

HEMINGTON, HARDINGTON & FOXCOTE PARISH COUNCIL

MENDIP DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 14 May 2014
at Faulkland Village Hall

Present: Councillors E. Drewe, A. Hall (Chairman), F. Green, T. Hucker
P. Roberts

In attendance: R. Campbell (clerk), 11 members of the public

*Actions – marked **A** – are on the Clerk and on any Councillor whose initials appear at right →*

2013. **Election of Chairman** Cllr Hall was proposed by Cllr Hucker, seconded by Cllr Green and elected as Chairman for the coming year. He signed the declaration of office and took the chair.
2014. **Apologies** None
2015. **Interests** Cllr Green declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to planning application 2014/0565/FUL, as a neighbouring landowner
2016. **Vice-chairman** Cllr Hucker was proposed by Cllr Green, seconded by Cllr Roberts and elected as Vice-chairman for the coming year.
2017. **Minutes** The minutes of the Parish Council (PC) Meeting of 16/04/2014 were signed by the Chairman as a true record.
2018. **Matters arising/Clerk's report** None
2019. **Vacancy for a Councillor** No interest had been expressed in the vacancy.
2020. **Planning**
- (i) **Application** 2014/0565/FUL Land Behind Oldfield Farm Faulkland Frome. Siting of temporary agricultural workers dwelling and a poultry house.
Cllr Green withdrew from discussion or voting.
Cllr Drewe said that approval had been given for a barn, now partly built, against the PC's recommendation. The National Planning Policy Framework (supplanting PPG 7, Appendix 2 on how agricultural buildings should be dealt with) said that a need must exist before permission could be granted for an additional dwelling. The application was for both chicken house and dwelling. If permission for the house was refused, the chicken house might not materialise.
RESOLVED (ED/TH) to recommend refusal on the grounds that the site is too small, too close to unrelated dwellings and likely to cause nuisance; the site has a footpath running through the middle of it; the proposed building is unsightly.
- (ii) As noted by Cllr Drewe at the Annual Parish Meeting (APM), if permission were granted for a wind turbine at Laverton (for which no application had been received) there was likely to be £10K annually to share between the three parishes affected: Hemington, Lullington and Norton St Philip.

Also as noted at the APM, the inspector of Mendip's Local Plan had raised minor points but no major objections. It was hoped he would approve the plan before very long and that this would put an end to development in Faulkland beyond the plan quota.

2021. **Finance**

(i) **Accounts RESOLVED** (FG/PR unanimous) to approve the internally audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2014.

(ii) **Annual Governance Statement** This was reviewed line by line, completed and signed by the Chairman.

(iii) **Insurance** Councillors reviewed insurance quotations for the coming year from AON (Allianz), Zurich and Came & Co (Aviva).

RESOLVED to accept a three-year deal from Zurich at a quoted cost of £370 per annum. The schedule to be amended to identify 2 x speed indicator devices and to add gates and fencing at the allotments; these additions will incur a small additional charge. A

(iv) **New Financial Regulations** Consideration was held over until June.

(v) **RESOLVED** (ED/PH) to pay the following:

Hardington Vale PCC – churchyard grant £300

Foxcote with Shoscombe PCC– churchyard grant £100

Staff salaries May 2014

2022. **Highways and rights of Way**

(i) **Speed gun** Tim Gibbs holds the speed gun. Cllr Drewe said that he, Mr Gibbs and two others were trained in its use. The last time they had tried it they had been rained off. Cllr Hucker said parked cars reduced traffic speed.

Calming measures Speed-sensitive traffic lights, mentioned at the April meeting, were an expensive option, as were traffic calming humps. Those in Norton St Philip had been paid for by a developer. A large scheme was proposed for Charlton.

(ii) **Update** The A366 had been surface scraped between Faulkland and Tuckers Grave; it was hoped this was a preliminary to resurfacing. The potholes at Bishop Street had been reported to Highways.

2023. **Items of information**

(i) **Temporary Post Office** As mentioned at the APM, the latest proposal was for sessions in Faulkland Village Hall on Monday and Thursday mornings. Roger Jacobs would provide the equipment but would only proceed if an operator could be found. Cllr Drewe offered to continue with this task and was thanked.

(ii) **Allotments** Lord Hylton, who had commented on the low-take up, to be advised that lack of interest was partly due to the location of the allotments. It was dangerous to cross the road to them; an allotment holder's wheelbarrow had been struck by a car.

Cllr Hall said he would regretfully call a halt to consideration of a community/allotment orchard as there was no interest.

(iii) **Faulkland Playing Field** Cllr Hucker will liaise with Mr Watts to find the most economical way to clear the lumps of concrete (skip hire?). A TH

RESOLVED (FG/ED) to spend up to £250 on clearing the site.

(iv) **Faulkland Green** Repeated attempts to get action from Advanced Tree Surgeons had failed. If they could not attend to the chestnut trees, an alternative tree surgeon to be found. A

2024. **Correspondence and reports**

(i) **Correspondence** None

(ii) **District Councillor** Cllr Drewe had reported at the APM.

(iii) Miscellaneous reports

- The burnt-out sign at Terry Hill crossroads still needed attending to **A**
- Cllr Roberts said the gate on the bridleway opposite the old laundry at Hemington needed attention. Clare Haskins to be contacted **A**
- The hall availability for the Post Office is less than before due to hirers but mornings should be OK.

(iv) **Planning application 2013/0914 West Farm** Cllr Hall said Cllr Drewe had told the April PC meeting the matter had been decided by the Chair and Vice-chair of the planning board. Cllr Hall had subsequently learned from the planning officer that Cllr Drewe had signed off the officer's recommendation for approval the day before the April parish council meeting, so denying the community the opportunity to make representations at a Planning Board. He considered this regrettable.

Cllr Drewe referred to the procedure at Mendip DC. Planning Officer Laura McKay had unambiguously recommended approval, which had put him in a dilemma. On the one hand the planning grounds were clear, on the other he knew there was strong local feeling against the application. He had sought assistance from the Planning Board Chair and Vice-chair, who had said they did not wish to take the matter to the Board and that he could sign it off, which he had done. The document had then been returned to the planning officer.

In a tense exchange, Cllr Hall said Cllr Drewe did not have to take the advice of the Chair and Vice-chair. Cllr Drewe asked if he was being accused of something? He further explained the procedure at Mendip. Given the planning officer's clear recommendation to approve, it was his (Cllr Drewe's) prerogative to make a decision. Instead, he had gone to the Board Chair and Vice-chair who had said that the matter was clear cut and a refusal by Mendip would be lost on appeal. Cllr Drewe said anyone accusing him of letting the parish down should refer to the planning board first. Only about 60 contentious decisions out of 3,000 applications per annum went to the board.

Cllr Hall repeated that Cllr Drewe had not allowed the parish to make representations to the board and had signed the approval off the day before the last parish council meeting.

Cllr Drewe said he should have had prior notice so that he could have brought the documentation to the parish council, which should not question his integrity.

Cllr Hall said Cllr Drewe was answerable to the PC. He had taken an anti-democratic course of action, ignored the parish plan and letters opposing the development.

Cllr Drewe denied this; he said Cllr Hall did not know the procedure.

Cllr Hall did not think Cllr Drewe should have signed. He must carry out the wishes of the parish.

Cllr Green said it was a shame the village did not have its chance at a full planning meeting. As Ward Councillor, Cllr Drewe could be expected to respond to the wishes of people in the parish.

Cllr Drewe said that the PC had agreed with the Local Plan allocation, with which this application complied.

Cllr Hall ended the discussion.

2025. **Next meeting**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 11 June 2014 at 7.30pm in Faulkland Village Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.25pm.