

Hannington Parish Council, – **Draft Minutes of Quarterly Meeting held on Tuesday 10th December 2024.**

PARISH COUNCIL OF HANNINGTON, HAMPSHIRE

Date and time of Meeting: 7.00pm, Tuesday 10th December 2024

Present: Chair, Cllr. Alex Lowrie (AL),
Cllr. Judy Henry (JH)
Cllr. Pat Coneley (PC)
Cllr David Conquest – BDBC (DC)

Apologies: Cllr. Nick Joslin
Cllr. Jon Whitfield (JW)

Clerk: Sue Wright

BDBC & HCC Cllrs. Cllr David Conquest – BDBC (DC)

Guest Speaker: Gemma Clinch, HCC's CER for Countryside Services.

Members of the Public: Three – including Francis Taylor (FT), British Horse Society Officer, for the area. (the Audience)

1. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest.

AL opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees, noting that Cllr. Nik Joslin and Cllr. Jon Whitfield were unable to attend and sent their apologies. SW confirmed the declarations of interest to be up to date – and nothing additional was being made for the purposes of the quarterly meeting.

2. Guest Speaker

AL welcomed our Guest Speaker for the evening, Gemma Clinch (GC) and in a change to the published agenda, invited her to speak first.

GC introduced HCC's push to raise awareness about the Countryside Services available at County level, how they interact with parish and other community groups and her role as a *Countryside Engagement Ranger* (CER).

GC explained the CER generally works with communities, encouraging them to take an interest in their local area and through work with local volunteer groups, the CER can support a broad range of activities related to path and bridleway maintenance. The Access Team are also able to help with disputes or other difficulties with landowners who are either unable or unwilling, to address issues relating to footpaths or bridleways across their land.

The CER is currently looking for volunteers in the area to come together as a local parish group, to help address some of the issues which have been raised around bridleway and footpath maintenance. Under the guidance of CER, volunteers in other areas have already come together to complete a wide range of activities, including installing gates and stiles, clearing footpaths, installing footways over ditches, and installing handrails. The CER seeks to empower the local volunteer groups with the skills and tools to complete such tasks, under CER supervision with either the landowner and/or the parish, contributing to the cost of any materials.

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GC noted that the best results are achieved when the CER, local groups and the landowner are all able to work together and noted that Micheldever Parish Council had some success in this respect and would be worth contacting, as an example of best practice.

AL noted that the parish insurance does extend to cover voluntary activity for the parish and FT confirmed several willing volunteers who would welcome the opportunity to work with the CER and tackle some of the long-running issues in the parish, with respect to certain footpaths and bridleways.

GC noted that funding for training volunteers is also available from sources like the National Lottery. AL commented that as a parish we made considerable use of the Lengthsman Scheme during 2024, to assist with the clearing and cutting back of certain paths and bridleways around the parish and that we plan to agree a schedule of work with the Lengthsman for 2025.

Action: SW to follow-up with GC and publish a new page to the parish website about the CER, and how to contact the Access Team at HCC Countryside Services.

AL, the Members and the Audience thanked GC for her attendance and invited her to remain for the Open Forum.

3. Open Forum (including an update on Roads, Paths and Bridleways).

In a change to the published agenda, AL brought forward the Open Forum.

FT reported on the work she had been doing to map issues with local bridleways. GC commented that HCC have a definitive public rights of way statement, which is dependent on up-to-date information and encouraged the making of reports to the HCC Rights of Way team, via the online portal. *Action SW to confirm details and add a link to the website.*

FT volunteered to take on the role of reporting the bridleway information to HCC via the portal and PC would continue to monitor and report on the condition of parish footpaths. FT commented that issues with the footpaths/bridleways around the burial ground, would still need to be reported direct to Kingsclere Estates. AL noted that Kingsclere Estates has its own process for reporting – SW to also add a link on the new Parish Footpaths page, to the Kingsclere Estates website.

GC noted in relation to reporting – What3Words can be especially helpfully in pinpointing the reference, more so than map grid references and where possible, requested this information be included when making reports to HCC.

FT reported that the issues she had previously raised concerning the state of bridleways around Ballstone/Plantation Farm had improved, with the removal of the abandoned wire – but that new electrical, livestock-fencing was inadequate. GC commented that all matters of serious concern should be directed to her manager, Corinne on the Access Team at HCC's Countryside Services – assuming the landowner failed to rectify or address the safety concerns which FT had raised.

FT also noted that the route of an older bridleway/right of way running along the far edge of Michaels Field, behind the hedgerow and adjacent the field, was now totally inaccessible and hadn't been maintained or kept clear for years. FT also reported that in 2018, the then Parish Council had made an application to HCC to have the bridleway reinstated – (application reference 7160A), but that the application was still pending! *Action: GC to follow-up and let SW know status.*

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Action: Once new noticeboards go up in the Parish – information on how to report path and bridleways in need of attention, will be displayed including links to the various websites and portals. AL to speak to JW about organising the maintenance schedule with the Lengthsman for 2025.

AL thanked the Audience and GC for their participation and attendance.

4. Borough Council Update – Cllr David Conquest.

Bin Collections – DC reported that BDBC was planning to introduce a new food-waste collection service, due to go live in the Autumn of 2025 and that it was otherwise moving ahead with its plans to switch to a borough-wide, fortnightly, main/black-bin, emptying service in 2026.

JH requested that BDBC recirculate its guide: the ‘what can be recycled booklet’ – given that it had been some time since this had happened and many people are uncertain about what can be recycled.

DC reported on the Local Plan process, which was completed in early 2024. However, the new government’s *Policy and Planning Framework* which requires a 44% increase in the number of houses to be built, - considerably changes the detail BDBC originally consulted upon – and BDBC (together with every other Borough in the country), has lobbied the government requesting that councils be permitted to continue with the original consultation timetable, pending confirmation of the amount of houses they will, in fact, need to provide for, (the alternative being that the Consultation just completed would need to be scrapped and repeated).

DC also confirmed that the Manydown Farm Development had received final approval and that developers are expected to break ground on Phase 1, in January 2025.

Other local activities DC had been involved with included holding a surgery in Kingsclere, with a further surgery to be held in Tadley in the New Year. These surgeries have been focusing on identifying those residents who need help to apply for their pension credit/winter fuel payment. DC had also been involved with regular sessions run by Kingsclere Parish Council in conjunction with the Citizens advice bureau.

SW queried if there had been any update on the status of the Solar Farm application submitted by Malshanger estates -DC confirmed no news – but would check and revert at a future meeting.

AL and the Members, thanked DC for his update.

5. Police Update

No member of the rural policing team in attendance tonight. SW noted that the team had been invited – and had planned to attend but were unfortunately, called away on another matter.

Action: SW to send out a reminder-invitation to all BDBC and County Councillors and the rural Policing Team, with the details of future meetings.

6. Draft Minutes of the Quarterly meetings held on 24th September 2024.

The draft minutes for the Annual meeting held on 24th September 2024, prior circulated, were Approved. **Action:** SW to amend and upload final version of minutes to website.

7. Matters Arising

- a. **Noticeboards.** SW reported that the Invoice for the noticeboards and bench was due – and was expected to be in the region of £4115.00 inclusive of VAT. AL requested of the Members, flexibility to approve and pay the invoice on receipt, so that the order could be placed before the Christmas break. AL confirmed that final invoice details and confirmation of order would be circulated to Members by email, as soon as it was received. (Approved).

Action: SW to circulate the invoice once received from GE Views.

- b. **Laptop:** SW confirmed that she was continuing to use her own laptop for the time being and that sourcing one for the parish, had been deferred as a project to 2025.
- c. **Solar Farm Application by Malshanger Estate:** Per DC – SW confirmed that no further update was available on the status of the planning application – and the BDBC planning portal still showed the application as “pending”.

8. Finance

a. Payments for Approval:

- Clear View – Parish Council Insurance Renewal: £421.84
- Boxxe - Microsoft Exchange Annual Licence Renewal for 2025 (wef 31/12/24) £339.84
- GE Views Invoice for Noticeboards & Bench (see note above)
- Clerk's Fees: for the period 01/10/24 – 31/12/24 £1000.00

AL circulated copies of the invoices for Members approval and countersignature. All payments approved. Action: AL/JW to login to Lloyds online banking and create payment instructions to pay all the invoices which are due for payment, before the Christmas break.

- b. **Bank Reconciliation** – AL provided copies of the cashbook summary for 01/07/24 – through 10/12/24 reconciling outgoings with our stated budget. No variations to report. **Approved.** PC and JH signed on behalf of the council as a true record of the council's accounts. SW noted that copies of all the council's financial documents, including monthly bank statements and copies of the cashbook summaries – were available to view on the website under the 'Financials' tab for 2024. Action: SW to upload copies of the Cashbook to the website.
- c. **VAT Reclaim 2024** – AL confirmed that the VAT reclaim was in progress and would be submitted before 31 December 2024. AL to report further on the timing of payment at the next meeting in February 2025.
- d. **BDBC Precept Application for 2025** – AL proposed tabling a finalised version of the 2025 budget at the first meeting of 2025. In respect of reserves – the council is still aiming longer-term to up the reserves to cater for planned (and unplanned) expenses in relation to the unadopted road around the village green - but otherwise the recommendation is to keep council reserves at £5000.00, (after the expense of the noticeboards and new bench). AL therefore recommended keeping the precept amount requested the same as last year and to not request an increase. **Approved** by the Members present. Action: AL will submit precept application before 31 January 2025 and report further at the next meeting.
- e. **HCC Councillor's Grant** – SW confirmed that the application to Cllr, Rhydian Vaughan for a grant of funds towards the cost of the noticeboards and bench had been made – and was successful, with Cllr. Vaughan's community fund contributing £800.00 to the overall cost.

Additional topic: Bank Savings Account Rates: – AL reported that the savings rate for the Parish savings account was coming to an end - and that he had researched a new instant

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access account with a guaranteed fixed rate for 6 months. AL proposed putting £15,000 into the new instant access account (still with Lloyds), with the rest of parish funds to remain in the current account. (Approved by all Members present).

8. **Policy Review:** *(note the review of all policies and codes for 2024, is now complete and current versions of all documents are available under the Governance and Health and Safety tabs of the website).*

- a. **Financial Risk Register** – AL confirmed that JW had reported verbally on this exercise and confirmed that there was no need to change the current insurance coverage. With regards to the physical assets/property owned by the council – AL proposed that the policy be reviewed and updated if need-be, after the installation of the new noticeboards and bench.

9. **Matters Arising** – nothing additional to report.

10. **AOB.** To note that the parish council is looking at low-level barrier options to surround the village green, following a further incident of vandalism and ongoing safety concerns by certain users of the green.

11. **Proposed Dates of meetings for 2025:**

Monday 10th February 2025 – Quarterly Meeting, 7.00pm

Monday 12th May 2025 (Annual and Quarterly Meetings), 7.00pm

Monday 8th September 2025 – Quarterly Meeting, 7.00pm

Monday 8th December 2025 – Quarterly Meeting, 7.00pm.

Approved at the Quarterly meeting of the Parish Council, held on Monday 24th February 2025

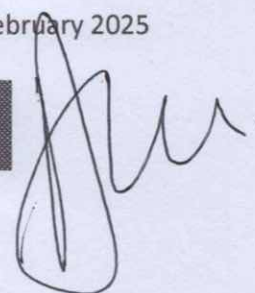
Signed:
Cllr. Alex Lowrie

Chair, Hannington Parish Council

Dated:



Monday 24th February 2025.



End.