

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HILPERTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, WHADDON LANE, HILPERTON,
at 7.30 p.m. on Friday, 14th August, 2020**

PRESENT	Cllr. E. Clark	Cllr. S. Sawyer
	Cllr. R. House	Cllr. D. Swift
	Cllr. G. Boreham	Cllr. P. Turner
	Cllr. D. Smokcum	Cllr. P. Fisher
	Cllr. T. Carbin	Cllr. C. Prevett

1a. CLARIFICATION OF PARISH COUNCILLOR APOLOGIES

A formal resolution was passed that ‘any member not attending a meeting for six months due to COVID19 will have their apology accepted and not lose their seat for non-attendance’.

1b. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Hayes, Uncles and Tucker, under the above resolution.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were none.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 17th March, 2020, were approved and signed.

4. CLERK’S REPORT ON ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minute 8 – Doubling tree cover in the Parish: On hold.

Minute 8 – CPRE Best Kept Village competition: Cancelled this year.

Minute 8 – Repairs to the Blind House: The Chairman had had a verbal discussion with Mark Packer a while ago, and he said he would take a look at the repairs needed to the door.

Minute 19 – COVID, Other Matters: Cllr Boreham reported that, following the March meeting, leaflets offering assistance had been printed and delivered throughout the parish by volunteers.

There had been a lot of calls from residents for help with shopping, picking up prescriptions etc., and this was still ongoing. Cllr. Carbin said it would be useful to have a report on what had been done for the Parish Council’s records, and it was agreed that this should be discussed at the next meeting.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

The Chairman thanked Cllrs. Boreham and Turner, and other volunteers for their part in the ‘COVID19 Help’ scheme.

He gave an update on the initiative taken by Malmesbury Town Council in respect of Neighbourhood Plans. A planning application in their area had recently been approved, which had undermined their Neighbourhood Plan and those of every other community in Wiltshire which already had a Plan and was more than two years old. This application had only been approved because Wiltshire Council had failed to maintain a five-year supply of land for housing development across the county. A Steering Group had been formed and all Wiltshire Members of Parliament would be receiving letters shortly, requesting their support, and reminding them of the tremendous efforts that went into the research and preparation of every Neighbourhood Plan. The Chairman reminded members that the Hilpertont Neighbourhood Plan would be two years’ old in November.

6. WILTSHIRE COUNCILLOR

Cllr. Clark had nothing to report. Cllr. Carbin said that Wiltshire Council had just issued a news release to say that it had submitted a bid to the Department for Transport for funding to reallocate road space to prioritise cycling and walking in the county. The bid comprised five different projects

around Wiltshire, one of which was Hilperton to Melksham via Semington. According to the press release, this permanent facility would complement the new cycling facility on the Hilperton Road, and would link Hilperton to Melksham via Semington, removing the need for cyclists to travel on this section of the A361. The scheme would start in Hilperton, with a closure on Devizes Road, and then follow a length of shared-use path on the north side of the A361 to allow cyclists to access Whaddon Lane. The route would then follow a byway to Semington, along the high street and towards Melksham before reaching the A350. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Carbin for spotting this report and said that he would request more details from Wiltshire Council and send a copy of the press release to all PC members.

The Chairman thanked those members who had advised him that Staverton and Holt parish councils were resurrecting the idea of a cycle/footpath link between the villages, and were asking for support from neighbouring parishes. Hilperton Parish Council had given its support.

7. POLICE

PCSO Matthew Till was not in attendance but had sent an e-mail which the Clerk had forwarded to members. In it he said he did not have any pressing issues to report, he would continue to make patrols around Hilperton and make a note of any speeding issues along Church Street. Cllr. Prett said it was a shame that, during his time as a parish councillor, no police representative had attended a parish council meeting, and the Clerk was asked to get in touch with Matthew to say that it would be helpful if he could endeavour to come to a few in future, especially as PCSOs no longer made monthly police reports.

8. ITEMS FOR REPORT AND DISCUSSION

Allotment Matters/Community Orchard

Cllr. House said that every plot was let, and there was a long waiting list of potential plot-holders. The bees were a big attraction and they had made a home in the orchard within twelve hours of the beehive being established.

Works for the Parish Steward

The Chairman asked members to send him details of work that needed to be carried out during the Parish Steward's next visit in September. He had already received a few requests from parish councillors.

Defibrillators – update

The Chairman said he had recently e-mailed the electrician to ask him when he would be able to install the last two defibrillators. Cllr. Turner said the one for the school might present a problem for a while, as most schools had a policy now of having as few people as possible on site.

Village Green Application

The Chairman said the application was moving ahead, and a Non-Statutory Public Inquiry in September would be held via Zoom, which would take two days. The Parish Council had recently become members of the Open Spaces Society who had supplied a list of solicitors and barristers who might be helpful, in light of the fact that the Inspector wished both sides to be represented legally. The Parish Council had also received a Freedom of Information request relating to the village green application. This would be answered within the permitted timescale.

As far as legal representation was concerned, the Chairman asked members if the Parish Council should agree to underwrite the costs of a solicitor/barrister. A discussion followed and it was formally agreed that this should be done, up to a maximum of £7,000. (Proposed by Cllr. House, seconded by Cllr. Sawyer, eight in favour, one against and one abstention).

The Chairman, on behalf of the Parish Council, had also contacted the owners of Church Field, and had asked them informally if they might accept an offer to purchase the site for an amount of £42,000. This had been declined by them. A detailed discussion then followed on the pros and cons of the Parish Council owning the land, at the end of which it was agreed that the Chairman should go back to the owners and increase the informal 'offer' to £55,000. (Proposed by Cllr. Sawyer, seconded by Cllr. House, eight in favour, one against and one abstention).

Wiltshire Council – Salt Bin Audit

An e-mail had recently been received from Wiltshire Council (Highways) asking the Parish Council to undertake an audit of salt/grit bins in the parish and let them know which required refilling or replacing due to damage. They offered to provide a plan of the parish showing where they believed the bins were located, and it was agreed that the Clerk should ask them for this information.

9. PLANNING MATTERS

Applications

(Both the Chairman and Cllr. Turner declared an interest in the following application, the applicant being known to them)

20/05777/TCA: 255 Hill Street

Works to trees in a conservation area – removal of Acer near the boundary wall by the pavement. It was agreed there should be no objection to this application as long as the planning officer concerned agreed with the proposals.

20/05482/FUL:

Former poultry farm building, Paxcroft Farm, Devizes Road

Conversion of agricultural building to General B uses (B1, B2 and B8) and extension of car parking and associated works.

It was agreed that no objection should be made to this application.

Decisions

Parish Councillors had recently received details of planning decisions made by Wiltshire Council over the last few months.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

A letter of thanks had been received from Mrs Mary Barber for the Parish Council's letter of condolence on the death of her husband, and the donation to the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Service.

11. PUBLICATIONS

- a) CPRE – Countryside Voice, Summer, 2020.
- b) Clerks and Councils Direct – July, 2020

12. ACCOUNTS

Payments authorised since the last meeting:

A list of payments made since March, 2020, had been forwarded to parish councillors. These payments had been made under the 'Emergency Items – COVID19', as set out in the Minutes of the March, 2020, meeting.

Payments authorised this meeting:

Clerk's Salary for August, 2020	£520.00)	
Clerk's Expenses	£110.80)	£630.80

13. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

- a) Cllr. Boreham said a gentleman was concerned about trees at the Village Hall, and was told that he should approach the Village Hall committee.

b) Cllr. Boreham referred to the state of overhanging hedgerows in a stretch along Church Street. The Chairman said he would ask the Parish Steward to cut them back, but the owners of Church Farm should have to attend to those hedges along their boundary.

14. ITEMS FOR PARISH NEWS

Deadline date – 22nd August.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that –circumstances permitting – the next meeting should be held on Tuesday, 15th September, commencing at either 7.30pm or 7.45pm (depending on whether or not the Brownies have use of the hall beforehand).

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Signed Date