

HAUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer: Jonathan Brumwell

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Minutes of the Meeting of Haughton Parish Council held at Haughton Village Hall at 7.00pm on Monday 26th February 2024

Present:

Parish Councillors: Ian Sunley (Chair), Michael Allen, Suzanne Beatty, Mark Burgess, Melvyn Cotterill, Peter Prokopa and Stuart Taylor.

In attendance:

Clerk: Jonathan Brumwell

Councillor J Rose

Mr Graham Wright, Community Bus Project

Public Open Forum: One member of the public was present.

1. To receive apologies and accept and record any reasons for absences.

There were no apologies.

2. Declarations of interest

Councillor Allen declared an interest in Item 12.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 22nd January 2024

The minutes were proposed, seconded and approved as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

4. Items to be taken with the public excluded

There were no items to be taken with the public excluded.

5. Reports from Borough and County Councillors, SPCA, PCSO, Chair, and Clerk

Borough – Councillor Rose informed the Council of an initiative to encourage pollinators to create a ‘bee-friendly Borough’ which could be extended to parish initiatives. Councillor Sunley asked about flooding issues; Councillor Rose said that he had received complaints from residents, sweeping had been carried out recently and he was looking into complaints. The Chairman identified flooding at Rectory Lane as an issue.

SPCA – Councillor Allen reported that the Wellbeing Officer initiative was seen as being successful and the County Council was exploring further similar projects. Policy and Resources Committee to meet on 7th March with meeting of the Executive one week later.

Chair – The Chairman said any issues were covered by items on the agenda.

Village Hall – Councillor Burgess reported that the Village Hall AGM would be held on 13th May at 7.00pm.

Clerk – the Clerk reported that articles had been submitted for both the Bugle and Village Voice to include the thermal camera project. Carl Dudley had agreed to give a talk at the Annual Parish Meeting on the railway line between Stafford and Newport. Options for distributing leaflets to publicise the meeting – possibly in conjunction with the Garden Guild – needed to be discussed.

6. Planning

a) Planning Applications for consideration (click on link for details)

23/38507/FUL - Variation of Condition 2 (plans) to application 20/32544/FUL - conversion of barns to two dwellings at Shutt Heath Farm, Shutt Heath Road, White Cross – no objection.

b) Approvals – for information only (link is to original planning application)

SCC/23/0172/FULL-MIN for Extension to Slurry Lagoon at LANE END FARM, Lane End Farm, Shippey Lane, STAFFORD, ST18 9GY

7. Financial Report

(a) Expenditure incurred on behalf of the Council under the terms of Financial Regulation 4.1:

Key to Playing Field Gate £5.99

RESOLVED that the expenditure incurred under Financial Regulation 4.1 is approved.

(b) Bank reconciliation as at 31st January 2024 was approved by Cllr Taylor.

(c) Payments for approval: To approve online payments and payment of direct debits as detailed below:

DESCRIPTION	NET	VAT	GROSS
Haughton Village Hall	25.00	0.00	25.00
J R Landscaping	374.58	74.92	449.50
Screwfix (fence spikes)	24.97	4.99	29.96
Decathlon (basketball net)	6.66	1.33	7.99
Salaries and Expenses	639.55	121.60	761.15
Direct Debit Payments			
EE Mobile	£12.67	£2.53	£15.20

The payments were approved.

(e) Income Received – to note:

Lloyds Bank (Lloyds Reserve – interest February) £ 5.02

The Chairman informed the Council that movements to reserves would be considered at the March meeting.

8. Highways, public rights of way and related issues including those requiring reporting:

a) Highways including grass cutting

1. Dale Lane – The temporary closure was noted

2. Playing Field – the Council considered purchasing a combination padlock at a cost of £24.59 (exclusive of VAT) to replace the keyed lock at the playing field

RESOLVED to authorise the Clerk to purchase a combination padlock for the playing field

b) Public Rights of Way – The Clerk had attempted to contact the owner's agent to discuss installation of kissing gates on Footpath 18. This would be progressed. Investigations to be made regarding ownership of land on bank of Grassy Lane brook opposite the footpath.

c) Dale Common – The Council considered the tender for grazing from April 2024.

RESOLVED to invite tenders for grazing on Dale Common for the period 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025.

9. Reports from Councillors

(a) Park – Councillor Taylor reported that the skate area and benches require treatment. Mole activity continuing in area near the exercise equipment with 4 or 5 new molehills having appeared along the hedge line. This would be monitored.

(b) Football Pitch – Councillor Taylor reported that the loose grass following the most recent cut by the Council's contractors was preventing growth and may result in reseeding being required.

10. Suspension of Standing Orders

The Chairman proposed that Standing Orders be suspended and Item 12 be brought forward to enable Mr Graham Wright to speak regarding the Community Bus.

RESOLVED that Standing Orders be suspended.

Councillor Allen left the meeting.

11. Community Bus

Mr Wright gave an overview of the Community Bus project, from its origins to the present day, and outlined how the service operates. Mr Wright took questions from members of the Council.

The Chairman thanked Mr Wright for attending. Mr Wright left the meeting.

The meeting resumed. After considering the information presented by Mr Wright the Council concluded that the Community Bus was of value to communities that did not enjoy the public transport links available in Haughton.

Councillor Allen rejoined the meeting.

12. Updates on projects and action points:

FLIRE5-X thermal Imaging Camera – Councillor Training

This service had now been advertised to residents via the Parish Council and village Facebook pages and enquiries had been received. Councillors were asked to meet at the end of the meeting to discuss arrangements for undertaking the first series of imaging visits.

13. Civic Amenity visits 2024

The Council considered the following documents relating to Civic Amenity visits:

- (1) the 2024 Civic Amenity Risk Assessment; and
- (2) Parish Council Civic Amenity Visit Agreement.

RESOLVED that the risk assessment and agreement are accepted and the Clerk is authorised to sign and return both documents.

14. Best Kept Village

The Council noted that applications were being invited for Best Kept Village.

RESOLVED to identify dates and times of Village Tidy-Ups at the Annual Parish Meeting and on the flyer.

15. Allimore Green – Extension of lease

The Council considered a proposed extension to the lease agreement between the Parish Council and Staffordshire Wildlife Trust for the use of Allimore Green as a nature reserve on similar terms and conditions to those detailed in the lease dated 29th January 1998.

RESOLVED to extend the existing lease agreement between the Parish Council and Staffordshire Wildlife Trust for the use of Allimore Green as a nature reserve on similar terms and conditions until 2026.

16. Suspension of Standing Order 3x

Councillor Prokopa proposed that Standing Order 3x be suspended to enable the remainder of the business on the agenda to be transacted.

RESOLVED to suspend Standing Order 3x.

17. Standards Working Group

The Council noted the work conducted by the Standards Working Group to review all Council policies and procedures and considered its report including amendments proposed to the following policies:

- (1) Financial Regulations
- (2) Standing Orders
- (3) Complaints Procedure
- (4) Unreasonable Complaints Policy
- (5) Appraisal Procedure

RESOLVED that the amendments are approved and adopted as proposed by the Working Group.

18. Future agenda items

The Council noted that future agenda items should be notified to the Clerk by Monday, 18th March 2024.

19. Date and time of next meeting

The Council confirmed the date and time of the next meeting as Monday, 25th March 2024 at 7.00pm.

20. Meeting Close

The meeting closed at 9.13pm.

Chair, 25th March 2024