

Winterborne Houghton Parish Council

Clerk: Sam Smith. email: winterbornehoughton@dorset-aptc.gov.uk

MINUTES of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 11th March 2024

1. Attendance & Apologies: Bruce Maguire (Chair) Andrea Bardock, Tim Rastall, Claire Eyre, Henry Cole, Sam Smith (Clerk) and 7 members of the public.

Apologies: None

2. Approve the minutes from the January 2024 PC meeting: The minutes were approved and signed by Cllr Maguire.

3. Unitary Councillors report: Cllr Kerby did not attend the meeting or send a report in advance.

4. Public Participation/Open Forum: A resident suggested that the PC might like to consider replacing the noticeboards by the telephone box. It was agreed that this would be a good idea for the new council to consider. Purchasing some village parking signs was also suggested. 'Please park considerately' 'Please park to allow access for emergency vehicles' etc

5. Declarations of Interest: None

6. Planning Applications received & updates: P/FUL/2024/00459 Neales Field, DT11 0PG covert existing agricultural building to dwelling – a resident who attended the meeting raised his objections to the application. The road/access to the proposed new property is a private road, the possible increased up keep costs to other residents along the road was questioned. It is unusual in the village for a new residential property to be built on agricultural land. The rest of the existing site will stay agricultural, only the barn will be residential. The general understanding was that the new property would be the main residence for a local couple, who would like to return to live in the village. The building of a small property should be encouraged, as the village is currently made up of predominantly large, detached buildings, which limits the affordability/appeal to smaller families. Another resident raised the issue of the inconsistency of planning policy & decisions made by DCs Planning Officers. A row of houses within the village have recently purchased some agricultural land at the rear of their gardens. An application was submitted recently to change the use to garden, but this was refused. Would the approval of this application to convert a barn open up the idea to other developers to put in similar applications? After discussion, the majority of Cllrs agreed that they did not object to the application, but one Cllr did object to the application. The Clerk will submit the PCs comments to DC Planning. Residents in attendance were instructed to submit their own comments directly to DC Planning. **Whealrose** – the summerhouse is still in place. We are waiting for further action from DC Planning Enforcement.

7. Clerks financial Report: The following payments were agreed and authorized –

S Smith £175.82	clerks wages & expenses (Feb 2024)
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R Smith £28	grass cutting (Feb 2024) SO
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Pam Ham Hall £10	room hire (Jan 2024)

CiLCA £12.50	clerks training
H Cole £163.89	replacement defibrillator battery
HMRC 80p	clerks PAYE

The balance in the PC account is currently **£5,763.27**
We will finish at the end of year (March 2024) within our 2023/24 budget.

8. Matters arising –

8.1 2024 Elections: Dorset Council elections are on 2nd May 2024 this will include elections for some Parish Councils. To form a council W Houghton needs to have a minimum of 3 Cllrs and a maximum of 5. Due to resignations from Cllrs Maguire, Bardock & Cole we only have 2 Cllrs standing in May. Without 1 other person a functioning PC is not possible. Cllr Eyre & Rastall will produce a flyer to circulate to residents to promote the vacancy.

8.2 The Orchard: On Saturday 3rd February a working party met at the orchard to tidy up the area. Rose oversaw the pruning of the fruit trees. The green waste still needs to be removed. It was thought that a bonfire could be organised for when the weather improves.

8.3 The Pond: The pond electric supply (SSE) contract expired on the 31st of January 2024. The clerk has re-negotiated another contract from 1st February 2024 for 12 months. Cllr Rastall will check that the pond pump timer is still on the correct time after the clocks go forward at the end of the month. It was suggested that future maintenance of the pond itself should take place in Autumn.

9. Other issues raised by Councillors or the Clerk: The battery on the village defibrillator has been replaced, the pads will be ok until November 2024. The Church upgrade will be starting this year. DC Highways cannot repair the potholes in the village until the springs subside. Residents are encouraged to report all road issues online to Dorset Council. Debris coming down the hill is collecting at the bottom of the Hollow. The general road condition and verges in Houghton was raised. Dorset Council has recently launched a new scheme - purchasing long term empty properties and converting them into liveable accommodation, either for sale or rent.

10. Items for the next agenda: AGM & APM meetings after elections.

End of meeting 8.10pm. Date of the next meeting **13th May 2024. Houghton Church rooms.**

Signed.....

Date.....