

## **HARBERTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes for the ordinary meeting of Harberton Parish Council  
at 7.30pm on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at Harberton Parish Hall

### **In attendance**

#### **Harbertonford Councillors**

Cllr Beamish: Present  
Cllr Bowley: Present  
Cllr Davies: Present  
Cllr Palmer: Present  
Vacancy  
Vacancy

#### **Harberton Councillors**

Cllr Camp: Apologies  
Cllr Hambly: Present  
Cllr Paine: Apologies  
Cllr Morris: Present  
Cllr Williams: Apologies  
Vacancy

#### **Others**

D.Cllr McKay: Apologies  
C.Cllr Hodgson: Present  
Clerk Ms Radford: Present  
Members of the Public: 1

### **Public Session**

- i) A Member of the Public (MoP) attended the meeting to introduce the applications due for consideration under item 7.1.1 and answer any questions. It was commented that planning applications had been submitted in the past, but the Local Planning Authority had advised the applicant to break the original proposal down into separate applications. The applications under consideration are focused on the clock tower, which is in a poor state of repair, creation of an external bat roost for a significant colony of Lesser Horseshoe Bats and the creation of a car port. In response to queries made by councillors (cllrs) it was confirmed that there will no substantive changes to the clock tower, beyond repointing.

### **Agenda**

1. **Apologies** were received as above. **It was RESOLVED** to sanction reasons given for absence.
2. **Declaration of Interests**
  - 2.1. Register of Interests Cllrs were reminded of the need to update their register of interests if any had changed.
  - 2.2. Declaration of interests No cllrs declared any interests on items on the agenda.
3. **Reports** for information from:
  - 3.1. County Councillor (C.Cllr) Cllrs had received a written report from the C.Cllr by email earlier in the week.
    - 3.1.1. Devolution Deal for Devon It was reported that this is going ahead. There are some concerns concerning voting rights on the Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC). Voting rights may be taken away from District Councillors. This decision has been deferred for the meantime.
    - 3.1.2. Public consultation on children's hubs The C.Cllr encouraged cllrs to engage with the consultation. It has been suggested that the Daisy Centre in the grounds of St John's Primary School (Totnes) could become a Family Hub and be in receipt of government funding to support work with children and young people up to the age of 19. Concern has been raised that supporting young people up to 19 may not be appropriate in a centre on the grounds of a primary school. It was also noted that Daisy is now contributing to the local pre-school offer and there are concerns that this service may be lost due to space and capacity.
    - 3.1.3. Community composting South Hams It was reported Totnes Climate Emergency group will be looking in detail at community composting initiatives and will share information about support in due course.
  - 3.2. District Councillor No report.
4. **Minutes** **It was RESOLVED** to sign the following documents as an accurate record:
  - 4.1. The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024 as an accurate record.
  - 4.2. The notes of the Annual Meeting of Harberton Parish 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 as an accurate record.
5. **Report Matters Arising from the Minutes** *Not otherwise on the agenda and for information only*
  - 5.1. Harberton Devon Air Ambulance clearance area sign (Clerk) Ongoing.
  - 5.2. Snow Warden registration and training (Clerk) Ongoing
  - 5.3. Parish Lengthsman (Clerk) Ongoing
  - 5.4. Emergency Directory (Cllr Paine/Clerk) Ongoing
  - 5.5. Parking in Harbertonford's south bound Bus Stop (Clerk) The Clerk reported that Harbertonford Village Life had published the letter from the Tally Ho bus driver discouraging parking in the bus stop, including on Sundays. An update had been published in the following month's Village Life commenting that it is legal to park in bus stops between 6pm and 8pm on Mondays – Saturdays and at any time on a Sunday. Cllrs still saw the value in requesting the letter be republished.
  - 5.6. New Parish Council Bank Account (Clerk) Ongoing. It was noted that the request to provide ID for the Chair and updated form of ID for one of the signatories is still pending.
6. **Co-option of Parish Councillors** No interest had been received in order to be able to co-opt anyone to the Parish Council.
7. **Planning**
  - 7.1. Consideration of planning applications

- 7.1.1. [1360/24/HHO](#) and [1364/24/LBC](#) Householder application and Listed Building Consent for construction of detached carport outbuilding with EV charging point & repair to Clock Tower at Tristford House, East Wing, Harberton **It was RESOLVED** to SUPPORT the application.
- 7.2. Receive a report on planning or appeal decisions The decisions of the Planning Authority were noted:
  - 7.2.1. 1094/24/ARC Application for approval of details reserved by Condition 7 (Ecology) of Planning Consent 1675/22/HHO at The Old Parsonage, Harbertonford APPROVED
  - 7.2.2. 0972/24/CLP Certificate of lawfulness for proposed erection of building in the grounds of Maryland House for studio/Leisure purposes incidental to the host Dwelling at Maryland House Harbertonford APPROVED
  - 7.2.3. 0107/24/LBC and 0108/24/HHO Listed Building Consent and Householder application for timber Conservatory to replace the existing at Dundridge House, Harberton APPROVED
- 7.3. Receive a report on enforcement cases (for information only) Cllrs were informed of alleged enforcement cases that had been removed from the caseload and the reasons for their removal. The Clerk and D.Cllr had both received correspondence from members of the public commenting that whilst the platform outside the Church House Inn had been removed, the area was still fenced off and tables and chairs remained. Devon County Highways received a confirmation from the owner that the remaining items will be removed.

## 8. Monthly reports

- 8.1. Finance Committee update No update.
- 8.2. Community Land Trust update No update.
- 8.3. Sustainable Harbourne Valley (SHV) update It was reported that the AGM had taken place recently. A Jumble Trail is in planning.
- 8.4. Neighbourhood Plan update Two chapters of the plan are due to be reviewed by the Parish Council under item 9. There was no further update.
- 8.5. Harberton Playing Field Association (HPFA) It was reported that the Annual Inspection Report from Allianz has been received. No category A errors have been noted. The report has been forwarded to HPFA for consideration of comments and observations made under categories B and C.
- 8.6. Harbertonford Play Area Action Committee (HPAAC) It was reported that work is underway to re-purpose the slide from the wooden play structure and install it on the grass bank, as had been its position some years ago. The committee are considering plans to install a galleon play structure made of oak. It was commented that a lot of fundraising is needed.
- 8.7. Clerk's update
  - 8.7.1. Screw Lane drainage and flooding issues Cllrs were informed about email correspondence between the C.Cllr and officers having been forwarded the Screw Lane condition report as compiled by a member of the public. The C.Cllr had asked if there was any budget for flood aversion that could be drawn down given the more frequent episodes of extreme weather due to Climate Change. The Head of Flood and Coastal Risk Management had expressed disappointment to the South West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee's Finance Sub Group that the application to the £25m Natural Flood Management Programme had not been successful, commenting that it was very frustrating to see some of the chosen projects against the very real situation in Harberton Parish. The Sub Group were interested in supporting a bid for Local Levy funding, which will require the development of a full business case with cost benefit justification that aligns with national policy to enable any funding to be drawn down. This is something that will now be discussed with the team who put the initial Natural Flood Management bid together and hopefully maintain momentum. It is likely to take several months to get through the system but definitely worth pursuing. The Highways officer had commented that the Highways team has no budget and the officer is against the installation of a kerb at the location. He commented that he had understood that the request for kerbs was to harden the edge of the entire verge, but the document forwarded suggests it is to denote the channel edge. The officer would resist this option as the new kerb would stop any water on the road surface falling into the channel. The member of the public that had compiled the document responded to comment that the officer's response implies that he had not read the report or looked the salient photo. Road surface drainage would flow along the concave kerb line due to the road camber and gradient, and that the response did not take road scouring or erosion into consideration. A 'drainage kerbstone' could be used, but is not necessary and risks blocking.
  - 8.7.2. Hearing Loop enabling disabled access to Parish Council meetings The Clerk commented that she has recently become aware of a situation in another parish where a resident hard of hearing was disappointed with the dismissive attitude of the Parish Council when he asked what measures had been put in place in order to assist him to participate. The Clerk commented that neither hall used for meetings in the Parish had a hearing loop installed and both had quite poor acoustics. In doing some research it is possible for the Parish Council to purchase a portable hearing loop for use in meetings at a cost of approximately £200. Some other Parish Councils have held Deaf Awareness training to help better understand what it is like to function in a world with hearing loss. Cllrs agreed that meetings should be accessible and whilst a portable hearing loop could be purchased, perhaps a better approach would be to encourage the two village halls to install a hearing loop. Funds could be sought to support this.
- 9. **Neighbourhood Plan Chapter Review** Cllrs reviewed drafts of the Social Amenities Chapter and Heritage Chapter of the Neighbourhood Plan as prepared by the Steering Group. A proforma had been prepared to collect the Parish Council's response to policies and community initiatives with the intention to preserve or improve social amenities in the village centres, protect and enhance existing green spaces, support economic activity that provides employment or facilities for local people, increase understanding and recognition of

Parish heritage assets, encourage the use of traditional materials in character with the local area and encourage ecological sustainability in heritage assets. All policies were read out in full to the meeting. The Parish Council agreed with all policies proposed with the following comments:

- Parish Council takes 'support transition to low carbon economy' as meaning provision of EV charging provision of bicycle racks.
- A query was raised about the possibility of the garage/petrol station providing community parking.
- It was noted that neither the village churches were listed as assets of community value. It was proposed that both churches should be included in the list following the comment made at the Annual Parish meeting that St Peter's Church may be at risk of closure as a place of worship.
- When reviewing a list of green spaces to be designated as Local Green Spaces in the meaning of NPPF 101 it was queried what designation means. Following an intervention from the c.cllr it was taken to mean that section 106 monies in support of these green spaces would be greenlit. It was noted that some of the green spaces listed are privately owned, and it was queried whether owners should be consulted. It was noted that 'Harbertonford playing fields' does not exist, and queried whether this is intended to refer to Harbertonford Football Club.
- When reviewing a policy on ecological sustainability in heritage assets and sensitive retrofitting of energy efficiency measures and appropriate use of renewables in historic buildings, cllrs thought use of phrases such as 'appropriate use' and 'balanced judgements' was good.

- 10. Totnes Rural Area Youth Engagement Project** Cllrs were informed correspondence from TRAYE had been received following the Annual Parish Meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> May in which TRAYE commented that it will continue running its normal 2 weekly youth club in Harbertonford until the end of October at which point sessions will cease in the Parish unless the extra £1000 is forthcoming. The Clerk had written to TRAYE to comment that whilst there appeared public support from those at the Annual Parish Meeting to increase the 2025/26 precept to ensure continuation of the youth club, the funding shortfall in the current financial year is still a challenge. The Clerk's reply also commented that in April TRAYE had said that it was prepared to reduce the number of sessions throughout the year, even though the organisation didn't see this as the right course of action and was asked if it had changed its mind. TRAYE trustees would discuss this at an upcoming meeting.

TRAYE had now provided a copy of its annual report that the Clerk could use to share with the public when preparing materials for ongoing community consultation. A cllr expressed concern that the amount of funds that TRAYE is seeking will not remain static, and that public consultation should include reference to this.

The C.Cllr, who is also the Chair of Trustees to TRAYE commented that a Crowd Funding campaign could be initiated to raise additional funds. A member of the public who attended the Annual Parish Meeting commented that children and their parents should be encouraged to be involved in fundraising. The Clerk commented some additional voluntary support from the community will be needed to lead on fundraising as the Clerk does not have the capacity to drive this.

**11. Document review** required as part of annual audit

- 11.1. Review of Statement of Internal Control The Statement of Internal Control was reviewed. **It was RESOLVED** to make one amendment: to reference 'The Practitioner's Guide', but remove reference to the publication date, on the basis that the guide receives regular updates.
- 11.2. Review of Parish Council Risk Assessment The Risk Assessment was reviewed. **It was RESOLVED** to make no amendments.
- 11.3. Receipt of Grants and Proof of Need Summary 2023/24 The 2023/24 summary had been circulated to all Parish Councillors with meeting papers. Receipt was noted.
- 11.4. Confirmation of bank signatory arrangements It was confirmed that Steve Hockings had been removed as a signatory from the Barclays bank account and replaced with Cllrs Beamish and Palmer. As managing the change of signatories with Barclays Bank had been so difficult it had been agreed to close this account and open a new account with Unity. Signatories on this new account would include Cllrs Beamish, Camp, Paine, Williams, and the Clerk. Current signatories on the Lloyds account include Cllrs Beamish, Camp, Williams and the Clerk, with the addition of Cllr Paine when paperwork complete. It was confirmed that a complex mandate was in place for both bank accounts, with two signatories being required to authorise payments before they could be made.
- 11.5. Approval of Standing Orders and Direct Debits **It was RESOLVED** to continue to pay the Clerk's salary by Standing Order and to pay the annual fee to the Information Commissioner's Office by Direct Debit.
- 11.6. Review of protocol on recordings of meetings The protocol was reviewed. **It was RESOLVED** to make no amendments.
- 11.7. Treatment of anonymous letters The policy was reviewed. **It was RESOLVED** to make no amendments.

**12. 2023/24 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)**

- 12.1. Receive Internal Auditor's report and note observations It was reported that the final internal audit was carried out remotely on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024. The Internal Auditor's final report had been received and circulated to all cllrs with papers for the meeting. It was noted that the internal auditor was able to report that he had signed off the internal audit section of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) with no comments. The

report referred to matters raised at the interim report, noting the Parish Council's response, and raised one further matter and recommendation following the end of year audit, which was considered by the Parish Council as follows: "**Matter arising** General reserves at 31 March 24 were £3,951. This represents 20% of precept and is below the minimum level recommended in the NALC Practitioners' Guide. For a smaller council like Harberton, I would anticipate a general reserve no lower than 50% of precept. The Council currently has minimum funds to meet unexpected costs. I note that this has been discussed at Finance Committee and that a review of Council reserves is to be undertaken at the July Finance Committee. **Recommendation:** I note that this has been discussed at Finance Committee and that a view of Council reserves is to be undertaken at the July Finance Committee.)." **Council Response:** The Finance Committee will look at the reserves policy and make amendments at the upcoming meeting in July. The Clerk commented that the internal auditor had suggested that the Finance Committee consider reducing some earmarked to put into general reserves and then agree a plan to boost reserves over next few years.

#### 12.2. Annual Governance Statement

12.2.1. Consider the findings of the review by the members meeting as a whole Cllrs considered findings.

12.2.2. Approve Governance Statement **It was RESOLVED** to approve the Governance Statement ticking 'yes' for all questions 1-8 and NA for question 9. The return was signed by the Clerk and the Chair and dated.

#### 12.3. Annual Accounting Statements

12.3.1. Consider the Accounts Statements by the members meeting as a whole Cllrs considered findings.

12.3.2. Approve the Accounting Statements by resolution **It was RESOLVED** to approve the Accounting Statement.

12.3.3. Ensure the accounting statements are signed and dated by the person presiding at the meeting It was noted that the return had been signed by the Clerk prior to presentation to the Council. The statements were signed by the Chair and dated.

12.4. Consider Notice of Date of Commencement of Period for the Exercise of Public Rights **It was RESOLVED** that the period for the Exercise of Public Rights would commence on Monday 3rd June – Friday 12th July 2024 as per the External Auditor's recommendation. The Clerk confirmed that notices would be posted at least one day in advance of the commencement date and be published together with sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR.

### 13. **Correspondence**

13.1. Citizens Advice South Hams annual report and funding request Cllrs were informed that the Parish Council has been forwarded a copy of Citizens Advice South Hams annual report for the 2022/23 financial year and a letter from the Chief Officer requesting a donation of £300 to support the charity continue in its work helping the people of the South Hams. The letter comments that financial pressures continue to affect even previously managing families and individuals in local communities and the charity needs funding to help keep its services open. **It was RESOLVED** to award a grant of £300.

13.2. Your SSL Certificate will expire in 120 days Cllrs were informed that the Parish Council's standard SSL certificate that makes the Parish Council's website more secure is due to expire on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2024. **It was RESOLVED** to renew the certificate for two years at a cost of £149.98.

13.3. Free decarbonisation support for South Hams businesses It was noted that the Parish Council has been informed by press release that Libraries Unlimited is providing specialist consultancy across the district to help businesses develop a decarbonisation plan. These plans will help identify a range of actions to reduce their carbon footprint and on their overall impact on the planet. Those who take part in the scheme can also apply for Rural England Prosperity Fund decarbonisation grants, which could help to pay for implementing one or more of the measures highlighted in their decarbonisation plans. The initiative is in receipt of funding from South Hams District Council as the programme links into one of the Council's key priorities by supporting businesses important to the local economy, helping them to save money by becoming more efficient, boosting their resilience for the years ahead while reducing their carbon footprint. Businesses can sign up for the project by registering an interest online at <https://bipc.librariesunlimited.org.uk/decarbonisation-plans/> (HTML).

### 14. **Finance**

14.1. Notice of income and expenditure since last meeting The following income was reported:

14.1.1. 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024, £10,682 income from South Hams District Council for first precept payment.

14.1.2. 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024 £697.26 income from HMRC, in respect of the 2023/24 VAT Claim.

14.1.3. 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024 £1,234.24 income from Community Council for the Devon Emergency Resilience Fund grant for the community of Harberton village.

14.1.4. 29<sup>th</sup> April 2024 £1498.09 income from Harbertonford Village Hall, transferring the Devon Emergency Resilience Fund Grant for the community of Harbertonford village to the Parish Council.

14.2. To consider payments as per the May payment schedule **It was RESOLVED** to make the following payments:

14.2.1. Payment 2405\_1 to Cat Radford, payslip dated 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 includes Clerk May salary £518.27, Neighbourhood Plan May Salary at £59.80 and overtime payment 2 of 3 at £292.95 = £871.02 no VAT.

14.2.2. Payment 2405\_2 to Cat Radford, Clerk expenses claim dated 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024 for mileage at £10.53, costs of refreshments for Annual Parish Meeting at £21.48 and broadband at £7.50 = £39.51 no VAT.

14.2.3. Payment 2405\_3 to Sustainable Harbourne Valley for Community Benefit Fund grant = £650 no VAT.

14.2.4. Payment 2405\_4 to Harbertonford CE Primary School and Pre-School PTFA for Community Benefit Fund grant = £785 no VAT.

14.2.5. Payment 2405\_5 to Jan Culf for Community Benefit Fund grant = £224 no VAT.

- 14.2.6. Payment 2405\_6 to April Skies Accounting, invoice reference INV-0241 for cost of final 2023/24 internal audit = £149.98 no VAT
  - 14.2.7. Payment 2405\_7 to Godaddy for renewal of SSL Certificate for Parish Council website = £149.98 no VAT
  - 14.2.8. Payment 2405\_8 to Harberton Parish Hall for cost of hall hire on Tuesday 14th May 2024 19.15 – 21.30 2.25hrs @ £6.50 per hour = £14.63 no VAT
  - 14.2.9. Payment 2405\_9 to Arthur J Gallagher Insurance Brokers Limited (AJGIBL) for renewal of AJG Community Schemes Hiscox Insurance Company Limited Contract No.: 8188245 Term: 01/06/24 - 31/05/25 = £643.30 no VAT
  - 14.2.10. Payment 2405\_10 to Citizens Advice South Hams for grant as agreed 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 = £300 no VAT.
- 15. E-Circulars for information** E-Circulars received included: Citizens Advice South Hams, Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency, Devon Communities Together, Devon County Council Community News Round-up, Devon Home Choice, Emergency Planning newsletter, Green Lanes Environmental Action Movement (GLEAM), Harberton Village Email, Healthwatch Devon, Information Commissioners Office, One Devon NHS Integrated Care Board, Parish Online, Rural Services Network, SLCC Membership.
- 16. Matters at the discretion of the Chairman:** Councillors may use this opportunity to report minor matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas.
- 16.1. New residential property query A cllr that had noticed a new post box on one of the parish roads, querying whether this served an already established residential property or a new residence. A second cllr confirmed that it was serving an established residential property.
  - 16.2. Fly tipping on Bow Road Residents who had posted about the fly tipping on social media had been provided with 'report it' links by other local residents responding to the post.
  - 16.3. Survey of trees at Harbertonford Football Club It was suggested that the Parish Council consider including trees at Harbertonford Football club within the annual tree survey. It was agreed to discuss this at a future meeting.
- 17. Date and location of next ordinary meeting** 7:30pm Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2024, Harbertonford Village Hall