

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HINTON BLEWETT PARISH COUNCIL HELD  
ON TUESDAY 19th MAY 2015 2015 IN THE VILLAGE HALL  
Draft until adopted by Council and signed by the Chairman**

**Present:** Cllrs Mrs E Brimmell (Chairman), Mrs C Arnold, D Huffadine, M Jay and J Layzell.  
Ward Councillor Tim Warren was present.

The Minutes were taken by Mrs E Merko (Clerk).

**Public Participation:** There were two members of the public present.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.35pm.

- 15/1 Election of Chairman of Council 2015-16:** nominations were invited. Cllr Mrs Brimmell was nominated. There being no other nominations, it was proposed and agreed that Cllr Mrs Brimmell be elected Chairman and took the chair.
- 15/2 Declarations of Office:** Declarations of Office were signed by all members present and by the new Chairman and were witnessed by the Clerk. One declaration of office was received from the absent Councillor which had been witnessed by another Councillor.
- 15/3 Election of Vice-Chairman:** nominations were invited. Cllr J Layzell was nominated. It was proposed and agreed that Cllr Layzell be elected Vice Chairman.
- 15/4 Apologies:** Apologies were received from Cllr Elliott.
- 15/5 Adoption of Minutes:** The minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2015 and 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015 were agreed as an accurate record. The minutes were proposed and agreed for adoption.
- 15/6 Annual Parish Meeting 2015:** the minutes of the meeting were received. It was requested that the date (2014) be added to clarify item 3. The minutes were agreed for signing at the next meeting in 2016.
- 15/7 Election of Officers:** The following officer appointments were proposed and agreed:
- |                                    |                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Finance Monitor:                   | Cllr Huffadine    |
| Emergency Planning & Snow Contact: | Cllr Layzell      |
| Footpath Representative:           | Cllr Mrs Brimmell |
- 15/8 Committees of the Parish Council:** it was proposed and agreed that the terms and structure of the committees should remain unchanged and officers were duly appointed as follows:
- HR Committee: Chairman (Cllr Mrs E Brimmell) and Vice Chairman (Cllr J Layzell).  
Finance Committee: Chairman (Cllr Mrs E Brimmell) and Finance Monitor (Cllr D Huffadine).  
Playing Field Management Committee: Chairman (Cllr Mrs E Brimmell), Vice Chairman (Cllr J Layzell), 4 members of the public (currently A Grant, M Booth, D Cox and T Layzell), it was noted that there was a vacancy on the Committee for another councillor.

Cllr Warren left the meeting at 8pm.

- 15/9 Standing Orders:** the new model Standing Orders were reviewed. Having taken advice from ALCA, it was agreed that references to seconding would be removed. It was agreed to add a former Standing Order to SO 10, to allow for acceptance of apologies where it is considered

Signed..... (Chairman) Dated..... Page..... 1

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appropriate. It was agreed that the structure of each Committee should be added to Standing Order 4.

Subject to the amendments above the new Standing Orders were proposed and agreed for adoption. To be reviewed in twelve months' time.

**15/10 Financial Regulations:** as there were new model Financial Regulations to consider it was agreed that the new model with highlighted comparison to the current regulations would be considered at the next meeting of the Council in July.

**15/11 Code of Conduct:** following review it was proposed and agreed to re-adopt the Code of Conduct with no amendments.

**15/12 Arrangements with other local authorities:** it was noted that a contract had been signed for BANES' mowing of the Barbury for 2015/16 at a cost of £342.99+VAT and that the Parish Council undertook to clear footpaths in the Parish on behalf of BANES for which a grant of £616.17 for 2015/16 would be awarded. An invoice would be sent to BANES for receipt of the grant.

**15/13 Representation on external bodies:** the following appointments were proposed and agreed:  
 Village Hall Committee: Cllr Mrs Arnold  
 Chew Valley Neighbourhood Plan: Cllr Mrs Brimmell (and a parishioner, J Howells)  
 Avon Local Councils Association (ALCA): Cllr Mrs Brimmell

**15/14 Parish Council insurance for 2015/16:** a comparison of three quotes for three-year Long Term Agreements (LTA) was reviewed. It was noted that the most competitive quote was £285.14 from Zurich but that Came & Co at £323.13 offered a more comprehensive cover, having insured the Council for the past three years. It was proposed and agreed that the Clerk would negotiate with Came&Co to lower its premium to £300 and if they were not able to do this this, that the quotation from Zurich be accepted.

**ACTION 15/14/1:** Clerk to arrange insurance cover as requested above.

**15/15 Membership of other bodies:** the following 2015/16 subscriptions were noted:  
 ALCA/National Association of Local Councils: £49.44  
 Society of Local Council Clerks: £77.00

**15/16 Parish Council Policies:** the policies for dealing with Complaints and Press/Media were reviewed and it was proposed and agreed to re-adopt the policies with no amendments. The Freedom of Information policy had been agreed at the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> March. It was suggested that a Policies folder be created. It was requested that all policies be posted on the Parish Council's new website once it was up and running.

**ACTION 15/16/1:** all policies to be filed together and made available on the new website

**15/17 Allocation of grants:** the current allocation of grants permitted under Section 137 of the Local Government Act (1972) was noted.

**15/18 Bank reconciliation and monthly accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015:** The outgoing Finance Monitor had confirmed the bank reconciliation to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 was correct. The report of budget variances was noted.

**15/19 Annual Accounts of the Parish Council for the year-ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015:** The accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 were proposed and agreed for adoption.

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The finances for refurbishment of Prospect Stile were discussed noting that contributions had been received from Wessex Water and promised by Mendip Hills AONB which added to the funds earmarked by the Parish Council. It was noted that, having been contacted for a final time, Butcombe no longer wished to contribute to the project. It was suggested that the Duchy of Cornwall should be taken up on its offer of a contribution.

**ACTION 15/19/1:** to assess the balance of funds needed for refurbishment of Prospect Stile and contact the Duchy to discuss the possibility of a contribution.

**15/20 Internal Audit 2014/15:** Nigel Westray was proposed and agreed as the Internal Auditor for 2014/15. The Internal Auditor's report and completion of the Annual Return were received. It was proposed and agreed to adopt the report of the Internal Auditor. It was asked that a letter of thanks be sent to Mr Westray with a request that he continue as Internal Auditor to the Parish Council until such time as he wished to stand down from the post.

**ACTION 15/20/1:** to send a letter of thanks and reappointment to Mr Nigel Westray.

**15/21 Annual Return 2014/15:** the Annual Governance statement was read and agreed by all present. It was proposed and agreed to approve the Annual Return including the Accounting Statements for 2014/15. The Annual Return was duly completed and signed by the Chairman and Clerk within the meeting.

**15/22 Election process for Councillors:** the form and process for nomination was discussed having presented significant barriers to nomination. It was asked that a letter of complaint be sent to BANES.

**ACTION: 15/22/1:** to write to BANES complaining about the repetition in the nomination form and asking that for future elections it should be possible for nomination forms to be submitted in Keynsham and Midsomer Norton as well as in Bath. Letter to be copied to Ward Councillor Warren.

**15/23 Appearance of the Conservation Area:** the superfluous clutter at the front of the Ring O Bells was discussed. It was noted that re-decoration had been planned for March but had not yet been completed. Concern was expressed for the appearance of the Conservation Area. It was asked that a polite letter be sent to Butcombe Breweries stating the importance of the Conservation Area to the village, referring to the comments of the Conservation Officer in planning permission reference 14/02778/FUL and asking for a time scale for decoration of the area.

**ACTION: 15/23/1:** to draft a letter, as detailed above, to be sent to Butcombe.

**15/24 Clerk's Annual Review:** the HR Committee reported a positive review of the Clerk's performance since her appointment in May 2014 having undertaken training with further training in the management of earmarked reserves planned for 2015. It was proposed and agreed that the Clerk move up to NALC Salary point 16.

**15/25 Signatories to the Parish Council bank account:** it was proposed and agreed that new Councillors Huffadine and Jay be added as signatories to the bank account. It was agreed that Cllr Huffadine, as the new Finance Monitor, should be granted online access to the bank account. It was agreed that former Councillors Barraclough, Grant and Whitmarsh should be removed as signatories. As Cllr Grant was the only signatory with online access to the bank account it was agreed that Cllr Grant should be permitted to amend the Clerk's salary standing

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order, as agreed above, on request from Cllr Huffadine, the new Finance Monitor, before being removed as a signatory.

**ACTION 15/25/1:** Cllr Huffadine to send details of the amendment to the Clerk's salary standing order to Cllr Grant.

**ACTION 15/25/2:** forms for a change to the bank mandate be completed and returned to TSB.

#### **15/26 Authorisation of payments.**

##### Cheques

£49.44	NALC and ALCA subscription for 2015/16 (chq 417)
£54.00	Martin Currell for ground works at Playing Field and maintenance to bench and noticeboard (chq 418)
£41.01	Clerks expenses for stationary (chq 419)

Cllrs Arnold and Layzell were instructed to sign cheques. It was proposed and agreed to approve the payments.

A quotation from GB Sport & Leisure for purchase and installation of swings for the playing field at a cost of £2324 plus VAT was agreed. The order would be placed.

##### Standing Orders

Clerk's salary for Mrs E Merko at NJC salary scale point 16, pro rata for 6 hours per week as from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2014.

The following income was noted.

£3,992.50	First payment of Parish Precept from B&NES
£90.00	First payment of Parish Support Grant from B&NES
£250.00	Grant from Wessex Watermark towards Prospect Stile Sign
£178.83	VAT refund
£54.21	HMRC reimbursement of overpaid PAYE

#### **15/27 Highways and Footpaths**

- The report of the Footpaths Warden was received. The Council was advised that the No Dogs signs on CL12/22 had already been replaced with legal signs.
- It was noted that the Works Order had been issued for work at Hollowmarsh Lane and the Council reconfirmed its budgeted commitment to contribute £200 towards the cost of this work.
- The Council noted with interest the report from the PRoW Officer of first-hand information gathered of 4X4 offenders at Hollowmarsh Lane. The Clerk was asked to follow this up with the police.
- It was reported that the large For Sale sign that had been placed on the Barbury outside the Old Rectory had now been moved onto the owner's property.
- A sign asking walkers to keep their dog from fouling along the path to the Bristol Water sewerage works was now ready to go up.

**ACTION 15/27/1:** to follow up the reported incident of 4X4 damage at Hollowmarsh Lane including evidence gathered by PRoW Officer.

#### **15/28 Items for information from the Clerk**

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- a) **Actions Report:** the report was received and noted. It was agreed that there was no longer a need to request a meeting with the Placemaking Plan Officer.
- b) **Vacancy for a Councillor:** it was agreed that due process would be followed to fill the vacancy, including, when permitted, advertising the vacancy on the noticeboard, in the Parish News and to the Parish mailing list. It was suggested that the Chew Valley Gazette might run a general article regarding the various vacancies in the area. It was hoped that nominations could be considered at the next meeting of the Parish Council in July.
- c) **NALC:** a letter of welcome to new and returning Councillors from the Chairman of NALC was received.
- d) **Broadband:** it was reported that new organisation Truespeed had taken over Wansdyke Telecom and that parishioners could register for updates.
- e) **Chew Valley Neighbourhood Plan:** it was reported that funding was currently being sought for advisory services with drop-in consultation sessions, leafleting of all households and media publicity planned for the summer.
- f) **Hinton Blewett beacon:** the celebratory lighting of the beacon on top of St Margaret's church tower commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day was well received by the Parish.  
Mr Sage had asked if he could borrow the beacon for a wedding celebration. The Council was happy to agree to this loan but asked that Mr Sage be informed that liability for the beacon during the event would rest with him as organiser.
- h) **Peter Duppa-Miller:** the Parish Council had been saddened to learn of the death of a good friend of the Council and advisor to ALCA. The Chairman would attend the funeral.
- i) **Planning Training:** it was asked that ALCA be approached regarding the provision of Planning Training for all Councillors. It was suggested that all Councillors who had not yet attended ALCA's Being a Good Councillor training should arrange a time to attend.
- j) **Councillor information folders:** all councillors received folders containing useful information such as policies, regulations, footpaths map etc.
- k) **Projection screen:** it was reported that a new screen would be installed at the Village Hall. With the ability to display documents on the screen, the Clerk would look to reduce the volume of paper at future meetings.

**ACTION 15/28/1:** Clerk to take steps to advertise the Councillor vacancy with a view to co-opting a new member to the Council at the meeting in July.

**ACTION 15/28/2:** Clerk to send to Councillors details of dates for Being a Good Councillor training.

**The meeting closed at 9.45pm.**