

HOPTON-CUM-KNETTISHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Monday 13th December 2021 at 7pm at Hopton Village Hall

These minutes will be submitted for approval & signing by the Chair at the next meeting of the Parish Council on Monday 17th January 2022. If any changes are made to the minutes at that meeting, a correction will be notified on the website.

Present: Cllrs L. Macklin (Chair), A. Hanks, R. Capon, S. Delve, D. Faiers & Cllr J Spicer (SCC)

Three members of the public were also present.

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr B Shotbolt and Cllr C Bull (WSDC) and it was noted that Cllr John Taylor had moved away and would be formally submitting his resignation, upon which there would be a second vacancy.

2 Members' declarations of interests

There were no declarations.

3. To approve as accurate the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 8th November 2021

The minutes were agreed and then signed by the Chair.

4 To review any action points highlighted in the minutes of Monday 8th November 2021

The Chair reported she was liaising with Burgess Homes as they prepared to start construction. The suggested name of the development was raised and the Chair would discuss this with interested parties and report back to the next meeting.

She also reported that as a survey of the Village Hall roof had been carried out some years ago, she had not taken photos for the surveyors she had recently been in communication with. The matter was further discussed, later in the meeting.

5. Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda and other matters that may be of mutual interest or local concern

Traffic issues, including the flashing light by the school which was not operating, and the Thelnetham Road application were raised, and these were further discussed during the meeting.

6 a) Report from County and/or District Councillor

Cllr Spicer (SCC) reported on the issue of the Olive's Throat ditch and culvert clearing. The Chair reported that Burgess Homes had offered to rod the culvert and they had said that they planned to do so within the next few days. It was noted that the footpath upgrade was a term of the planning approval.

Cllr Spicer thanked the Parish Council for hosting the visit in November of the local Member of Parliament, Matt Hancock, to see the Healing Wood project.

Cllr Spicer said that speeding had again been raised with her and she felt it was important that the Parish Council progressed the issue of the Vehicle Activated Speed Sign (VAS) which was currently not being used as it was chained to the pole in the High Street but the key holder had not been identified. It was agreed that this needed to be done as soon as possible, both because this is an asset belonging to the parish and because in order to make representations to the County Council, data needed to be gathered. The idea of reviving the Speed Watch was also raised with it being noted that at least four volunteers would be needed to operate it. Cllr Delve said she would ask PC Lee if he could give advice on who to contact in the police regarding community traffic issues.

Cllr Bull (WSDC) was unable to attend but reported that the Highways Authority had recently submitted their response to the Thelnetham Road application "Notice is hereby given that the County Council as Highways Authority recommends that permission be refused because it has not been evidenced that construction and future residential traffic will be able to access the site safely". The full response can be read online. The planning application was still under consideration by the District Council.

b) Report from Hopton School

The Head had sent a report that the children were looking forward to being taken to the pantomime at the end of term.

7 Reports from

a. The Chair including any correspondence

Cllr Taylor was thanked in his absence for his contribution to the work of the Council.

Further discussion of planting for the Queen's Green Canopy would be needed as the idea previously raised did not look possible.

b. Councillors

Cllr Delve raised the closing of Fen Street by Anglia Water without notice. It was thought that this was due to emergency repair to a burst pipe.

Cllr Delve reported that there were boards on the Fen Street to Greyhound Lane boardwalk which were deteriorating and would need attention soon.

Cllr Delve also reported that PC Lee was back from COP22 and was now on leave. A village walk was planned for January.

Cllr Hanks reported that 8+ families had attended the family planting day on Saturday 11th December and that further planting was planned for Friday 17th December by children from the school and also in memory of Barbara Boyes. The fencing materials were expected to be delivered within the next few days. The disposal of the asbestos found on the site was a concern and the Parish Council might need to pay for this.

8. Planning

No applications had been notified by West Suffolk District Council.

9. Finances

- a) Council to approve the payments schedule

The payments schedule was agreed.

- b) Council to consider the draft budget for 2022 - 2023

Prior to the meeting, the draft budget had been circulated by the Clerk to Councillors for their consideration and would be brought back to the Council at the January meeting so that it and the precept application could be approved prior to the 25th January deadline.

The Clerk noted that at the end of the year, the PC would need to make a statement regarding its 'high reserves'. It was noted that the reserves were high as the result of a bequest to the Village and consideration could be needed in the medium term to a further graveyard.

Arising from looking at the draft budget, there was some discussion as to how the Parish Council might support the work of the Village Hall Committee, for example in seeking match funding from the National Lottery Fund to that being received from the Hopton South development. It was agreed that the Council should approach the Village Hall Management Committee to suggest that this be discussed.

The Clerk reported that he had requested a demonstration of the Scribe financial software which was designed for Town & Parish Councils. It was designed to facilitate budgeting, accurate book-keeping, bank reconciliations Vat returns, monthly payments schedules and reporting, and internal audits and AGAR returns. He would make a recommendation at the next meeting.

Cllr Hanks agreed to the role of 'Finance Support to the RFO'.

10. Items from Councillors to be added to the next agenda.

Cllr Delve asked that Sam Norris be asked to a future meeting to give an update on the work of the Knettishall Reserve.

11. Date of next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be on Monday 17th January 2022 at 7pm rather than Monday 10th January 2022

Nicholas Spring, Clerk to the Council (Telephone 07813396404 & email hoptonpc@outlook.com)