

Harpole Parish Council Newsletter  
Following the Meeting held on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017



**Present:**

Ms S Eason (in the chair), Mr J Calderwood, Mr S Drinkwater, Mr B Gibbins, Mrs R Gibbins, Mrs M Jones' Mr B Justice, Mr M Marketis, Mr P Marlow, Mrs S. Roberts, Mr D Lawrence, Mr D Starmer, Mr C Wilkinson, Cllr A Brown, three members of the Public and the Clerk, G Ravine

**Apologies for Absence:**

Neither Cllr A. Addison nor Cllr. K. Cooper, who both have a standing invitation, attended.

**Public Discussion:**

Cllr Brown reported that the situation at NCC had worsened. NCC cannot enter into any new contracts under the Section 114 issued this month. There are serious doubts as to whether the budget can be balanced. A failure to sell land had led to a shortfall in income. Angel Square (The new County Council HQ) will have to be sold and leased back, which will result in additional rental costs, which is embarrassing as this was touted as a money saving exercise. A budget meeting would be held on 22nd Feb. The budget is balanced on paper, but he feels this is unrealistic. There has been some change of heart on libraries and Connect buses, but it is not yet clear whether this will happen. Cllr. Brown has signed a document criticising past leadership for failing to acknowledge their mistakes and feels NCC is failing the people. He is concerned that a complete rethink is necessary and it is his view that NCC, as it stands, is unsustainable.

**Parish Finances:**

The Council approved payments to suppliers and receipts, with the figure of £4488.26 being the largest, a VAT refund

**Planning:**

At the last planning committee, Framptons expressed astonishment at the lack of information sent to Harpole Parish Council about the Junction 16 development. In future, relevant information would be sent directly to the Council. The Clerk was asked to set up a meeting with SNC officers about the various developments, Norwood Farm, Junction 16, and the N4 development. *Detailed information on current Planning applications can be found on our website at:*<http://harpolevillage.org.uk/the-work-of-harpoleparish/planning>



## **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

The Council discussed becoming compliant with the law from May 25th. The clerk reported that he had attended a course and a seminar largely concerned with GDPR. The council would need to appoint a Data Protection Officer (DPO), carry out an information audit, and formulate a Documents retention and disposal policy. David Lawrence felt that the online element of GDPR was largely a continuation of existing policy from the 1998 Data Protection Act, and the PC's use of contact information was compliant.

## **Allotments**

There was discussion as to the future administration of the Allotments. The Chair wondered whether Council should return to the previous system of having an allotments committee. It was resolved that the Allotments Committee would be appointed at the May Annual Meeting.

## **Grass Maintenance**

Three quotations had been obtained. Council considered the three offers and chose to stay with Mr Warden. Two Councillors abstained from voting, expressing reservations about the quality of work.

## **Review of the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit**

The Review of the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit was adopted by Council and signed.

## **Risk Assessment**

The Council reviewed and endorsed both the Health and Safety and Financial Risk annual review documents provided by the Clerk. It was decided that the latter document would need a further review in the light of future changes in the Parish.

## **NCALC workshop**

The working party was to meet later in the week.

## **Clerk's working hours**

Following a study of the working hours of the Clerk, it was resolved to increase the hours in line with actual time worked to 67 hours/month



### **Patient Participation Group**

Michael Marketis reported on the work of the PPG. The group had discussed blood testing at NGH, Parking difficulties and phone response problems. The group needs a secretary.

### **Garners Way parking**

The working party was to conduct a site meeting on Thursday 22nd Feb.

### **Parish Mapping**

An Agenda paper had been distributed. David Lawrence recommended Council go forward with this system, and offered to host a training session. It was felt this could be very useful now, and even more so in the future. JC asked whether it would. DL stated that it could be made available for other village organisations subject to the purchase of additional licences. The Council resolved to proceed with the software procurement.

### **District Councillors**

Following the last invitation from the Clerk, Cllr. Addison had replied that she would not attend due to previous differences and attitudes between the Parish and District Councillors. The chair distributed a letter in response, and it was agreed that the letter should be sent. The PC expressed disappointment at the situation, and it was felt that it was time to move on.

### **Audits**

The Clerk reported that the internal auditor had not yet been appointed, and nothing had yet been received from the new external auditors. He would make contact with both as soon as the situation has been resolved, about gaining an understanding the qualified accounts last year.

### **Live and Let Live**

Michael Marketis had wished to make the Council aware that the situation regarding the future of the pub was unclear at present, and hoped that the possibility of a community pub was not dismissed.

### **Internet banking**

The Clerk had spent a morning at HSBC trying to restart the initiation of Internet banking. The previous attempt had stalled and had to be



repeated. The responsible Councillors would need to sign the mandate, in addition to the Clerk.

## REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES and ADVISORY GROUPS

**Allotments:** Rita Gibbins reported that some rents were still to come in. There were five vacant plots at present. David Starmer pointed out that there were two acres not being used.

**Churchyard:** No report.

**Finance:** A VAT refund had been received. An enquiry about applying for funding had been made by a pre-school group in Duston because they had children from Harpole. No formal application had been received. The Council felt unable to support an application from this group

**Highways/ Footpaths:** The Clerk reported that Streetdoctor had informed the Council that there was insufficient funding to enable full-width restoration on the footpath between Kislingbury & Harpole Turn; He felt this would be a recurring theme.

**Lighting:** Aylesbury Mains had quoted approx. £3000 for a comparable light near the jitty in the High Street. It was felt that this was too expensive to justify. The matter was deferred to the next agenda. The Chair would update the Antique Shop owner. The Clerk was requested to ask WPD about the proposed works to put cables underground.

**Charities:** No report

### Items for next agenda.

Qualified Audit, Garners Way, District Councillors, Leisure equipment.

### DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS.

Highways February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018      Ordinary Meeting March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018

## STOP PRESS

### LibraryPlus Mobile Library Service – immediate withdrawal of service

The County Council has announced the cessation of the Mobile Library service with Immediate effect. See the Parish Website for more information.