/summer of 2024.
- c) To consider a grant payment for Test Valley School PTA – **Resolved** to pay £50.00 grant – Proposed Cllr Adams, seconded Cllr Dougall.
- d) To consider grass cutting quotation for 2024 - £992.00 – **Resolved** to accept the quotation for 2024 – Proposed Cllr Dougall, seconded Cllr Adams.
- e) To approve the following Schedule of Payments – **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Adams, seconded Cllr Dougall.

<u>Payee</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Payroll/HMRC (Sept/Oct)	£1170.00	Clerks/office expenses	£68.76
HCC Street lighting	£32.62	SLCC Conference (training)	£72.00
D Robins grass cutting 2023	£992.00	Steve Lees Planning advice	£150.00
CCTV cost for post & bolts	£23.04	SLCC subscription	£144.00
Grant funding TVS PTA	£50.00	Grant funding VH refurbishment	£2,734.00
CPRE subscription	£36.00		

Bank balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 - £69,205.06

**10. Play Area**

To receive an update – Cllr Coombes gave an update. After Cllrs had a meeting on the recreation ground it was felt that reutilising some existing equipment may be possible along with new equipment. The project is likely to go over the threshold for a formal tender process and also need funding from sources other than Council funding.

**11. River Pollution Working Group**

To receive an update from the working group – Cllr Middleton gave an update:

- We are in the process of contacting/meeting other Parish/Town Councils along the River Test. This is with a view to setting up a Pan-Parish Group to work towards preventing further river pollution.
- We are awaiting quotations for purchasing or renting water quality monitoring stations, this is for information purposes to bring recommendations to Council.

A discussion was held around water quality monitoring.

Cllr Dougall left the meeting at 20.03

**12. Churchyard Burial Spaces**

To discuss – it was noted that there are 8 or 9 burial spaces remaining and still space available for cremation plots – a discussion was held around a possible extension of the existing churchyard.

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**13. Next Meetings**

Budget discussion – Cllrs only – possibly 21<sup>st</sup> November – TBC.

Full Council Meeting – Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 19.00

Cllr Dougall was thanked for liaising with the lengthsman for the cleaning of the war memorial. The lengthsman will be working on hedge by village hall soon.

Cllr Drew arrived at 20.15 and provided a brief update on HCC report (report posted to PC website):

- Hants minerals and waste plan – recycling collections to be revisited
- Voice of Hampshire youth
- Meals on Wheels
- Community Pantry
- Consultation on school transport

Cllr Young thanked Cllr Drew for his work on flytipping.

**14. To pass a resolution in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for discussion regarding staffing matters – Resolved – Proposed Cllr Adams, seconded Cllr Young.**

The Clerk's salary and hours were reviewed and Cllrs **resolved** to increase the hourly rate of salary with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, no changes were made to the contracted hours – Proposed Cllr Adams, seconded Cllr Young.

**Meeting closed at 20.40**

**These minutes were approved at the meeting held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024**