

Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council

No.7 North Street Workshops, North Street, Stoke-sub-Hamdon, TA14 6QR

Clerk: Mr Neil Bloomfield,
clerk@stoke-sub-hamdon-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting Wednesday 11th October 2023 Hamdon Youth & Family Centre West Street

Present Cllr Lyn Foley (Chair), Cllr Michael Foley, Cllr Rebecca Merrick, Cllr Suzanne Nelms, Cllr Moira Hulett, Cllr Simon Hulber, Cllr Middleton, Cllr Denise Burton (minutes)

23/170 **Recording of meetings**

Attention is drawn to the Council's policy on recording meetings. Those wishing to record meetings are asked to notify prior to, or at the commencement of the meeting, if they intend to audio/video record public proceedings. The Council will record the meeting.

23/171 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Phillips, Cllr Holder and the Clerk. It was noted that it would not be possible to discuss some of the items on the agenda due to absence of the Clerk.

23/172 **Declarations of Interest**

Standing declarations apply as published and are available from the Clerk.

23/173 **Public Questions**

2 Ward members and 3 members of the public were in attendance.

Cllr John Bailey questioned why he had not received a response to the FOI request that he had submitted some time ago. The clerk would respond.

ACTION: Clerk

A request by a Trustee of the Hamdon Youth Centre to distribute a document to Council regarding the audit report into spending on the youth centre was refused by the Chair. He was advised to forward his document to the clerk who would circulate it. Further challenges to the reports accuracy were made and the council should not act on its findings. He felt that trust between the

council and HFYC could be rebuilt if the council was prepared to liaise with the Trust.

A second Trustee of Hamdon Youth Centre stated she had also prepared a report which was available to Cllrs by request.

The Chair of the Hamdon Youth Group reported that he had yet to receive a response from the Council to present his annual review to full council.

ACTION: Clerk

Issues of vehicles traveling at excess speed in the village and inconsiderate parking were raised. Damage to the corner section of wall at the coffee shop had been caused by a car crashing into it. The resident felt this could have easily led to loss of life.

She and her partner had both been emotionally affected by the accident and questioned whether the issues she outlined were being addressed (these issues had initially been raised with the Council some 18 months previous). She asked whether the Council had been able to take any action in relation to this and if so, whether the outcome could be shared. She also asked whether there was a way in which the community could collectively report the issues to local government and maybe also make communication via the village newsletter and/or undertake a survey. If action was not taken, then the situation would likely remain the same going forward.

Rosemary Stibbon, member of the public, said she had attended the last Parish Council meeting to also voice her concerns regarding the speed of traffic through the village. She said the volume of traffic through the village had clearly increased and she feared people could get killed crossing the road to the Recreation Ground. She had previously been told that her telephone number would be passed to Cllr Phillips who would make contact with her, but as yet she had heard nothing. She was extremely concerned and upset by the situation. She asked if the Parish Council had a plan, and if so, whether this could be shared.

Cllr Lyn Foley said that as far as she was aware, the Clerk had emailed the County Council to express an interest in a 20-mph speed limit through the village. However, this would be verified with the Clerk.

ACTION: Clerk

Cllr Middleton said he was in the process of engaging with Speed Watch. At the annual meeting, six people had come forward to offer assistance with training and to carry out monitoring of traffic. He said that he was in email communication with the Avon and Somerset Police. The PCSO who looked after the area had been unavailable and this was the reason why it had not been possible to undertake any testing or checking.

However, the Beat Sargeant had taken over during the last month and had undertaken a speeding exercise outside Stanchester Academy, at which time it was reported that no speeding had taken place. He would be carrying out further exercises in other locations within the village and the Council would then be informed as to whether advice would be available and Speed Watch training provided so that monitoring could be put into action.

Cllr Middleton stated that it was not permitted to operate Speed Watch outside of daylight hours, nor during inclement weather. Restrictions were also in place as to where the radar could be positioned. The police had to approve any site and a clear view of 150 metres was required with Speed Watch volunteers also clearly visible.

Cllr Middleton said he would continue to regularly email Avon & Somerset Police to try to get the situation resolved. Emily Pearson advised that members of the public were also able to email the PCSO as support to the Council.

Cllr Bailey noted that Somerset Council had not received any emails in relation to issues of speeding. Cllr Middleton agreed to rectify this omission and said he would copy any emails to Somerset County Council.

ACTION: Cllr Middleton

Cllr Foley thanked Cllr Pearson for her helpful monthly update. It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Yeovil LCN would take place on Wednesday, 1 November 2023.

Cllrs Pearson and Bailey left the meeting at this point, as did Mandy Elliott and Rosemary Stibbon, members of the public.

23/174

Approval of and noting of Minutes

Cllr Merrick made the following comments relating to the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 6 September 2023:

- 23/158 – should read ‘Fleur’ and not ‘Fluer’
- 23/163 – noted that the same balances were showing for both the Melton and Cambridge building societies as those as at 31 March 2023. Cllr Lyn Foley said that it had not been possible to obtain current building society statements.
- 23/167 – she asked for reference to the minute relating to the report commissioned by the Council into the major project spend covering the years 2019-22. Cllr Lyn Foley said the minute reference was 23/061 from the meeting held in July 2023.
- 23/169 – she asked when the full Council would hear what the contractual arrangements were for the Interim Clerk in terms of duration and hours per week. Cllr Michael Foley said that once the

contract had been drawn up it would be discussed by the HR Sub-committee with recommendations put forward to the full Council for approval. It was agreed that the minute should be reworded accordingly to reflect this.

ACTION: Clerk

Other comments were:

- 23/164 – the lease for Unit 7, the new Council Office, had already been signed by the Chair and Clerk and therefore this minute was misleading and needed to be reworded to reflect this.

ACTION: Clerk

- Cllr Middleton had given apologies for the last meeting and Cllr Wilkinson had been present which needed recording on the minutes.

ACTION: Clerk

- The last meeting had taken place on Wednesday, 6 September – not Tuesday and this needed to be amended.

ACTION: Clerk

Councillors agreed that Action Logs were needed to keep track of actions from any council meetings.

ACTION: Clerk

With the above amendments made to the minutes, Cllr Merrick **proposed** that they were accepted as a true record of the meeting, seconded by Cllr **Nelms** and **approved** by all other Councillors present.

23/175 Finance & Resources Committee

Rebecca Merrick briefly exited the meeting at this point.

Cllr Lyn Foley advised that there was a vacant position on the Finance & Resources Committee. She asked for any expressions of interest to be communicated to the Clerk.

ACTION: All Councillors

Rebecca Merrick rejoined the meeting.

23/176 Financial Review Recommendations/Implementation

23/176(a) Financial accounting software package

It was agreed to defer this agenda item to the next Finance & Resources Committee due to cancellation of its last meeting, to allow for a further discussion and ratification of the Scribe package.

ACTION: Clerk

23/176(b) Councillor training – financial review

Dates for training had been circulated to the Councillors and Cllr Lyn Foley asked for them to communicate convenient dates to the Clerk as soon as possible.

ACTION: All Councillors

23/176(c) Review of Agreements with outside Groups – (Financial Review)

It was agreed to defer review of the leases and external management agreements to the next Finance & Resources Committee due to cancellation of its previous meeting.

Cllr Merrick said that according to the Scheme of Delegation and the Finance & Resources Committee Terms of Reference Section 5, grant applications should be approved by full Council. She questioned whether a grant request had been received from the Hamdon Youth and Family Centre. Cllr Lyn Foley said there was a need to check with the Clerk, as recollection was only of a verbal request being made by Cllr John Bailey at a previous meeting during public questions. Cllr Mike Foley Referred to the Council's Grants Policy dated 3 March 2021 which stated that anyone requesting a grant needed to fill out a form for any grant to be considered and agreed.

ACTION: Clerk

23/177 Parish Council Office

The Council was asked to note that the lease for the Parish Council Office had been signed by both the Clerk and the Chair, as per the suggested amendment to be made to the previous minutes.

The Council was asked to consider an 'Office Facilities Sub-Committee' with responsibility for setting up the new office. The amount of £1000 was suggested to cover the purchase of a printer, mobile telephone for the Clerk and router for the office, and also for the alarm to be set up by PG securities. This was **proposed** by Cllr Merrick, **seconded** by Cllr Mike Foley and **agreed** by all other Councillors at the meeting.

ACTION: Clerk

23/178 Council Logo

Four options were put forward for Councillors to consider for a Parish Council logo. The use of logo Number 1 (on documents) and Number 3 (on the website) was **proposed** by Cllr Merrick, **seconded** by Cllr Middleton and **agreed** by all other Councillors present at the meeting.

23/179 Account Balances and Schedule of Payments

Account Balances as at 29 Sept 2023:

Lloyds Business Acc xxxxx860	£68,731.92
Lloyds BB Inst Acc xxxxx260	£44,058.82
Melton Building Soc	£33,428.98
Cambridge & Counties	£23,026.17

Payments to be agreed by resolution (Standing orders *are pre resolved)

PKF Littlejohn	AGAR audit fee	£ 378.00
Stable Print *	October newsletter	£ 210.00
Evis GM *	Sept ground maintenance	£ 750.00
Cloudy IT *	Office 365	£ 70.68
Inwood Interiors	HYFC window repairs	£2,610.00
L Foley Reimbursement	Fireproof safe for Unit 7	£ 257.98
L Foley Reimbursement	Road salt/grit 45 bags	£ 134.77
Ionos Reimbursement Clerk	Village website domain part charge	£ 30.36

Total for approval by resolution £4,441.79

Cllr Lyn Foley said that the variance of 90p was due to a miscalculation and would be deducted from one of the reimbursement payments that she was due.

Cllr Lyn Foley advised that financial receipts had only been received from PKF Littlejohn and Inwood Interiors for payment. It was noted that Stable Print, Evis GM and Cloudy IT were all paid by Standing Order.

Cllr Merrick, as a member of the Finance & Resources Committee, said she would like to see information of spend against the budget and questioned what was happening with the VAT claims. As a member of the Finance & Resources Committee she had access to the Lloyds Bank account and did not agree with the figure stated on the agenda.

Payment of the listed items (excepting Standing Orders which are pre resolved) was **proposed** by Cllr Middleton, **seconded** by Cllr Nelms and **agreed** by all other Councillors present at the meeting.

23/180 Urgent Payment - Clerk

The Clerk needed to be reimbursed for the two payments he had made to Ionos for the Council's website domain, one for £30.36 and one for £108.00.

Reimbursement was **proposed** by Cllr Middleton, **seconded** by Cllr Nelms and **agreed** by all other Councillors present at the meeting.

23/181 Banking Mandate

Cllr Lyn Foley advised that there were currently no signatories for either the Cambridge or Melton Building Societies. To resolve this, the Council was asked to ratify Cllr Lyn Foley, Cllr Merrick and the Clerk as signatories for the two building societies (after having been agreed by the Finance & Resources Committee).

The building societies required copies of the relevant minutes detailing the resignations of the former Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk as confirmation that they were no longer signatories.

Addition of the three new signatories was **proposed** by Cllr Nelms, **seconded** by Cllr Hulett and agreed by all other Councillors present at the meeting.

23/182 Direct Debit Payments

Direct debits needed to be opened for the payment of utility bills for Unit 7, the Council's new premises.

The unit would be used as a workplace for the Clerk as well as a meeting area for some of the Council meetings and also hopefully for other groups. No charge could be made for hire of the meeting room, but there was a possibility that donations could be made for teas/coffees. Cllr Mike Foley would verify this.

ACTION: Cllr Foley

The Community Hub was still in the process of development and therefore not yet ready for use.

Opening of the direct debits was **proposed** by Cllr Merrick, seconded by Cllr Middleton and **agreed** by all other Councillors present at the meeting.

23/183 Council Policies

It was agreed to delay reviewing the Safeguarding Policy and Document Retention Policy until the next meeting because Councillors had not had a reasonable amount of time to read the documents in advance of the meeting so that any questions could be raised or research carried out.

ACTION: Clerk

Cllr Middleton suggested that due to the large number of Council policies that needed to be reviewed, it would be helpful to review one policy at each future full Parish Council meeting.

ACTION: Clerk

Cllr Hulett noted that it would be helpful to receive draft minutes as soon as possible following Council meetings to act as a reminder of any actions required by Councillors.

ACTION: Clerk

23/184 Office Equipment

Provision of a printer, router and mobile phone had been agreed earlier in the meeting.

External signage to identify Unit 7 was **proposed** by Cllr Merrick, **seconded** by Cllr Middleton and **agreed** by all Councillors present at the meeting. Cllr Hulett said she would obtain quotes for this.

ACTION: Cllr Hulett

23/185 Future Projects and Budget Setting

This agenda item needed to be deferred until the Finance & Resources Committee had undertaken a budget setting exercise at its next meeting. Future projects would need to include Memorial Gardens.

This was **proposed** by Cllr Merrick, **seconded** by Cllr Middleton and **agreed** by all Councillors present at the meeting.

23/186 To note date of next meeting will be Wednesday 1 November 2023 (later deferred to Wednesday, 8 November 2023 due to the LCN meeting being held on 1 November, 2023)

