

HARESCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON LINE ON 18TH NOVEMBER 2020 AT 8PM.

Present: Cllrs Andy Buckmaster (Chairman), Mike Hyett, Daffyd Lawday, Kath Pritchard, Caroline Ractliffe (Vice Chair), District Cllr David Mossman and Sheila Murray (Clerk)

There were no members of the public present

1/11.20 Public question time

None

2/11.20 To receive apologies for absence

None.

3/11.20 To approve the minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th September, 2020 were accepted and approved as a true record. To be signed at an appropriate time by Cllr Buckmaster on behalf of the Council.

4/11.20 Matters Arising from the Minutes not covered on the Agenda

None

5/11.20 Member's declaration of interest to items on the agenda

None

6/11.20 Report on roads, ditches and footpaths in the village

6/11.1 Cllr Buckmaster gave a follow up of the meeting of councillors regarding the condition of Daniels Brook. It was agreed that no further action would be taken and Cllr Buckmaster will review the condition of the brook in the Spring. It was noted that any new or replacements sewage units must be Bio-tanks which purifies the effluent. Cllr Buckmaster commented on a fallen tree obstructing the water flow which he will discuss with the landowner.

6/11.2 The Clerk advised on the status regarding the SDRSG and confirmed that the organisation will be disbanded and any residue funds will be returned to the respective Parish Councils. The two VAS units are available to be purchased by any member Council.

6/11.3 Cllr Buckmaster confirmed that Highways have inspected the tarmac car parking area outside Woodstock and raised no concerns at this time. However, it was noted that this type of work should not be carried out without the consent of The Highways.

6/11.4 Cllr Ractliffe raised concerns about the water rising outside Brook Farm. It is believed that a pipe is damaged under the road. The Clerk will discuss with Highways.

6/11.5 Cllr Ractliffe also requested Highways be notified of the rising water level in the ditches near the Harescombe village sign and that there are six bin bags wedged in the ditch also causing flooding. Additionally, there is ditch filling from Threshold Farm to Haresfield Lane. The Clerk agreed to discuss the matter with Highways.

6/11.6 Highways have confirmed that they will be reducing the bank to clear the slippage which has caused the road closure at Spring Acre.

6/11.7 Cllr Ractliffe confirmed that the maize field has now been cleared to enable improved access to the public footpath.

7/11.20 District Councillor's report

Cllr David Mossman extended his apologies as there has not been any recent representation from District Council.

He gave an update on District Council matters.

- There is currently a high alert on Dog thefts and information is available on SDC website for safeguarding against dog theft.
- He confirmed that the Canal Project were successful in obtaining Lottery funding to complete the next phase of the Stroudwater Canal access. This project is expected to bring £5.5m from tourism into the Stroud area.
- He advised that The Local Plan review is in consultation stage until 16th December, 2020 by which time there will be no further opportunity to place a point of view. There has been a change to the Government guidelines on housing requirements from 638 to 786 dwellings and Parish Councils are requested to review their thoughts on this matter and comment by the deadline date.

There were no ongoing questions and Cllr Mossman left the meeting.

8/11.20 Planning SDC decisions and new applications

The Clerk confirmed that there were no Planning Applications for discussion.

She noted that the application S20/1522/FUL Wood Cottage To erect and Garage and Garage Store was still pending a decision.

9/11.20 Finance

9/11.1 The financial reports were provided to Councillors prior to the meeting and included:

- A Bank Reconciliation
- Summary expenditure year to date
- Performance v budget.

Cllr Pritchard proposed approval of the documents, seconded by Cllr Hyett.

Vote: unanimous

9/11.2 Cllr Buckmaster proposed that the following payments be made and the cheques signed at a convenient time. Councillors approved.

Invoices for payment

Date	Payee	Details	Cheq	Total £	Total £
18/11/2020	Mrs S Murray	Payroll September	440	£ 95.37	£ 285.91
18/11/2020	Mrs S Murray	Payroll October		£ 95.37	
18/11/2020	Mrs S Murray	Payroll November		£ 95.17	
18/11/2020	HMRC	PAYE SEPT	442	£ 23.80	£ 71.60
18/11/2020	HMRC	PAYE OCT		£ 23.80	
18/11/2020	HMRC	PAYE S Murray		£ 24.00	
18/11/2020	PATA	Payroll Services	443	£ 23.25	
18/11/2020	Town & Parish Council Websites	Website upgrade	444	£ 140.00	
18/11/2020	S Murray Expenses	Computer/lead	445	£ 64.95	
25/08/2020	ICO	GDRP	DD	£ 35.00	

9/11.3 The Clerk previously provided details of the Budget 2021/22 to the Councillors prior to the meeting.

The Clerk gave an overview of the information provided and the following items were approved:

- The Village Hall will retain their fee for Hall Hire in 2020/21 and 2021/22. Following debate on support for the Village Hall Councillors approved an increase to £200 for an annual contribution to the Hall Hire for both this year and next year.

The budget discussion was suspended to enable Councillors to discuss item 11 as it had an impact on the precept decision. *Councillors agreed and Standing Orders were suspended for this purpose.*

11/11.20 Donations for the Church

The Clerk had previously provided as much information as possible to assist with the decision on whether the Parish Council should continue to give an annual donation to the church. Cllr Pritchard advised that the matter was discussed previously and minutes of the September 2018 meeting resolved to continue payments to the Church. Councillors debated the issue and felt that the guidelines are ambiguous and until current case law is proven it is unclear as to its power to provide monies to the Church. Consequently, the Councillors would likely be personally liable for the costs of any legal challenge.

Cllr Buckmaster proposed to stop making donations to the Church, Seconded by Cllr Lawday Vote: unanimous.

Councillors requested that the minute reflected their reluctance to make this decision as the Church is the centre of their community. The Clerk undertook to bring any new developments on this matter to the Council.

9/11.3 continuation of Budget 2021/22

Items discussed and changed:

- Internal audit figure to be checked
- Increase Village Hall hire to £200 per annum
- Reduce Grant funding to £500
- Increase Village Maintenance to £1000
- Contingency/Sundry to £557

Cllr Pritchard proposed that the Precept be set at the same level per resident as last year. Seconded by Cllr Ractliffe. Vote unanimous.

It was resolved that the Precept value for 2021/22 will be determined by the December Electoral Role and be calculated at the same level per resident as 2020/21. The actual value to be confirmed at the next meeting.

Councillors discussed the opportunity to provide additional facilities to the Village and outlined proposals for the purchase of a Defibrillator unit and to consider some road calming measures. Councillors will discuss the opportunities with local residents and report back at the next meeting.

10/11.20 Administration

10.11.1 The Clerk confirmed the website accessibility content was completed and requested approval of the extra time incurred. 6 hours @ £11 Total £66 to be included in the December payroll. Councillors approved.

10.11.2 Councillors discussed the Risk Assessment & Management Policy. Councillors approved and adopted the Policy with an amendment to the number of grit bins.

10/11.3 Councillors discussed the Grant Awarding Policy and resolved to omit a limiting value on any grant which must be presented on its own merit. Councillors approved and adopted the Grant Awarding Policy.

12/11.20 Correspondence

The Clerk advised that the Census 2021 information was available and should be placed on the notice board and website. Councillors agreed.

13/11.20 Councillors' Submissions.

Councillors agreed to reconsider the Local Plan review and to submit information to the clerk prior to the deadline of 16th December 2020.

14/11.20 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on 20th January, 2021 at 8pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.50pm