

HOUGHTON AND WYTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Parish Council Meeting** held on Wednesday 10 April 2024, 7:00pm.

Present: Cllr P Boothman - Chair
Cllr Gilmour
Cllr D Keane
Cllr A Skinner
Cllr Baxendale
Cllr R Guinea
Cllr J Rodgers
Cllr R Southworth

There were nine members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Hunter was absent.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED: The minutes of 26 February 2024 were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: Cllr Baxendale; Seconded: Cllr Southworth. All in favour

RESOLVED: The minutes of 6 March 2024 were approved as a correct record.

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

5. MATTERS ARISING

- Cllr Rodgers will contact a contractor about fencing work at the cemetery extension. **JR**

6. DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS

D Cllr Keane submitted the following report:

Green Bins & Waste services

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins-waste/garden-waste-subscription-service/>

On 31 March 2024, the existing FREE garden bin service came to an end, and has been replaced with a new garden waste subscription service. Residents who have not paid for the new service will not have their bins emptied. If a sticker hasn't arrived the crews have details of all subscribers on the database in their cabs, and bins should be collected. If residents ordered an additional bin/s as part of their subscription, stickers for these bins will be sent once a bin has been delivered.

Because of this change from 1 April 2024 food waste will no longer be accepted as part of the garden waste collections. By law the council cannot charge for the collection of food waste and now that the garden waste service is moving over to a chargeable service, food waste has to be excluded. Any food waste will have to be placed in the grey bin. Find out more on the Food Waste page.

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins-waste/garden-waste-subscription-service/food-waste/>

Green bins can be kept to be used as compost bins. (Details of how to do this can be found online.) HDC must be informed of this or the bins will be collected later in the year.

All other aspects of the refuse collection service and times for collection should stay the same and details of days for bins can be found here:

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/refuse-calendar>

More information on obtaining compost, subsidised compost bins (cost £10), siting of freigher for disposal of green waste in St Ives and other relevant information can be found at [Garden Waste Community Initiatives - Huntingdonshire.gov.uk](https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/garden-waste-community-initiatives) or call HDC on 01480 388388.

Fly tipping can be reported here <https://forms.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/REPORTFLY-TIPPING/launch>

Election for police and crime commissioner is Thursday May 2nd

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/elections/upcoming-elections/>

There are 3 candidates nominated.

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/23f13p3z/statement-of-persons-nominated-pcc-2-may-2024.pdf>

Photo identification will be needed to vote.

Active for Health

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/leisure/active-for-health/>

Active for Health is a new 12-week activity programme for adults (18 and over) to help them become active and move more. Eligible residents can sign up for the Active for Health programme (BMI of 25 or over, or 23.5 if you are from the BME community.)

Active for Health Xtra is a new 12-week activity programme for adults (50 years and over) who have at least two of the additional risk factors of Cardiovascular Disease; diabetes, are a smoker, high blood pressure, have an unhealthy diet, have high cholesterol, family history of heart disease, are from a Black, Asian or minority background, are inactive, drink alcohol to excess, are overweight or obese.

The HDC CEO, Michelle Sacks, will attend the Parish Council meeting on 7 August.

7. CLERK & RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICERS REPORT

7.1. To authorise payments due and paid and note financial reports and bank balances

RESOLVED: Payments now due are authorised:

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

The budget report and bank balances were noted.

7.2. Annual Parish Meeting

It was suggested that the Parish Meeting should take the form of a 'fair' for village societies and clubs. Representatives of clubs that were present agreed this would be a good idea and a date in June will be proposed.

8. PLANNING MATTERS

8.1. T1 leylandi - 70% reduction approx 9m to below snapped out limbs T2 and T3

leylandi - 70% reduction approx 9m The Elms Thicket Road Houghton Ref. No: 24/00564/TREE

RESOLVED: Houghton & Wyton Parish Council recommend that this application be APPROVED for safety reasons and the health of the trees

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

8.2. change of use of an agricultural building into 4 dwellings Building East Of Gumecestre Farm Splash Lane Wyton Ref. No: 24/00419/PMBPA

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

We remain unconvinced that this application can proceed using the General Permitted Development (England) (Amendment) Order 2018.

To use this procedure, the Order applies to an entire agricultural unit (i.e. farm) and all the land therein, and requires that the sum total of permissions granted to that unit over time do not breach the upper limits of either a cumulative number of units or floor space conversions.

The Acorus Rural Property Services document supplied by the applicant in the application (Class Q Statement 5/3/2024) specifies that the agricultural unit in question is Gumecestre Farm Ltd.

In 2014, the agricultural unit which is Gumecestre Farm Ltd was granted permissions to convert an agricultural building adjacent to Manor Farm into 3 residential units totalling 450sq m (ref 14/01702/PMBPA).

This latest application by Gumecestre Farm Ltd 24/00419/PMPA is to convert a different agricultural building to the east of Splash Lane into 4 residential units with a floor space of 646sq m.

Each and in themselves, these permissions satisfy the conditions laid down by the legislation, however, taken together the cumulative effect (a total of 7 dwellings and 1096sq m) is to breach the developable limits set by the Order.

We therefore request that the applicant makes a full planning application which can then be determined using the planning policy documents contained in the Huntingdonshire Development Plan for the area.

We believe to consider as a permitted development application would be unlawful and would welcome sight of the District Councils legal opinion on this. However, if the application is found to be justified as permitted development, we would ask that the following points be considered.

We are concerned that despite the Transport Statement assertion (5/3/2024) that the public footpath FP23 will be unaffected, we are concerned that this has already been impinged upon before any new development has begun with efforts made to restrict its width. As far as we can tell, the width of this footpath should be at least 2m where currently it is squeezed to 0.7m. Furthermore, we fear that if not carefully considered and protected, the footpath may be inadvertently moved or share the road surface of the new carriage way if this is made to be 5m wide running for 8m from where it joins Splash Lane as per Cambridgeshire County Council Highways requirements.

In order to comply with this stipulation and maintain the footpaths legal alignment and width, it may be necessary to utilise some land currently associated with the properties either side of the access about which there are no details supplied.

We would therefore like County Council officers Definitive Map Team to review this.

We also note the comments made by the resident of Waddle House Splash Lane which describe the lived experience of Splash Lane, it is largely single carriage way and shared use make it less than ideal to accommodate more vehicular traffic.

Likewise, details showing space around the building for the numerous bins that will be required to be stored, refuse collection, cycles and visitor parking are not supplied but need to be understood and where appropriate built into any conditions relating to this application.

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

8.3. Erection of a flat roof extension, Kitchen room, store & dining room and alterations.

Public House 3 Huntingdon Road Wyton Huntingdon PE28 2AD Ref. No: 24/00398/FUL

Erection of a flat roof extension, Kitchen room, store & dining room and alterations.

Public House Three Jolly Butchers 3 Huntingdon Road Wyton Huntingdon PE28 2AD Ref. No: 24/00416/LBC

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

The proposals will 'tidy-up' the site and tie previous alterations together.

Increasing the size of the kitchen will improve the commercial operations.

It is noted that the proposal is supported by the immediate neighbours and the Campaign for Pubs.

Proposed: Cllr Keane, Seconded: Cllr Baxendale. All in favour

8.4. Installation of 2 x wood burners to existing downstairs fireplaces including lining of chimneys

Holme Cottage Huntingdon Road Wyton Huntingdon PE28 2AD
Ref. No: 24/00379/LBC

RESOLVED: Houghton & Wyton Parish Council recommend that this application be APPROVED:

The chimneys have not been used for a long time and linings will be needed if they are to be used.

We are not aware if this affects the listed status of the building

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

8.5. Change of use of land from Agricultural land to the keeping and exercising of horses with menage (for private use).

Land North Of Ruddles Lane Off Splash Lane Wyton Ref. No: 23/01181/FUL

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

The field was previously farmed for crops and grazing and use for horses is unlikely to the adversely affect the on-site ecology.

Whilst Policy HWNP7 – Protection of best and most versatile agricultural land -- would recommend rejecting this application, we feel that the land could easily be converted back to agriculture in the future. Particularly if topsoil is banked up around the menage.

This is a use that is in keeping with the area.

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

8.6. Houghton Grange update and S106 agreements

There is no feedback from the meeting held at HDC with Homes England.

The Parish Council plan for development at Houghton Grange phase 2 has been shared with Morris Homes.

HCR Hewitsons have been instructed to write to HDC about the completion of the long-term lease for the Playing Field to confirm the acquisition of the Playing Field and eligibility for S106 funding under the 2016 Houghton Grange S106 agreement.

8.7. Neighbourhood Plan Review

Neighbourhood Plan review: This needs to shadow the planned review of the HDC Local Plan. As with the original plan a group of residents will need to be formed to carry out the review and gather the views of all residents.

8.8. Other Planning matters

St Ives Town Council will be asked to provide an update on progress with development at The How. **PB**

Some councillors attended a Wyton on the Hill Parish Council meeting to hear about the proposals from Bellway developers to build a large number of dwellings on agricultural land within their parish along the A1123. This site is not included in the current HDC Local Plan.

9. REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1. Bus stop at Hartford Marina

There has been no further contact from Highways on this initiative. **Clerk**

9.2. Parking in the village and speed control

There is no further update on these issues. **Clerk**

9.3. Drainage and Flooding Issues.

9.3.1. Meeting with Anglian Water

A meeting has been arranged for 29 April, and a list of questions has been forwarded to Anglian Water. It is hoped that this can address the sewerage problems experienced in some areas of the parish when there is heavy rain, flooding and a high groundwater level. Anglian Water will also be asked for information on the state of the sewage treatment plant north of Ruddles Lane. There are documents which report that 50 discharges, running for a total of 566 hours emanated from this site that would flow into the Back Brook.

Evidence from residents is still needed. The Flood Group have organised an open event for 20 April to share information with residents and *vice versa*.

Pump at the end of Thicket Road – the Parish Council will write to the EA for further information on the repair or replacement of this pump. The MP will also be asked to help with this.

The Flood Group have recently bought equipment for its use and in the case of flooding.

9.3.2. Letter from Hemingford Grey Parish Council

A letter was received from Hemingford Grey Parish Council asking for support in their request to the EA to maintain flood defences in the area. They note that several staunch gates on the river are inoperable and this may have led to the high water levels in the area. The Parish Council will reply to offer support and hope to send a representative to the next meeting of the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee

10. PROJECTS

10.1. Clock Tower phase 2

There has been no response from CCC Highways in regard to the plans for the proposals around the Clock Tower. A draft planning application will be produced to be submitted to HDC. **RB**

10.2. Village Defibrillators

A planning application is being submitted to HDC to install a defibrillator on the northern wall of the Three Jolly Butchers. This should be covered by an available grant. **RESOLVED:** A DefibSafe 2 case will be bought to house a defibrillator on the external wall of the Pavilion. The chosen case is approved by the British Heart Foundation and is very similar to the one at the Memorial Hall. It will be locked with a code that will be provided by the emergency services if needed. **Asst Clerk**

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

10.3. Play Area repairs

Grants are being sought to cover repairs and resurfacing. **Asst Clerk**

Quotes for laying a rubberised safety surface are being obtained.

The Parish Clerks of Hemingford Abbots and Grey will be contacted for recommendations to repair/replace the gate the Playing Field entrance from Laughtons Lane. **Asst Clerk**

Volunteers to carry out routine inspections of the Play Area are needed. The Clerk and Cllr Rodgers volunteered.

10.4. Migrate emails and website to gov.uk domain

This will be deferred to the next meeting.

10.5. Playing Field & Sports Clubs – Annual Agreement and invoices

Cllr Boothman read the following statement. 'On behalf of the Parish Council I'm pleased to report that today, together with members of the Anderson family we finally secured the future of the playing field for the community.'

We have signed a new long lease to run for 125 years for the consideration of £100,000. In terms of an agreement, such a long lease of this nature can be considered similar to buying the freehold of the land.

This lease provides very long-term security and frees us from the risk of commercial or developmental exploitation, and whilst our current lease agreement offered some short-term protections, this new lease addresses certain weaknesses and limitations which we were concerned could impact us negatively over time. For example, our current agreement only had 14 years left to run with no automatic right of renewal guarantee, plus rental rate increases linked directly to inflation.

Our new long lease operates on just a peppercorn rent for the next 125 years helping our financial planning. It has support for sports clubs and scouts written into the agreement over the long term, and by being long term aids our ability to secure grant funding for projects. It also allows the parish opportunities and flexibility to utilise the playing field in different ways to address changing sports and recreational needs of the village over time.

It's important to say that we owe a debt of gratitude to members of the Anderson family and particularly Jessie Anderson who in the 1940's had the foresight to recognise the need for recreational green space in the village and to set aside the area and grant it for use by the village.

I'm pleased to report that her descendants, past (some only recently) and present, have continued in the same vein by being generous in their agreement to the new lease and like us, careful to make sure it delivers for the many different user groups and community.

Finally, I'm pleased to say that it has come at an opportune time when the District Council's S106 agreement, negotiated in 2016 in relation to Houghton Grange/Shelborne Homes specifically for acquisition of the playing field, is about to materialise and soon paid. Thankfully, this will go a long way to help to pay for the new lease.'

The Parish Council and the Sports Clubs want to record their thanks to the Anderson family for their work and patience to reach agreement on this lease. Congratulations were expressed to the chair and others involved for securing this lease.

Representative from the Bowls, Cricket and Tennis Clubs were present. The Parish Council stated to the Clubs that they are all valued by the residents and they are therefore committed to supporting them. However, the Parish Council must exercise prudence in the management of public funds for the benefit of all residents while the Clubs take responsibility for their own future. The Parish Council stressed that it can offer help with applying for external grants and funding and can offer small grants itself. It will also continue to maintain the field, pavilion and other facilities. The Pavilion can be used as part of the agreements for fundraising events.

With the signing of a long lease, it is now possible to look to the future and how facilities can be improved. The benefits of the formation of a separate 'association' to push this forward and manage the facilities were discussed.

The Parish Council accepted that the Football Club had offered to pay part of the fee for the 2023-24 season now, but felt that the entire amount should be paid as soon as possible. They will be informed of this.

Invoices for the current year are due to be issued soon. The Clubs were urged to meet together to decide on the percentage split of the costs between themselves. It might help to have an independent person facilitate their discussions. It was recognised that the rising costs of utilities and falling membership of the clubs would be a major factor in these negotiations. Following this a meeting with the Parish Council can then be arranged to finalise proposals and discuss changes to the agreements.

10.6. Registering Assets of Community Value.

All assets currently listed will be renewed.

RESOLVED: It was agreed that the following properties be nominated for inclusion as Assets of Community Value: Houghton School Playing Field, The Three Jolly Butchers Public House, The Memorial Hall, Our Shop and Beers Garage site.
Proposed: Cllr Boothman; Seconded: Cllr Southworth. All in favour

11. CORRESPONDENCE

Christmas Lights Committee are considering the purchase of the stage for their events; the Parish Council does not want to join with them in this. **Clerk**

A Huntingdon Town Councillor (Cllr Coles) had contacted the Parish Council about continuation of the shared use path along the A1123 from Hartford into Wyton village. While this has been mentioned by the Combined Authority and others to promote Active Travel it was felt that the combined pressure of all relevant Town and Parish Councils might move the project forward. St Ives Town Council will be approached **(PB)** and the Clerk will respond to Cllr Coles. **CLERK**

Cllr Boothman will respond to a resident's queries about the proposed 20mph zone in the village. **PB** This will outline the background to the proposal, the consultation undertaken by the Parish Council and responses received. CCC will formally consult on the proposal later this year.

A resident of Manor Close had asked the Parish Council if they can offer support to improve the inadequate road surface there. The Clerk will write to C Cllr Dew and Highways. **CLERK**

12. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS, DELEGATED ACTION OR FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Costs and specifications for MVAS, solar speed and indicator signs will be presented at the next meeting.

D Cllr Davenport-Ray will attend the next meeting to provide an update on tree planting and management in The Thicket. The Chair of St Ives Civic Society will be asked to attend as they are keen to see this area, which forms a border between both parishes, managed more sustainably. **CLERK**

The Clerk will respond to the consultation on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. **CLERK**

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Parish Council meeting will be **Wednesday 1 May 2024 at 7pm**. This will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

Signature Date.....