Hockliffe Parish Council
"Serving the local community"

Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Monday 12th February 2024

Councillors Present: Cllrs R Scott (Chair), R Wuczke, P Edwards & R Alexander

Clerk: C Underhay

128: To receive apologies for absence:

All Councillors were present.

129: Declarations of Interest:

No Declarations of Interest were received. Cllr Edwards made it clear that he is not related to Mr Edwards from Edwards Surfacing (item 142.3)

130: Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on 8th January 2024:

It was proposed by Cllr Scott & seconded by Cllr Alexander that the Minutes of the Meeting's held on 8th January 2024 were approved as a correct record. This was then resolved by all Councillors.

131: CBC Cllr Mark Versallion Report:

Cllr Versallion sent his apologies as he was unable to attend.

132: Public Forum:

Several residents were present at the meeting to discuss drainage – specifically because of the "backup" of drainage (in particular, human waste) during heavy rain periods. Residents have tried to contact various authorities, and seem to be passed around, with no commitment to do anything. They asked if the Parish Council could intercede. The Chair said he had been in contact with our MP Andrew Selous, who is aware – he will update him. The Chair also noted that we have written to Anglian

Water. The Clerk asked for any relevant photo's/video's to be emailed to him so evidence can be compiled.

133: Matters arising from the Minutes not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda:

None

134: Co-option of new Councillors:

Two residents offered to be Co-Opted to the Parish Council. The interested residents are Mike & Melanie Richards. It was proposed by the Chair, and seconded by Cllr Edwards that these applications are accepted. They will be formally welcomed at the next Parish Council meeting. The Clerk will complete the necessary paperwork.

135: Planning – Applications received:

The Chair advised that there were no planning applications.

136: A5:

The Chair reported that he and two Councillors (Alexander & Wuczke) had visited the "headquarters" of the M1 work site. They had a presentation on the work being carried out. However, they did not make any progress with traffic on the A5 when the M1 is closed. National Highways would not agree to divert traffic or make it more difficult for vehicles to use the A5 – as the A5 is not the road being "worked" on – and it is a trunk road. There was a van trying to divert traffic – but lorries just ignored it.

137: Communication:

1. Communication Policy

Cllr Edwards had reviewed the Communication Policy and updated it. This was reviewed by Councillors – it was then proposed by the Chair, and seconded by Cllr Wuczke that this policy was adopted – this was then resolved by all Councillors.

Cllr Edwards had also looked at upcoming policy reviews – he noted that he considered the Social Media Policy needed to be updated.

2. **Community Newsletter:**
   This is to be reviewed

3. **Notice Boards:**
   Cllr Alexander noted that he could repair the Notice Board at Church End in the Summer. The Notice Board at the Post Office will be removed at the owner's request. The main notice board for Parish Council notices will now be on the corner of the A5 and Woburn Road. Quotes will be obtained to replace this Notice Board – perhaps a metal one. Cllr Alexander noted that the Notice Board by Hockley Court is in good condition – however, the one by Birches Close needs attention.
   The Chair also noted that the Parish Council, some time ago, had looked at purchasing a new bench – and suggested this could be something we looked at – to go by the Notice Board by Hockley Court (where the phone box is, as this is due to be removed).

138: Village Hall:

Standing item – nothing to report at this meeting.

139: Handyman:

Cllr Alexander was not involved in policy decisions or voting - as he is also the Handyman. It was proposed by the Chair and seconded by Cllr Wuczke that we repair the Notice Board at Church End and Hockley Court. The Notice Board at Birches Close will be moved to the bus stop shelter (owned by the Parish Council). This work will be carried out by the handyman. This was then resolved by remaining Councillors.
The Chair will collect the village barbecue from Mr Coleman and deliver to Cllr Alexander, who will look after it.

140: Cemetery Matters:

Cllr Edwards had circulated a proposal prior to the meeting. This is for a post box at the Cemetery for "letters to loved ones." The idea being that letters could be posted in the box to people that had passed. The letters would be treated with respect – not read but placed somewhere (to be confirmed). Cllr Edwards further proposed that the £2500 held in reserve for the Neighbourhood Plan could be transferred to finance this project. Cllr Edwards would like to take this project forward. These proposals were discussed, and then seconded by Cllr Wuczke – it was then resolved by all Councillors present. The Chair then proposed that the post box go next to the bench already in the Cemetery – and the plinth replaced to accommodate both. This was seconded by the Cllr Alexander and resolved by all Councillors.

The Chair asked the Clerk to obtain quotes to remove the "spoils" at the Cemetery. He also asked the Clerk to remind Goldleaf the hedge at the Cemetery needs to be trimmed. Cllr Alexander said he would look at the Cemetery gate to see if it needs any further repair.

141: Development of HAS26:

The Chair noted he has included this as a standing item – nothing to report at this meeting

142: The Park:

1. Memorial Request:

The Chair noted that the resident that has applied for a memorial in the park has accepted that it can be placed in the northeast corner. This application was then formally approved by all Councillors.

2. Swings:

A quote was attached from Online Playgrounds (our usual contractor-renamed) for replacement of all swings, cradles – one disability, one

flat and two for under 5's with bars). This was for £2106.48. The Chair asked for two further quotes to be provided at the next meeting.

3. **Tarmac at the park:**
   Cllr Edwards provided an email from the Company we used to Tarmac the area in the park. This was to resurface the area and to paint parking lines. This was discussed, but no formal proposal was made.

143: Finance:

The Chair asked the Clerk to speak.

1. **To authorise accounts for payment:**
   It was resolved that the following amounts could be paid:

Cheque	To	Amount	For
2098	C Underhay	£308.90	Salary
2099	HMRC	£205.60	HMRC (Clerk Tax)
2100	Goldleaf	£1272.12	Jan & Feb maintenance
2101	CBC	£96	Hall Hire for Jan/Feb/March
2102	C Underhay	11.98	stamps and envelopes

A standing order for £26 was paid to C Underhay on 1st December 2023 & 1st January 2024 for working at home allowance.

A direct debit for £10.25 was paid to Clear Methods on 20th December 2023 and 18th January 2024 for payroll administration.

A direct debit for £35 was paid on 12th January 2024 for our annual Data Protection Fee.

We received £29.18 on 31st December 2023 and £35.23 on 31st January 2024 in respect of interest.

Payment of all the above was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Cllr Alexander, and then resolved by all Councillors.

2. **Account Balances & Budget. To review summary of spend against budget:**
   Bank account balances as of 31st January 2024 – current account £10,867.12 and savings account £35,391.46 (total £46,258.58). Spending against budget (taking out the tarmac spending as this was not in the budget) comes to £17,348. This represents 64.5% of the £26,890 budget, with 83% of the financial year gone.

3. **Appointment of internal auditor:**
   It was proposed by Cllr Edwards and seconded by Cllr Alexander that we appoint the same internal auditor as last year – Elizabeth Barnicoat. This was then resolved by all Councillors.

4. **Review of funds in reserve:**
   The funds in reserve statement were distributed for information – it was noted that this will be discussed at next month's meeting.

144: Correspondence Received (for information only):

None

145: Items for inclusion in the next agenda:

None

The meeting closed at 8.45pm
Colin Underhay – Clerk – 3rd March 2024

Signed as a true copy……. (R Scott - Chair) 11th March 2024