

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Hargrave Parish Council
Held on Monday 4th January 2021 on Zoom

Members present:
Cllr J Gunthorpe in the Chair

Councillors
J Brotherton M Clarke C Jones N How H West
Clerk- Ms J Hodgson
ENC Councillor Howell
4 members of the public

This meeting was held 'remotely' via an internet platform as permitted by The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Meeting started at 7.30 p.m.

20-115 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Farrington.

20-116 Minutes

RESOLVED: that the Minutes for the meeting held 7th December 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

20-117 Declaration of interests

There were no declarations made.

20-118 Public Speaking Time

A resident of Church Road spoke about the surface water flooding that had occurred due to the exceptionally heavy rainfall, the existing water management infrastructure at various places and the impact of global warming and climate change on weather patterns and rain fall.

Another resident of Church Road endorsed what had been said and was concerned that the financial situation of Northamptonshire County Council would prevent long term remedial works.

A further resident of Church outlined what efforts had been undertaken by residents on the night of the 23rd December to prevent properties being flooded.

The following two items were move from 20.125 and 20.126 to this point of the meeting at the discretion of the chairman.

20-119 Flooding 23rd December 2020

It was noted that there had been an exceptional level of flooding on Church Road that had not been previously witnessed due to the excessive rainfall and the runoff from the land had overwhelmed the surface water drainage system when it had reached the road.

It was also noted that Brook Street had flooded at the same time.

It was noted that the Parish Council does not have the legal power to take action on land and infrastructure it does not own. Northamptonshire County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority and any incidents of surface water flooding should be reported via their online system by individuals as well as alerting emergency services if required. The Council was advised that when remediation works were being prioritised, this data base would be utilised by officers to determine where the need is greatest and is referred to by East Northamptonshire Council planning officers.

It was agreed that the Hargrave Herald and the website would be used to encourage residents to report flooding. It was noted that flooding could also be reported through the Anglian Water website.

ENC Councillor Howell agreed to make contact with the Northamptonshire County Council cabinet lead for the environment, highways and place Cllr Smithers to determine what action he could take.

It was agreed that there should be separate working party meeting with local stakeholders dedicated to flood issues to assess possible actions.

20-120 Pathfinder

Further to Minute 20.91 it was **RESOLVED** that the Council would continue with the project and Mr Taylor offered to be a flood warden.

20-121 Report from Northants County Councillor & East Northants District Councillor

Councillors Hughes did not send a report. Councillors Howell advised that due to the Christmas break there was not much to report since the last Parish Council meeting.

20-122 Financial Matters

a. Cheques for payment

RESOLVED that the following payments be authorised.

100922	J Hodgson – 1 x salary & Expenses LGA 1972 s111 & s112	£223.80
100923	Aylesbury Mains Ltd – street lamp repair Parish Council Act 1957	£110.76

b. Financial report

As at 14th December 2020 (the latest bank statement) the Council had an available cash balance of £25989.87 split between the current account and the deposit account. This balance does include the grant for the Neighbourhood Plan (£9684.00) that the Parish Council is holding on behalf of the steering group. The grant of £200.00 from the East Northamptonshire Council empowerment fund was received into the account on the 8th December.

It was noted that the automatic enrolment duties as required by The Pension Regulator were completed on 22nd December 2020. The Parish Council does not provide a pension for the Clerk.

- c. Report from the Internal Control Councillor – it was noted that Councillor Brotherton had completed the Internal Control review of the account in December 2020 and everything was found to be satisfactory.
- d. Risk Assessment Annual Review – **RESOLVED** that the ‘Financial & Governance’, ‘grit bin’ and ‘speed sign’ risk assessment documents are fit for purpose without amendment.
- e. Internal Audit arrangements for the year ending 31st March 2021- it was noted that all councils are required to appoint a competent and independent internal auditor. For a number of years, the Council has appointed Greenbiro, the cost of which was £175.00 net for 2020. It was agreed to enquire whether Greenbiro would continue to offer services for the year ending 31st March 2021 and if not, the Parish Council has the fall-back option of Northants CALC Internal Audit Service. This will be considered again at the March meeting.
- f. Banking arrangements – Further to Minute 20.59 c it was noted that there are ongoing difficulties in setting up online banking. **RESOLVED** that the Internet Banking Policy as shown in Appendix A be adopted with immediate effect in anticipation of the facility being set up.
- g. Membership of Northants ACRE – **RESOLVED** that membership at a cost of £35.00 per year should be renewed and that a cheque be authorised accordingly. This expenditure is authorised by the Local Government Act 1972 s143.
- h. Transfer from e-on to YU Energy – Further to Minute 20.94 e it was noted that the change in energy provider for the street lamps had been completed. This is three-year contract.

20-123 Planning Matters

- a. Planning applications - none
- b. Planning decisions made by East Northamptonshire Council – it was noted that planning consent had been issued in the case of:

20/01141/FUL Erection Of Double Garage And Associated Parking For Plot 3 (Amendment To Application 19/01527/FUL) Land Adjacent Vicarage View Church Road

20-124 Natural Capital Data Mapping pilot

It was noted that an invitation had been received from Northants ACRE for councillors to take part in a study.

20-125 Neighbourhood Plan steering group report

The report that forms Appendix B was received and noted.

20-126 Parish elections

It was noted that elections were scheduled for the 6th May 2021 when all councillors would be required to stand down and all seven seats would be open to candidates. It was agreed that councillors would speak to residents to encourage candidacy. It was noted that there were operational advantages to having all seven seats filled at the time of election and democratically advantageous to have a contested election. It is not known how the elections will be affected by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

20-127 Village Infrastructure

- a. Annual litter pick – **RESOLVED** that it should be possible to undertake a socially distanced litter pick that is covid-secure using equipment previously purchased by the Parish Council over the weekend of 27th and 28th March. The risk assessment and covid-secure strategies to be agreed at the March meeting.
- b. Brook Street lighting issue – further to Minute 20.97 b it was noted that the relevant landowner had been sent a letter in November and a response or acknowledgement had not been received. The tree surgeon has been instructed to undertake the work at a cost of approximately £100.00. This expenditure is authorised by the Parish Council Act 1957 s 3 d.
- c. Maintenance works on the track by the Hoggin Ditch – it was agreed that there should be a covid-secure site meeting with a tree surgeon to what works are required on the trees. It was noted that any work on the ditch should not adversely impact the tree roots as the trees played an important role in absorbing water from the surrounding land.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council should write to the resident responsible for the chain link fence that had fallen down behind Elm Close to request that it is repaired.

20-128 Community and road safety

- a. Report from the JAG (Joint Action Group) representative - There was no report to give as the December meeting had been very brief.
- b. Police Liaison Representative – **RESOLVED** that Councillor Brotherton is to act as a single point of contact with Northamptonshire Police
- c. OPFCC budget consultation - The Parish Council did not have any comment to make on the proposed budget of the Office of the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner

20-129 Report from Village Hall Committee

There was no report to give.

20-130 Report from the Wind Farm Trust

There was no report to give.

20-131 List of correspondence

The list that forms Appendix C was noted. No further action was required.

20-132 Next scheduled meeting

The next scheduled meeting will be on 1st March 2021. It was agreed that future agenda items should include consideration of adoption the ransom strip between the track the Parish Council owns and Church Road.

Meeting closed: 9.26 p.m.

Chairman

Hargrave Parish Council

Internet Banking Policy

Background

The Legislative Reform (Payments by Parish Councils, Community Councils and Charter Trustees) Order 2014 came into effect on 12th March 2014. This Legislative Reform Order repeals the statutory requirement for two elected members to sign cheques and other orders for payment. The removal of this particular legal requirement will enable Parish Councils to take an overall approach to how it controls its money as well as taking advantage of modern technology including internet banking.

The Parish Council acknowledges the need to maintain robust controls on payments as an integrated part of its overall financial control system.

Account details

The Parish Council has two account with Barclays Bank. The accounts are organised with the bank to require internet payments to be authorised by two signatories. This is in accordance with the guidance on page 14 of the document "The Good Councillor's Guide to Finance and Transparency where it states – "Where electronic banking is used, arrangements should ensure that at least two people are involved in any transaction, one of whom must be a councillor".

Account signatories

The signatories on the account are reviewed at the Annual Council Meeting in May. This review will include the internet access status of each signatory and will be Minuted.

The Clerk will have access to view accounts but not to authorise payments. This is to facilitate day to day management and reconciliations of the accounts.

Internet Banking Procedure

Payments will be made by internet banking where possible. The following sentences (a – g) set out the principles and procedures of operation of the online account with particular attention to the raising of payment requests and their authorisation. The actual process of operating the online account will be the subject to the rules and security authorisation process of the bank:

- a. The Council's Financial Regulations 6.7 to 6.14 will be adhered to for internet banking
- b. All orders for payment will be verified for accuracy by the Parish Clerk
- c. A schedule of all payments shall be prepared by the Parish Clerk and presented to each meeting of the Council together with any supporting invoices or other documentation for approval. The approved schedule will be initialled by the Chair of the meeting. Where meetings are being held on an internet platform due to the corona virus pandemic, the schedule and invoices will be delivered to the Chairman in advance of the meeting.

- d. Once the payments have been authorised, the Parish Clerk will set up the payments and inform one of the Councillor signatories with internet access by email
- e. On receipt of the email the Councillor will authorise the payment, cross referencing with the schedule which was agreed at the meeting (Point (a) above) to ensure there are no discrepancies.
- f. Where payments may be required in between meetings the Parish Clerk will email copies of the invoices requiring payment to one of the Councillor signatories with internet access before raising a payment request online. The Councillor will then authorise the payment as in (e) above.
- g. All payments authorised between meetings will be done so in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations. If such a payment requires authorisation by the chair (Financial Regulation 4.1), the email from the chair containing the authorisation will be forwarded to the councillor authorising.

Keys dates:

Adopted	
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Appendix B

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee - Monthly Update – 4th January, 2021

1. Summary: The Hargrave Neighbourhood Plan is being written up (by consultants Kirkwells) before being presented to both the villagers and the PC for their consideration and forward endorsement to ENC for their review. There are imposed delays in the formal processes caused by Covid-19 and changes in Government regulations.
2. There was an HNP Steering Committee meeting held during December.
3. Whilst the content of that plan is largely complete, some of the appendices remain in drafting:
 - a. The design code (supported by consultants AECOM) remains the largest appendix to be finished. The content of the first draft proved unacceptable. Rework continues with strong encouragement and input to AECOM
 - b. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) are in hand and being prepared: further advice likely to be sought from ENC colleagues to ensure we have faced these matters in the most appropriate manner
 - c. Other work comprising the Green Space strategy and the completion of analysis and responses to the Call for Sites are complete and have been submitted to Kirkwells for inclusion as appendices.
4. It is not considered that changes at ENC and in the Northants council structures will have any impact on the process.
5. However, the Village Referendum will essentially be deferred until at least May 2021, because of government requirements due to Covid-19, in which "All neighbourhood planning referendums that have been recently cancelled, or are scheduled to take place between 16

March 2020 and 5 May 2021 are postponed in line with the Local Government and Police and Crime Commissioner (Coronavirus) (Postponement of Elections and Referendums) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 until 6 May 2021.”

6. Given this imposed delay to the start of the formal processes of the HNP, and acknowledging that the referendum is likely to be further extended beyond May if Covid-19 persists, it is reasonable to assume that the formal “making” of the HNP is pushed into early 2022.

7. Therefore it is recommended that the PC in the meantime considers resolving to make use of the drafted policies and findings of the surveys purely for their own deliberations and purposes. Whilst these documents and findings have no formal standing in terms of law or planning regulations, they do provide a framework for the PC’s own consistent decision making and evaluation when considering planning matters, and carry the weight of tested public opinion within our village community.

Next Steps

Q1/ 2021

- i. Finalise the design code recommendations and SEA
- ii. Finalise the plan and present to the PC for consideration (February target).
- iii. Once permitted in Q2/Q3 2021:
 - a. Present the draft plan to the village through another village “town hall” meeting (date and method TBC) to update and refresh memories before holding a formal referendum
 - b. Final review with HPC
 - c. Submission of plan to ENC (Q3/2021)

Through Q3/Q4 2021:

Run the formal process and formal public consultations with village/HPC and ENC.

Secure adoption in 2022

Next HNP Steering Committee will be held on Monday, 11th January 2021 at 6.30pm on ZOOM.

Appendix C

List of correspondence received (November to January)

1. Email: Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner newsletter October 2019
2. Email: Northants Highways weekly list of schemes 1st November 2019
3. Email: Northants CALC mini eUpdate 1st November 2019 (circulated to Councillors)
4. Email: Invitation to Raunds Mayor events (forwarded to Chairman)
5. Email: Armed Forces Covenant
6. Email: Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Chelveston Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund 28th October 2019
7. Email: Details of ‘My Neighbourhood Plan’
8. Email: Northants CALC mini eUpdate 8th November 2019 (circulated to Councillors)
9. Email: Northants Highways weekly list of schemes 8th November 2019
10. Email: Information Commissioners Newsletter, November 2019
11. Email: Northamptonshire carers sitting service volunteer recruitment poster
12. Email: Northamptonshire County Council budget consultation (circulated to councillors)
13. Email: Northamptonshire County Council consultation on school admission policies
14. Email: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Proposed Submission Plan Consultation - 15 November 2019 to 09 January 2020

15. Email: Northants Highways weekly list of schemes 15th November 2019
16. Email: Northants CALC mini eUpdate 15th November 2019 (circulated to Councillors)
17. Email: Details of meeting with the Police commissioner 02/12/19
18. Email: Northants Highways weekly list of schemes 22nd November 2019
19. Email: Northants CALC mini eUpdate 22nd November 2019
20. Email: Northants Highways weekly list of schemes 6th December 2019
21. Email: latest news from Information Commissioner Office
22. Email: East Northamptonshire Council meeting papers for 9th December
23. Email: 'Power for People' re Local Electricity Bill
24. Email: Northants CALC eUpdate for Nov/Dec (circulated to councillors)
25. Email: Northants Highways weekly list of schemes 29th November 2019
26. Email: Northants CALC mini eUpdate 6th December 2019
27. Email: Northants Highways weekly list of schemes 13th December 2019
28. Email: Northants CALC mini eUpdate 13th December 2019
29. Email: OPFCC December 2019 Newsletter
30. Email: NCC Consultation Active Parks Projects
31. Email: Northants Highways weekly list of schemes 20th December 2019
32. Email: Northants CALC mini eUpdate 20th December 2019 (circulated to councillors)
33. Email: Public Sector Mapping Agreement December newsletter