


HALSE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 31st JANUARY 2024 at 7:30 pm AT HALSE VILLAGE HALL

Present: Mr I Walker – Chair
Mrs S Haselock
Mr D Huxtable
Mrs K Robinson Burge

In attendance: Mr T Payne, Clerk to the Council
One member of the public

	Public Questions - None
1.	Apologies for Absence - None
2.	Declarations of Interest - None
3.	Minutes of the meeting held on 4th October 2023 It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting be approved
4.	Actions from Previous Meetings - None.
5.	Roads and footpaths 5.1 Highways Monthly Report No new matters reported other than the Blakes Lane beyond Buddle Oak: hedgerow very thick making it almost impassable by vehicle. 5.2 Footpaths Monthly Report An electric fence on the footpath to Preston Bowyer was reported.
6.	Planning Clerk reported that the solar farm at Preston Farm had been approved as well as the access works on the land, west of Mount House. It was noted that the letter advising of the decision sent by Somerset Council to the applicant referred to plans for a completely different application. It was agreed that Cllr S Haselock write to SC expressing the Parish Council’s concern as to this happening, as well as noting that there was no decision document on the website setting out the Planning Officer’s reasons for reaching his/her decision.
7.	Finance 7.1 Schedule of Payments The following payments were noted as having been paid since the last meeting: T Payne – Clerk Fee re Oct/Nov/Dec £505.55 HMRC – Salary deductions £31.20 Halse PCC Churchyard grant (two years) £1,360.00 The following payments were agreed to be paid: Halse Village Hall – hire charge £40.00. T Payne – Clerk Fee re Jan/Feb £299.70 South West Ambulance Service – Annual defibrillator fee £840.00 12 Cloud Payroll – software fee £6.00 A Walker Reimbursement re Village Christmas tree £25.00 (s137 Expenditure)

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	<p>7.2 2024/25 Precept Discussion took place on the required level of the precept for 2024/25. Whilst administrative expenditure was expected to be similar to the current year, there was uncertainty as to the need for the Parish Council to take on the costs of some services that may not be provided by Somerset Council due to its financial constraints and the level of savings to be found in order to allow it to balance its budget and avoid it having to issue a s114 Notice. Despite there being little information about what expenditure Parish Council's may choose to incur, the Council agreed that it should make significant provision in order to be able to fill some service gaps and so resolved to set the precept for 2024/25 at £8,200.</p>
8.	<p>Unitary Authority Update The LCN meeting on 12 October was attended by Chair. There had been issues with a different agenda being produced to that previously circulated but there was a briefing by Highways.</p>
9.	<p>Grants 9.1 Grant Form Clerk had prepared a grant application form to be completed by bodies seeking grants from the PC. It was agreed to consider adoption at a future meeting. 9.2 Grants to be made. It was agreed no grants to be made at the present time</p>
10.	<p>Risk Assessment Clerk had prepared an updated Risk Assessment. It was agreed to consider approval at a future meeting</p>
11.	<p>Co-option to fill vacancy on Parish Council Further to the resignation of Cllr J Stevens, it was resolved to review the timetable for seeking a replacement by co-option at a future meeting</p>
12	<p>Clerk's Report Clerk had prepared handover notes to the replacement Clerk on issues for the Council to consider going forward. A meeting with the new Clerk to go through the summary in due course</p>
13	<p>Appointment of Replacement Clerk It was resolved that Mrs C Windeatt be appointed as Clerk with the contract to commence on 1 March 2024 on terms to be confirmed with the Chair</p>
14.	<p>Matters of Report 14.1 Village Hall Report It was reported that works had taken place re tree pruning, gutter cleaning as well as dealing with pest infestation that had caused electrical damage. Grants Applications had been made for the installation of solar panels. 14.2 Police Report No report received. 14.3 Other None</p>
15	<p>Items for Next Meeting None</p>
16	<p>Date of Next Meeting The next Ordinary meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 10th April 2024 with the Annual Meeting scheduled for Wednesday 1st May.</p>

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