

**HAWSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
AT THE VILLAGE HALL  
ON 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7.30pm.**

**Present:** Cllrs R Alexander (Chair), P Barham, P Baker, H Brewis, C Carr, J Bulbrook & J West. C Hibbert (Clerk).  
One member of the public.

**Apologies:** SC Cllr K Soons.

*The meeting started at 7.30pm.*

The filming statement was taken as read.

**1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND CONSIDER ANY APPLICATIONS FOR APPROVAL OF ABSENCE**

N/A.

**2. PUBLIC FORUM**

**2.1 Public participation.** No comments made.

**2.2 County Council.** In the absence of SC Cllr Soons, a copy of her most recent report will be uploaded onto the website.

**2.3 West Suffolk Council.** See item 2.2.

**2.4 Police;** N/A.

**3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

**3.1** RA declared an interest in respect of her recent appointment to the Board of Trustees for the River Lark Catchment Partnership (item 5 below); HB declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 9.2 as neighbour of the application site; JB, RA and PB declared pecuniary interests in the payments at item 10.3 below.

**3.2** No dispensation applications were received.

**4. MINUTES FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATED 9<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2023.**

The minutes from the Parish Council meeting dated 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023 were **APPROVED** and signed as a true and accurate record of this meeting.

**5. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT** The meeting heard that the Chair had; (i) attended the SALC conference in November 2023 (topics included emerging planning legislation, local government finance - including bond products suitable for parish councils, new arrangements for maintenance of the local highway network); (ii) registered an interest in the EV charging point offer on behalf of the village – subject to further consideration by the Council in due course; (iii) attended the recent River Lark Catchment Partnership meeting. Discussion followed about; (a) the chalk stream running through the village (and the associated catchment area) which is heavily polluted with phosphates from the surrounding agricultural land; and (b) the Environment Agency's role in monitoring pollution and enforcing any breach of relevant legislation. Discussion followed about the extent to which it was appropriate (if at all) for the Council to concern itself with issues of national policy/significance. The Chair will bring a proposal to the next meeting for due consideration to facilitate a 'Citizen Science' initiative whereby a team of local volunteers might be mobilised to gather data which could be used to help inform efforts to tackle the pollution of the watercourse.

JB agreed to review the bond products promoted at the SALC conference for suitability.

Finally the meeting heard that a draft statement from the Chair for the new website would be circulated for comment before publication. It was noted that the Village Voice is to be reinstated shortly.

**6. CONSERVATION**

**6.1 Greens:** The meeting heard that;(i) DEFRA has confirmed the level of Basic Farm Payment grant will reduce over the next seven years (delinked payments) – Hawstead should receive £1,290pa for the period 24-27; (ii) it may be possible to benefit from an enhanced Countryside

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Stewardship grant package if it can be demonstrated that the green is species rich grassland (GS6) rather than the current GS2 classification. The current Countryside Stewardship agreement would need to be varied. It was **AGREED** that CC would investigate the availability of a free local advice session to support this initiative; (iii) unknown vehicles continue to drive on the green causing damage in the wet weather. It is hoped to arrange a group of volunteers to 'stamp down' the ruts before the green starts to dry out (March? - TBC). Discussion followed about whether the Council could do more to reduce the height of the grass to promote vehicle sightlines and prevent dogs getting covered in burrs from the long grass. The meeting heard that it had previously been agreed to amend the grass cutting spec so that the edges of the traffic triangles are cut low; usually the green is cut shortly after 1 July (in line with the Countryside Stewardship agreement). The unusual weather conditions last year meant that the green was not cut for hay until September which meant that dog owners would have had to deal with burrs for a longer period than usual. It is hoped that the main hay cut will take place much earlier in the year which will limit this problem.

**6.2 Footpaths:** The meeting heard that the footpaths are in good condition. The grit bins have been topped up, for which thanks to PB and her husband. Safety for pedestrians (especially schoolchildren) walking along Bury Road was discussed.

**6.3 Bird boxes:** A new owl box has been purchased; the volunteer group has renovated the broken one – thanks to JW and his team of volunteers. A quote to install these boxes will be sought.

**6.4 Trees on the Green:** The meeting heard that a quote for the further tree works (see minutes 9th November 2023) is awaited.

## 7. REPORTS

**7.1 Communications;** HB reported that the various communication lists/WhatsApp groups were working well. It was noted that a flier inviting residents to join the WhatsApp Group will be circulated with the final emergency plan when ready. All Councillors are requested to get the new email box loaded onto their own devices, before the new email account is put into use. Discussion followed about the extent to which the Parish Council should endeavour to circulate WSC/SCC consultations etc via the various local communication channels. It was **NOTED** that councillors can always request that any issue is added to the agenda for consideration/action by the Council as a whole; otherwise it was generally considered that the Council communication channels should not be used to distribute issues of more general relevance.

**7.2 Highways;** the meeting heard about the huge potholes at the bottom of Bells Lane which have been causing a hazard for cyclists and motorists; these have been reported twice – no action to date. It was **AGREED** that the Council should write to SCC highlighting these awful conditions and lack of response to date – copy to KS. Discussion followed about tentative plans for leaky dams etc/ attenuation pond on the green to reduce flooding. The Chair did not consider that there was sufficient information available to go forward with this at present but would keep this under review. It was **AGREED** that SCC should be approached for permission to install a flood gauge at Bells Lane.

**7.3 Volunteering:** the meeting heard that the volunteer group has undertaken a whole range of work including renovation of owl box; installation and removal of Xmas tree; repair of pothole in car park; maintenance work at Hawstead Brook. – plans are afoot to do some further work at Hawstead Brook and lay bark under the swings. The volunteer group might be amenable to clearing some of the blocked gullies in the village. Thanks to JW and his team. The speedwatch gun has been taken back by the police as there are no volunteers available to run the scheme in the village. JW has been liaising with Hargreave PC to share details of how the new village hall project at Hawstead was delivered.

It was **AGREED** that quotes for the replacement fingerposts for Brook Green would be brought to the next meeting.

**7.4 Clerk.** The clerk report was received and **NOTED**.

## 8 TO CONSIDER

**8.1 Mowing quotes.** A quote from WSC £2,180.84 plus VAT (2023 cost was £2,104 plus VAT). WSC will be approached with the amended spec to check whether this quote needs to be adjusted

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further. It was **AGREED** to try and source two further quotes on the amended spec before the final decision is made.

**8.2 Purchase of bark.** A quote of £120 from Field Compost was **APPROVED**.

**9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, APPEALS AND NOTIFICATIONS**

**9.1 Planning notifications:** The following notifications were received;-

Appeal Ref: APP/F3545/W/23/3316413; The Spinney, Bury Road, Hawstead, Suffolk IP29 5NJ - ALLOWED.

**9.2 Appeal AP/23/0050/STAND re refusal of Planning application DC/23/0036/FUL for one dwelling with detached garage at Land Off Church Road Hawstead Suffolk.** Appeal noted – no further action required.

**10. FINANCE**

**10.1 To receive and approve the quarterly financial summary to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.** The quarterly summary to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 was received and **APPROVED** – copy attached.

**10.2 To receive and approve the bi-monthly financial summary for November-December 2023;** received and **APPROVED**.

**10.3 To approve payments;** the following online payments were **APPROVED:-**

	Detail	Cheque no/online payment	Net (of VAT)	Vat	TOTAL
1	CH website refund	online	14.97	2.99	17.96
2	Rougham Estate Sales	online	74.08	14.82	88.90
3	Stuart Bradnam (paid)	online	50.00	10.00	60.00
4	CH – honoraria refund	online	150.00		150.00
5	CH wage	online	1069.60		1069.60
6	HMRC wage	online	50.60		50.60
7	CH – owl box refund	online	178.33	35.67	214.00
8	SALC	online	15.00	3.00	18.00
9	RC King	online	15.49		15.49
10	P Barham	online	111.60	22.32	133.92
11	J Bulbrook	online	480.00		480.00

JB completed the interim internal finance check, for which thanks.

**11. CORRESPONDENCE AND CIRCULARS**

The following correspondence was received and **NOTED**;-

11.1 Play area reports for Dec/Jan24;

11.2 Quiet Lanes correspondence;

11.3 Fit Villages info;

11.4 WSC info re grass cutting;

11.5 Update from Anglian Water re strategic pipeline project;

11.6 Thank you letter from AE;

11.7 Correspondence re moving defibrillator; Discussion followed about this item; the defibrillator is powered by a battery and is in a sheltered visible location; there is no need for a new casing at present; the fact the power shuts off from time to time won't impact on functionality. It was **AGREED** to respond to HCC accordingly.

11.8 Correspondence re use of hall in 2024. A letter had been received from HCC requesting permission to install plastic parking matting at the village hall to facilitate overflow event car parking. Discussion followed about the protected status of the green and the consequent limitations. It was **AGREED** to respond accordingly and also to address the assertion that the Council is responsible for maintenance of the car park.

**12. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

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Thursday 14th March 2024 at 7.30pm .  
 The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Distribution  
 All Cllrs  
 Website  
 Noticeboard

Docs before the meeting

CC report  
 Clerk report  
 Bi Monthly summary

**Attachment 9.1 Quarterly summary to 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

**HAWSTEAD PC  
 SUMMARY RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS  
 FOR THE YEAR ending 31/3/24**

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	<u>2023/24</u>		<u>Variance</u>
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	
	£		
Precept	7,400.00	7,400.00	0.00
Wayleave	41.44	50.00	-8.56
Bottle Bank	423.60	250.00	173.60
Grant	838.60	1,500.00	-661.40
reserves		200.00	-200.00
Interest	115.58	0.00	115.58
VAT	1,499.79		1,499.79
	<u>10,319.01</u>	<u>9,400.00</u>	<u>919.01</u>

<u>PAYMENTS</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Misc	98.91	350.00	251.09
Admin	54.00	200.00	146.00
Audit fees	169.00	180.00	11.00
Clerk's salary(inc tax)	1,880.40	4,000.00	2,119.60
Clerk exps	212.70	0.00	-212.70
Greens	2494.22	3,020.00	525.78
Insurance	399.15	350.00	-49.15
Repairs/maintenance	124.61	300.00	175.39
Training	60.00	150.00	90.00
Subscriptions	151.89	250.00	98.11
VAT	712.88		-712.88
Grants	150.00	150.00	0.00
Trees	170.00	0.00	-170.00
defib	384.00	150.00	-234.00
website	894.82	300.00	-594.82
	<u>7,956.58</u>	<u>9,400.00</u>	<u>1,443.42</u>

<u>Reconciliation of R. &amp; P. Book</u>			
Balance b/f 01.04.23	£16,892.79	Deposit a/c Aug 23	£13,000.00
Receipts	£10,203.43	Receipts	£115.58
Payments	-£7,956.58	Payments	£0.00
inter a/c tfr	-£13,000.00		
	<u>£6,139.64</u>		<u>£13,115.58</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>£19,255.22</u></b>		

<u>Bank Reconciliation balances as at</u>	
Lloyds Balance as at 31.12.23	£6,139.64
<b>less unrepresented cheques as at</b>	<b>£0.00</b>
	<u>£6,139.64</u>
Lloyds deposit as at 31.12.23	£13,115.58
<b>TOTAL Bank Reconciliation</b>	<b><u>£19,255.22</u></b>

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