

Harescombe Parish Council

Parish Council Meeting - Draft Minutes

20th November 2023

Meeting commenced at; 7.32pm

Present, Cllr. Ratcliffe, Cllr. Richards, Cllr. Pritchard, and Cllr. Leeper. County Cllr, District Cllr. Stephen Davies (part of meeting).

Parish Clerk, Mr. S. Hale

01/11.23 Public question time – limited to 15 minutes.

No members of the public were present.

02/11.23 To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies from Cllr. Perkins & Cllr. Susan Williams

03/11.23 Member's declaration of interest to items on the agenda.

Cllr. Pritchard in relation to matters referring to the church

04/11.23 Minutes for 25th September 2023 were approved.

05/11.23 Dispensation requests – Cllr. Pritchard.

05/11.23.1 Council resolved to approve Cllr. Pritchard's request for dispensation to participate in any discussion on business on any agenda which may have an effect upon or relate to the activities of the Parochial Church Council. Dispensation to run until 13th May 2024.

05/11.23.2 Council resolved to approve Cllr. Pritchard's request for dispensation to vote upon resolutions on business on any agenda which may have an effect upon or relate to the activities of the Parochial Church Council. Dispensation to run until 13th May 2024.

06/11.23 Finance.

Cllr Davies arrived at this point in the meeting and gave a full and informative update as to SDC Local Plan updates and the potential consequences on planning activity. He was requested to provide a briefing sheet so that information can be shared. He agreed to do so. Cllr. Davies left after giving his update in order to attend another parish council meeting.

Special Motions submitted by Cllrs. Ractliffe, Pritchard, Perkins and Leeper.

Further to minute 10/09.23 - Special Motions submitted,

06/11.23.1 *To reconsider the provision of financial assistance to the church regarding maintenance of the churchyard, as it is bisected by a public right of way footpath,*





Harescombe Parish Council

Following a discussion, Councillors resolved to retain its current position not to contribute to maintenance of the churchyard,

06/11.23.2 **To consider providing financial assistance to the Parish / Village Hall as a Community Meeting Room.**

Following a discussion, and having considered a communication from the Secretary of State for DLHC dated 29th March 2022, Council resolved to designate the Church owned Parish / Village Hall as a Community Hub, and to consider financial assistance to its maintenance and upkeep as may be appropriate in the future. This was deemed to be in the interests of all members of the parish and was in the spirit of the communication from the Secretary of State.

06/11.23.3 **Internal Controls & Bank Reconciliation** - The first of the new Internal Controls process was conducted by Cllr. Richards who noted that an invoice was password protected and there was a receipt, rather than an invoice from the ICO. The Clerk's explanations were accepted and the invoice had the password removed. All was found to be correct. This showed that the Internal Controls process is robust and effective.

Bank Reconciliation

Cash book

Balance b/f 1 April 2023	£16,198.31
Receipts	£5,246.15
Payments	<u>-£2,287.31</u>
Balance as of 15/11/2023	<u>£19,157.15</u>

Lloyds Bank

Balance per cash book 15/11/2023	<u>£19,157.15</u>
Closing balance as per statement 15/11/2023	<u>£19,157.15</u>

06/11.23.4 **Note & ratify the following payments since the last meeting.**

23/10/2023	Simon Hale	Two 1st class stamps - bank mandates	bacs	£2.20
	SLCC	Clerk's SLCC membership	bacs	
27/10/2023	HMRC	Sheila Murray - PAYE July	bacs	
	HMRC	Simon Hale - PAYE September	bacs	
30/10/2023	Sheila Murray	Salary - Jul	bacs	
	Simon Hale	Salary - Sept	bacs	
	PATA payroll services	Payroll services Jul - Sept 23-076-PPS	bacs	£25.80

06/11.23.5 **Pay Award** - Council resolved to ratify and backdate the national pay award.

Harescombe Parish Council

- 06/11.23.6 **Internal Audit** - Council resolved to appoint GAPTC as the competent and independent Internal Auditor - £180 + mileage.
- 06/11.23.7 **Bank Signatory** - Council resolved to add the Clerk as a full power signatory for account management purposes. Two councillors will still be required to authorise payments.
- 06/11.23.8 **Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Project** – It was noted that the PCC had approved the siting of a commemorative armillary, purchased by the Parish Council to form part of a planned Garden of Remembrance as the Parish Council has no land of its owns. Council was supportive of the proposal. Cllr. Pritchard to bring costs to the next meeting and council will consider.
- 06/11.23.10 **Budget and Precept 2024 – 2025.** Councillors considered the budget and precept proposals for 2024 – 2025 as presented by the Clerk. Council resolved to adopt the following reserves, budget (detailed at appendix A) and precept demand for 2024 – 2025.

Proposed Reserves 2024 - 2025	Amount
General Reserves	£5,000.00
Village Maintenance	£2,000.00
Infrastructure Project – Earmarked Reserves	£3,000.00
Village Hall	£3,200.00
Elections	£2,000.00
Defibrillator	£2,000.00
Total Reserves	£17,200.00

Council resolved to increase the precept demand by £170 to £5,250.00 to cover the predicted budget for the next financial year as adopted and detailed in Appendix A. This is a 3.35 % rise on the previous year. For a Band D property, this is likely to be an annual precept rise of approximately £1.58 which would equate to a weekly increase of just 3 pence.

- 07/11.23 **Biodiversity Duty** - Council noted its new duty to consider biodiversity as part of its business and resolved to adopt the Biodiversity Policy.
- 08/11.23 **Grant Policy** - Council reviewed, amended and resolved to adopt the Grant Policy to take into account the Council's new position on providing assistance to the Parish / Village Hall.
- 09/11.23 **Meeting Diary Schedule** - Council resolved to adopt the second Monday of Feb & Apr 2024. Then an annual schedule of the second Monday in May, Jul, Sep, Nov, then 2025 Jan, Mar, etc as the Council meeting diary schedule. Subject to any necessary change to facilitate the Council being quorate.
- 10/11.23 **D-DAY Commemoration** - Council noted that it may be asked to support a D-Day Commemoration event in June 2024.



402

Harescombe Parish Council

11/11.23 Highways

11/11.23.1 Street-name signs within the parish.

Council considered the Clerk's report and the issue was discussed at length. The potential costs to the parish were not considered necessary or proportionate at this time, as there was no perceived local requirement for such a project to take place. Council resolved not to pursue street naming activity at this time.

11/11.23.2 Update from Clerk regarding Grunters Lane flooding

Council noted the report which had been submitted to Highways by the Clerk. The GCC Highways manager, Paul Helbrow has offered a site visit to consider the issues raised. County Cllr. Williams has offered to attend any site meeting and it was agreed that Cllr. Ractliffe with her knowledge of the history of this problem was best placed to meet with Mr Helbrow for a site visit. Cllr Ractliffe to arrange a site visit to address Grunters Lane Flooding.

11/11.23.3 Update regarding drain cleaning frequency

Council noted drains were cleaned at least annually and some perhaps 2 or 3 times a year. Additional attention could be undertaken as and when required and the PC would need to make additional requests as necessary.

11/11.23.4 Update for hedge cutting on A4173 and Brook Lane.

Hedgerow has been cutback but the pavement remains overgrown with encroaching vegetation. Cllr. Ractliffe to bring to the attention of, and discuss with, GCC Highways Manager Mr Helbrow at the proposed Grunters Lane flooding meeting.

11/11.23.5 Update on road signs at the top of Grunters Lane.

GCC Highways acknowledged the Clerk's request to inspect these signs with a view of replacement and also consider a proper 1:6 gradient sign at the top of Grunters Lane in Edge. Clerk to follow up.

12/11.23 Matters arising (no decisions can be made on such matters).

Council wishes to consider making donations to local charities which have an effect on the local community. Particularly Neighbourhood Wardens and the Air Ambulance. This is to be considered at the next meeting

Clerk to give full planning status update to future meetings.

Local tradesman is available to address village maintenance issues. Clerk to research costs of Painswick Parish Council handymen.

13/11.23 Date of next meeting.

7.30 pm Monday 12th February 2024 then potentially Tuesday 8th April. New meeting schedule will then commence in May

Meeting concluded at 9.27pm



Harescombe Parish Council

Appendix A – Adopted Budget for 2024 – 2025

Minute 06/11.23.10 refers

NOTE - All figures rounded up to the nearest pound

2022-23	Category	2023-24	Apr - Sept	Oct - Mar	2023-24	2023-24	Variance
Previous year	Payments	Budget	Actual	Predicted	TOTAL	TOTAL	
£783.00	Clerks Gross Salary (& PAYE)						
£0.00	Clerk's expenses	£16.00	£19.00	£40.00	£59.00	£59.00	-£43.00
£89.00	PATA Payroll	£26.00	£52.00	£28.00	£80.00	£80.00	-£54.00
£41.00	Councillors' expenses	£50.00	£40.00	£0.00	£40.00	£40.00	£10.00
£180.00	Internal audit	£200.00	£180.00	£0.00	£180.00	£180.00	£20.00
£120.00	Training	£100.00	£144.00	£70.00	£214.00	£214.00	-£114.00
£0.00	Hire of Village Hall	£220.00	£0.00	£220.00	£220.00	£220.00	£0.00
£94.00	Subscriptions	£100.00	£212.00	£0.00	£212.00	£212.00	-£112.00
£128.00	Insurance	£200.00	£128.00	£0.00	£128.00	£128.00	£72.00
£250.00	Donations / S137	£700.00	£250.00	£0.00	£250.00	£250.00	£450.00
£274.00	Website & office admin	£160.00	£35.00	£60.00	£95.00	£95.00	£65.00
£0.00	Village maintenance	£1,000.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1,000.00
£1,959.00	SUB TOTAL	£4,822.00	£2,287.00	£2,048.00	£4,335.00	£4,335.00	£487.00

2024-25	Proposed Budget	Comments - CPI estimated at approx 6% where appropriate
	£80.00	£60 WFH allowance + £40 for mileage
	£60.00	Currently £14.00 per quarter.
	£50.00	No change
	£200.00	Currently £180 + mileage but budgeted for inflationary rise
	£100.00	No change
	£235.00	Assume £15 rise
	£132.00	£100 for GAPTC and £32 towards SLCC
	£140.00	Reviewed 2nd year of a 3-year contract
	£0.00	Wardens & Air Ambulance * Note: S137 allowance
	£160.00	£60 for annual fee, ICO + other
	£400.00	Ditch clearing and replacement grit bins
	£5,232.00	