

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HILPERTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, WHADDON LANE, HILPERTON,
at 7.30 pm on Tuesday, 15th January, 2008**

There were four members of the public present.

PRESENT Mr. E. Clark (in the Chair)
 Mrs. S. Sawyer
 Mr. Trevor Carbin
 Mr. K. Jackson
 Mrs. K. Hayes
 Mr. V. Bielecki
 Mrs. J. Waring

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: PCSO Karen Beedon and District Councillor David Binding.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mr. R. House, Mr. J. Willis, Mr. B. Cullern and Mr. W. Jameson.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL/PREJUDICIAL INTEREST

Agenda item 7 – Standards Arrangements in West Wiltshire: Mr. E. Clark, personal, being a member of WWDC's Standards Committee.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 11th December, 2007, and the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on the 8th January, 2008, had been circulated. Mrs. Waring pointed out that in Minute 6 of the December Parish Council meeting, under 'District Report', second paragraph, Ms. Waring should have read Ms. Turner. Subject to this amendment the Minutes were approved and signed.

4. MATTERS ARISING (from the December Parish Council meeting)

Minute 6 – District Report: The Clerk had received confirmation from the Chief Executive of WWDC of the proposal to next hold town and parish council elections in 2013 to coincide with unitary council elections. It would now be for parliament to decide whether to implement this arrangement and the outcome should be known later in January.

Minute 6 – Police: The Clerk said she had written to District Councillor Linda Conley, portfolio holder for the environment, about the possible relocation of the recycling centre at Budgens. She had not yet received a reply but had learned that there were various problems with the current site including excess waste left around the centre put there by the shops along the parade, resulting in capacity issues for the containers that should only serve the residents of the locality. The management company of the shops who own the land on which the recycling centre is sited recently instructed the District Council to remove the mini recycling facilities and a meeting had been proposed on site with Hills Waste (the cleansing team) and the management company to look for a way forward that would keep all parties happy and would see an improvement in the condition of the site. After the meeting an action plan would be formulated. The Chairman had made his views known that he thought it might have been sensible/courteous to seek the views of the Parish Council on this matter. In her letter to Councillor Conley the Clerk had made it clear that if the recycling centre was moved to a site near to The Mead Primary school it would be highly undesirable, and it was agreed that this view of the Parish Council should be re-enforced. A temporary solution might be to re-site the centre on the 'pub' land but it was agreed that hard standing would be essential.

Minute 7 – Trowbridge Community Area Future: The Clerk had, as asked, written to the joint project officer but had not as yet received a reply.

Minute 7 – Historic Buildings and Areas Grant System: The Chairman had not yet had an opportunity to discuss the Hooper monument with the PCC but they would be meeting next Thursday and he would send an e-mail to the vicar.

Minute 7 – Delta Kitchens: WWDC's compliance officer had not yet had any response from the owner and Mr. Jackson said that the use of the buildings overnight had recently been intermittent and it appeared the business was not operating any longer.

Minute 12a – The Clerk had reported the blocked drains near Mrs. Sawyer's property but with the recent rain and localised flooding this was still causing a problem and should be included on the Parish Steward's list of jobs to undertake on his next visit.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

The Chairman wished everyone a Happy New Year.

6. COUNTY COUNCILLOR, DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AND POLICE

County Report

The Chairman reported that Councillor Content had recently resigned and there would therefore be an election which would take place on Thursday, 7th February. Five candidates had been nominated.

District Report

Mr. Clark said that the cabinet would be recommending a 2% increase in the precept and this would be put before the full Council in February. The unitary authority challenge was still ongoing but the Chief Executive of the District Council had resigned and would be leaving at the end of March to take up an appointment at B.A.N.E.S.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7.45 p.m. to enable a resident of Newleaze to address the Parish Council and PCSO Beedon about the problems he and his neighbours were experiencing because of the regular parking of trailers, pick-up trucks etc .near their houses. PCSO Beedon took some details and said she would go to see him shortly. The meeting reconvened at 7.52 p.m.

Police

PCSO Beedon said that Hilperton had been fairly quiet crime-wise over the past month, although there had been problems with anti-social behaviour in the Marshmead area and 'boy racers' on Paxcroft Mead. Speeding along Marsh Road continued to be monitored, with the police liaising with the camera safety unit. Mr. Jackson said that the Parish Council had still not received any statistics concerning Marsh Road speeding and PCSO Beedon said she would chase this up.

The next meeting of the Hilperton and Staverton Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) Neighbourhood Tasking Group would be on Thursday, 17th January, at Hilperton Village Hall, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Mrs. Hayes kindly offered to attend. The Clerk also informed members that there would be a public meeting on the 31st January at The Neeld Hall, Chippenham, at 7 p.m. on the subject of 'Improving Community Safety'.

In conclusion, the Clerk had received a letter from Wiltshire Police introducing the new Chief Constable for Wiltshire, Mr. Brian Moore, who took up his post on the 1st January.

7. ITEMS FOR REPORT AND DISCUSSION

Proposed Unitary Authority – Parish Councils’ Prospective Responsibilities

At the last ‘meet and greet’ evening, attended by Mrs. Hayes, Parish Councils had been asked to discuss and identify any areas they felt they might like to be better informed about, have more influence over, or interested in delivering. After a short discussion it was agreed that this was probably the County Council’s way of trying to trim their budget by moving some of their financial responsibilities to parish councils, and any such move should be treated with caution.

Newsletter

After a short discussion it was agreed that the distribution of any newsletter should be after the election for a new county councillor. The Chairman said he would, however, bring a draft to the next meeting.

Recharge of Election Expenses

The Clerk reminded members that at the November meeting it had been agreed that the Parish Council should pay to WWDC all but the fees relating to the returning officer (£268.78 minus £175.14) and a cheque for £93.64 had therefore been sent to the District Council. The cheque had, however, been returned with an accompanying letter from the Democratic and Communications Service Manager stating that the costs related to the administration of the elections and the returning officer’s fees had been shown as a total cost, for Hilperton Parish Council this being £175.14. The total charge related to the returning officer fee for Hilperton was £25.14 and the remaining £150 was to cover the full administration cost of preparing and processing all the required documentation for the parish election. After a short discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should write back saying that the Parish Council was still not satisfied with the explanation, it was felt that what had been offered was a reasonable sum and that the cheque should again accompany the letter. Mrs. Hayes referred to an article in the January edition of the Local Council Review entitled ‘championing local democracy’ in which it stated that ‘parish and town council elections should take place on the same day as other local elections and that principal authorities should always cover the cost of administering elections in full without passing them down to the first tier’.

Cereal Partners/Great Bear Traffic Forum Representative

The Chairman informed members that the Cereal Partners Factory Manager, Peter Smith, wished to set up a forum where discussion could take place with representatives from all the relevant parish councils about the impact their operations was having on communities and to share with them how they saw traffic volumes moving in the future and the strategy for minimising the impact on any one village. A resident of the village had volunteered to attend the forum but he was not a member of the Parish Council. After a short discussion it was agreed that Mrs. Sawyer should be the Parish Council’s representative and any travel expenses incurred by her in attending meetings should be paid for by the Parish Council.

School Governors’ Reports

Pam Turner was not present at the meeting and Mrs. Sinclair’s report had not yet been received, so it was agreed to defer this item to the February PC meeting.

Parish Steward

The Clerk reminded members that the next visit would be on the 22nd and 23rd January. In view of the recent torrential rain and the likelihood of more to come, it was agreed that the top priority would be to unblock drains throughout the village and in particular those in Newleaze, Hill Street (opposite Mrs. Sawyer’s house) and opposite the War Memorial.

West Wilts. Central Area Parish Councils' Liaison Group

Mr. Jackson reminded members that the meeting to be held on the 24th January would follow the AGM. He said he would bring a report to the next Parish Council meeting.

Wessex Water – Whaddon Lane

The Clerk had been informed that the reinstatement of the trench would begin early in January and in fact she understood work had already commenced.

WWDC - Consultation on changes to Standards Arrangements in West Wiltshire

A letter had been received from WWDC to say that The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 introduced a number of changes to the way in which allegations of breaches of the code of conduct were dealt with. Complaints would be made initially to the District Council's Standards Committee. The Committee might then refer it to the Monitoring Officer for investigation, refer it to the Standards Board for England or decide that no action should be taken. If it was decided that no action should be taken, the complainant could ask for this decision to be reviewed. There were, therefore, potentially three stages to the new process, namely initial assessment, review and the hearing itself.

The District Council's Standards Committee had considered these new requirements in December and its view was that, to be able to deal with the new requirements, the Committee needed to be increased in size from the current nine to twelve and that three sub-committees should be formed to discharge the functions associated with the three roles. The District Council's decision must be informed by the results of consultation with town and parish councils, hence the letter seeking their views. After a short discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council should endorse the recommendations of the District Council's Standards Committee but should state that it failed to see the relevance of this consultation exercise when it was unable to influence what had already been decided by government.

Approval of Budget and Setting of the Precept for 2008/2009

The Clerk tabled copies of the proposed budget for 2008/09 and said that the estimated number of band D properties in the parish had risen only slightly since the previous year. Based on the estimate given of 1,858.08, if the levy again remained at £10.99 this would produce a precept of £20,420. After a short discussion Mr. Jackson proposed the adoption of the budget and the setting of the Precept at this figure. This was seconded by Mr. Bielecki, with all in favour.

WALC – Training Day for new Councillors – Saturday, 15th March, 2008

The Clerk had received information about a training day for new and existing councillors which would take place on Saturday, 15th March, at the Civic Hall, Trowbridge, commencing at 9.30 a.m. and finishing at 3.30 p.m. As a number of parish councillors were not present at the meeting, she said she would send details to everyone.

The following item was discussed earlier in the meeting but is minuted here in line with the agenda.

West Wilts. Core Strategy: Issues and Options Paper

The Chairman reminded members that the core strategy would set out a) a spatial vision for towns and parishes within West Wiltshire for the next twenty years and b) how it would be delivered through development and the use of land. There were some aspects included in the paper of particular significance to Hilperton. The District Council had arranged for two seminars to take place to discuss the issues and potential options relevant to rural parishes, the first one being in the Bradford-on-Avon library meeting room on Tuesday, 29th January, and the second at The Athenaeum, Warminster, on Tuesday, 5th February. Both would run for two hours, commencing at 7 p.m. and finishing at 9 p.m.

The Chairman suggested that a public meeting might be held before the next Parish Council meeting on the 19th February so that members could gauge the feelings of the general public before sending comments to the District Council by the 29th February deadline. It was agreed that any public meeting should take place after the County Council election on the 7th February, and it appeared that Monday, 18th February, was a possible date as the Village Hall was available in the evening. Another option was on Saturday, 9th February, either in the morning or the afternoon. The Clerk was asked to get in touch with Karol Jakubczyk at the District Council to see when their display boards would be ready so that they could be used at the public meeting. It was also agreed that Mrs. Hayes, Mr. Carbin and Mr. Jameson should form a sub-committee to look through the issues and options paper and make some suggestions as to the comments the Parish Council might make.

Beyond the Parish Boundaries Workshops 2008

All members now had details of these workshops and the deadline dates for registering, and it was agreed that if anyone wished to attend a workshop he/she should contact the Clerk who would make the booking on their behalf.

8. PLANNING MATTERS

Applications

07/03822/LBC: Mr. Warren Smith, 209 Church Street

Resiting of bathroom to create larger family bathroom, erection of independent stud walls to create 'square' walls where shower, toilet and sinks are to be located; laying of under-floor heating and natural stone flooring, removal of vinyl wallpaper/modern paint textured coating and defective plaster from walls, re-wiring, re-plumbing, re-plastering with non hydraulic lime, installation of recessed spot lights.

It was agreed that there would be no objection to this application as long as it met with the District Council's conservation officer's approval.

08/00046/FUL: Mr. and Mrs. P. Tuite, 80 Lacock Gardens

Erection of two storey side extension

It was agreed that there would be no objection to this application

Decisions

07/03008/FUL: Mr. D. Overton, land rear of 175 Devizes Road

Erection of detached two storey house and double garage including alterations to access – refusal

9. CORRESPONDENCE

- a) Letter from Wiltshire County Council stating that a bus stop clearway will be located in Horse Road, set back so that it will be located between 41 and 42 Horse Road.
- b) Letter from WCC concerning waiting/on-street parking restrictions in various parts of West Wiltshire.

10. PUBLICATIONS

- a) Clerks and Councils Direct – January, 2008
- b) Local Council Review – January, 2008
- c) The Clerk – January, 2008
- d) WCC 4ward – January, 2008
- e) Paxcroft Mead News – January, 2008

11. ACCOUNTS

Payments authorised:-

Clerk's salary and expenses for January (including use of computer)	£617.96
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12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

- a) Mr. Jackson reported that the recent rains were causing chaos along Devizes Road and with the gullies not working properly his property was easily flooded. He was of the opinion that the drains from the gullies into the sewer were not properly flushed out and no-one appeared to check to see if the gullies were working properly.
- b) Mr. Bielecki reported that in his street very few green bins were put out at this time of year and he felt this must result in huge savings for the District Council. As composting was difficult during the winter more refuse was put into the grey bins and he wondered if it would be possible to go back to the weekly collection of grey bins until the spring/summer.
- c) Mr. Carbin said he was still trying to get something done about the compost heap at the cemetery. The Chairman had seen someone from English Landscapes in the vicinity recently but no actual work appeared to have been done. He would get in touch with Commercial Services again.
- d) Mrs. Sawyer reported flooding at the by-pass leading to The Mead Primary School.

13. ITEMS FOR PARISH NEWS/LOCAL PRESS

- a) Details of the County Council election following the resignation of Cllr. Sarah Content.
- b) Setting of the Precept for 2008/09
- c) Public meeting to discuss WWDC's Core Strategy: Issues and Options Paper

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, 19th February, 2008

The meeting ended at 9.15 p.m.

Signed Date

