

MINUTES OF 1055TH MEETING OF HOGHTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 16TH MAY 2011 AT THE VILLAGE HALL.

PRESENT: - COUNCILLOR D. DICKINSON (CHAIRMAN) COUNCILLOR T. GREENWOOD (VICE CHAIRMAN) COUNCILLORS N.PETER, T.SHARRATT, AND Ms M. URRY AND MR. T HARKNESS (CLERK).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors J.Baldwin and J. Proctor.

2. COUNCILLOR PROCTOR:

The Chairman (Councillor D. Dickinson) informed the Parish Council of the illness of Councillor Proctor.

The Parish Council wished Councillor Proctor a speedy recovery.

3. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL/PREJUDICIAL INTEREST:

The Clerk reminded Members of their responsibility to declare any personal interest in respect of matters on the agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct. No one made a declaration at this stage.

4. MINUTES:

The Minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 18th April 2011 having been previously circulated were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. MATTERS ARISING:

Councillor Ms Urry reported that following the meeting of the Equality Forum in April 2011 a sub group meeting dealing with the legal basis for assessment and personal benefits had been arranged for Tuesday 17th May 2011.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

THERE THEN FOLLOWED AN ADJOURNMENT TO ALLOW THE PUBLIC TO RAISE ISSUES AND QUESTION THE PARISH COUNCIL REGARDING MATTERS DEALT WITH. AS THERE WERE NO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT THE PARISH COUNCIL CONTINUED WITH THE BUSINESS ON THE AGENDA.

7. POLICE REPORT:

The Clerk circulated details of the latest police newsletter which indicated that there had been two reported incident of crime during April 2011.

Councillor Ms Urry reported two further incidents on Houghton Lane near her property.

Councillor Sharratt indicated that the nature of the incidents echoed his report of similar incidents at the last Parish Council meeting.

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The Chairman reported on the organisational review of the Southern Division of the Lancashire Constabulary which included Hoghton.

8. LALC REPORT:

The Clerk submitted the current newsletter and referred to the Big Society Awards scheme.

The Chairman (Councillor Dickinson) reported on the current situation regarding appointments to the County Council's Three Tier Forum.

The Clerk confirmed that Mr. D. Cranshaw wished his nomination to serve on the Forum to stand.

The Clerk reported that a consultation exercise was being undertaken by the Department of Communities and Local Government on the future of local public audit following the decision to disband the Audit Commission.

The suggested method for the Parish Council would be for them to either appoint their own independent auditor or adopt a regime similar to that operated for charities whereby the type and level was related to the financial turnover of the Parish Council.

The closing date for the consultation was 30th June 2011. The National Association was proposing to draft a response on behalf of all members and had requested the views of the Parish Council.

The Parish Councils view was that the option for audit similar to charities should be adopted subject to there being no increase in the fees paid.

The Parish Council supported the proposals of National Association and the Clerk would forward the views of the Parish Council to LALC.

9. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS:

(A). GIB LANE:

The Vice Chairman (Councillor T. Greenwood) reported there had still been no progress on the repainting of the SLOW markings.

Councillor Sharratt reported that water continued to leak onto the road near the railway bridge.

The Clerk would report this to United Utilities.

(B). HEDGES – STATION ROAD:

At the last meeting Councillor Baldwin had reported that there had been some progress on the cutting back of the branches on the road side but further work was required.

The Clerk contacted the County Council about this and a further inspection had been carried out and it was considered that no further work was required.

(C). FOOTPATH – FINNINGTON:

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The Clerk reported that no action had been taken regarding the report by Councillor Ms Urry that the footpath along the canal from Finnington towards Withnell was obstructed and part of it had been closed off.

Councillor Sharratt circulated a copy of the letter from British Waterways Board regarding the collapsed wall on the canal towpath near Finnington Moorings.

(D). BOUNDARY SIGN MOULDEN BROW:

The Clerk reported that no further action had been taken on this matter.

(E). HOGHTON SIGN QUAKER BROOK LANE:

The Clerk reported that the sign had now been repaired and that the police had agreed to undertake further patrols on Houghton Lane.

(F). ROAD TRAFFIC SIGN – LANE SIDE FARM:

The Chairman (Councillor D. Dickinson) reported that a local resident at Lane Side Farm had seen deer on the A675 Blackburn Old Road and had asked for the erection a deer warning sign.

The Clerk had contacted the County Council about this and they were looking into the possibility of providing a sign.

10. CHORLEY COUNCIL REPORT:

The Chairman (Councillor Dickinson) reported on issues affecting the Parish Council. Councillor Sharratt referred to the resignation of the Chief Executive and hoped that a clear and transparent selection procedure would be followed in appointing a successor.

11. PLANNING REPORT:

(A) DECISIONS.

There were no decisions to report.

(B). APPLICATIONS:

No planning application had been received since the last meeting of the Parish Council.

(C). RESIDENTIAL PARKING PROVISION-PROPOSED INTERIM POLICY:

The Clerk reported that Chorley Council had proposed an interim policy for car parking provision in view of the amendment to national policy by the Coalition Government. Details of the policy were presented.

The Parish Council made no observations.

(D). CENTRAL LANCASHIRE CORE STRATEGY:

The Clerk reported that this had been submitted to the Secretary of State for approval and there would be hearings into it commencing in June 2011.

12. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:

There were no accounts for payment

13. HMRC EMPLOYERS PAYE REGISTRATION:

The Clerk reported the current position regarding PAYE Registration.

14. INSURANCE PREMIUM - RENEWAL.

The Clerk submitted details of the Parish Council's insurance quotation from Norwich Union for the period from 1st June 2011, requested the Council to consider whether this was adequate and reported that the cost of renewing this would amount to £562.47 a slight reduction since last year.

A sum of £650.00 had been included in the Parish Council's Estimates for this premium in 2011/12.

The Parish Council agreed that the Council's Insurance was adequate, that it be renewed for 2011/12 at a premium of £562.47 and a cheque was signed.

15. AUDIT OF PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS:

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that the Audit for 2010/11 would take place on 1st July 2011.

The Independent Internal Auditor had examined the Parish Council's Accounts and procedures, confirmed that they were in order, agreed the Audit Report and submitted it to the Parish Council for approval.

The Clerk also reported that under the procedure it was necessary for the Parish Council to approve a statement of governance that the accounts had been undertaken in accordance with prescribed regulations. A copy of the Annual Return Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and the Independent Auditors Report was circulated to each Member.

The Parish Council acknowledged its responsibility for the preparation of the accounts and confirmed, to the best of its knowledge and belief that the Council's accounts for the year ended 31st March 2011 were true and correct and that they had considered the statement of governance in connection with those accounts.

The Chairman (Councillor D. Dickinson) then signed the Annual Return where appropriate.

16. PINFOLD:

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that the Pinfold had been registered with the Land Registry and circulated a copy of the certificate. He had notified the de Houghton Estate that the Commons Registration Authority (CRA) had confirmed that the Parish Council was recorded as owner of VG59 (The Pinfold) on the Register on direction of a Commons Commissioner under S8 of the 1965 Statute and the land appeared to be statutorily vested in the Parish Council.

He had also sent the Estate the certificate of registration with the Land Registry.

The Estate was now considering its position.

Arrangements would be made with the contractor to see if there was any increase in the price, the question of access for the contractor would be investigated and residents and the Royal Oak would be notified of the proposed work.

Councillor Peter asked if arrangements were in place for the provision of a skip. The Clerk would contact Mr. Peet at Chorley Council about this.

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He also suggested that the Wildlife Conservation Officer at the County Council should be contacted before the work started to minimise any disturbance to wildlife on the site.

Councillor Peter also asked that when work is due to start the de Houghton Estate be informed of the Parish Council's intentions and that they be asked for their views.

17. WAR MEMORIAL:

The Vice Chairman (Councillor T. Greenwood) that a provisional estimate had been submitted from Askam Construction Ltd amounting to £11024.00 a copy of which was circulated.

The Clerk would now seek funding for the work.

The Clerk had also posted notices as suggested by Councillor Peter informing the public of the current state of the War Memorial and asking for their comments and assistance.

Once funding was available and a scheme had been drawn up arrangements would be made for the public to be consulted on it and a public meeting held.

18. COMMUNITY TRANSPORT:

The Clerk had previously circulated details of the review of Community Transport being undertaken on behalf of the County Council by TAS Partnerships.

The Clerk reported that Brindle Parish Council had commented that Public Transport by regular, inexpensive and reliable bus to Chorley was needed.

In addition to improved public transport the lack of publicity and information on other schemes such as `dial a ride` and taxis for health appointments was identified.

Generally most people found it easy to access local services but admit that it is essential to travel by car.

There were also issues with the concessionary travel scheme due to the proximity of the Parish to the boundaries of South Ribble and the City of Preston.

The Parish Council concurred with the views of Brindle Parish Council.

Councillor Ms Urry also reported that the Equality Forum had sent comments on rural transport provision to the County Council.

19. REVISIONS TO PARISH COUNCIL CHARTER:

The Clerk informed the Parish Council of revisions to the present charter.

No observations were made

20. ARMED FORCES DAY:

Following the last meeting when the Parish Council had agreed to support Armed Forces Day planned for 25th June 2011, the Clerk had enquired about the costs of a flag and flagpole.

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The total cost would be £149.95.

Councillor Ms Urry offered to provide a flag for the occasion.

Arrangements would be made for the flag to be displayed in an appropriate location on the day.

21. FIRE AUTHORITY RISK MANGEMENT PLAN CONSULTATION:

The Clerk submitted the outcome of the consultations undertaken by the Fire Authority following the publication of the Risk Management Plan in February 2011.

22. FLOODING - QUAKER BROOK LANE:

Councillor Sharratt circulated a copy of a letter from the Environment Director regarding the work undertaken to alleviate the flooding problem.

The Parish Council agreed to send a letter of thanks to her for the work done.

23. CHORLEY STANDARDS COMMITTEE:

Councillor Sharratt reported on the outcome of his complaint to the Ombudsman. The complaint had been rejected on the grounds of protocol not on the merits of the complaint and as there was no further appeal except by judicial review he was not taking the matter further.

24. SCAM:

Councillor Sharratt outlined details of a possible scam which he had been informed of whereby a resident received a letter notifying him he had a package in Holland which contained up to £2,500.00 and this would be sent to him on payment of a delivery charge. Trading Standards had been notified but Councillor Sharratt was concerned how the company had obtained the name and address of the resident. He asked to be notified if anyone received a similar letter or if any Member of the Parish Council knew of any one who had received a letter.

25. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Monday 20th June 2011 at 7.30.pm at the Village Hall.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.05. p.m.

**SIGNED
CHAIRMAN**

20TH JUNE 2011