

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

There were four members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

A resident addressed the Parish Council about the bus service to the village. For several years the Busway B bus run by Stagecoach is the main bus through the parish stopping once an hour at St Ives Road and Hartford Marina on the A1123. The bus shelters on the A1123 are also in need of a clean. The Council agreed to have the shelters cleaned and look at a regular service for this. **CLERK**

The route is a commercial one run by Stagecoach which the Combined Authority has not taken on.

The Combined Authority has franchised some routes and is promoting 'TIGER' buses, but they do not cover this area. It was agreed that the public meetings about this bus should be advertised as they may be useful to some residents or could open a conversation about expanding the routes.

IT was mentioned that the government are giving powers to local authorities to issue bus passes to all over-60s, rather than retirees. The County Councillor agreed to look into this. **DK**

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED: The minutes of 2 July were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: Cllr Rodgers; Seconded: Cllr Rowe. For: 8, Abstentions: 1

RESOLVED: The minutes of 28 July were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: Cllr Guinea; Seconded: Cllr Gilmour. For: 8, Abstentions: 1

5. MATTERS ARISING

- The Parish Council response to the Rights of Way hierarchy consultation was returned.
- A quote is still awaited for new CCTV at the Pavilion.
- Pavilion and Playing Field hire charges are being reviewed.
- A decision from HDC on the application to list the Community Shop as an Asset of Community Value is awaited.
- A meeting has been requested from Houghton Mill. All councillors are asked to circulate their concerns to enable an agenda to be put together.
- There has been no further information from the village Baby and Toddler group about their costs or request for financial help.

- D Cllr Keane has asked officers if they will expedite parking enforcement action in the village during the summer and is awaiting a response.

6. MICHELLE SACKS – CHIEF EXECUTIVE, HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ms Sacks was unable to attend the Parish Council meeting, but did meet with Councillors Baxendale, Boothman and Guinea earlier in the day. This was reported as a 'constructive and good natured meeting' covering issues including economic growth in Huntingdonshire, planning and local development.

7. DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

District Council report

Local Government Reorganisation. In a fourth option proposed to create 3 unitary authorities and Houghton & Wyton, Wyton on the Hill and Hemingford Grey would be in Mid-Cambridgeshire. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c2d0k1r4wk5o> This is in addition to the three options of possible unitary authorities that have been sent to the Secretary of State. The HDC Cabinet will make an executive decision.

Scam Emails. Some residents have received text messages claiming they have received a parking Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) from "a local council", or emails claiming Council Tax payment is outstanding. Huntingdonshire District Council will never make contact via text and all emails will come from a @huntingdonshire.gov.uk address. Do not click on any links and if in doubt contact HDC on 01480 388388 <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/news/parking-scam-alert/>

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/news/council-tax-email-scam/>

Parking. Civil parking enforcement is in force at HDC and signs have gone up in the market towns. Signs have been requested in the village. In the first 4-week period fines are not being issued but warning notes.

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/news/civil-parking-enforcement-is-coming-to-huntingdonshire/>

Garden Waste Renewal or Sign Up. The cost per year is £57.50 for one garden waste bin and £30 per additional bin. The annual subscription runs from 1 April to 31 March. **If residents join mid-year, they will be charged for the full year.**

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

County Council Report. The Adult & Health Committee supported an extension of the existing contracts for 497 block contracted beds within Care Homes at a total value of £170,503,696. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hq9vWZRbD7U>

The Local Highways Initiatives (LHI) panel met on 14 July to review and score the 17 applications within Huntingdonshire. The outcome will be announced in October. Cambridgeshire Community Foundation funds grants are available to non-profit organisations that contribute to a better quality of life across Cambridgeshire. The projects often focus on health and wellbeing, homelessness, social isolation, education and the environment. <https://www.cambscf.org.uk/team/>

Other activities & useful links. Details on weed spraying done by CCC can be found at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/weed-spraying>.

The Parish Council extended its thanks to the County Council for recent repairs and replacement of footbridges on local Rights of Way

8. PLANNING MATTERS

8.1. 25/01137/FUL Erection of storage building (Use Class B8) in lieu of open air storage. New Manor Farm Sawtry Way Wyton Huntingdon PE28 2DY

RESOLVED: Houghton & Wyton Parish Council object to this proposal for the following reasons:

Breach of existing planning conditions in terms of full permission, landscape, fencing and storage height

Conflict with Development Plan policies in the HDC Local Plan and Houghton & Wyton Neighbourhood Plan.

Height and massing is contrary to policies LP19 and HWNP15.

There is permanent loss of agricultural land.

There is increased flood risk and impact on drainage.

There is no net gain in biodiversity and grassland and trees have already been removed and lost due to the installation of the current hardstanding.

There are traffic, environmental and pollution issues.

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

The full objection is attached as an appendix to these minutes.

8.2. 25/01038/FUL Siting of three padel tennis courts. Blue Diamond Banks End Wyton Huntingdon PE28 2AA

RESOLVED: Houghton & Wyton Parish Council have the following comments on this application:

Whilst the Council agrees in principle with this application we are concerned about comments already received from neighbouring residents and Environmental Health.

Lighting: This needs to be appropriate for the use and not cause any light pollution to neighbours or adjacent areas used by wildlife.

Noise: there is a potential for this particular sport to create a noise nuisance to neighbours, as has already been experienced by some. All efforts should be made to eliminate or reduce noise from the sport and by those attending. This could be helped by restricting hours of use and by planting trees around the courts. Tree planting would also help to mitigate the wildlife amenity lost in the loss of grassland to these courts and improve the biodiversity of the area.

Operating hours: The hours proposed are lengthy and outside of the operating hours of the Garden Centre. This will lead to increased vehicle access to the area, which will create a noise nuisance to neighbours and increased traffic movements at this potentially dangerous junction. We recommend that the operating hours are reduced and suggest 8am to 9pm, Mon to Sat and 9am to 7pm on Sunday. This would also help to reduce any light pollution which could be a distraction to drivers on the A1123 and disruptive to local wildlife.

The council also queries whether the courts could be sited elsewhere on the site where the impact of light and noise may be less.

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

8.3. 25/00877/CLPD Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for a Proposed single storey rear extension. 10 Hill Estate Houghton Huntingdon PE28 2BU

RESOLVED: Houghton and Wyton Parish Council does not object to this application. The stated dimensions do not exceed permitted development rights.

This road is a Character Area within the Houghton & Wyton Neighbourhood Plan, but we do not believe this extension to the rear would affect this designation or the street scene.

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

8.4. Houghton Grange Phase 1

Cllr Rowe is meeting with a resident to discuss siting of community noticeboards in this area. **NR**

The site of a path leading to the Thicket footpath is currently being used as a staff car park, which may remain the case for up to two years. An informal path has been created, but this is not maintained at all. Concerns were raised about the length of time it is taking to get this important footpath link established. A more timely solution will be sought.

8.5. Houghton Grange Phase 2

The actions agreed on 28 July have been carried out. HDC have confirmed receipt of the letter and will respond by the end of August.

Information has been shared with the leader of the District Council and neighbouring councils. There were objections from areas outside of the parish. It was agreed that current residents of phase 1 need to be made aware of the issues and encouraged to engage.

8.6. Potential Developments Surrounding the Parish

The development proposed by Bellway in Wyton on the Hill Parish is likely to be brought to the DMC soon and it was felt awareness should be raised.

9. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1. Traffic and Highway Issues

Clock Tower – As there is no update on when the Experimental Traffic Order will be processed, Cllr Baxendale suggested that remedial work be carried out on the Clock Tower and look at moving the post box to outside the Post Office. A meeting will be arranged with the architect to discuss this and ask for costings.

Funding sources will be investigated. **RB & Clerk**

Highways Officer – it is hoped that a permanent officer for this area will be appointed soon. A list of the outstanding issues will be compiled for discussion. **DK**

Parking – it was suggested that the National Trust could look into introducing advance booking for parking which works well at other sites. A meeting will be arranged to discuss this and other issues. **Clerk**

9.2 Parish Asset Maintenance – play area and benches

RESOLVED: up to £2,000 be allocated for repairs to the Tree House and stepping posts. Up to £3,000 be allocated to supply and fit recycled plastic benches at Manor Close and near Houghton Lock.

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

9.3 Parish Council Policies, Guidelines and Procedures

9.3.1 Standing Orders – With suggested amendments and clarifications these will be brought back for approval in September.

9.3.2 Meadow Lane Bollard Guidelines

RESOLVED: The guidelines for the key holding and operation of the bollards on Meadow Lane, Houghton were approved:

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

10. PROJECTS

10.1. St Mary's Centre Improvements

It was decided that this project was not ready for a funding application yet. The PCC will be informed of this and a meeting arranged to look at the next stages.

11 CLERK, ASSISTANT CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

11.1 To authorise payments due and paid and note financial reports and bank balances

RESOLVED: The payments now due were authorised.

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

11.2 CAPALC Update

Councillors will be sent reminders of how to log into CAPALC and NALC websites. They are asked to look at the training available and let the office know about any they would like to undertake. **All Cllrs**

Training is available on the Code of Conduct on 7 Oct and Governance for Councillors on 23 Sept.

SLCC are running a webinar on Bad/Unlawful Planning Decisions on 19 August which councillors are encouraged to join. **All Cllrs**

11.3 Meeting with Community Coordinator (Youth) to discuss Youth Engagement and Facilities

The Assistant Clerk met with this officer and will be arranging an event with their help to encourage young people in the parish to engage with the Parish Council, Neighbourhood Plan and their village.

12 CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk and Assistant Clerk have done a course on using the iNaturalist app to record species and biodiversity. This would a useful way to build a database of sightings in the Parish which would feed in to several projects, including the Neighbourhood Plan refresh. They hope to encourage others to use this and arrange a training session. **Clerk & Asst Clerk**

A Heath and Wellbeing fund has been announced by HDC. Precepting authorities cannot apply, but information has been sent to the sports clubs and others. It was felt that a meeting with the new management at the Blue Diamond Garden Centre might be useful.

13 DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The next Parish Council meeting will be Wednesday 3 September 2025 at 7pm.

Signature Date.....