

Harpole Parish Council Newsletter

Following the Ordinary Meeting held on August 18th, 2018



AT THE ORDINARY MEETING 11th August

Present were Mr C Wilkinson (in the chair), Mr J Calderwood, Mr S Drinkwater, Mr B Gibbins, Mrs R Gibbins, Mr B Justice, Mr D Lowrence, Mr M Marketis, Mr P Marlow, Mrs. S. Roberts, Mr. D Starmer, Miss S Eason, 15 members of the Public, Cllr A Addison. Apologies for absence were received from the Clerk (sickness)

In the absence of the Clerk, Miss S.Eason took the Minutes

Public Participation

Maxine Jones complained that the Parish Council had not followed up her letter to the last meeting and requested that it be discussed and the outcome communicated to her. She felt that the Council had not followed its own code of conduct. Requesting confirmation that the public may attend public meetings, she stated that she had been made to feel uncomfortable when attending a meeting where a Councillor had told her that he was unaware that the public was allowed to attend committee meetings. (The public are welcome at all regular Parish Council Committee meetings). John Gibbins asked as to the process to be followed if a Parishioner has a problem with a Councillor. The Chair stated that the name and details are available for the Monitoring Officer at South Northants. (These details are available on the Parish Website. www.harpolevillage.org.uk) Cllr Anne Addison updated the meeting on the current status of the reorganisation of local Government in Northamptonshire. She said that NCC is Bankrupt because of poor financial management and the proposals meant that South Northants Council (with no debt) had sadly cancelled its teaming arrangement with Cherwell, which had delivered good benefits for the district. A large Unitary, consisting of Northampton, SNC and Daventry would produce a number of issues and the inheritance of the debt from the current County Council would be a great burden. She expected that the next elections, for Unitary and Parish Councils, would be held over until 2020 and the current situation is rather uncertain

The Clerk

The Clerk has been signed off for a further two weeks. A hearing of his grievance had been held with the Clerk and his union adviser by a panel consisting of The Chair, Sarah Eason and David Lowrence. Having acceded to his requests to work more closely with him over the future of the Council, the Clerk exercised his prerogative to appeal against the outcome within seven days. At the time of the meeting, the reasons for the appeal had not been received by the Council.

Payments

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The Council agreed all the payments due this month, but some concern was expressed at the size of the electricity bill from EON, which appeared high, given that this applied to summer months. In the absence of the Clerk, comparative data was not immediately to hand.

Parish Council Code of Conduct.

At the previous meeting, a resolution was logged for this meeting requesting that Mr Gibbins be asked to “consider his position as a Councillor”, following his behaviour towards a fellow Councillor. Mr Gibbins requested to know the nature of the complaint. David Lowrence reminded the meeting that as this complaint had since been submitted by the complainants in the correct manner to the monitoring office as South Northants District Council, we must not discuss it at Parish Council Meetings. Apart from potential prejudice, it would lead to a slanging match in the interest of no party. From the Public seats, Cllr Addison advised that this was the correct course of action as it would be in the hands of the Monitoring officer for submission to the Standards Board and subject to legal process.

Brian Justice requested that the Chair amend the previous minutes as he had no right to bring it up, but Sarah Eason pointed out that the minutes had been agreed and signed, so this item could not be removed. Mr Gibbins again requested to know the nature of the complaint, the Chair replying that it related to abusive behaviour. David Lowrence firmly reiterated his previous statement about not discussing it here and requested the next item on the agenda.

Council Committee Reports

For the Allotments Committee Simon Drinkwater felt that, as Maxine Jones had resigned from the Parish Council, she should be replaced on the committee. Rita Gibbins felt that there were sufficient members. Asked if any would volunteer to join the committee, there were no Councillors willing to join. The matter was held over to the next meeting. Notes on a meeting of the Allotments Association were referred to, but these had not been referred to. It was pointed out that the HAA had no standing at the Parish Council, and the correct way for communication was via Public attendance at the Allotments Committee meetings, where issues could be addressed and minuted. The ban on fires was to be reviewed at the next meeting.

Under the Highways Committee report, the subject of the disused Bus Shelter on Larkhall Lane was raised. It had not been used for 14 years. As it was now understood that the Parish Council owns the shelter, it was decided that it would be removed without delay and arrangements were put in hand to have it done. The subject of speed signs had made no progress since the Clerk had been asked to obtain quotations, and it was felt that it should be referred back to the Highways Committee even if the Clerk was not in a position to take it forward. In the Churchyard Committee report, the matter of the Scrivens Tomb repairs was raised, The price had increased since the original quote, and it was proposed that the new quote is accepted in order to ensure a September start to the work. This was carried with two exceptions due to declarations of interest (family and Churchwarden).

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All reported lights had been repaired, and the light at the end of the jitty opposite the antique shop. David Starmer reported that there is a new cable under the lamp ready for reconnection, but due to a misunderstanding, the hole had been re-tarmacked without any realisation that the repair could be completed.

The Finance Committee had met as planned, but the agenda was restricted due to the absence of the Clerk. The next meeting would be on 24th September.

The next meeting of the Harpole in Transition Committee is scheduled for 19th October. Brian Gibbins reported that parishioners do not know what the HiT committee is about. Peter Marlow replied that if he felt unable to explain it to them, he should refer them to other councillors, or members of the Committee, or direct them to the Website where full details of its activities and remit would be found, together with the statement that it is to look to the future of the Parish.

Planning

The three applications for Norwood Farms and land to the East And West of New Sandy Lane are still pending. Four New Applications have been received:

- 26 High Street Harpole NN7 4DH
- 29 Larkhall Lane Harpole NN7 4DP
- Land off A4500 Weedon Road near Junction 16 of the M1
- 7 Park Lane NN7 4BT

Five applications have been approved:

- 2 Larkhall Lane Harpole NN7 4DP
- Swan House 8 Park Lane Harpole NN7 4BT
- 6 Sandy Lane Harpole NN7 4AP
- 1 Norwood Farm Cottages Sandy Lane Harpole NN7 4DG
- 66 Carrs Way, Harpole NN7 4DP

One Application has been refused:

- 9 Orchard Way, NN7 4BW

Details of all applications can be found on the Parish Council Website and the SNDC planning website

Other Items discussed at the meeting

The Council had been asked to indicate if there was an interest in managing the green spaces in the news part of the West Northamptonshire SUE developments. It was felt that the HiT committee should respond positively in order to better understand the pros and cons of this approach and set up meetings with both South Northants Council and the developers.

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The recent Flood report by Northampton County Council was discussed, and it was noted that John Gibbins and Margaret Potts are the Flood Wardens. An amount of money is available with this report for planning associated with the report.

Two Committees have ratified terms of Reference - Harpole in Transition and Finance. These were adopted by the Meeting and scheduled for annual review. They can be found on the Parish Council Website on the Front page document section. Other committees are producing their Terms of Reference.

The Salvation Army had asked if they could place a clothing recycling bin on Parish Council land. This was rejected on the grounds that the Council does not have a suitable plot, and that the Parish already has a recycling bin at the "The Bull" for the Northamptonshire Air Ambulance.

The Meeting resolved to start future Parish Council Meetings at 7 pm in order to finish earlier.

ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA AND NEXT MEETINGS

Bugbrooke Participation Group, Vice Chair replacement, Drones.

ORDINARY MEETING Monday 10th September 2018, 7.00 pm in the Old School Hall.

HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE 24th September 7.00 pm. in the Old School Hall.

FINANCE COMMITTEE AFTER HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE 24th September

Potholes and Street Furniture problems

Parishioners can report potholes and damage to street furniture online quickly and easily on the County Council Street Doctor link :

<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/Transport/roads/streetdoctor/>

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