

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Hargrave Parish Council**  
Held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at Hargrave Village Hall

Members present:  
Cllr D Farrington in the Chair

Councillors  
M Leonard R Sheppard S Taylor H West  
Clerk- Ms J Hodgson  
3 member of the public

Meeting started at 7.30pm

**22-118 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Jones. **RESOLVED** that the reason for absence be approved.

Apologies were received from NNC Councillor Howell, Levell and Wilkes.

**22-119 Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes for the meeting held 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

**22-120 Code of Conduct determination**

The Monitoring Officer has assessed a Code of Conduct complaint regarding the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022 and has formed the view that the Code was not breached.

**22-121 Declaration of interests**

Cllr Leonard declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in planning application NE/23/00050/PDU.

**22-122 Public Speaking Time**

A resident spoke about the recent motorbike fatality on the B645, calling for the Police to take more direct action to deter nuisance behaviour by motorbike users.

A resident requested a progress update with a blocked right of way.

A resident gave the background to a planning application.

**22-123 Report from North Northants Councillors**

No report to give.

**22-124 Resignation of Councillor Phillips**

It was noted that the resignation of Councillor Phillips had been received. The legal processes are being followed with regard to the casual vacancy. The Council appreciated all that Cllr Phillips had achieved during his short time in office.

## 22-125 Civility and Respect Pledge

**RESOLVED:** That the Council endorses the principles of the Civility and Respect project and signs the pledge.

## 22-126 Financial Matters

a. Payment schedule – **RESOLVED** that the following payments be authorised

Payments made between meetings

Payee	Amount
Ford & McHugh – repair of street lamp	£192.00
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Payments Authorised at the meeting:

Payee	Amount
Hargrave Parish Church – annual payment due under the lease	£50.00
HMRC – final quarter tax & NI – to be paid after 6 <sup>th</sup> April	£184.60
J Hodgson – 2 months salary, travel, 2 year anti-virus software	£572.55

The General Power of Competence was adopted May 2021

The following payments have been made under the Councils Direct debit arrangements

Date	Payee	Amount
Monthly	Yu Energy – street lighting	various

- b. Financial report from the Clerk - The Council holds £7188.56 in the current account and £12272.97 in the deposit account for ring fenced purposes. A VAT reclaim for the period 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 will be submitted in April 2023. It was noted that the internal audit had been arranged for April.
- c. Effectiveness of Internal Control – the requirements as described in the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Partitioners Guide were reviewed. **RESOLVED** the Council is satisfied with the effectiveness of internal control for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.
- d. Financial Reserves – **RESOLVED** That the Financial Reserves Policy that forms appendix A be adopted with immediate effect. It was further **RESOLVED** that £4000.00 be transferred from the Current Account to the Deposit Account for Ear-Marked reserves.

## 22-127 Planning Matters

a. Planning applications

**NE/23/00001/LBC** Replacement of rotten windows, French doors, and sills with identical hardwood windows, doors and sills, but having double glazed panels for greater thermal efficiency. Location: Box Tree House Church Street

**RESOLVED:** The Parish Council does not object to the proposal providing the materials and effect are sympathetic to the existing dwelling. The Council welcomes energy efficiency being introduced to the property.

Cllr Leonard left the meeting room.

**NE/23/00050/PDU** Change of use of paddock land to garden to be used for growing flowers and vegetables and construction of a greenhouse for the cultivation of plants and vegetables for domestic use made from an aluminium frame clad with western red cedar and toughened safety glass Location: Woodlands Church Road

**RESOLVED:** The Parish Council does not object to the proposal. However, it does request that any permission granted does specify the area in an identifiable manner to ensure that the area does not 'creep' further into the paddock. The Council also requests that a condition be placed so that in the event that this area ceases to be for horticultural/garden purposes, it is to revert to paddock.

Cllr Leonard returned to the meeting room.

**NE/23/00185/TPO** Various tree works at Box Tree House Church Street

**RESOLVED:** The Parish Council has no objection to this work

b. Planning decisions made by North Northamptonshire Council - None

### **22-128 The King's Coronation**

Further to Minute 22-105 There was a general discussion as to the expected costs of the Coronation events and the possible small grant from the Wind Farm Trust. It was agreed that it would preferred if the other main parties to the celebration, Hargrave Church and Hargrave Village Hall Committee, contribute an equal amount to the Parish Council in addition to the possible Wind Farm Trust grant. **RESOLVED** That the Parish Council will contribute up to £200.00 to the Coronation celebrations.

### **22-129 Jubilee tree plaque**

**RESOLVED** That a plaque be purchased from The Royal British Legion at a cost of £145.99.

### **22-130 Policies**

- a. Periodic review (Website) Accessible Document Policy **RESOLVED** that the policy is satisfactory.
- b. New policies: **RESOLVED** that the following policies be adopted with immediate effect: Staff Recruitment Policy, Councillor Induction Booklet, & Pensions Policy (as shown in Appendix B)
- c. Annual policy review summary report: The report that forms Appendix C was received.

### **22-131 Village Infrastructure**

- a. Trees/hedges works (minute 22.106 b refers) – arrangements for the road closure were discussed for when the work takes place in the autumn.

### **22-132 Community and road safety**

In view of the on-going issues with the B645, it was agreed details of the Police 'Operation Snap' be circulated to residents. It was also agreed that correspondence should be sent to the Police and North Northamptonshire Council requesting stronger action.

### **22-133 Report from village hall committee representative**

There was no report to give.

## **22-134 Report from the Wind Farm Trust representative**

There was no report to give at this time.

## **22-135 Correspondence list**

The list of correspondence received that forms Appendix D was received. No further action was identified.

## **22-136 Resignation of the Clerk**

It was noted the Clerk had given eight weeks notice. The Clerk was thanked for her 5 years service to the Council.

## **22-137 Future scheduled meeting**

15th May 2023 – Annual Parish Meeting at 6.30pm  
15th May 2023 – Annual Council Meeting at 7.30pm  
3rd July 2023, 4th September 2023 & 6th November 2023

Meeting closed 9.12pm

**Chairman**

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**Appendix A**

## **FINANCIAL RESERVES POLICY**

Hargrave Parish Council is required to maintain adequate Financial Reserves to meet the needs of the Parish Council. The purpose of this policy is to set out how the Council will determine and review the level of Reserves.

Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require local authorities to have regard to the level of Reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement. However, there is no specified minimum level of Reserves that an authority should hold and it is the responsibility of the Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer to advise the Council about the level of Reserves and to ensure that there are procedures for their establishment and use.

### **TYPES OF RESERVES**

Reserves may be categorised as General or Earmarked. Earmarked Reserves can be held for several reasons and are intended to be restricted for that agreed use. General Reserves are funds that do not have any restrictions as to their use. These Reserves can be used to smooth the impact of uneven cashflows, offset the budget requirement, if necessary, or can be held in case of unexpected events or emergencies.

**Earmarked Reserves** – Earmarked Reserves will be established on a ‘needs’ basis, in line with anticipated requirements. Any decision to set up a Reserve must be given by the Parish Council. Expenditure from Reserves can only be authorised by the Parish Council.

Reserves will not be held to fund ongoing expenditure. This would be unsustainable as, at some point, the Reserves would be exhausted. To the extent that Reserves are used to meet

short term funding gaps, they must be replenished in the following year. However, Earmarked Reserves that have been used to meet a specific liability (or project) would not need to be replenished, having served the purpose for which they were originally established.

**General Reserves** – the level of General Reserves is a matter of judgment and so this policy does not attempt to prescribe an overall level. However, the current level of General Reserves to be held by the council is targeted to be a minimum of 50% of the annual precept figure.

The primary means of building General Reserves will be through an allocation from the annual budget. This will be in addition to any amounts needed to replenish Reserves that have been consumed in the previous year.

The Council must build and maintain sufficient working balances to cover the key risks it faces, as expressed in its Risk Assessment & Management Schedule, which is reviewed annually.

If, in extreme circumstances, General Reserves were exhausted due to major unforeseen spending pressures within a particular financial year, the Council would be able to draw down from its Earmarked Reserves to provide short-term resources.

Even at times when extreme pressure is put on the Council's finances the Council must keep a minimum balance, sufficient to pay three month's salaries to staff, in General Reserves at all times.

### **Opportunity costs of holding Reserves**

In addition to allowing the Council to manage unforeseen financial pressures and plan for known or predicted liabilities, there is a benefit to holding Reserves in terms of the interest earned on funds which are not utilised. This investment income is fed into the budget strategy. However, there is an "opportunity cost" of holding funds in Reserves, in that these funds cannot then be spent on anything else. Given the opportunity costs of holding Reserves, it is critical that Reserves continue to be reviewed each year as part of the budget process to confirm that they are still required and that the level is still appropriate.

### **Policy in Practice**

The Council will hold Reserves for these three main purposes:

- A working balance to help cushion the impact of uneven cashflows and avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing – this forms part of the General Reserves
- A contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies – this also forms part of the General Reserves
- A means of building up funds (Earmarked Reserves), to meet known or predicted requirements.

### **Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

Date adopted	Minute reference
6 March 2023	22.126 d

## **Hargrave Parish Council Pension Policy**

### **Introduction**

Under the Pensions Acts 2004 to 2015 any qualifying employee who does not opt out of an employer's pension scheme is automatically enrolled into a qualifying pension scheme. As a UK employer that employs one or more workers, the legislation applies to Hargrave Parish Council.

As a minimum, the Council has to assess all workers and automatically enrol those who are eligible into a workplace pension.

Hargrave Parish Council, as an employer of less than 30 staff, this Automatic Enrolment Duty due date was 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016 to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.

Parish Councillors and unpaid clerks are not covered by this legislation.

### **Pension Regulator**

Hargrave Parish Council is registered with the Pension Regulator.

### **Categories of job holder**

- a) Eligible jobholders: aged 22 years or more and under the state pension age earning more than the income tax personal allowance
- b) Non-eligible job holders: aged 22 years or more and under the state pension age earning more than the lower income limit for National Insurance purposes but less than income tax personal allowance  
Those aged between 16 and 21 or state pension age and 74 who earn more than the income tax personal allowance.
- c) Entitled workers: those aged between 16 and 74 earning less than the lower limit for National Insurance purposes. As at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023 the threshold is earnings less than £6,240 a year

### **Parish Council employees**

The Parish Council employs one part time employee that would be categorized as an entitled job holder.

An entitled job holder has the right to join a pension scheme but not necessarily the same one as provided to a person with a right of automatic enrolment.

If an entitled worker asks to join, an employer must enrol them.

### **Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)**

Employees of local councils are not automatically entitled to rights under the LGPS. Hargrave Parish Council has not entered an admission agreement with the Northamptonshire LGPS.

### **Pension Schemes**

The Council can select an appropriate pension scheme to offer. These include

a) National Employment Saving Trust (NEST)

Parish Councils are eligible to subscribe to a government established scheme, NEST. The employer does not have to make contributions unless it choose to.

b) Other pension schemes

### **Parish Council contributions**

Hargrave Parish Council will not make a contribution to an entitled job holders pension scheme.

Adopted 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023 Minute ref 22-130 B

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## **Appendix C**

### **Annual Policy Review Report**

#### **Policies reviewed in the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

##### Annually reviewed polices

Code of Conduct      Complaints Policy      Data Protection Policies x5

Financial Regulations      Freedom of information Policies      Standing Orders

##### Other policies to reviewed

Accessible Document Policy

Internet Banking Policy

##### New Policies in the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

None

#### **Policies to be reviewed in the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

##### Annually reviewed policies in accordance with Standing Order 5j

Code of Conduct

Complaints Policy

Data Protection (Data Breach Policy; Data Protection Policy; General Privacy Policy; Data Subject Access Request Policy; & Privacy Policy)

Employment Policies (Disciplinary & Dismissal Policy; Grievance Policy)

Financial Regulations

Freedom of information (FOI Model Scheme; FOI Supplementary Policy)

Standing Orders

##### Other policies to be reviewed in the civic year

Record Retention Policy

Lone Working Policy

Other Policy reviews may be necessitated by changes to legislation, regulations or new guidance from NALC

### Correspondence list 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 to 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023

This list is comprised of generic or informational emails sent by other organisations and Councils rather than listing correspondence with members of the public. A separate list of correspondence with members of the public or correspondence on specific matters with other bodies is not maintained.

1. Email: NNC Update from the Leader of the Council #40 (circulated to Councillors)
2. Email: NCALC Friday mini eUpdate - 23/12/22 (circulated to Councillors)
3. Email: Raunds Community Library events
4. Email: N ACRE notification of VAT on membership subscription
5. Email: Friday mini eUpdate - 06/01/23 (circulated to Councillors)
6. Email: Northants CALC Training Newsletter - January 2023 (circulated to Councillors)
7. Email: Bedford BC Great Denham Neighbourhood Development Plan
8. Email: Highways - What would you call a gritter?
9. Email: NNC Community Funding information
10. Email: Burns Night 28th January cancellation
11. Email: NCALC Friday mini eUpdate - 13/01/23 (circulated to Councillors)
12. Email: NNC Update from the Leader of the Council #41 (circulated to Councillors)
13. Email: Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's January Newsletter (circulated to Councillors)
14. Email: NACRE Parish Council Members - January E-Bulletin (circulated to Councillors)
15. Email: NCALC Friday mini eUpdate - 20/01/23 (circulated to Councillors)
16. Email: ICO Celebrating Data Protection Day 2023
17. Email: NCALC Training: Civility and Respect Part 1 (circulated to Councillors)
18. Email: NACRE Rural Crime Engagement Events (circulated to Councillors)
19. Email: N ACRE Parish Council Network Event (circulated to Councillors)
20. Email: Bedford Borough Local Plan 2040 Examination
21. Email: NNC Update from the Leader of the Council #42 (circulated to Councillors)
22. Email: NNC February Half Term Free Swimming Sessions
23. Email: Northants CALC eUpdate - Jan/Feb 2023 (circulated to Councillors)
24. Email: Revised Street light repair rates (McHugh & Forde)
25. Email: North Northamptonshire Place Development Event for all Councillors (circulated to Councillors)
26. Email: Friday mini eUpdate - 20/01/23 (circulated to Councillors)
27. Email: Northants ACRE Winter 2022/23 Village Viewpoint (circulated to Councillors)
28. Email: NNC Update from the Leader of the Council #43 (circulated to Councillors)
29. Email: Raunds Civic Service Invite , Sunday 26th March 2023
30. Email: Friday mini eUpdate - 10/02/23 (circulated to Councillors)
31. Email: Latest news from the ICO
32. Email: Place Development Event for all Ward and Town and Parish Cllrs and clerks
33. Email: Forest of Marston Vale: Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document
34. Email: Friday mini eUpdate - 17/02/23

End