

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF HEPTONSTALL PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD AT HEPTONSTALL SOCIAL & BOWLING CLUB, 05 MARCH 2024**

**Present:** Councillors: J Crowther (Chairman)    B Cutts    S Slater    J Holt  
   N Dempsey                M V Edwards                M Hughes  
   A Baldwin                C Jackson

(Also in attendance: Clerk Hannah Sherriff-Jackson and 6 members of the public)

**205/23 APOLOGIES (AND REASONS) FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**206/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

**207/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Six members of the public attended, only one wished to speak.

One member of the public spoke in support of the Parish Council signing the Civility and Respect Pledge at Agenda item 19. At the request of the member of the public and the Parish Council, the report read aloud by the member of the public has been reproduced in the Minutes.

“I wish to speak in support of the Council signing ‘The Pledge’, particularly addressing the newer members (and Clerk) of the Council. You are all unpaid yet give your time freely for the benefit of the community that you serve. No individual member (including Chairman) can make a decision on behalf of the Council.

I was pleased to witness the correct manner in which you dealt with the unusual situation at the last meeting – 2 Planning Applications relating to 2 members of the Council. Both members correctly declared Pecuniary Interests and not only left the room before any discussions occurred but each left the building! Each being invited back after all discussions had ceased. The resultant minutes are accurate on this important aspect.

It was important you did not abdicate your responsibility to proceed with providing comment on each application. Similarly, there were no abstentions – you each quite properly had broad enough backs to handle the matters, the Vice Chairman taking charge when the Chairman was absent.

Decisions were made democratically which made them the corporate decision of the Council. It is vital that, when interacting with members of the community, you make it clear whether you are speaking as an individual or as a member of the Council. Clarity is the key here.

'The Pledge': Electronic communications and social media each have their benefits, but also have pitfalls: instant responses without thought, and less than accurate missives can cloud an issue and even lead to bullying, harassing or even vexatious actions which should of course be shunned.

Your Clerk is the servant of the Council, not of the Parish or any individual within it. As Proper Officer of the Council there are legal responsibilities she must fulfil, and it is essential she has the time in which to do so. At ten hours per week there is a limit as to what other actions she can take, and she must be protected from her time being eroded by less relevant matters.

Your work can sometimes be a (literally) thankless task, but you may be sometimes pleasantly surprised by occasional gratitude. Never use your positions to seek popularity – it is a rug that can easily slip or be pulled from under your feet.

'The Pledge' is a nationally driven regime: at a Conference last week on harassment and bullying it was made clear Civility and Respect needed to be highlighted in these sometimes less palatable times.

I therefore support your signing of this Pledge (1035 Councils are already signed up) and thank you for your continued good work."

## **208/23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Minutes of the previous meeting of Heptonstall Parish Council were approved as a correct record of the following:

- Monthly Meeting held 6 February 2024
  - Amendment made to Minute 187/23 to add the word 'existing'. The Minute now reads: 'Councillor Edwards noted that concerns about the existing access road raised in a previous application had been addressed by this new application.'

Arising from the Minutes, the Clerk reported that she is yet to receive a response regarding the cleaning of the flags at Weaver's Square prior to the Pace Egg Play.

Councillor Hughes reported that he has undertaken some research into the procedure to have the trestle bridge bases at Blake Dean listed. Structures can be listed through public nomination through an application on the Historic England website which will be reviewed and determined by Historic England. The information provided by Councillor Hughes will be passed to the member of the public who raised these concerns when

they next attend a meeting. The Clerk will write to the Conservation Officer at CMBC to further express these concerns.

### **209/23 OUTSTANDING ITEMS**

The Clerk circulated the Outstanding Items List to members prior to the meeting.

The Clerk will chase up outstanding email replies.

Councillor Slater noted that drainage issues on Slack are a common theme. These issues have been raised at Safer Cleaner Greener meetings.

### **210/23 TRAINING/WEBINAR/CONFERENCE OPPORTUNITES**

The Clerk reported that she has completed her FILCA qualification.

The Clerk provides regular details of the availability of training and conferences and invites members to request bookings via the Clerk as already authorised.

### **211/23 APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS TO PAY**

RESOLVED: That the Council approved the following accounts to pay:

H Sherriff-Jackson	Salary (net) to 31/3	£480.53
	Home Working Allowance (March)	£26.00
	Domain & Mail Basic 25	£6.00
	Email Archiving	£3.00
	Training Fee	£14.34
	Microsoft 365	£5.88
	McAfee Ultimate (2 years)	£119.99
HMRC	PAYE & NI	£145.63
N K Dymott	Community Website - WordPress	£12.36
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£813.73</b>

The Clerk reported that cheque number 1016 to Lambert Print & Design Ltd (sent January 2024) has been cancelled due to being lost in the post. The Parish Council will issue a new cheque to cover this payment.

### **212/23 CALDERDALE WIND FARM**

Councillor Edwards reminded members that Calderdale MBC is in the process of writing a Supplementary Planning Document on Renewable Energy and encouraged all in attendance (including members of the public) to regularly check the Calderdale MBC website for any developments.

### **213/23 NEWSLETTER**

Councillor Baldwin reported that the next edition of the newsletter will be going to print in the coming days.

The Parish Council praised the brilliant work of the editor.

### **214/23 PLANNING**

**(a) Planning Decisions:** Details of Planning decision made by Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council were provided to members.

**(b) New Applications:**

1. **24/22012/TCA** - RESOLVED: The Council had no objections
  - Clay Hill House, 29 Smithwell Lane, Heptonstall
  - Fell two trees, prune others (Trees in a Conservation Area)

**(c) Planning Appeals:**

1. **APP/A4710/Y/23/3329389** - RESOVLED: The Council had nothing to add
  - Barn at Little Learings Farm, Smithy Lane, Colden
  - Planning Ref: 23/00550/LBC
  - Conversion of barn to dwelling including re-instatement of roof and lean-to extension with installation of solar panels on roof (Listed Building Consent)
  
2. **APP/A4710/Y/23/3327191** - RESOVLED: The Council had nothing to add
  - Whitehall Farm, Townfield Lane, Heptonstall
  - Planning Ref: 22/01223/LBC
  - Internal alterations including truss modifications and the installations of 2No. new Conservation-style rooflights

*The Parish Council suspended Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak during the following discussion.*

### **215/23 BOWLING CLUB CAR PARK**

The Parish Council received an update from Councillor Baldwin and a member of the public. The Bowling Club has been told the issue was only recently passed to the legal department at CMBC and it will take 2-3 weeks to hear more, despite the conflicting information received in October/November 2023.

CMBC is in default of the April 2023 payment, and the Bowling Club is concerned that CMBC may also default on the April 2024 payment. This could potentially result in the closure of the car park to the public and potential legal action.

Councillor Slater reported that she had raised the issue at a meeting regarding Calderdale's Parking Strategy. She advised the member of the public that the Bowling Club should contact Rob Shipway at CMBC.

The Clerk reported that she had not yet written to the Leader of CMBC or the Chief Executive of CMBC due to the recent developments.

RESOLVED: The Clerk will write to the Leader of CMBC and the Chief Executive of CMBC regarding this issue. She will stress the importance of a swift resolution due to the potentially imminent closure of the car park and the possible impacts of this on the community and upcoming events.

*The Parish Council resumed Standing Orders.*

### **216/23 TRAFFIC ISSUES – TOWNGATE**

Councillor Edwards reported that he had met with the concerned homeowner. There have been no further incidents of damage therefore the matter will be deferred until another incident occurs.

RESOLVED: The Clerk will mark this matter as Closed on the Outstanding Items List.

### **217/23 EMERGENCY PLANNING**

This item was considered under Agenda item 22 (Minute 225/23).

### **218/23 BIODIVERSITY POLICY**

The amended draft Biodiversity Policy was circulated to the members for consideration prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council approved the adoption of the Biodiversity Policy.

### **219/23 DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING**

Councillor Slater informed the Parish Council that a re-run of the defibrillator training held in 2023 has been offered.

RESOLVED: The Parish Council will cover any costs associated with the training e.g. room hire.

Councillor Slater will liaise with the Bowling Club to set a date. The event will then be publicised in the noticeboards and in the newsletter.

### **220/23 HISTORIC MINUTE ARCHIVING**

The Parish Council discussed the archiving of historic Minutes.

RESOLVED: The Parish Council supports the archiving of the historic Minutes. The Clerk will liaise with the previous Clerk to arrange this.

*The Parish Council suspended Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak during the following discussion.*

### **221/23 FORMAL APPOINTMENT OF THE CLERK**

The Chair reported that the Clerk's probation period has ended.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council formally appoints the Clerk following the successful completion of the probation period.

The Staffing Committee will put together a public statement outlining the Clerk's roles and responsibilities. This will be worked on between themselves and reported back to the Full Council in due course.

*The Parish Council resumed Standing Orders.*

### **222/23 CIVILITY & RESPECT PLEDGE**

The Council considered the signing of the Pledge and the statement from the member of the public.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council will sign the Civility & Respect Pledge.

The Clerk will contact YLCA for information on further training for members on this topic.

*The Parish Council suspended Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak during the following discussion.*

### **223/23 FALLEN TREES & POOR PAVING CONDITIONS**

Councillor Jackson informed members that he reported the trees touching the telephone lines. These trees have since been felled by Together Housing.

Councillor Jackson reported that the paving slabs are to be reviewed by Together Housing in the coming weeks.

Councillor Hughes raised concerns about overhanging vegetation blocking pavements on Longfield and Southfield. He will contact CMBC to ask for permission for residents to remove this vegetation by hand.

*The Parish Council resumed Standing Orders.*

### **224/23 ARISING FROM CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

**CROWS Email:** The Parish Council noted receipt of an email regarding the repair works to the public footpaths in the past 12 months.

**Mass Transit in West Yorkshire Email:** The Parish Council noted receipt of this email.

**Heptonstall Festival Email:** The Parish Council noted receipt of this email regarding the Festival which will take place on Saturday 06 July 2024.

**FOI and related correspondence:** The Clerk reported that the response to the FOI request was sent on 05 March 2024. The Clerk has received further correspondence regarding this request. The Parish Council will respond to the correspondence and close the matter.

### **225/23 REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS**

Councillor Edwards reported that he had attended the YLCA South Pennine Branch Meeting.

He informed members that the prohibition on local councils providing s137 grants to places of worship has been lifted.

Councillor Edwards reported that the issue of good practice in respect of communications with communities was also discussed. This includes the use of Facebook for output only with agreed protocols about what can be posted. This will be considered further at the July meeting.

He informed members that he raised the issue of training, especially during the daytime with members in waged employment being unable to attend. He will raise this again in the future and request for webinars to be recorded. Councillor Edwards also asked YLCA if they would host another training day dedicated to Planning.

Councillor Edwards reported on the role of Parish Councils in emergency planning. There is no legal requirement for a Parish Council to have an emergency plan. Emergency plans can become too reliant on specific named individuals who may not be available when needed.

A working party was set up by the Parish Council two years ago. They assessed that the only useful contribution that a Parish Council could make to emergency planning is preparedness and providing information and advice to the community. The West Yorkshire Resilience Forum has published reader friendly advice.

This issue will be considered further at a future meeting to be decided.

Councillor Slater informed the Parish Council that Hebden Bridge and District Old People's Welfare Committee is hosting an age friendly event on 20 March 2024 at Hebden Bridge Town Hall.

*The Parish Council suspended Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak during the following discussion.*

Councillor Slater informed members that she attended the final meeting of the Hebden Royd & Hilltop Parishes Joint Neighbourhood Planning Committee. It was agreed at this meeting to formally end the Neighbourhood Planning Process.

Councillor Slater reported that a new group may be created consisting of two representatives of the five Parishes involved in the Neighbourhood Planning Committee. This group will meet periodically to discuss issues of mutual interest and exchange ideas and experiences.



The Parish Council thanked Councillor Slater and the previous Clerk for their work on this Committee over the years and expressed disappointment that the Neighbourhood Plan didn't go ahead.

*The Parish Council resumed Standing Orders.*

**226/23 DATE & TIMES OF NEXT MEETING**

The Clerk advised that matters for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting should be with her by 19 March 2024.

The Clerk advised the next meeting would be held:

- Monthly Meeting at Heptonstall Social & Bowling Club at **7.30pm on Tuesday 2 April 2024**

.....  
**(Chair)**

.....  
**(Date)**