

## HOUGHTON AND WYTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Parish Council Meeting** held on Wednesday 3 November 2021, 7:00pm.

**Present:** Cllr C Spearing (Chair) Cllr D Bonny  
Cllr P Boothman Cllr N Elborn  
Cllr B Gilmour Cllr R Guinea  
Cllr D Keane Cllr A Skinner

Staff present: Lois Dale, Parish Clerk and Lane Thompson, Timebank Coordinator

There was 1 member of the public present.

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Baxendale.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Boothman declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8.1 as a neighbour of the applicant.

### 3. PUBLIC COMMENT

A resident pointed out that the wooden gate from Laughtons Lane onto the Playing Field was beginning to rot. The Clerk was aware and will get quotes for a replacement.

**ACTION: Clerk**

### 4. MINUTES

**RESOLVED:** The minutes of the Parish Meeting of 8 October 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

Proposed: Cllr Skinner; Seconded: Cllr Bonny. For: 7 Abstentions: 1

### 5. MATTERS ARISING

The Action List was reviewed and will be updated.

The CCC highways will be contacted again about parking on and damage to verges in Thicket Road copying in C Cllr Dew. **ACTION: Clerk**

A meeting will be organised to discuss events for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

**ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Skinner has sourced some daffodil bulbs from Dobbies Garden Centre and the Gardening Club plans to plant these on the triangle at the entrance to Wyton. The Clerk will inform CCC who own this land. **ACTION :Clerk**

It is thought that the Council has been overcharged for electricity use from the Clock Tower. A reading will be submitted to the supplier and cheaper tariffs will be looked at.

**ACTION: NE and Clerk**

The Clerk will contact CCC highways about the use of vehicle on the Thicket footpath again; and investigate the use of fields along the footpath to run a dog training business which is leading to extra vehicle use. **ACTION: Clerk**

A meeting to discuss the budget and precept for 2022-23 will be held on 17 November. Cllrs Skinner and Spearing met with the Chair and President of the Bowls Club and they have agreed to pay their invoice for pavilion use in 2021 in full.

It was agreed that work is needed to make the Pavilion a more neutral and usable space for all clubs. Clubs who have equipment stored in the lockers in the changing rooms will be asked to clear these out by the end of November. **ACTION: Clerk**

### 6. DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT.

C Cllr Dew reported that the Combined Authority has launched several transport initiatives that Cambs County Council will be involved in delivering. Many of the cycling and walking initiatives are in the urban areas, but so far not in the more rural areas. A Green Infrastructure Panel will meet soon which may make grants available. The focus on more sustainable transport is a good opportunity for improving the cycle route on the A1123. Cllr Dew will liaise with the Clerk and the Highways Project Manager to arrange a

meeting to discuss how to progress this project. **ACTION: DD**

The region is now in a COVID enhanced area, which will lead to more funding especially to schools. Parish Councils may be asked to help with publicity to aid public awareness. In response to questions:

Cllr Dew agreed to ask a CC highways officer to meet with parish councillors to discuss the clearance and maintenance of drains on the roads. **ACTION: DD**

Cllr Dew agreed to ask the senior highways and transport officer at the Combined Authority to meet with parish councillors. He will be able to give more information about the potential re-routing of the A141 at Huntingdon and how this could link with St Ives and the A14. **ACTION: DD**

There is no update on the future of the RAF Wyton site. There is still permission for various storage on the site for several years.

Cllr Dew agreed to ask the Combined Authority mayor for further information on progress with the Ox-Cam Arc project. **ACTION: DD**

It was noted that the e-scooter trial in Cambridge is still in place. There are several instances of use of e-scooters locally including on The Thicket footpath. It is illegal to use these vehicles on a public highway unless they are part of an official trial.

Cllr Dew reported that the Head of Planning Services at HDC is currently still a temporary post, held by Adrian Harding. Other long-standing officers, including Clara Kerr, are still in place in Strategic Planning. John Neish is the Executive Councillor for Planning.

D Cllr Keane reported that HDC are looking at changes to their budget and bids for funding. They aim to have a balanced budget for 2022-23.

## **7. CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICERS REPORT**

### **7.1. To authorise payments due**

**RESOLVED:** The payments be approved and paid.

Proposed: Cllr Boothman, Seconded: Cllr Gilmour. All in favour.

The Parish Council was pleased that the fee for office hire had been reduced due to reduced use of the office and utilities during the Covid pandemic. It was agreed that the hire agreement would be reviewed to see if any changes were needed **ACTION: Clerk.**

### **7.2. Make a decision on Contractor for Tree Survey 2021**

**RESOLVED:** Following consideration of quotes received, it was decided to contract EWP Consultancy Ltd to carry out a tree survey on all trees owned and managed by the Parish Council

Proposed: Cllr Bonny; Seconded: Cllr Guinea. All in favour

**ACTION: Clerk**

### **7.3. Make a decision on a locked recycling bin. Discuss the siting of a public recycling bin on the Playing Field**

The Parish Clerk will discuss available options with the Trade Waste Manager at HDC and look at costs of suitable recycling bins. **ACTION: Clerk**

### **7.4. Make a decision on ordering bark for play area surface**

**RESOLVED:** Up to six bags of play bark be ordered for the Play Area. The surface will be reviewed next year and potential costs included in the budget for 2022-23.

Proposed: Cllr Guinea, Seconded: Cllr Gilmour. All in favour

**ACTION: Clerk**

## **8. PLANNING MATTERS**

### **8.1. Partial infill extension of the ground-floor porch and first-floor extension** The Old Coach House Thicket Road Houghton Huntingdon PE28 2BQ Ref. No: 21/02311/HHFUL

**RESOLVED:** Houghton & Wyton Parish Council recommend that this application be **APPROVED** for the following reasons:

Although within the Conservation Area, this building is not listed.

The extension remains within the building line.

Despite greater massing to the first floor, overall, the extension will give a more balanced look to the dwelling.

This extension will future proof the dwelling for the current residents and improves its use.

Proposed: Cllr Keane; Seconded: Cllr Bonny. For: 8; Abstentions: 1

### **8.2. Houghton Grange phase 1**

There is no update.

### **8.3. Homes England – update**

The Information Commissioners Office is looking at the appeal against the refusal to answer the Freedom of Information request. It is believed that Homes England have started an internal investigation. While they have not responded to the FOI request, an independent solicitor has provided information that Morris Homes paid £4.5million for a 125-year leasehold for the site of Houghton Grange phase 1 development. Homes England currently still have the freehold. This information does help with the viability of a CLT.

Homes England have been repeatedly asked to meet the Parish Council and consult further before submitting an application for Houghton Grange phase 2. This looks unlikely, with maybe 24 hours' notice of the application being released.

Homes England have received pre-application advice from HDC; the Parish Council also submitted an application and was refused pre-application advice.

HDC also intervened to withdraw the Parish Council application for a CLT grant without informing the Parish Council. Complaints against these actions will be considered.

### **ACTION: RB & PB**

### **8.4. Community Land Trust (CLT)**

Cllr Boothman has arranged a meeting with Laragh Homes, a community orientated developer who has worked with local CLTs.

Cllr Boothman is also considering arranging a surgery meeting with our MP, Jonathan Djanogly to elicit his support. The government has backed CLTs and affordable housing models.

### **8.5. Other Planning Matters**

It is noted that the Diocese of Ely has permitted the felling of two Ash trees in Wyton cemetery, they have agreed the planting of silver birch trees elsewhere in mitigation.

## **9. TREE PLANTING IN THE PARISH**

The Tree Wardens have identified some areas in the parish for potential tree planting. These areas were discussed on site with The Clerk and Cllr Elborn.

It was agreed that as areas on the Playing Field were in the land leased by the Parish Council that proposals would be discussed with the owners of that land with a view to planting one or two trees near the car park. **ACTION: CS**

HDC will be asked about planting one or two trees on Loxley Green with an aim to provide succession planting for some existing trees. HDC will also be asked for advice on species, siting and location of underground pipework. **ACTION: Clerk**

An area in the south-east of the playing field is in need of renovation and there are several dead or unhealthy trees. This area could be suitable for memorial trees and underplanting.

#### **10. HOUGHTON CEMETERY REGULATIONS**

The draft of cemetery regulations and fees has been revised and further comments are requested. A final version will be produced for acceptance at the December meeting.

**ACTION: NE**

#### **11. PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE**

##### **11.1. Land West of Houghton Cemetery**

There is no update on this proposal.

##### **11.2. A1123 Speed Reduction Local Highway Initiative 2022/23- update**

There is no update on this project application.

##### **11.3. Mill Street Local Highway Initiative 2021/22**

This project has been accepted for the LHI funding and further information is awaited from CCC. **ACTION: DK**

##### **11.4. HDC CIL application for Pedestrian / Cycle way A1123**

A meeting will be arranged with the CCC Highways project manager and additional funding sourced. **ACTION: DK & RG**

#### **12. CORRESPONDENCE**

- A resident of Mill Street has initiated the formation of a Homewatch group to incorporate Mill Street, Chapel Lane and The Green. The Parish Council agreed that it supported this and the Parish Council contact details will be provided. **ACTION: Clerk**
- A Timebank update on projects, events and volunteer opportunities has been circulated.

#### **13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- A resident has asked if he can borrow the Parish Council projector to use at a talk he is giving to the Over 60s club. It was agreed that this was acceptable; future requests will be considered individually if they occur.
- Cllr Elborn and the Clerk attended a NALC webinar on Biodiversity Net Gain. Several ideas for practical initiatives were discussed. There was a debate on whether to declare a climate emergency. There is a CCC Climate webinar on 11 November.
- Cllr Spearing will lay a wreath on Remembrance Sunday on behalf of the Parish Council.

#### **14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Wed 1 December, 7pm.

#### **15. RESOLUTION TO CLOSE THE MEETING TO PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED:** That the meeting be closed to the public and press for the following item due to the confidential nature of the item. (The Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960)

Proposed: Cllr Gilmour; Seconded: Cllr Bonny. All in favour.

#### **16. TIMEBANK**

A procedure was agreed to address a sensitive and confidential issue. It was agreed that policies and procedures for member applications should be reassessed.

Signed:..... Date: .....