

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH MEETING OF HOPTON CUM KNETTISHALL PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 17TH MAY 2021 AT 7PM HIGH STREET CHAPEL HOPTON, DRAFT UNTIL
APPROVED AT JUNE MEETING

PRESENT: Councillors: L. Macklin (Chair), A Hanks, J. Taylor, D. Faiers, R. Salter (Clerk), Cllr J.Spicer (part)

Invited visitor – Su Delve

2 members of public.

		ACTION
1.	It was proposed by Cllr Faiers and seconded by Cllr Taylor that Cllr Macklin be Chair. This was unanimously agreed.	
2.	It was proposed by Cllr Macklin and seconded by Cllr Taylor that Cllr Hanks be Vice Chair. This was unanimously agreed.	
3.	Apologies: Cllrs M Filler, B Shotbolt, R Capon & C Bull	
4.	Declarations of interest: None	
5.	The draft minutes of the last meetings (12 th & 28 th April) had been pre-circulated; were taken as read and approved.	
6.	Previous actions were reviewed and are completed or covered on the agenda. Cllr Macklin confirmed she had been in contact with Anglian Water about the flooding and pump station issues. She had also reported the pavement issues along Nethergate Street.	
7.	The RFO was re-appointed through to the end of May after which time the Chair will take on this role till a new Clerk/RFO is recruited.	
8.	<p>Update from Hopton School -At the point of writing there has been no updated guidance from the Government in regards to the operational aspects of running the school but it is anticipated that this will be in place by 17th May 2021. We are hopeful that some restrictions may be relaxed. Functioning in bubbles with staggered communal times is taking its toll and we long to be able to function as a united school again.</p> <p>We are aware that residential trips may go ahead after the 17th May but there are none planned in school.</p> <p>Until the new guidance is released there is some apprehension as to how best transition children in and out of the school, but we believe this may be clearer in time.</p> <p>You may be aware that the Government has asked High School's to provide 'Summer School' particularly focusing on the soon to be Yr7 children. This can either be one full week or two weeks on a part time basis. We are awaiting further communications from High School's to see if neighbouring schools are looking to arrange such provision.</p> <p>The new EYFS area was successfully installed over the Easter holiday and the children and adults are thoroughly enjoying the new setting. We also had a reflection area added to the back of the school as well as our 'magic path' re-laid around the outside of our field.</p>	

	<p>Over the Summer term we hope to continue with our library renovation and by Autumn 2021, we should have a very welcoming environment with a completed book audit, new books, fresh comfortable seating and a kindle station.</p> <p>As the Government lead us out of lockdown through their roadmap we are endeavouring to offer more opportunities for the children. Classes have outings booked in the Summer term and we have external visitors coming to provide sessions for the children. These include a British Values Day and Circus skills day.</p> <p>You may remember that I noted the Willow tree at the front of the school had unfortunately died last year. The new sculpture should be ready just after half term. We are very excited about this!</p> <p>Update from Su Delve – she is out in the village 3-4 times a week in her Police Volunteer role. No specific updates but the public do engage with her.</p>	
9.	<p>Hopton South Development – Members of the Parish Council and Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) met with Burgess Homes and Pigeon via video conference on 13 May. Matters have moved forward at pace and Burgess Homes have reached the point where they are satisfied that due diligence has been completed so much so that they now wish to purchase the site in one month from now. To achieve that a number of planning conditions still have to be signed off, one of which relates to the contractual arrangements to construct the path from the development to the village hall across the recreation field. The path will follow the tree line on the Shortgrove Lane side of the recreation field to the existing car park and the legal documents to allow Burgess Homes to conduct the work will be forwarded to the VHMC solicitors for consideration prior to signing by the committee and Parish Council. Burgess Homes agreed to meet all reasonable legal costs. On completion of the purchase, Burgess Homes would hope to begin work on the site in the early part of next year. Simon Burgess also agreed to look into the issue of the capacity of the Anglian Water pumping station at the end of Nethergate Street.</p>	
10.	<p>Councillor Joanna Spicer advised that she had to attend the Honington PC meeting but should have longer at the next Hopton PC meeting. She would send on her Annual Report (please see below). She advised that she was waiting to hear more about the changes at Knettishall and had contributed towards the cost of quietening the cattle grids and making them safer.</p> <p>The Healing Wood project is awaiting a decision on funding from SCC. A brilliant effort is being made by Andrea and the volunteers.</p> <p>It was mentioned that the Police mobile speed unit had been seen in the village last week on Common Road/High Street. Cllr Macklin confirmed she had an ongoing action regarding the speed devices.</p> <p><u>Report for Hopton cum Knettishall Annual Parish Meeting from County May 2021</u></p> <p>Firstly I would like to thank the Chairman, Members and Clerk of Hopton cum Knettishall Parish Council for their help, support and advice to me over the last year. I am pleased to have recently been re-elected as the Blackbourn County Councillor and will continue for the next 4 years to work with you and your residents to ensure fair and needed provision of local services. I send my best wishes to your clerk Rowena on her departure from Suffolk.</p> <p>The last year has clearly not only been challenging for individuals (especially those with health or social difficulties) but also for organisations and</p>	

businesses. Warm congratulations to our local schools, shops, doctors, pubs and small businesses for keeping up service provision despite the circumstances. Many villages, like yours, provided extra community support. The successful vaccination programme looks set to help us all on the way to normality – but we should continue to follow government rules and guidance

A brief report about Suffolk County Council

- Following the recent elections we are determined to play a leading role helping Suffolk recover and build a stronger and fairer local economy
- Over the last 4 years we have spent over £1 billion caring for vulnerable residents – adults and children
- We declared a “climate emergency” and aim to be carbon neutral by 2030. The new household waste site outside Bury St Edmunds is considered a welcome success
- Over the last 4 years we have re-surfaced 1,000 miles of road and we are now pledging to spend an extra £10m on improving pavements and footpaths and £10m on flood prevention
- Despite spending 75% of our £600 million budget on caring for vulnerable residents we have managed to retain sound financial outcomes and careful use of reserves
- We are planning to plant around 200,000 trees in the next couple of years – to support biodiversity and join the “Queen’s Green Canopy”

About local services

- Kept the roads open through unprecedented bad weather but this has meant an increase in flooding – especially around Nethergate Street
- Footpath repairs and ditch clearance has happened but more needs to be done
- My Local Highways Budget has funded entrance signs to the village from Fen Street and Knettishall as well as a traffic survey in Nethergate Street
- I have much appreciated being involved in the Hopton Healing Wood Project and I hope this will now benefit from SCC funding.
- Library at Ixworth has remained open and managed by IPS. There is to be a change in opening hours to reflect demand

The year ahead – big issues for me in Hopton cum Knettishall

- Responding to West Suffolk Council’s new draft strategic plan and any other housing implications for Hopton
- Supporting the Parish Council and Village Hall Committee if the new development proceeds this year
- Working to improve footpaths working with SCC countryside access teams
- Liaison with Suffolk Preservation Society about parking changes at the Country Park and road safety
- Supporting schools in Hopton and in the surrounding villages to ensure their continuing success

- Highways safety and speed management issues especially on the B1111 and safety outside the school
- Pressing for work to prevent highway flooding

REPORT FROM DISTRICT CLLR BULL TO HOPTON PARISH COUNCIL FOR YEAR APRIL 20 TO MARCH 21

This has been a roller coaster of a year fraught with difficulties, much worry and sadness for many and yet with some small triumphs, not least of which has been the way communities have risen to the challenges covid and self-isolation have brought, rallying around to support their friends and neighbours.

I could spend the whole of this report in talking about covid but I am sure you are all fully aware of its impacts at all levels, many of you with very personal experiences. I will however highlight a few things that West Suffolk Council has done to support its residents:

Setting up the Home Alone telephone help line;

Processing and paying millions of pounds of Government Grants to local businesses and other organisations including village halls;

Increasing the amount of Locality Funding available for each ward;

Maintaining its bin collection services, with just a short pause in brown bin collections, despite significant staffing problems;

Ensuring that all other services have continued to operate effectively by redeploying staff within the organisation with the majority of officers working from home

Developing our IT systems to allow us to run our council and committee meetings virtually and still ensure the public can attend where necessary;

Ensuring that customer services have been accessible throughout with offices being closed.

In addition to dealing with all the extra work that has been necessitated by the need to respond to the many and varied covid challenges normal work has still had to continue and whilst one or two smaller projects were put on hold and we were not able to hold the usual Christmas Fair in Bury St Edmunds, we are still moving forward, despite difficulties with getting builders on site, with some of our major projects which you may have read of in the press:

The Mildenhall hub is nearing completion and will be opening in phases shortly.

The Western Way Hub development is one stage further in its journey with the Planning application having been submitted at the end of last year.

The Old Post office development in the Cornhill is also progressing well with major work going on to preserve the façade.

	<p>Another major piece of work we are engaged on is of course the Local Plan. Because of covid restrictions the consultation process at the end of last year had to be held online. There was a great deal of concern that an online survey might not attract the same level of involvement as the more traditional ones we had carried out in the past. However, in the end there were approximately 3,300 responses which is well in excess of any previous surveys. These responses are being collated and will inform the Preferred Options document which will be ready for further consultation later in the year.</p> <p>Whilst the County, PCC and some by-elections fall in the 2021/22 year work in preparation for these has taken up a great deal of time in 2020/21. Always a big logistics exercise this time it has been particularly problematical with doubts about whether they would be held at all or be postpone. There has also been the need to carry out risk assessments of all polling stations to ensure their use was covid safe for staff and voters as well the practical problems of recruiting and training these staff.</p> <p>At Parish level it has also been a busy year with the added burden of having to get to grips with virtual meetings. Whilst many of us can see the advantage of these on cold dark winter nights it will be good to meet up in person again!</p> <p>I have been pleased to assist with Locality Budget funding this year for the Friendship Bench, Trail cameras for Suffolk Wildlife Trust and the replacement of an outside “patio” are at Hopton Bowls Club and will shortly be “open for business” for applications for 2021/22.</p> <p>We have had our flooding problems to contend with and a few planning issues but there is much to look forward to. Work has started on the Healing Wood and Crookes Corner and things finally seem to be moving with the Pigeon development but I will not hold my breath quite yet!</p> <p>This is really just a flavour of all that is going on and I am happy to answer any questions. However, before I finish I would just like to thank the Parish Council for all their hard work and the effort they put in to supporting their residents and helping to make Hopton a great village to live in.</p> <p>No items were raised in the public forum but a member of the public thanks the Clerk for all her efforts for the public.</p>	
11a.	<p>a The Annual Return (AGAR) pages 3,5 & 6 for year ended 31st March 2021 were completed.</p> <p>The RFO went through the questions and qualifying criteria at Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement.</p> <p>These were answered as follows for each question: 1. Yes, 2. Yes, 3. Yes, 4. Yes, 5. Yes, 6. Yes, 7. Yes, 8.yes, 9. n/a unanimously agreed.</p> <p>These were signed by Chair and RFO. The Section 2 Accounting Statements were unanimously agreed and were signed by Chair and RFO.</p> <p>As both gross income and gross expenditure were below the threshold of 25,000 and all other conditions of the Certificate of Exemption had been met;</p>	

	<p>it was resolved that the Council qualifies to certify itself exempt from external audit. This was unanimously agreed.</p> <p>The completed AGAR will be submitted.</p> <p>The Internal Audit had been carried out and nothing was raised.</p>													
11b.	The variances and bank reconciliation were agreed and will be published on the website.													
11c.	The dates for the exercise of public rights were agreed and will be published on the website.													
12.	<p>Crooke's Corner update – Su is hoping to source the slabs in the next few days. The Crooke's have kindly cut the grass but this responsibility will now fall to the Parish Council. No planting will take place until the Autumn.</p> <p>Healing Woodland – one volunteer day has taken place and a path has been established through the area. There was a lot of rubbles and the bags are still there for now. It maybe possible to use some American Servicemen based at Lackenheath to help develop a path and other tasks as they are looking for volunteer work.</p> <p>The National Trust may assist with funding if planting trees with blossom. 2 trees have been donated in memory of villagers. Trees can be donated but no plaques will be displayed.</p>													
13.	<p>Recruitment of new Clerk/RFO. Cllr Macklin will contact local Clerks & SALC regarding the job vacancy.</p> <p>Luke Delve will cover the website for an interim period.</p> <p>Cllr Filler had agreed to cover the cemetery and Cllr Macklin will monitor emails and finance.</p>	LM												
14a.	<p>Clerks Report.</p> <p>i Bank Balances at 14th April 2021: Community Current Account: £9612.41 Business Premium Account (savings): £45566.76 <u>2021/22</u> £1907.94 Expenditure is 22% of expected Expenditure budget (£8675) Income – waiting on next bank statement to confirm receipt of Precept</p> <p>Payment Schedule for May had been pre-circulated and agreed by email. This included the following payments –</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="336 1424 1299 1682"> <tr> <td>Expenditure</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>SALC Subscription</td> <td>338.58</td> </tr> <tr> <td>R Waugh May Salary</td> <td>133.65</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B Shotbolt SALC Councillor Training</td> <td>150</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vertas April to June</td> <td>475.74</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Eon</td> <td>50.83</td> </tr> </table> <p>ii Councillor Responsibilities These were agreed with no changes to existing roles.</p>	Expenditure		SALC Subscription	338.58	R Waugh May Salary	133.65	B Shotbolt SALC Councillor Training	150	Vertas April to June	475.74	Eon	50.83	
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14b.	Chairs Report. The Chair had had some correspondence with a resident in Wattisfield in regard to a query about the cemetery but this had been dealt with.													
14c.	Councillors Reports. No update													
15.	<p>Date of next Parish Council Meeting Monday 14th June 2021.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 20.00</p>													