

**Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on
Thursday, 9th January at 7.30 pm in Awbridge Village Hall**

Present:

Cllr Peter Allen (PA)
Cllr Gordon Piper (GP)
Cllr Tony Byrne (TB)
Cllr Christopher Wheeler (CW)
Cllr Janet Whiteley (JW)

Apologies:

Cllr Kelly Seymour (KS)
Grahame Jackson (GJ)

In attendance:

Cllr Nick Adams-King (Leader of HCC)
Tracy Sansome (Clerk)
Antony Chapman (Community link - TVBC)
& three Member of public

PROCEDURAL ITEMS

1. Welcome

Councillor Peter Allen kindly agreed to chair the meeting in absence of Cllr Grahame Jackson. He welcomed all and thanked our guests for attending.

2. Apologies

Were noted

3. Declarations of Interest

None were noted.

4. Hampshire County Council Leader Cllr Nick Adams-King - report

Cllr Adams-King covered in his report:

- Devolution vote – Cllr Adams-King explained how HCC have voted for devolution of smaller councils which means Winchester, Test Valley and New Forest and the Isle of Wight would merge. He explained that Local Govt reform is necessary and that it is probably better to vote for devolution in order to have more control on the outcome and decisions made, while central Government push through changes.
- Cllr Adams-King congratulated Fred Tucker (in attendance) for his award of BEM from the King in the New Year Honours List. The Parish Council also extended their thanks and congratulations to both Fred and his wife Lynda who work tirelessly for the village.
- Flood issues that regularly occur by Stanbridge Lane/Railway bridge – blockages and flood are due to be jet washed through in the next few days.

- HCC Highways are due to repair the area around the damaged War Memorial. Cllr Peter Allen raised the issue of potential new bollards/railings due to the incident that resulted in the badly damaged War Memorial due to a driver who left the scene. The clerk assured the council that our insurers have been informed and the Stonemason who repaired the memorial before has been contacted for a quote.
- Cllr Adams-King confirmed he will attend the Parish Assembly on 15th May and Antony Chapman was invited to speak as well about his role in the community.

5. **Public Observations/open period**

A member of the public who looks after the nature sanctuary/farmland requested some support from the parish council to maintain looking after this open space. He explained that his age and health does not allow him to maintain this important amenity in the village going forward and financial support is required as up to now – he has done this on a voluntary basis using private funds.

Cllr Adams-King and Antony Chapman responded by suggesting that there are a number of potential grants that could be applied for to support this. The PC also agreed that we may consider supporting this too. He agreed that he would come back with a plan of what is needed and what finance is requested.

A member of the public spoke to clarify that there was a police presence when the accident with the memorial happened last week. The clerk confirmed that the Police were informed the next day with all details and a crime reference number obtained. They also suggested whether the War Memorial could be set back from its current location near the pavement? It was explained that this is unlikely as it is consecrated ground, however, with the support of the church – it would be investigated whether this is viable.

The discussions around the memorial will be on the agenda next meeting.

6. **Clerk Report and Correspondence**

Noted. An email from J Alexander was shared which explained plans for extension of village hall. It was agreed that this should be an agenda item for next month.

7. **Minutes**

The minutes of the last Parish meeting on 28th November 2024 were accepted as an accurate record of business conducted. Cllr Tony Byrne proposed to agree and was seconded by Cllr Gordon Piper. Cllr Allen signed these. **RESOLVED**

8. **Matters arising**

Cllr Janet Whiteley asked the PC if we have officially responded to a planning application that was sent out in November. It was agreed that we had no objections at the time, however, the clerk will in future officially respond no objection even if there are no comments. This will ensure transparency and an adequate paper trail recording decisions. **RESOLVED**

BUSINESS ITEMS

9. **Planning**

None to consider

10. Financial and Administrative

10.1 The invoices for payment were agreed by all. Proposed by Cllr Tony Byrne and seconded by Cllr Gordon Piper.

10.2 The financial statement was received and agreed. The bank reconciliation statements were attached and signed by Cllr Tony Byrne.

Proposed by Cllr Peter Allen, seconded by Cllr Christopher Wheeler.

10.3 Draft Budget (2025-2026) was discussed and agreed. Proposed by Cllr Tony Byrne and seconded by Cllr Gordon Piper.

10.4 The council agreed to keep the precept the same although our expenditure has increased. This is due to reserves that the PC can draw on this year.

10.5 Clerk salary was raised in line with recommended payscales produced by NALC.

10.6 The Chairman's allowance of £600 was agreed.

RESOLVED

11. Lengthsman Tasks

It was agreed to move this item to February's meeting.

12. GOVERNANCE

12.1 Financial Regulations were updated by the clerk and agreed. Proposed by Cllr Gordon Piper and seconded by Cllr Peter Allen. Clerk to update website.

- 13. Antony Chapman (AC) from TVBC** spoke to explain how his role as community ward officer may help local parishes apply and obtain grants/support for projects. He explained that he is there as a resource to help in any way particularly with issues such as rights of way. If the PC sends him our agenda each month – any issues he feels he can support with can be acted on. Clerk agreed to include him on this.

There was a discussion that a grant may be available for the PC to consider having a 'virtual footpath' along Saunders Lane. Clerk to liaise with AC.

- 14. Defib.** Cllr Christopher Wheeler reported costs for the installation of the two new defib boxes (yet to be ordered). The high costs of the quotes need further discussion before the PC agree to go ahead. The quotes obtained are, however, from the preferred supplier for the primary school where one of these will be installed. The council voted by majority in favour of pressing ahead with this important amenity. A minority vote against was recorded.

- 15. Village Bus** Planned routes was shared. Clerk to provide a copy of this for the FB page.

- 16. Speedsign** – it was agreed to explore the options of new speed signs next meeting due to time constraints.

- 17.** Dates agreed for Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and Parish Council Assembly – 15th May 2025 - Time was agreed for 7pm start.

Meeting closed at 9.35pm

Tracy Sansome Clerkawbridge@gmail.com

Chairman signature

Date

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

INCOME		
	Total £	0.00
INVOICES TO PAY		
Simon Nightingale	Management of VAS0375	102.66
Simon Nightingale	Management of VAS0385	102.66
HALC	Training T Sansome	24.00
	Total £	229.32
OTHER PAYMENTS		
Tracy Sansome	Salary January	599.43
HMRC	PAYE January	149.80
Tracy Sansome	Reimbursements & Home Allowance	150.14
	Total £	899.37
ALLOTTED PROJECTS		
CIL Funds		81,872.00
General Reserve		12,000.00
	Total £	93,872.00
Account Balances		
UNITY TRUST BANK	Current Account	11,872.87
	Reserve Account	110999.22
	Total £	122,872.09
ACTUAL FUNDS Available		
	Less payments	1,128.69
	Less Allotted funds	93,872.00
	£	27,871.40

