

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HILPERTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, WHADDON LANE, HILPERTON,
at 7.45pm on Tuesday, 19th September, 2023**

There were two members of the public present - Dr. Celia Beckett and Liz Gwinnell.

PRESENT	Cllr. E. Clark	Cllr. S. Sawyer
	Cllr. T. Carbin	Cllr. C. Prevett
	Cllr. R. House	Cllr. K. Hayes
	Cllr. S. Woodard	Cllr. R. Allan
	Cllr. S. Robinson	

Before the meeting commenced, parish councillors and members of the public stood for a minutes' silence in memory of Cllr. Pam Fisher, who died in August.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Boreham, Turner and Uncles.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were none.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 18th July, 2023, and the Minutes of the two extraordinary meetings held on the 1st and the 29th August, were approved and signed.

4. CLERK'S REPORT ON ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS PARISH MEETINGS
18th July, 2023: Minute 8 – Bus Shelters and Notice Boards: The Clerk had put a notice on the PC website, hoping it would attract a volunteer to take on the work of regular cleaning of the shelters and notice boards, but no-one had made contact.

Minute 8 – Whaddon Farm Solar Farm: The Chairman said he had contacted the owners, BSR Energy, and they had now sent a contract which he would read through.

1st August, 2023: The McDonald's planning applications: The planning consultants, Planning Sphere, had prepared their report, setting out the Parish Council's objections, and they had now sent these to Wiltshire Council.

29th August, 2023: Traffic Regulation Order for Devizes Road – The Parish Council's comments had been sent to Wiltshire Council, and acknowledged.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

The Chairman said that he, together with Cllrs. Turner, Hayes and Sawyer, had attended the funeral of Cllr. Fisher, which was held at St. Mary's Church, Whaddon, on the 17th August.

Local Plan: The Chairman said there would be a meeting on the 27th September in the Village Hall, which had been arranged by HAAG.

6. WILTSHIRE COUNCILLOR

Cllr. Clerk informed members that 90 new houses were proposed in Holt on land currently run as an equestrian centre. Although refused by Wiltshire Council, the applicant had gone to appeal and this was successful.

7. POLICE

PCSO Jack Thomas was not in attendance and he had given his apologies.

8. ITEMS FOR REPORT AND DISCUSSION

Wiltshire Council Local Plan

a) Possible Emergency Flood Plan

Dr. Beckett said it would be helpful if this matter could be discussed at the October PC meeting.

b) Legal grounds to challenge the inclusion of area 677a in the Local Plan

Dr. Beckett had e-mailed a statement for the Parish Council which set out possible legal grounds to challenge the inclusion of area 677a in the Local Plan. She voiced her concern that – among other things – there had been no Regulation 18 consultation on the inclusion of part of 677a for housing and a school, despite HAAG’s continual attempts to have some consultation with Wiltshire Council on this matter. After a detailed discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council should seek expert legal advice with the purpose of challenging the inclusion of area 677a in the Local Plan. An amount of up to £3,000 (plus VAT) should be set aside for this. (Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr. House, eight in favour). Dr. Beckett, on behalf of HAAG, was asked to go ahead and take this forward.

c) Counsels’opinion re. Elizabeth Way

Members of the Parish Council had received another statement, this time regarding Elizabeth Way, and Liz Gwinnell (a member of HAAG) addressed members on the merits of judicially reviewing the decision-making policy of Wiltshire Council in relation to the granting of planning permission, with particular reference to The Gap; and the failure of Wiltshire Council to consult before including specific areas of land within the Local Plan.

Ms. Gwinnell said that at the time of granting planning permission for The Gap, the SANG (suitable alternative natural green space) measures were not definitively known or set out. If they were not definitively known or set out, Wiltshire Council could not consider whether they were certain to offset long-term damage to the biodiversity of the sites in The Gap.

A detailed discussion then followed, including mitigation measures contained in the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy not being secured or defined in detail before planning permission was granted. At the end of this discussion, it was agreed that an amount of up to £2,000 (plus VAT) should be spent by the Parish Council on legal advice. Once that advice had been given, the matter of a judicial review could be discussed further. (Proposed by Cllr. Sawyer, seconded by Cllr. Hayes, all in favour).

Allotments/Community Orchard

Cllr. House said that there were no issues to report. There had been bumper crops of fruit this year and there was still a waiting list of potential new plot holders.

Works for the Parish Steward on his next visit

The Chairman said that the Parish Steward had been working in the village during the day. His next scheduled visits would be on the 13th and 17th October, the 10th and 14th November and the 7th and 8th December.

Casual Vacancy

Wiltshire Council had written to advise that as they had not received a request for an election by ten electors, the vacancy arising from the death of Cllr. Fisher could now be filled by co-option. The Chairman said this should be discussed at the October PC meeting.

New Clerk for the Parish Council

The Chairman said that a job description and advert had been prepared, and the advert was now on the WALC website, the SLCC website, the PC website, the Village Hall website (and on their Facebook page) and the Chairman’s website. The Clerk had also put copies on the notice boards.

So far, three people had expressed an interest and one application made.

Marsh Road Parking Issues relating to Avonfield Nursery

When Cllr. Woodward called in to speak to the owner, he was not there. She then went on holiday and hadn't been able to get back since. She said she would have a chat with Matthew before the next meeting and report back then. But she added that the road did not appear to have as many cars parked at or near the nursery, possibly due to the closure of the bridge at Staverton.

Request for 20mph speed limits - £625 contribution from the Parish Council towards a Metro Count

The Chairman said that LHFIG had confirmed that a contribution of £625 would be required from the Parish Council, and it was agreed that this should be paid.

Newhurst Park Pedestrian Z Barrier - £450 contribution from the Parish Council

It was agreed that a contribution of £450 should be made by the Parish Council so that a safety barrier could be put in place.

Church Clock – Maintenance and Cleaning

The Canalside Benefice had received a quote in the amount of £2,200.00 for stripping and cleaning the turret clock movements at St. Michael's Church, and they were seeking a grant from the Parish Council to help towards the cost. After a short discussion, it was agreed that the full amount of the quote should be paid for by the Parish Council. (Proposed by Cllr. Carbin, seconded by Cllr. House, eight in favour with one abstention).

SIDS Update

The Chairman said that the post for Marsh Road had not yet been erected, but the work should be done shortly.

Trowbridge to Melksham Cycle Track

This matter had been discussed at the extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council on the 29th August, and the Chairman wished to know if parish councillors had any comments they wished to make to Wiltshire Council about the track. Clearly landowners had a right to use it, but since tarmac had been put down it was encouraging people with cars to drive along it, despite the narrowness of the track. After a short discussion, it was agreed that Wiltshire Council should be contacted to see if 'Unsuitable for motor vehicles' signage could be erected at both ends in an effort to deter drivers of motorised vehicles.

Lacock Gardens and Stourton Park Play Areas

The Chairman had met WC officers at both sites recently and said that it was possible to 'save' Lacock Gardens. Wiltshire Council would take some of the play equipment out and restore it using S.106 money. With luck, the play area would be ready to use by next spring.

Stourton Park was a different matter. There was no equipment left on site and much of the fencing was missing. If the Parish Council wanted the play area restored, it would cost up to £80,000. It was agreed that this quite small area should be put back to grass, which Wiltshire Council would then take on responsibility for cutting.

The Chairman added that Wiltshire Council was still keen for the Parish Council to take on play areas such as Millards Close, Towpath and Navigator Close. If the Parish Council was interested, this could be done on a seven-year lease.

9. PLANNING MATTERS**Applications**

PL/2023/07595 – Land north of roundabout, Hilperton Road

Possible works to a protected Beech tree arising out of the proposed installation by Wessex Water of 1.2km of new water main along the footpath of Elizabeth Way

This application had been submitted as a precaution in case any tree roots were encountered during the work that needed to be carried out. It was agreed that no objection would be made and the tree officer would no doubt keep an eye on the situation.

PL/2023/07302 – 12 Dymott Square

Alteration to windows and doors to the rear elevation with the inclusion of bi-fold doors.

It was agreed that no objection would be made.

Decisions

PL/2023/05104 – 21 King's Gardens

Single storey rear extension – approval given

PL/2023/06076 – 206 Devizes Road

Addition of rear dormer and replacement rear kitchen extension – approval given

10. CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

11. PUBLICATIONS

Clerks and Councils Direct – September, 2023

12. ACCOUNTS**Payments authorised since the July meeting**

Idverde – Planters and maintenance for July (including £20.27 VAT)	£121.60
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Clerk's salary for August, 2023	£533.00)
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Clerk's expenses	£229.50)	£762.50
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E. Clark – donation to the Bath Cats and Dogs Home in respect of Pam Fisher decd. (Chairman's allowance)	£20.00
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Idverde – Planters and maintenance for August (including £20.27 VAT)	£121.60
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Water2Business – Allotments water supply	£65.97
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Payments to be authorised this meeting:

Clerk's salary for September, 2023	£533.00)
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Clerk's expenses	£248.50)	£781.50
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Celia M. Beckett – HAAG printing (£19.25 plus £10.86)	£30.11
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13. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Increase in postal charges.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, 17th October, 2023. (Apologies given by Cllr. Hayes)

The meeting ended at 9.07 p.m.

Signed Date

