

MINUTES OF HANKERTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 4 SEP 23

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Held on Monday 4 September 2023 at 7.30 pm in the North Aisle, Hankerton Church

Present: Parish Cllrs Jacqui Erskine-Crum (Chairman), Richard Barrow, David Bosley, Dai Davies, Denis DeSouza, Kate Nurden; M R Bromley Gardner (Clerk); Wilts Cllr Elizabeth Threlfall; and 19 members of the public.

1. Apologies. None.
2. Public Questions/Receipt of Petitions.
 - Could we fly the flag at half-mast on 8 Sep? PC agreed. **Action: Kate Nurden**
 - A complaint about planning applications not being discussed in meetings. Noted.
 - Yew Tree Farm – 2 members of the public voiced their objections to the planning application (their points can be seen in their written objections on the application web page). The applicant was also in attendance and spoke briefly.
3. Declarations Of Interest. None.
4. Urgent Matters at Chairman's Discretion. None.
5. Cllr Vacancy. Dr Malcolm Gerald was co-opted in his absence, being away and therefore unable to attend. **Action: Clerk**
6. Minutes of Last Meeting. The Minutes of the last meeting (held on 3 Jul 23) had been circulated in advance. They were approved and signed. Three named Cllrs were urged to complete their Cllr Profiles including a photograph. The Clerk mentioned an outstanding action – him to speak to the agent for the owner of the pond by the Amenity Area. The Clerk referred to the point raised under Item 2 at the last meeting; the day after the meeting he had spoken to the resident concerned and could confirm that the resident had said that all was now well and the bus drivers were being helpful.
7. Finance. There was £5762 in the 2 accounts. No payments were needed. The Clerk referred to the £56 payment authorised at last meeting, which he had said he would not pay out until the overpayment of the same figure had been credited back; it had arrived in the account, so he would now make the payment. The Clerk also announced that the PC had incurred a £40 audit fine because he had mistakenly failed to send in the Exemption Certificate on time, and explained how it happened.
8. Yew Tree Farm. The aim of this item was to provide transparency on why the PC had voted, in the remote decision process, for no objection; and the reason for it was that after the PC had decided, some objections by residents had started to appear. The basis of the decision was summarised as: the house was in a poor state, as evidenced by the Heritage Assessment and the Structural Report, the latter of which recommended that the house was beyond economic repair; and the previous long-term occupants had told a Cllr how bad the condition was; the proposed replacement was the best way to return the site to a family home; this did not seem contentious to Cllrs who therefore had voted not to take the application in a PC meeting.
9. Speeding. The Speed Survey had returned a result of 33 responses are they 73% to 27% majority that the PC should not try for speed limit for the village. Costs had been

Chairman

MINUTES OF HANKERTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 4 SEP 23

briefed to Cllrs at the last meeting. Cllrs voted unanimously not to pursue a speed limit. Thoughts then turned to how to reduce vehicle speeds and dangerous; it was decided to bring this to the next meeting preceded by full discussions on ideas, by email circulation, in the intervening time. The Clerk would initiate this. **Action: Clerk**

10. Flags. At the last meeting the PC had decided to buy Home Nation flags at a cost of about £50 each, but since they would fly for one day per year only and were available for only about £10 Cllrs decided to buy these instead. **Action: Chairman**

11. Flooding Update. David Pynn, official Flooding Advisor to the PC, briefed the meeting. Summary:

- surrounding ground is flat with no gradient and impervious soil. An ancient map records that the area was 'prone to flooding'.
- A major flooding event in mid-2000s led to remedial work by various homeowners, by WWT and by Wilts Council who constructed a 2-stage channel at Pill Bridge.
- Now much reduced in-village flooding. Occasional flooding on lane running north towards the Brook and south of The Holt
- Sewage flooding results from rainwater leaking into the sewage pipes underground (from Crudwell, Eastcourt, Minety and 3 other villages that all converge on Hankerton); sometimes pumps and downstream pipes cannot cope and sewage leaks out of in-road manhole covers. Wessex Water are lining the pipes to reduce this; if it doesn't solve the problem they might install a stronger pump at Hankerton pumping station, though this might cause other problems elsewhere. He would keep an eye on this and maintain pressure on Wessex Water as needed.
- Work might usefully be done on the ditch and culverts running north to Hankerton Brook (as well as major work to replace a presumed damaged underlane culvert in The Holt area). The Clerk would talk to householders. **Action: Clerk**

David Pynn was thanked for the update.

12. Footpaths. Denis DeSouza gave an update. He had sent out a longer written report to Cllrs and gave only a summary to the meeting. Perhaps the key points were the advice he had received from the Wilts Council RoW officer – manage expectations, self-help (ie walkers carrying, and being prepared to use, secateurs; and a stick to beat down nettles); and relationships with land owners. He had had good meetings with the previous Footpaths Cllr and with 2 landowners, and thanked some residents who had shown him some of the routes. Dog fouling remains a problem. He suggested that local verges should be cut twice a year. He was happy to report to every other meeting.

13. Hedgecutting. The proposal was to require all land owners with roadside hedges within the 3 village signs to cut their hedges annually, for aesthetic reasons. The PC did not support this, but an eye would be kept on the cutting of all road-impinging hedges.

14. Planning Function. The proposal was that the PC should make itself responsible for checking that planning permissions were accurately and correctly actioned by the successful applicants. The PC did not support this. Any resident who thought that there was a problem in this regard should report it to Planning Enforcement at Wilts Council; but any such resident needing help to do this could call on the PC for help.

Chairman

MINUTES OF HANKERTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 4 SEP 23

15. Water Butt at Bus Shelter. The proposal was that a water butt be installed at the bus shelter, behind the line of the front of the building. The PC agreed. Richard Barrow would provide a free water butt. Kate Nurden would action this. **Action: Kate Nurden**

16. First Aid Training. Only 2 names had come forward asking to attend the training. The Chairman would re-advertise one more time. **Action: Chairman**

17. Hillwell Hedges. The Clerk reported that, as he presumed almost everyone had seen, excellent work had been done to cut the hedges right back so that the Hillwell car parking area and the exit well once again clear; and that the footpath Hillwell-Church Lane was either already cut back or would be done soon. He personally thanked those who had done the work.

18. Hillwell-Follyfield Footpath. Discussion. The Clerk said he had asked the Parish Steward with strimming it a few weeks ago; in future this could be done again, the main limitation being that time spent doing this reduced the time available for other tasks.

19. Planning. Report on Planning Applications:

- Considered by the PC since the last meeting:
 - Yew Tree Farm, demolish and replace farmhouse, no objection.
- Decided by Wilts Council since the last meeting:
 - BESS at Purlieus Farm – variation of conditions – permitted.
 - Old Post Office, single additional dwelling – refused.
 - Five Lanes Solar Farm – permitted.
- Not yet decided:
 - Minety Substation extension
 - Minety Solar Farm variation of conditions. Of note was the applicant's response to the Hankerton PC detailed objection, now on the webpage.

20. Councillors' Observations/Points for the Next Meeting. None.

21. Next Meetings. 6 Nov. 2024 – 8 Jan, 4 Mar, (13 May AVM), 20 May APCM, 1 Jul, 2 Sep, 4 Nov.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Chairman