

Henstridge Parish Council

Clerk: Rachel Walker, Westcombe House, 48, Bowden Road, Templecombe,
Somerset, BA8 0LF, Tel: 01963 370388
e-mail: clerk@henstridgeparishcouncil.org.uk

Draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Henstridge Village Hall Lounge on Monday 10th November 2008.

Present:

Councillors: Norman Symcox (Chair), Jim Fitch, David Nicholls, Jean Oswick, Malcolm Stobart, Adam Temperton, Mickey Vincent, Paul White.

Clerk: Mrs Walker

There were no members of the public in attendance at the meeting.

1. Apologies.

Apologies had been received from Mr Crocker, Mr Brighten and Mr Jarvis.

2. Declarations of Interest.

Mr Stobart and Mrs Oswick declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 7b (xvi) as the Parish Council's representatives on the Village Hall Management Committee.

Mrs Oswick also declared a personal interest in the HALT item due to being married to the Chairman, which could possibly be deemed as prejudicial due to the siting of her property. For this reason she left the meeting for the item.

3. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 06.10.08.

RESOLVED: It was agreed to approve the above minutes.

As PC Brown was in attendance, it was proposed and agreed to move item 6a forward in the agenda.

6a. To receive a visit from a local police representative.

PC Brown reported that there were 3 reported crimes in Henstridge in October, 2 assaults which took place in the Virginia Ash Public House and from which an arrest had been made, and a theft from Yenston which had unfortunately gone undetected. He reported that he had met with HALT and some points had been agreed with regard to accessing the safety camera partnership and the radar signs, which he was hoping to progress prior to meeting again towards the end of November. He asked for confirmation that the Council were still keen to hold a PACT meeting and asked for a list of possible dates for this. He asked for any areas of concern and it was suggested that following the arson at the Village Hall, it would be appreciated to see some police presence in the evenings.

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4. Matters arising from previous meetings:

- a. **To advise the Council's agreed representative, Mr Jarvis, of items that the Council wish to raise at the County and District Council Question time event.**

The issue of drains was raised and it was felt that the recent "cleaning" of the drains had in fact exacerbated the problem so that in several areas it was now creating more flooding which could potentially become very dangerous if it freezes (particular places mentioned were the A357 on the Templecombe side of Yenston and at Townsend, and Marsh Lane). The general poor state of repair of the footpaths and roads was also mentioned. Concern was also raised with regard to the level of consultation that is given to Parishes outside of the County for matters which are within the County boundaries and it was felt important to emphasise that we are Somerset and that we do not wish to feel that Dorset are being given priority over us.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the above issues should be put forward.

- b. **To agree to write the SSDC requesting information on the frequency of litter collection from the recreation ground bins.**

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the Council should write to SSDC requesting information on the frequency of litter collection from the recreation ground bins.

- c. **Burial Ground – to consider and agree the possible removal of the central bush in the cemetery with a view to extending the path.**

The Clerk advised that she had received an e-mail from Mike Simpson in relation to this matter and that during his time on the Parish Council he was responsible for the Churchyard and in approximately 1996 a designated area for the Internment of Ashes had been set aside, an area was marked and a path and plinth for a seat laid by Neil Moore. The Parish Council had provided the seat which was made by Westree and the Shrubs were donated by Vale Crops Ltd, who are no longer in business. Some discussion occurred as to the best way to move forward.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the bush should be removed and that a plan should be developed to renew and extend the path and replace the benches in the Parish Council area of the Burial Ground.

- d. **To provide an update with regard to the provision of water at the allotments.**

The Clerk advised that she understood that the water had now been connected at the allotments to a trough which was provided by Wessex Water.

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5. Correspondence

20.09.08	SSDC	Pioneer Somerset: Devolution of Services' Survey – to agree the services which the Council feel that they are currently providing and to agree any additional services which the Council would like to consider providing in the future.
<p>The Chairman summarised what was required within the survey.</p> <p>RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the Council did not wish to take on responsibility for any further services at this stage and that they therefore instructed the Clerk to complete the survey on their behalf.</p> <p>Mrs Oswick left the meeting.</p>		
06.10.08	Peter Oswick – HALT	To agree any response arising from a letter written to Paul Brighten (HALT representative) and the enclosed copies of letters addressed to County Councillor Hazel Prior-Sankey and Inspector Andy Pritchard
<p>The Chairman summarised the letters that had been received. It was felt that PC Brown's information had helped to address some of the issues that had been raised. Some discussion occurred to the terminology being used and whether a more specific campaign, for example for a weight restriction, would not be more appropriate.</p> <p>RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the Council should write thanking Mr Oswick for letter, assuring him that his comments have been noted and that we have heard about his meeting with PC Brown who was in attendance at the Parish Council meeting, and that we look forward to hearing more about this and the subsequent meeting to be held from this, which will hopefully provide some positive steps forward.</p>		
09.10.08	SALC	To agree how the Council will address the changes to the Model Publication Scheme and make provision of the information and agree a resolution to address this.
<p>The Clerk explained that the new Publication scheme needs to be adopted by 31st December 2008 and now comprises of 3 elements – the scheme itself, a manual containing definitions of the information available and a guide as to how the information can be obtained. The Clerk advised that if the Council are happy to accept the model document then they do not need to gain permission or advise the Information commissioner of this but simply need to make a formal resolution to this effect. However, prior to this resolution they need to agree that the information available is correct and how they wish this information to be available and that this should be the first resolution.</p>		

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Councillors considered the information which the Clerk had provided and discussed the format for presentation.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the Council were happy to accept the information as provided with the addition of a hard copy option alongside the web option.

It was agreed that the Council were happy for the Clerk to instruct Milborne Port Computing to create a linked document for presentation of the information.

It was proposed and agreed that Henstridge Parish Council should formally adopt the new Model Publication Scheme.

14.10.08	Ian Clarke – SSDC	To agree any response which the Council wish to make to the “Parish Charter”
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Comments were made in relation to items 5.2 (“SSDC, through its area committees will hold at least two parish workshops a year, at which local councils will be invited to raise items of interest for discussion”) and 5.6 (“SSDC Officers may attend local council meetings when invited by the local council.”) which the Council were pleased to see included in the draft charter.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the Council’s response to Mr Clarke, should be that they are pleased to see the inclusion of points 5.2 and 5.6 and hope that these will form part of the final document.

12.10.08	Paul Rowsell, Communities and Local Government	Communities in Control: Real People, real power: codes of conduct for local authority members and employees – A consultation – To agree any response which the Council may wish to make
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RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the Council had no response to make to this consultation.

17.10.08	Les Jales – HUFC	To receive a response to the Parish Council’s offer to provide temporary changing room accommodation.
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RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that an acknowledgement should be sent to Mr Jales including thanks for the recognition of the Parish Council’s efforts.

20.10.08	Gill Holt – WI	Invitation to put forward a Parish Council team for the New Year Quiz evening on Friday 16 th January at 7.30pm
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RESOLVED: It was agreed that a team should be put forward, consisting of Mr Stobart, Mrs Oswick, Mr White and Mr Vincent.

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31.10.08	Rob Jones, Policy and Development manager – SCC	To agree any comments which the Council may wish to make with regard to the Draft Cultural Strategy
RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the Council had no response to make to this consultation.		
03.11.08	Margaret Gibson – Taunton and South Somerset Housing Market Partnership	To agree if the Council wish to send a representative to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Meeting, Wednesday 26 th November, 2-4.30pm, Taunton Conference Centre.
No members were available to attend.		

6. Council Matters

It was proposed and agreed that due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed that the press and public should be excluded. It was agreed to move item 7b(iv) up the agenda for consideration while the meeting was in closed session.

The Clerk left the meeting.

b. Personnel matters

- (i) To provide Councillors with an opportunity to raise any issues which they feel should be addressed as part of the Clerk's appraisals.

RESOLVED: Councillors were given the opportunity to make comment.

7b(iv) that a 2% increase in salary is made for the staff working on Parish Council open spaces;

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the suggested increase was appropriate.

As a matter of report, the Chair advised that a complaint against the Council had been received and that he would seek advice and bring this to the Council in due course.

The Clerk returned to the meeting.

- (ii) To agree the terms of reference of the personnel committee

The Clerk presented Councillors with a suggested terms of reference.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed to accept the Terms of Reference as presented.

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b. To agree the content of the application for funding to the Somerset Local Initiatives Budget.

The Clerk explained that the money available through the Somerset Local Initiatives Budget had to fit into various categories and be for a project costing over £2000.00. The Clerk suggested that as the Council had initially wanted to apply for the provision of a Copper Beech tree at the allotments, which would not on its own quality, that the Council may like to consider the extension of the allotments as being an appropriate project.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed to instruct the Clerk to make an application to the Budget for the extension of the allotments.

c. Wots On

- (i) **To agree if the Council wish to make a contribution for the November edition**

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed to advertise the Parish Council newsletter in Wots on.

- (ii) **To agree whether the Parish Council are happy for items from the Parish Council newsletter to be reproduced and credited accordingly in Wots On**

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the Council are happy for items to be reproduced.

d. Memorials – to approve memorials as received.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the memorials as presented should be approved.

e. To receive a report from the HACC meeting

Mr Symcox reported that Mr Williams had advised of the complaints that had been received and that a number of members of the public in attendance had thanked Mr Williams for his efforts in reducing the number of overflights. The events for the following year were announced which were in line with previous years. An issue of increasing radio licensing costs had been raised and while the airfield are campaigning against this, they had advised that the license would be maintained regardless for safety reasons. It had been suggested that the Air Ambulance should have a representative on the HACC. Concerns were raised over the fact that this would mean a change to the Committee's terms of reference and it was therefore agreed that the Air Ambulance manager should attend meetings as an observer and be invited to comment where appropriate, rather than being a full member of the HACC.

f. To advise Councillors of the date of the Community Speedwatch presentation.

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The Clerk advised that further to the instruction from the Council, she had arranged a presentation regarding Community Speedwatch on Monday 24th November to follow the Planning meeting at 7.30pm. She advised that HALT had also been invited and that notices would also be put on the boards encouraging members of the public to attend.

g. Playground Inspection Reports.

Mr Temperton advised that there was nothing new to report. The Clerk had heard back from Playdale who took no responsibility for the defects. The Clerk would therefore contact contractors with regard to the work needed.

h. To receive reports from Representatives (VHMC, HALT, Footpaths, Other) and provide guidance as appropriate:

Mr Stobart reported that the work to the Changing rooms was now complete and that the committee are financially stable. An open meeting is to be held on 22nd November with regard to a possible new village hall.

Mr Temperton reported that there had been an incident recently where a resident had slipped on a bridge, which County had now replaced. He emphasised the importance of redirecting members of the public to report issues to Somerset County Council who are liable for the footpaths.

7. Finance

a. To inform the Council of the closure of the Annual Audit and the external auditors report.

The Clerk advised the Council that the Annual Audit was now closed and read out the external auditors report. She advised that the only query raised was with the level of reserves which the auditor felt to be too low. The RFO had stated that while she was happy with the current level of reserves, as the budget is well planned with projects also being planned for, we would look to raise reserves slightly next year in line with the advice received.

b. To consider and approve the recommendations of the Finance committee:

- (i) that no charges be set for advertisement on local events on the PC web site and that the set up of the events page is premature and it is unwise to invest funds in this until more is known in terms of demand for adverts and web site usage;**
- (ii) that allotment rents should be kept at the current level pending review when the water supply is provided;**
- (iii) that the Parish council give 12 months notice of a rent review on Furge Lane field and seek the relevant information in order to calculate the appropriate rent;**
- (iv) that a 2% increase in salary is made for the staff working on Parish Council open spaces (agreed earlier in the meeting);**
- (v) the finance pack remain in its current form for future distribution;**

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- (vi) to accept the information presented regarding the Council's financial position for the first half of 2008- 9 and predicted position at the end of the financial year;
- (vii) to accept the proposed additions and changes in allocation of funds in the project account at the 6-month point;
- (viii) to accept the budgeted wage figures;
- (ix) to accept the budgeted figure for subscriptions;
- (x) to accept the budgeted administration figures, including figure presented under "other" for administration;
- (xi) that the award for the contracts for grass cutting the Ash Walk recreation ground main field for the season 09/10 be made by the full Council;
- (xii) to accept the other budgeted figures for Burial Ground/Open Spaces;
- (xiii) to accept the figure for charitable donations;
- (xiv) that donations of £50.00 to be made to Victim Support Somerset and Wincanton Community Sports Centre and for a donation of £150.00 to be made to The Citizen's Advice Bureau (split between South Somerset and Dorset Branches);
- (xv) that the policy set in 04/05 be maintained in that charities applying through the year are considered on their merits for a donation of £30.00, until the fund is used and asked to make future applications in September;
- (xvi) that in the absence of a quorum the proposal for the funding for donation to cover village hall insurance be deferred to the Full Council;
- (xvii) to approve the budgeted figures for Section 137 including agreement/ adjustment of the figure presented under "other" for section 137;
- (xviii) to accept the figure to be set aside for reserves;
- (xix) to accept the overall appropriateness of the predicted figures presented for receipts and payments
- (xx) to set the precept at £20,000.

RESOLVED: It was agreed to deal with items (xi) and (xvi) prior to the other items.

(ix)that the award for the contracts for grass cutting the Ash Walk recreation ground main field for the season 09/10 be made by the full Council;

The Clerk explained that this had not been agreed at the finance meeting as no quote had been received from the Cricket Club at this stage. The quotes from Somerset Landscapes for £1455.00 and the Cricket Club for £1750.00 were presented to the Council and the percentage increases that each contractor had made in their quotes since last year were pointed out. The Chair advised that Somerset Landscapes charge per cut and so their figure would be a maximum which would reduce if less cuts were necessary, while the Cricket Clubs quote would remain the same regardless. It was pointed out that the figure included in the budget was for £1455.00 and that to agree

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the Cricket Clubs quote would mean an increase in the precept, and the Clerk strongly advised that this would fall foul of best value in her opinion. The Council recognised that the Cricket Club maintain the grass to a high standard but that this is for the benefit of the Cricket Club and is not actually to fulfil the needs of the Council. This is also not quantifiable as no breakdown is ever provided of the number of cuts per season. It was additionally recognised that Somerset Landscapes, as an employer, have greater overheads than the Cricket Club.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that in the spirit of Best Value whilst still supporting local organisations, if the Cricket Club can match the price offered by Somerset Landscapes then we will contract them. However, if this is not the case then Somerset Landscapes should be contracted, in order to maintain the precept figure.

(xvi) that in the absence of a quorum the proposal for the funding for donation to cover village hall insurance be deferred to the Full Council;

The figures set aside for the Village Hall Insurance were discussed. It was advised that a higher figure had been budgeted than in previous years as an increase is expected due to the claims necessitated by the arson attacks.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the Council were happy with the level of funding available for the Village Hall Insurance.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed to address the other items as a block. The recommendations of the Finance Committee were approved. The Precept application form was signed by the Chair.

c. To approve the following accounts for payment:

Madasafish	Line 1 DD Internet & Telephone 24/09/08-23/10/08	£37.48
Madasafish	Line 2 DD Internet & Telephone 06/10/08-05/11/08	£34.62
Viking Direct	Stationery	£122.78
Moore Stephens	External Audit	£334.87
Rachel Walker	In Lieu of payment to service point ref. graveyard plan copy	£7.13
Somerset Landscapes	Grasscutting Ash Walk Playground 18 & 22nd sept	£68.27
R Walker	Salary October	£240.37
T Watson	Salary October	£287.37
G Edwards	Salary October	£45.29
T Pulling	Salary October	£22.74
Inland revenue	Tax and NI - October	£90.00
Milborne Port		
Computing	General management of website	£117.50

RESOLVED: The above accounts were approved for payment.

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d. Income

Henstridge VHMC	Peppercorn rent 08/09	£1.00
T Watson	Line rental	£8.50

8. Date of Next meeting – The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **Monday 8th December 2008**. All items for inclusion on the agenda and all items to be listed under issues arising from previous meetings must be received by the Clerk by 9.00am on Thursday 27th November 2008.

The meeting closed at 8.53pm.