

Hildersham Parish Council
Clerk: Mrs. PM Harper
17 Lewis Crescent, Great Abington, Cambridge CB21 6AG

A Meeting of Hildersham Parish Council

To be held on Tuesday 14th November 2023, **starting at 7.30pm at the Hildersham Village Hall.**

Meeting started at 7.32pm

Present: Mark Logan, Darren Long, Tom Barton-Owen, Rob Clay, David Mercer, Henry Batchelor one member of the public and the Clerk.

53. Open Forum – As part of the Neighbourhood Plan the British Horse Society was asking to change the footpaths into bridleways. The working group is looking at what this is likely to entail, although most footpaths do not seem viable apart from possibly the Blench Lane to Back Road path. Any upgrading of these paths to bridleways seem likely to be to the parish councils. Mark Logan suggested the council see the merits of the requested changes but noted that the council did not have funds for any upgrades.

The Nature Recovery group had requested that 2 or 3 signs be erected in the middle of the two greens explaining the what grew and lived on these areas of land. **Jean Kelly kindly agreed to resend her email with the request to councillors.**

54. Apologies - John Batchelor had sent his apologies

55. Councillors to declare any interests in the items to be discussed during the meeting? Has the Clerk granted any dispensations under section 33 (1) of the Localism Act and the basis is set out under section 33(2)? No interests declared.

56. Approval of the minutes from the last meetings on 19th September 2023. The minutes for the meeting on 19th September were unanimously approved.

57. Report from District Councillor John Batchelor – a monthly report had been circulated to councillors - Councillor John Batchelor did not attend the meeting

58. Report from County Councillor and District Councillor Henry Batchelor - a monthly report had been circulated to councillors

Comments were being invited about plans for a bio-digester outside Haverhill from Suffolk County Council. This could affect traffic locally. A decision was expected in February. A public meeting was to be held on 18TH November about an application for a bio-digester in West Wickham, Streetly End. Locals were concerned about noise and traffic.

Kingsway Solar was planning a large development of solar panels covering 900 hectares which would make it the large solar farm in Europe. The solar farm would be from the edge of Fulbourn to the far side of Balsham. The next stage of the application would for the company to contract local stakeholders.

Henry Batchelor asked if residents have any issues with parking outside the pub, as the District Council and County Council are taking on responsibility from the Police for parking in the new year using wardens.

59. Feedback on actions from the last meetings

- a) Rob Clay and Mark Logan to report their findings after looking at the unlit area of the village between Mabbutt and the church. The unlit area of the village is very black and young people are unhappy walking in the dark. However many residents do not want more lighting in the village so it was suggested that people who lived near to where new light could be installed be asked their views. The last night is outside Mabbutts and it was thought new light could be near the green. Some residents were quoted as believing funds spent on lighting was bad practice and long term residents used torches, as they had concerns about light pollution. Jean Kelly was concerned that recently seen toads were likely to cross Towne Green and light may deter them. **Action: Clerk** to get cost of new light and write to locals to get their views on installing a new light near Towne Green.
- b) Update on the replacement bollards for the entrance to the South Holding. Martin Meehan has found two new bollards but they do not fit , however the contractors will dig a hole to get them to fit.
- c) The boundary fence between the Ford and the Recreation Ground has been repaired and an additional repair will be done to the fencing along the slope to the village hall which HVHT will fund.
- d) Sourcing a new Christmas tree – retrospective approval for the purchase of a Christmas tree. **Councillors unanimously approved the purchase of the installed Christmas tree.**

60. Village maintenance

- a) The boundary verge alongside Pampisford Estate boundary on Beech Row to be cut from the phone kiosk to the area where the path is no longer next to the boundary of Pampisford Estate and work is already underway.
- b) Ford depth measure, does it need to be bigger or in a different location? A lorry had got stuck recently in the Ford in 4 foot of water and had to be rescued by local residents. The bridge weight limit sign limiting vehicles using it to less than 12 tonnes may have been covered by over-grown trees. **Action: Clerk** to write the Highway Officer asking what can be done to stop drivers getting stuck in the flooded Ford and to make the weight limit clearly visible to drivers and cc in Henry Batchelor.

61. The Pear and Olive (former the The Pear Tree pub) Asset of Community Value (ACV) form

- a) The application for a renewal of the AVC status for the Pear and Olive Inn was approved on 30/10/2023. It will remain on the ACV list for 5 years. The owners have told the Council that they intend to sell the property.
- b) The ACV is operational so a community group could make a bid. A community bid was made some years ago to purchase the premises for £395,00 by a community group but they would not be making a bid this time. The Parish Council would publicise this as there is a 6 week period in which a group can register an interest in attempting to purchase the building with South Cambs. **Action: Councillors/Clerk** to publicise this in the village News publication

62. Neighbourhood Plan (NP).

- a) Update on what happens next. There have been fortnightly calls with the NP team so that the outstanding work could be divided up. The development of Linton is the main work to be done, once this is completed a public consultation can take place.

63. Year end Annual Return

- a) External auditors issued an ‘interim’ report in respect of our review of Hildersham Parish Council’s AGAR and we unable to certify completion of the review at that time, as our auditor had left Littlejohn.
- b) Recently the External certified completion of the audit and stated: *In the prior year, the smaller authority was exempt from our review, thus we have not reviewed any evidence to support the prior year comparatives on the AGAR. The smaller authority has confirmed that it has not complied with the governance Assertion in Section 1, Box 4, but it has provided the appointed auditor with an adequate explanation for non-compliance and details of the actions necessary to address weaknesses identified. In the completion of the Annual Internal Audit Report, and their detailed report, the internal auditor has drawn attention to weaknesses in relation to updating standing orders and financial regulations, documenting the review of internal controls, non compliance with GDPR requirements, review of reserves and documentation on the website. The smaller authority must ensure that action is taken to address these areas of weakness in a timely manner.*
- c) The end of the external audit notice, AGAR figures with the external auditors report have been advertised on the website and noticeboard.

64. Budget

- a) Council to review the draft budget and proposed precept. **Mark Logan proposed that the precept be increased to £13,500, which was seconded by Rob Clay with the support of all councillors. Mark Logan proposed that the Parish Council paid for the grass cutting on the grass cutting in the play area and the RoSPA reports but that the Land funds pay all other expenses for the Trust land, which was seconded by Daren Long with the support of all councillors.**
- b) Council to authorise the budget and the precept for 2024-25. **Mark Logan proposed that the draft budget be accepted , which was seconded by Rob Clay with the support of all councillors.**

65. Correspondences

- a) The Pear and Olive reported loss of some advertising signage. Mark Logan found the sign in the verge and returned it to owners.
- b) HVH Trust contacted the council about asking our contractor to fix the fencing in front of the village hall. This has been done.
- c) The Highway dept confirmed that the dead tree at the Back Road/Balsham Road junction is on county council verge and regarded by the Highway dept as no risk.
- d) Outcome of 2023/24 20 mph Funding Application. Unfortunately the council’s bid was not successful this time.

66. Finance

- a) **Mark Logan proposed that the Parish Council authorise the payments and approve the financial statement dated 14.11.2023, which was seconded by Daren Long with the support of all councillors. Mark Logan proposed that the funds for leasing the South Holding of £7200 be transferred into the new Land Treasury account by the Clerk, which was seconded by Rob Clay with the support of all councillors. Councillors unanimously agreed that Tom Barton-Owen and Rob Clay be authorised to use the Lloyds bank accounts. - Action: Clerk.**
- b) Council to authorise Clerks NALC pay increase from 1 April 2022 £11.28- £12.28/hr with effect from 1st April 2023. **Mark Logan proposed that the Council authorise the Clerk’s pay increase, which was seconded by Rob Clay with the support of all councillors.**

c) Council to authorise retrospectively a payment to Mark Logan for the 3 padlocks for the South Holding bollards. **Dareen Long proposed retrospectively a payment to Mark Logan for the 3 padlocks, which was seconded by Rob Clay with the support of the councillors.**

67. Open Forum for Parishioners to make comments or raise items

Concern about parking in the centre of the village particularly on Saturday mornings, ground on both sides of the road are churned up. Parking outside the pub is also an issue as some people are unable to park outside their houses. **Action: Mark Logan** to speak to Helen to ask if the dance teacher can speak to the parents about this. From January the County Council wardens may be able to deal with this problem.

68. Items for the next meeting's agenda on 9th January 2024: Financial regulations and grass contractors

The meeting ended at 8.39pm

Agenda for the Hildersham Land Management

This meeting followed the Parish Council meeting on 14th November 2023

1.Maintenance of the new plantation- maintenance plan and bigger access gate? Strimming around the copse tress was very hard work, which should be large enough for the sheep to graze the area in two year's time. The Trust could consider installing a bigger fence and could Rob check that he could fit his mower between the trees (46 inches).

2.Allotment

a) Complaint about the neglected condition of some allotment plots. The council has asked the allotment holder id they would like to reduce the size of their plot. The Braithwaites are planning to surrender their allotment and the Palmers have moved to Shelly's plot so their previous plot is vacant.

b) Any news on allotment who had not paid last year's invoice? Further invoices have been sent to the allotment holder.

3.South Holding

a) Replacing stollen bollards from the entrance to the South Holding. Discuss in PC meeting above .

4. Finance

a) **Trustees agreed that the secretary/Clerk could transfer the £7200 into the new current Land account and any subsequent allotment income and then get it getting authorised retrospectively.**

b) Secretary noted that there would be no interest earned in new account

c) **The Trustees agreed unanimously that the payments taken from PC funds for larger payments should be deducted from Trust funds before income is transferred, such as fence repair £660, allot hedge cut £550, skip hire £648, and £147.03 for new padlocks.** The PC had previously agreed to fund RoSPA inspections.

5. Actions from RoSPA Report – new swing and chains would cost about £250.00, which the Parish Council would pay for. New spring guard for the horse was required , repairs to ship and replacement bolts needed. Painting goal posts- **Action secretary** : to ask Ian Blackman to quote to paint the goal.

6. Expenditure for 204-2025

Copse maintenance/making the site easier to maintain

Play area maintenance

Allotment maintenance

Recreation Ground Maintenance