

HEMPNALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 18th December 2012 at 7.30pm in The Mill Centre

ACTION

Present

Chairman Geoffrey Moulton, Vice Chairman David Hook, Liz Allen, Kevin Cunningham (to end of parish poll discussion), Richard Delf, Peter Workman and the Clerk Ian Nelson.

Members of the public present

Mr Roger Parker, Mr Paul Ellis (to end of Queen's Head matter), Mrs Janette Franks, Mrs Melanie Hook, Dr David Taylor, Mrs Mary Taylor, Mr Trevor Shurmer

Apologies

Apologies were received from County Councillor Alison Thomas, District Councillor Windridge, Debbie Ashford, David Pointer, and Mike Turner.

Declarations of Interest

Mrs Allen declared a prejudicial interest in the Wind Turbine, and the GNDP / JCS matters and an interest in the Village Hall matter.

Mr Moulton declared an interest in the Wind Turbine.

All except Mr Moulton declared an n interest in the Precept.

Dispensations re Budgets

All councillors except Mr Moulton (who did not have property in the village) sought a dispensation to consider and vote on the annual budget until the date of the next election (May 2015) and presented such written requests to the clerk, who as Hempnall Parish Council's proper officer granted the dispensations.

The clerk to register the dispensations and diarise their expiry.

IN

Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 13th November 2012 were approved and signed.

Public Participation

Mr Parker indicated that the repair to the village hall drain pipe had been completed.

Planning Applications

New applications since the last meeting:

There had not been any.

Applications approved since the last meeting:

There had not been any.

Queen's Head

Mr Hook stated that Liz Allen had corrected the tense of a word, other than that no further amendments had been suggested.

Mr Hook proposed, Mr Workman seconded and it was unanimously agreed that the clerk should send the letter to Mr Ellis

IN

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GNDP / JCS Site Specific Allocations

ACTION

Mrs Allen temporarily left the meeting.

Mr Hook reported that Anglian Water Authority (“AWA”) had informed him that there were issues regarding the capacity of the Morningthorpe sewage treatment works to handle the sewage and drainage it is currently required to deal with. In the recent spell of bad weather tankering was required on a 24-7 basis in order that the works could continue to function.

Mr Hook proposed, Mr Workman seconded and it was unanimously agreed that the clerk should write to SNC re concerns over the sewage situation and stress that limitations to capacity reinforced the case made by the parish council that the housing allocation to Hempnall, as a service village in the GNDP/JCS, should be restricted to 10 houses – i.e. at the lower end of the applicable range of 10 to 20 houses.

IN

The clerk read the letter from UK Power Networks in response to our enquiries re capacity for the village as a whole and in particular the house of Mr & Mrs Scott. The matter did not seem to be a village wide issue.

Mrs Allen returned to the meeting.

Matters arising from previous parish council meetings – for discussion

Jubilee Oak Tree

Mrs Allen reported that she had inspected a 1m high tree and liaised with Mr Hook re the same. It could be moved at any time in the next 2 or 3 months. Mr Hook described the proposed planting location near the site of the old cricket nets.

It was unanimously agreed that Mr Hook would look at the tree to determine if it was practical to replant it and if it is felt better not to move it, Mr Hook was authorised to purchase another tree.

DH

Ray Youngman’s 60 Years Service

The clerk distributed a selection of seat options to the meeting.

Plaque wording:

“Ray Youngman
In appreciation of 60 years of service
1952 to 2012”

It was unanimously agreed that the seat known as “Traditional Three Seat” and the plaque be ordered and that Mr Medlar be approached regarding installation.

IN

Hempnall Post Office

The clerk had written to McColls and reported that he had not as yet received a response. The clerk to chase.

IN

Blocked drain pipe – Village Hall/car park

The village hall committee had written to state that:

“At the last meeting of Hempnall Village Hall Committee we considered once more the question of the blocked drain pipe. The committee decided to do the work as a matter of urgency and are minded to bear the cost rather than delay matters further. We had one other quote at an increased cost of a further £250. So we are staying with our first estimate. In view of the Village Hall funding this work, we hope in future, when the car park surface is reconsidered, the parish council will bear this in mind.”

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Budget/Precept 2013/14

ACTION

The Clerk presented the budget for 2013/14 as previously circulated to Councillors.

The clerk reported that SNC had informed him that the grant attributable to Hempnall in order to compensate for Council Tax Support would be £1,979. The tax base is 432 properties.

Discussion was held re the possible cost of village hall car park and drainage repairs and the budget was adjusted accordingly.

Maintenance of public footpaths was discussed and it was agreed to keep pressure on Highways to cut, perhaps via the Rangers, but funds would be reserved to allow the clearance of paths should they become heavily overgrown.

Mr Delf proposed, Mr Hook seconded and it was agreed unanimously that the precept be set at £26,000 subject to any changes agreed below following discussion of the wind turbine matters.

The Clerk to inform SNC of the required precept.

IN

D Cracknell

Mrs Allen proposed, Mr Workman seconded and it was unanimously agreed that a gratuity of £580 be paid for his sterling work around the village over the last year in maintaining the bus shelter, litter clearance and bin emptying. The clerk to write a thank you letter and make payment.

IN

School presentation

Mrs Allen reported the outcome of her visit to Hempnall School and both she and Mr Moulton volunteered to give a presentation to the school to explain the work of the parish council.

GM/LA

Items for Newsletter

- Council tax changes explanation

IN

Items for next meeting

- Potential Hempnall School planning matter.
- Rota for HPC newsletter

IN

Mrs Allen left the meeting.

Wind Turbines

Mr Hook took the chair.

Bat Survey

The clerk had confirmed with NAPTC that his opinion that the votes taken in the last meeting were valid.

The clerk sent the bat survey to TCI and responded to the Information Commissioners Office.

TCI had asked for permission to place the bat survey as an appendix to their Environmental Statement. Mr Hook proposed, Mr Delf seconded and it was unanimously agreed with Mr Moulton abstaining that the clerk write to TCI indicating that permission was not granted as the first survey they had been given represented only a part of the work that the parish council had commissioned with regard to the surveying of bats. A second survey is currently being produced. The Environmental Statement would need to include both surveys in order to represent a complete and comprehensive picture of the content of

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the work that Hempnall parish council had commissioned on the potential impact of wind turbines on local bat populations. It was agreed that the publication of only one of the surveys in the environmental statement would present an incomplete and possibly misleading picture. **ACTION**

Response from John Hayes MP

The clerk had written to Mr Hayes MP and as yet not received a response. He had however received a response from Mr Richard Bacon MP stating that he had written to Mr Hayes to ask him to answer the specific points raised. Mr Bacon would also look out for opportunities to discuss the matter with Mr Hayes in the voting lobbies of the House of Commons. **IN**

The clerk to chase for an urgent response.

Parish Poll

Mr Hook stated that a formal poll conducted by SNC would guide the parish council with regard to its response to a wind turbine application and would be viewed as a material planning consideration. He reminded councillors that at the public meeting in January 2012 there had been an overwhelming call to hold such a poll. **IN**

Mr Delf proposed, Mr Cunningham seconded and it was unanimously agreed with Mr Moulton abstaining that a parish poll be held once a planning application has been received and that negotiations should take place with SNC at that time in order to arrange the timetable of the poll.

Mr Delf proposed, Mr Cunningham seconded and it was unanimously agreed with Mr Moulton abstaining that the precept be increased by £500 to allow £2000 instead of £1500 for the parish poll in line with the most up to date estimate of its cost provided by SNC.

Photomontages

Mr Hook stated that the photo montages of Enertrag had been considered unacceptable by the inspector at public inquiry and parishioners had commented that the quality of TCI montages seen at their open evening seemed to be of similar poor quality. **IN**

Mr Hook reported that he had been in contact with a landscape consultancy company which had offered a three stage approach to analysing wind turbine visualisations. They would advise at stage 1, free of charge, if the visualisations complied with the usual guidelines reference by the wind industry, i.e. those produced by Scottish Natural Heritage. At stage 2, if required, they would write a report on the quality of visualisations for an approximate cost of £500 and if necessary, at stage 3, would produce visualisations covering all the agreed view points for a cost in the range of £2,000 to £4,000. **IN**

It was accepted that independently produced visualisations would provide the parish council and the residents of Hempnall with an unbiased view of the visual impact that a turbine development would have on the village and surrounding area.

Mr Shurmer offered to assist but appreciated the value of an independent approach.

Mr Delf proposed, Mr Workman seconded and it was unanimously agreed with Mr Moulton abstaining that when appropriate an independent view would be obtained, free of charge, as to the quality of any visualisations attached to a planning application and that if they were considered inadequate further action would be taken, for example, commissioning a set of independently produced visualisations.

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Ecology

ACTION

It was accepted that as the proposed wind turbine site encompasses an area that contains at least three SSSIs ecological issues would be an important matter in any planning application for wind turbines. It was recognised that the parish council does not have the expertise to analyse the ecology content of an environmental statement in order to reach an informed opinion. Mr Hook reported that he had been in contact with Dr Timothy Reed of Ecotext Ltd who had offered to review the environmental statement to determine its adequacy in relation to ecological matters. This expert would also be prepared to produce a report informing the parish council of relevant matters that it should consider in assessing its response to the planning application. Depending upon the amount of work involved and the aspects highlighted in the initial review, such a report could cost between £2,400 and £5,500.

Mr Hook proposed, Mr Workman seconded and it was unanimously agreed, with Mr Moulton abstaining, that the precept should be increased by £5,000 in order to create a total reserved fund of £10,000 for fact finding, analysis and possible further actions with regard to ecological issues and visualisations (photomontages) in respect of the anticipated planning application for wind turbines in the village. The parish council considers that it needs to be in possession of independently produced material of a high calibre in order to make an informed decision on a wind turbine planning application. The detailed manner in which this money will be allocated for expenditure will be determined and approved in future meetings of the council.

IN

It was noted that if the developer and landowner were to withdraw from submitting an application for wind turbines in Hempnall then council tax payers could be saved a considerable amount of expenditure.

Date of next meeting

The next main meeting will be on 15th January 2013.

The next planning meeting will be on 12th February 2013.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9:45pm.

Signed _____ Date 15th January 2013