

Annual Meeting of Hickling Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 14th May 2024 at the Village Hall, Hickling commencing at 7.15pm.

Councillors present: Cllrs Playle (Chair), Green, Prosser and Rowe.
Also in attendance: Cate Stokes (Parish Clerk), RBC Cllr Combellack, NC Cllr Cottee and 6 parishioners.

24.4.1 Election of Officers

- **Chair:** Cllr Playle proposed by Cllr Green **agreed by all**
- **Vice Chair:** Cllr Prosser proposed by Cllr Playle **agreed by all**
- **Portfolio groups:** Finance and admin (Cllr Prosser), Environment (Cllrs Conway and Playle), Highways and Street furniture (Cllrs Rowe, Lamb and Conaway), Assets (Cllr Prosser), Community engagement (Cllr Green), Hickling Pastures (Cllr Rowe), Grants (Cllr Green), Village Hall (Cllr Prosser), Snow wardens (Cllrs Green and Rowe), Neighbourhood Watch (Cllr Prosser).
Agreed by all

Clerk to find out official responsibilities of snow wardens and to update website with portfolio group descriptions.

24.4.2 Apologies – accepted from Cllrs Conway and Lamb

24.4.3 Declarations of interest – None

24.4.4 Acceptance of Minutes – Minutes from the PC meeting held on 26th March were **agreed by all**

24.4.5 Open session

- **Noticeboard** – parishioner asked if a final decision on the replacement of the community noticeboard had been made.

Cllr Prosser noted that when previously discussed, due to the various other unofficial noticeboards located around the village, it had been decided not to replace the old noticeboard opposite the junction with Long Clawson Lane.

A discussion was had where concerns were raised about the increase in fly posting in particular for events not involving Hickling. The PC decided that posters in an inappropriate place or where the event had passed should be removed. If members of the community wanted help advertising local events, they should contact the PC and they would place in the council noticeboard when there is space and advertise on the website.

- **Flood warden schemes** – Parishioner noted that in a recent article about flood warden schemes in Nottinghamshire Hickling was not listed as a village with a scheme.

PC noted that this is correct as there is no official scheme yet in Hickling but progress has been made setting one up – as detailed later.

- **Verge cutting** – Parishioner expressed annoyance that the verges have been cut making a mess. Suggested that where the verge is not restricting visibility for road uses that it should be left to encourage bees etc.

Cllr Prosser also noted that this grass cutting has been an issue in other local villages with a lot of complaints from other residents where verges have been cut that were being left intentionally for “no Mow May”

- **Lengthsman’s Scheme** – Cllr Combellack raised the point that verge cutting could be maintained by the PC if they employed a Lengthsman they would also be responsible for sign cleaning etc.

The PC had previously discussed this and it was decided that there were not enough jobs for a Lengthsman as the role would involve the PC having the responsibility of employing someone and would generate a lot of extra paperwork for the Cllrs. Cllr Cottee suggested that it is possible to share a Lengthsman between PCs however, there would still be some responsibility from Hickling PC.

24.4.6 Ward Member Reports

- **Cllr Comberlack** – reported from the Farmers’ rural crime meeting.

Need to spread the word about the successful WhatsApp group where farmers report suspicious vehicles and activities etc.

There was also a demonstration of the police drone. Combined with the 5 new rural off-road crime vehicles which have already been used successfully to prevent hare coursing. Cllr Combellack commented that she had more confidence in policing of rural areas since the meeting.

- **Police priority settings group** – in Bingham as there is not one currently for our area
Following this meeting a joint meeting will be set up to include us for people to go along to voice concerns about local crime so that police can make it a priority where possible.

- **Cllr Cottee** – Local community fund is open until 24th May with another round in September for projects up to £3000. CC with 50:50 match fund, this funding is aimed at small villages.
- **Funding available** - PC require a new laptop for the Clerk.

Clerk to send necessary information to Cllr Cottee.

- **Flood Walkabout** – Cllr Cottee and Cllr Combellack met with Scott Stone (flood expert) and Laura Trussler (Via) to discuss Flood concerns and maintenance. Blocked drains at South end Main street arranged to be cleared. Possible need for attenuation ponds and culvert unblocking also discussed. Issues with Dalby Brook and sewers around Church Farm and Glebe Cottage discussed with attenuation ponds and increasing the size of the culvert suggested. Repeated flooding of the pub due to a blocked pipe under the canal considering redirecting water into the canal. Joined up thinking required.

White line painting on Main Street not going ahead apart from around junctions where it is required for safety.

24.4.7 Items requiring a decision

- **Biodiversity Policy** – Proposed by Cllr Prosser, **agreed by all**.
- **Assets of community value** – nomination of the Wharf Building and Wharf yard submission to RBC for listing on the ACV register proposed by Cllr Prosser, **agreed by all**

24.4.8 Other Items

- **Traffic Calming** – PC seek clarification for what has been submitted to NCC for with respect to requests for traffic calming along Main Street and when an answer is expected.

Cllr Cottee: a response would not be quick, they usually take 2-3 months. When a proposal is made, Cllr Cottee will receive this document and present it to full council for consideration however, little funding is available.

Cllr Prosser was concerned regarding any measure that would urbanise the village and, especially, the urbanising effect of extreme road structures such as 'S' bend / contraflow gateways. She reminded councillors that urbanisation was regularly identified by the PC as a threat to our rural village and that any potential change that involved concrete, signage and road markings could be intrusive and character-changing. She was particularly concerned that the key characteristics of Hickling's rural heritage could be eroded by traffic calming measures, e.g., the wide verge on Bridegate Lane as you approach the village is the site of the old Washpit, the open/wide verges on all approaches are a remnant of the Enclosure of the village and the old practice of Lane Letting and that 'gateways' could establish a physical and psychological barrier between the countryside and the village itself.

Cllr Combellack suggested that all affected people were surveyed and as there was no response from NCC with a proposal there was nothing to consult the rest of the village on yet. Cllr Combellack clarified that the PC had seen all the documents that had been passed to Cllr Cottee for review.

Cllr Combellack suggested that she and Cllr Cottee should relinquish Hickling PC due to her frustration with the parish council.

Cllr Cottee left the meeting at 8.30pm.

- **Community engagement** – PC need to reach more people and get messages out to a wider audience within the village.

Cllr Green suggested compiling a list of email addresses for parishioners that wish to receive information from the PC.

A parishioner noted that people who live in Hickling often poorly support Hickling events. People would like different forms of communication.

Clerk to produce a GDPR compliant "sign up" flyer that can be distributed through Hickling and Hickling Pastures.

- **Flood wardens** – Clerk has a list of interested volunteers and information for how to sign up for training to become flood wardens. Clerk has also discussed with Josh Wells at NCC what is required to set up the scheme and has a policy template.

Cllr Prosser and **Clerk** to draft flood warden policy

Clerk to contact further volunteers and confirm that they have signed up for training.

- **D-day 80** – It has not been possible to get a beacon built for D-Day80 on 6th June. Alternatives suggested

Clerk to seek permission to use the village hall flag pole to fly the official D-day 80 flag of peace and to obtain a flag.

- **Project** – Cllr Playle noted that successful Wildflower verges are maintained by Gary Watts wished to raise the idea that he be consulted on how to manage the wildflower verges on Bridegate Lane.

Cllr Playle to discuss and obtain costs

24.4.9 Correspondence

- A606 resurfacing – now complete, patch repairs up to Hanwell estate scheduled for June
- WI Black poplar – Rota organised to water tree until October
- Cemetery gates – To stop the left hand gate opening inwards across the grave of Mrs Faulks a temporary wooden stake has been used. PC agreed that this should be replaced with a more permanent metal stake. Cllr Prosser has also spoken to Nigel Prosser about adjusting the left hand gate so that the gates close properly. He has kindly offered to carry out this work at no cost to the PC.
- Weed killer around village hall – Streetwise apologized it should not have been put within the village hall boundary
- Winter heliotrope – Via have been and assessed the area and state they couldn't find any evidence of the invasive plant.

Cllr Rowe to take photos and **Clerk** to re-contact Via as Cllr Playle notes that this invasive weed is still evident

- Driveway mirrors – considered de-minimus works and no planning required unless on CC Highway
- From a Parishioner raising concerns about the grass cutting in the cemetery and the need to repair cemetery gates.

Clerk and Cllr Prosser had a very useful meeting with the contractor this week to talk about cemetery maintenance. The recent very wet weather has not helped the general appearance of the cemetery, however the grass is due to be cut again this week and Cllr Prosser and the Clerk will return to take photos of the work. Current cemetery regulations will also be reviewed to detail what is expected from the contractor and also from grave owners. Currently following a burial, graves are left with floral tributes on the mound and the contractor carefully strims round. Once these floral tributes have died they are normally removed to bins in the cemetery, future flowers or approved memorial items need to then be placed at the headstone end of the grave and not left on the grass mound so that the cemetery can be properly maintained by the contractor.

24.4.10 Planning Applications

- Ref: 24/00498/FUL
Applicant: Mr Lewis Smith
Development: Extensions to the side and rear of the existing dwelling with installation of PV panels
Location: Lonicera, Melton Road, Hickling Pastures, LE14 3QG

No Objection

Decisions made outside of PC meetings by the planning working group:

- Notification of planning appeal APP/P3040/W/23/3332122
Ref: 22/01907/FUL
Applicant: Mr Grice
Proposal: To retain existing open sided covered area, bin store and permeable surfacing
Location: Old Wharf Tea Rooms, Main Street, Hickling

An appeal has been sent to the inspector.

- Ref: 24/00408/FUL
Applicant: Mr Steve Roberts
Development: Removal of existing shed/ garage and erection or replacement shed/ garage
Location: Hillside Farm, Melton Road, Hickling Pastures, LE14 3QG

No Objection

- Ref: 24/00538/FUL
Applicant: Richard Marchbank
Development: First floor front/side extension

Location: 21 Harles Acres, Hickling, Nottinghamshire, LE14 3AF

No Objection

24.4.11 Decision Notices

Ref: 21/00432/FUL

Applicant: Dr Matthew Blades

Development: Continued mixed farm and forestry use of part of farm yard for logging enterprise and retention of outbuildings and extension to Barn 2 (Retrospective)

Location: Land at Hickling Pastures, Melton Road, Nottinghamshire

Decision: Permission Granted with conditions

24.4.12 Finance

Balance of accounts: 2.05.24

Current Account: £20599.22

Reserve Account: £3903.26

Cheque no	Payee	Description	Amount
BACS	Zurich	Insurance (due in June)	£463.92
BACS	Clerk	Paper	£5.99
BACS	SLCC	SLCC Membership	£112
Receipts			
Cheque	RichardBarnes Funeral	Interment fees	£200
Bank Transfer	RBC	Precept	£12076

Date of next meeting: TBC

Cllr Green raised a query about Defibrillator registration as he had been approached by someone who could not find them on the app – **Clerk** to check defib registration.

No further business Meeting Closed at 9.00pm