

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 15 DECEMBER 2011
AT THE VILLAGE HALL, STATION ROAD, BROUGHTON ASTLEY**

PRESENT: Councillors C Grafton-Reed (Chairman), N D Bannister (Vice-Chairman), C Golding, C Porter, D G Brown, C Evans, M Graves, R Tomlin, S Oliver, S Page, R Patrick, P Dann, M Stell, J Bateman R H Capewell, and Mrs L Blockley.

MINUTE

152

1. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from County Councillor Bill Liquorish

153

2. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Declarations of personal interest were received from Councillors' Oliver, Page, Golding and Blockley in relation of Item 5(a) of the Agenda (Income and expenditure budgets) in respect of their tenancy of Parish Council allotment plots.

154

3. MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – 17 November 2011

Councillor Bannister moved and Councillor Dann seconded confirmation and adoption of the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 17 November 2011 which were approved and accepted unanimously.

155

4. PUBLIC FORUM

Public forum opened at 7.33pm. No members of the public were present. Public Forum closed at 7.34pm.

156

5. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Councillor Bannister moved and Dann seconded confirmation and adoption of the Minutes of the special Executive Committee held on 1 December 2011.

Minute 74.11 – Grounds Maintenance Mower

157

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the purchase of the new grounds maintenance mowers is deferred until 2012/13 following a further report produced by 31 March 2011, based on professional advice from the Institute of Grounds Maintenance on the best mower to suit the Parish Councils needs in respect of acreage, frequency and type of use and times grass is cut per year.**
- 2. That should a new mower be required for the grass cutting season funding should be allocated from general reserves.**

Minute 75.11 – Public Conveniences

158

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the Parish Council should respond to the communication stating the Parish Council stating that it does not have the funds to meet the cost of refurbishment of the public conveniences in the village centre.**
- 2. That Harborough District Council should be asked to consider either the installation of a purpose-built public convenience or the demolition of the existing closed facilities, to make more parking spaces.**

Minute 76.11 – Changes to signatories

159

RESOLVED:

That the Parish Council's bank mandate is amended to include Councillor Brown as a signatory.

Minute 77.11 & 78.11 - Business Plan 2012-13 to 2016-17
Members reviewed the Business Plan for 2012-13 to 2016 -17, as presented by the Executive Committee.

160

RESOLVED:

That a draft of the Parish Council's Business Plan for 2012-13 to 2016-17, incorporating the minor additions and amendments to the schedule of products and services identified by the Executive Committee, should be adopted the Parish Council

Minute 79.11 – Income budget

Members noted that income had been lost due to the closure of the Neighbourhood Office at the Village Hall, however proposed increases in some charges, made following benchmarking exercises with local service providers, and an increase in bookings at the village hall had compensated for the loss.

161

RESOLVED:

1. **That the income budget for 2012-13, as detailed in the Business Plan for 2012-13 to 2016-2017 should be set at £45,750.**
2. **That the fees for hiring accommodation at the Village Hall should not be increased due to the current economic climate.**
3. **That the regular user discount to remain at 35%.**
4. **That any group or organisation that has provided the Parish Council with an income of £5,000 and above during the course of the previous financial year will be granted an additional discount of 5% as a 'High Volume' user.**
5. **That the charges for Cemeteries should be increased from 1 April 2012 as follows:**
Grave Purchase from £125 to £140; Cremation Purchase from £75 to £85; Internment Child £15 (no increase); Internment Adult from £55 to £65; Headstone, Vase or Tablet from £55 to £65; and Cremation Memorial from £45 to £50.
6. **That the charges for pitch hire should be increased from 1 April as follows:**
Football pitch hire - per season from £175 to £185; Hire of changing rooms from £25 to £27; Line Marking from £10 to £11; Casual hire from £33 to £35, Rounder's Pitch from £30 to £32; and Cricket Pitch from £100 to £105.
4. **That photocopying charges should be increased from 1 April 2012 as follows:**
11-25 singled sided copies from 6p to 7p each; over 25 single sided copies from 5p to 6p each.
A4 laminates from 5p to 6p each and A3 laminates from 8p to 10p each.
5. **That the charges for allotments should be increased from 1 October 2012 as follows:**
Full size plot from £18 to £20; Senior Citizens (over 65) £12 to £13; and half size plot from £9 to £10.

Councillor Oliver queried why no increases had been made in respect of Village Hall hire, particularly when this was the largest source of income for the Parish Council.

In response the Chairman pointed out that no recommendation for increase had been received from the Scrutiny Committee following its review of the income and charges in September and the review of the Business Plan in October.

Minute 80.11 – Revenue Expenditure budget

This document is also available in large print.

Members noted that the proposed revenue expenditure budgets for 2012-13 have increased from the current year mainly due to the provision of £12,000 of additional funding for the production of a Neighbourhood Plan and the introduction of the Localism Act. The additional funding will enable the Parish Council to respond to additional services which may be devolved as a consequence of the Act. Members noted that significant savings been made in loan interest repayments due to the maturing of 2 loans.

162 **RESOLVED:**
That the revenue expenditure budget for 2012-13, as detailed in the Business Plan for 2012-13 to 2016-17, should be set at £285,390.

Minute 81.11 – Staff pay and conditions

163 **RESOLVED:**
That the pay and conditions of service for other Council employees should be unchanged for 2012-13, other than as recommended in National Guidelines.

Minute 82.11 – Capital expenditure budget

In reviewing the capital expenditure budget Members noted that due to the current financial climate no large capital projects were planned, the largest being £7,000 allocated for the feasibility study and design of a community sports hall; and that the majority of capital expenditure was due to existing loan repayments.

164 **RESOLVED:**
1. That the capital expenditure budget for 2012-13, as detailed in the draft Business Plan for 2012-13 to 2016-17, should be restricted to £ 27,800
2. That the capital projects deferred from previous years, together with those added to the capital programme in 2012-13, should be carried forward, subject to the availability of relevant grants.

165 Mr Ivor Norman of Sutton Lane Broughton Astley joined the meeting.

Minute 83.11 - Funding and Reserves Policy

Members noted that the reserve of £140,000 had been allocated for the purchase of land for community, leisure or recreational use which may be available now the Local Development Framework is determined. Other significant earmarked reserves include £25,000 in the rolling reserve for playground equipment replacement which is likely to be spent in the new financial year.

Through a combination of the reduction in revenue expenditure, mainly due to the maturing of loans; and careful use of capital expenditure the Precept bid has been kept to £ 272,520 representing a 2% decrease in requirement.

Councillor Bannister proposed that the Precept bid of £ 272,520 should be presented. Councillor Dann seconded the proposal. The proposal was agreed unanimously

166 **RESOLVED:**
That the Parish Council should submit a Precept bid of £272,520 to Harborough District Council to support its expenditure plans for 2012-13.

Minute 84.11 - Farming and water for the future scheme

167 **RESOLVED:**
That the Parish Council should inform 'OnTrent' that it would not provide a contribution towards the funding of the Farming and water for the future scheme.

Minute 85.11 – Christmas Lights installation

168

RESOLVED:

That the Parish Manager should raise purchase orders for the additional unplanned expenditure identified in relation to the installation of the village centre Christmas lights in order for the Electricians to carry out the works on behalf of the Parish Council.

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6. COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORT

Councillor Liquorish submitted a written report updating Members on progress made on 2 issues raised at the Parish Council meeting on 15 November 2011 which effect Broughton Astley:

5 Manton Close – Planning enforcement issue

The County Council have now been served formal notice of enforcement action by Harborough District Council in respect to the removal of hedging, the filling of a ditch and erection of fencing encroaching on highways land by the occupier.

Village Centre traffic problems

A meeting has been held with County Council highways to discuss introduction of on-street parking orders in village centre. Public consultation process will commence shortly - either prior to the Christmas period or in the New Year.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

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Councillor Dann – Councillor Dann had nothing to report at present, except that Harborough District Council was in the middle of budget reviews and preparation.

171

Councillor Golding – Councillor Golding reiterated that the enforcement actions in relation to the Co-operative Store and 5 Manton Close were still on-going.

172

Councillor Graves –

- Councillor Graves informed the meeting that Harborough District Council had voted to proceed with a radical transformation programme which would affect services, property and assets and staffing in the future.
- Councillor Graves informed the meeting that the 5 year supply of available housing supply was decreasing due to work on developments not beginning, although permission for a number of significant developments had been given, which may mean some improvement in the level of housing available.

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7. CHAIRMAN'S TIME

The Chairman informed and updated Members on the following items of interest:

Christmas Closure – The Parish Office will be closed from 1pm on Friday 23 December until Thursday 29 December. Parish Manager will be in office on Wednesday 28 December. The Parish Office will be closed again on Monday 2 January 2012.

Annual Parish Meeting – The date of the Annual Parish Meeting with Harborough District Council has been set for 6.30pm on Monday 30 January at HDC. Places are normally limited to 2 representatives per Parish Council, so please let Parish Manager know if you wish to attend on behalf of the Parish Council by 13 January.

Sport Relief Fun Run - The Parish Manager and the office staff would like to organise (on a voluntary basis) a Sport Relief Fun Run in the Recreation Ground on the morning of Sunday 25 March 2012. The Chairman pledged his support for the proposal, and hoped that others would support it too.

It is anticipated that the event will signal the start of several events being organised in the community to celebrate the Olympic Games - promoting fitness and well-being. The event will not adversely affect the local football teams, as there is no match scheduled for

the morning.

Planning is still in the very early stages, but it is hoped that around 200 young people/adults would participate in the event and in the Chairman's' opinion it could be many more. If anyone would like to assist with the organisation of the event or help marshalling on the day, please contact the Parish Manager.

Olympic Year 2012 - In relation to Olympic Year an initial meeting was held last week, organised by HDC Community Sports Officer in order to exchange information and provide support and links between the various events which are being planned to celebrate the Olympic Year 2012 in Broughton Astley.

The Carnival Committee are considering what theme to adopt although it is likely to be sports based , and several events and activities are being organised by TECC and a full weekend programme, including a village Fun Run is being organised in August by Sutton in the Elms Baptist Church.

The Olympic Torch route will be visiting Kibworth/Foxton/Lubenham and Market Harborough on 2 July and HDC would like to involve residents and the local schools in the procession if possible – perhaps by allocating each school a length of the route to decorate or by providing transport for older people to allow them to see the torch procession. – please let the Parish Manager have your ideas.

174 Mr Ivor Norman of Sutton Lane Broughton Astley left the meeting.

175 **8. MEMBERS MOTION 06/11 – COUNCILLOR GRAVES**

"The Parish Council notes that in the current 4 year term, 5 Parish Councillors are also elected to Harborough District Council. A sixth District Councillor is also a County Councillor and is therefore invited to attend Parish Council Meetings.

Broughton Astley residents expect both Parish and District Councillors to represent their interests, and attend all meetings on their behalf wherever possible. Residents expect both Parish and District Councils to cooperate in the setting of meeting dates to avoid repeated clashes to make sure their interests are properly represented on both Councils. Broughton Astley residents deserve the best representation on both District meetings and Parish Council meetings to avoid decisions being made that adversely affect the village. Broughton Astley Parish Council should make all reasonable efforts to assist affected members to attend BOTH Parish and District meetings on different evenings, to properly represent the residents who have elected them to public service."

Opening the debate Councillor Graves circulated a calendar of dates displaying when various meetings held at the Parish Council clashed with those held at the District Council in support of his motion.

He reiterated his view that the position of BAPC was unprecedented in that 5 Parish Councillors are also District Councillors, and that Councils Standing Orders specify a precise schedule of meetings, unless the Council otherwise decides. He viewed that the Parish Council must make reasonable efforts to allow him, and other District Councils to attend meetings in order to fully represent their Wards.

Councillor Oliver seconded the motion and the Chairman opened the motion for debate by other Parish Councillors.

Councillor Bannister said that he had been a Parish Councillor for 13 years, and he had given a great deal of consideration before making his decision to stand for election as a district councillor earlier this year, having been very conscious of the time it takes to represent both parish and District. He was also conscious of when meetings were

planned and took this into consideration when making his decision to stand for the District Council. He did not wish to contribute to any subsequent inconvenience the decision might have on his colleagues on the Parish Council. Councillor Bannister added that the Motion, if passed might be impractical to fulfil if everyone's outside commitments were to be accommodated, for example, he represented Dunton Ward at district level, having 5 villages with 3 Parish Councils to attend, and would not consider it right to expect the Parish Councils to change their meetings to accommodate his needs. Personally he would not expect his fellow Parish Councillors to change the arrangements to suit him. He is also aware that Parish Councillors are involved in other voluntary activities such as supporting the British Legion or being Governors of local schools and these should be taken into account as well when trying to avoid clashes between parish and district council meetings. To do otherwise might indicate a lack of respect for their activities. In his view the Parish Council and committee meetings that had to be rearranged when anticipated not to be quorate because district councillors had other commitments were few and far between, and the Status Quo should therefore be retained.

Councillor Tomlin said that this issue was a problem for all town and parish council as well as Harborough District Council. He represented both the parish and Lutterworth Brookfield Ward and that in attempting to change the schedule of meetings in Standing Orders there is likelihood of making matters worse. He also had concerns about re-arranging meetings at short notice due to his commitments.

Councillor Dann said that his views had been covered adequately by Councillor Bannister, and added that he had been a Parish Councillor for twenty-odd years and was also a District Councillor. He said that he sometimes had to make an informed judgement on which meeting to attend; and that he would not be right to try to dictate to the other Members of the Parish Council when his meetings clashed. He considered that the Status Quo should remain.

Councillor Golding pointed out that there were 97 parishes in Harborough District, with many 'dual-hatted representatives. Having to manage the diaries of 16 Councillors, all with different commitments was extremely difficult, however, if Councillor Graves felt it was necessary to change any that weren't statutory this should be done at Annual council in May.

Councillor Oliver viewed that every effort should be made to make it easy for Members to attend, and that the rigidity of meetings should be removed. He commented that the October meeting of the Scrutiny Committee was not quorate.

Councillor Stell remarked that many other Councillors participate in other activities, and that she allocates regular Monday nights to Planning meetings and Thursdays to Executive and Parish Meetings. If this pattern were to change it may cause her problems personally.

Councillor Porter viewed that the needs of ordinary Parish Councillors should be considered and that of the staff. He remarked that the office should be informed in advance of any planned non-attendance in order to allow them to re-arrange meetings if necessary, such as the October Scrutiny meeting.

Councillor Graves was provided with the opportunity for further comment. Councillor Graves responded by stating that everyone can see why he had raised the motion. In principal he didn't believe anyone would disagree, and would never expect an exception on the issue. He didn't regard the motion as changing things to suit him; He had heard the views of others in respect to their commitments but people elected to

public office are different from those serving on the British Legion and other voluntary organisations. He believed that reasonable efforts should be made, and that Scrutiny Committee should look at the meetings schedule and efforts be made to accommodate the needs of Councillors who have to attend meetings. Big things are happening at District Council and elected Councillors need to be there. He said that he has asked for reasonable efforts to be made, and that anyone who votes against the motion is saying that the Council shouldn't make reasonable efforts.

The Chairman thanked the Members for their participation in the debate on the motion, reiterating that the overriding result appeared to be to retain the Status Quo and that where conflict of meetings cannot be helped, respect needed to be given to the corporate body of the Parish Council.

176 **The result of the vote on the motion, by a show of hands was: FOR 2 AGAINST 7
There were 7 ABSTENTIONS**

177 **9. MEMBERS' MOTIONS FOR NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**
None received.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm

Minutes approved and accepted as correct

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Chairman

Dated