

HIGHCLERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held at

Highclere Village Hall

Tuesday 13 January 2015 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors Sally Izett (Chairman), Mike Jenkins, Don Langan, Horace Mitchell, John Stoker, Hampshire County Councillor Tom Thacker, Jane Meredith (Newbury Weekly News).

Apologies: Councillor Graham Falconer, Councillor Russ Castle, Councillor Will Flack, Borough Councillor John Izett

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

73/14 – To approve the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 9 December 2014

The minutes had been circulated, were taken as read and were signed by the Chairman, Councillor Izett.

74/14 – Matters arising from the Minutes

68/14 – Councillor Mitchell announced that the Local Plan Assessment Meeting is unlikely to be held before July 2015 and so he will probably be able to attend.

14/01354/FUL. Curridge Car Sales, Andover Road, Appeal Decision. An amended plan has been submitted. The previous application had been turned down by BDBC Planning Officers due to overdevelopment of the site, an access issue and because the site had previously been a Petrol Station.

75/14 – To approve the Budget Precept for year 2015/2016

The current Parish Clerk, Mike Harwood, explained the reasons for the figures presented. The Actual data was available for 9 months.

Staff

There is an increase in the Staff costs due to a new Clerk being appointed and a two month handover period (two Clerks being paid for two months). There is a decrease in Clerk's salary for next year as the new Clerk will be on a lower pay grade. There will be a slight increase in expenses as the new Clerk will be travelling to training courses.

Litter wardens – these are paid by BDBC and they have agreed to pay for the same number of hours of litter picking in 2015-16. The fuel allowance, that is shown separately, is paid from HPC precept.

Administration and Office

A small decrease in the total for stationery, books and publications is planned based on current expenditure. However, the new Clerk will need to purchase some new stationery and books.

Phones and Internet - the same budget as the current year.

Legal Powers

Cemetery – this covers HPC contribution to the costs (not the full cost) of maintaining the Cemetery Chapel and the grounds i.e. grass cutting.

Regeneration – (Heathlands and Woodlands Improvement Project) there is an increase in budget as this expected to move forward in 2015/16. There is also money in the Bank Account held over from last year to help with costs.

Traffic calming/Speedwatch – next year HPC will need to pay 50% of the cost of the Speedwatch mobile cameras. East Woodhay has obtained a grant to cover their funding but as HPC were not the main purchaser they could not obtain a grant. Councillor Stoker asked if there should be money set aside to cover Speedwatch training but Councillor Mitchell advised that this would not be necessary as there was money in the Bank Account held over from last year.

General

The Chairman's Allowance – there had been a marginal overspend.

Councillors' Travel – this covers travel expense for Councillors on official business.

Hire of the Halls – covers hiring of the meeting room at Highclere Village Hall.

Insurance – the Clerk was able to reduce the Premium this year but as all insurance premiums are expected to rise an increase has been budgeted.

Subscriptions – SLCC and NALC

Training – courses for the new Clerk (and any Courses that Councillors would like to attend)

Website – this has been increased to cover extra costs

Audit – this covers both the Internal and the External Audit – overall there is a slight decrease in budget based on this year's actual cost.

Repairs – this year (2015-2015) this covered the cost of the materials to mend the Highclere noticeboard. A parishioner kindly offered to undertake repairs without charging HPC.

Notes: the Litter Wardens are funded by BDBC; HPC receives a Support Grant of £1100 as a rural Parish far from Basingstoke leisure facilities; the BDBC Council allocates a fund of £523 known as the Council Tax Base.

Bank Account – there is a balance in the Business Premium Account. This contains previous allocations for Regeneration, traffic calming, street lighting and S106 money. £7700 will be withdrawn to fund the Little Penwood project. Parish Clerk, Mike Harwood advised that the S106 money should be spent soon. Councillor Stoker suggested that Frank Wright is asked for his costs and Councillor Mitchell suggested that the S106 fund is discussed at the next meeting.

Councillor Mitchell proposed adopting the draft budget and Councillor Stoker seconded the Proposal. Extraordinary expense will be funded out of Reserves. The Precept request must be returned to BDBC by 31 January 2015.

76/14 County Councillor's Report.

County Councillor Tom Thacker reported that the contract for Phase Two Broadband had been awarded. Glen Pearcey at HCC has been very helpful. Councillor Mitchell congratulated HCC on the

progress. The second phase of the scheme will ensure that 95% of Hampshire has Superfast Broadband.

Bus Services – there has been an amalgamation of bus routes into Route 27. The timetable has not yet been published. Councillor Thacker asked that he be informed of any specific problems regarding the new bus service as he is supporting rural bus services, they are expensive but they are needed. He will liaise with Councillor Keith Chapman MBE who has responsibility for Community Affairs. Neighbourhood Care is a voluntary service where volunteers take residents to hospital, for example. There has been a 50% cut in funding since the last election. There has also been a change in library services including the opening times.

77/14 Heathlands and Woodlands Improvement Project

Due to illness over the Christmas period Councillor Mitchell was not able to make further progress. A majority of residents have approved the proposed change of name from “Council Houses”, Penwood to “Field View” Penwood. Shirley Brewer at BDBC has been sent a letter informing the Council. The idea to change the name came from Resident representatives on the Improvement Project Team.

78/14 Report on the Environment

Councillor Jenkins stated that, before Christmas, the Lengthsman had mended the style on Mount Road and straightened the leaning speed sign posts. Derek Cane has not re-sent the spreadsheet which shows current budget status but Councillor Jenkins believes that there is approximately £400 remaining. He suggested clearing the verges in Mount Road to remove the rubbish where the hedges have been cut back. Chevrons on Treasure Hill were mentioned but it is believed HCC and Steve Goodall have this in hand. The Clerk to check this point with Councillor Castle. Councillor Izett asked if the fallen trees, due to recent bad weather, could be managed by the Lengthsman but it was felt that this was a job for a tree surgeon. The flooding on Treasure Hill was raised by Councillor Langan and Councillor Izett said that it was a priority area for the salt gritter. Councillor Jenkins raised the flooding on Tubbs Lane. Councillor Mitchell asked about clearance of foliage around the Pedestrian Refuge at Penwood Crossroads. Councillor Thacker to speak to Andrew Kettlewell about these areas. Councillor Stoker asked about progress on the Salt Bin on Ashmansworth Hill. This needs to be progressed with Steve Goodall who is aware of the request. Councillor Mitchell asked why the Sandford development in West Berkshire has prioritised work at the south bound Wash Water junction of the A34/343 and not the north bound junction.

Councillor Jenkins stated that the annual review of the Emergency Plan had been undertaken.

Councillor Thacker asked for feedback on the Lengthsman scheme. Everyone agreed that it appeared to be of benefit and that it needed to run for at least one more year before it could be assessed.

79/14 Report on Roads and Transport

Speedwatch. No progress appeared to have been made on Speedwatch. There has been a reply from Brad Norton over coordination of the project. An update is awaited from PC Abby Carpenter. Volunteers came forward as a result of posters on the Parish noticeboards and an advertisement in the Parish magazine. Councillor Mitchell is a volunteer for East Woodhay ward as well as Highclere, and he will keep the Council informed of progress.

Councillor Stoker provided maps to Councillor Langan.

Councillor Stoker asked that the road from Zell House to the Yew Tree Public House be inspected again as there is constant running water and no drainage. He had been informed that it would not receive investigation until 2016/17.

80/14 Report on Planning

Draft Guidelines on the Parish Council's Protocol for Planning have been produced by Councillor Mitchell. Councillor Langan asked that the 4 minute time allowance to speak at planning meetings at BDBC be included. Councillor Mitchell to revise the notes and add to HPC website. With no settlement boundary policy, there are relatively few applications for new dwellings.

14/03685/FUL The meeting supported and confirmed the Planning Committee's objection to the proposal for a new dwelling in the grounds of "Hadley" the reasons are appended to these minutes.

There is a revised Curridge Car Sales application.

81/14 Farewell to the Parish Clerk

Councillor Izett, Chairman of HPC thanked Mike Harwood for the last 9 years of service and expressed the Council's gratitude for all of his hard work. Mike Harwood, retiring Parish Clerk was delighted with all the kind words and the Councillors' gift of a watch. He has enjoyed the position and being part of a hard working team. Jane Meredith took a photograph of the Clerk, the new Clerk Sue Edwards and the Chairman, Councillor Izett presenting the leaving gift.

82/14 Correspondence Received

Nothing to report.

83/14 Financial Matters

The address of the Clerk needs to be changed with Barclays Bank. Councillor Jenkins needs to be added as a signatory. This was Proposed by Councillor Izett and seconded by Councillor Mitchell.

Accounts for payment

Society of Local Council Clerks (Subscription)	£131.00
Councillor Sally Izett (Chairman's Allowance)	£119.97
M. Harwood (Clerk's Salary)	£659.20
S. Edwards (Clerk's Salary)	£534.92
C. Corral (Litter Warden)	£131.60
D. McClelland (Litter Warden)	£267.00
HMRC (Tax & NI)	£340.00

84/14 Councillor's matters to be included in the Agenda for the next Council Meeting

Little Penwood update. Section 106 suggestions. HPC Planning Protocol.

85/14 Date of the next Council Meeting - Tuesday 10 February 2015 7pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.50pm.