Hemington, Hardington
& Foxcote Parish Council

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**M I N U T E S**

**Of Hemington, Hardington & Foxcote Parish Council**

**Held on Wednesday 14th December 2022 at Faulkland Village Hall**

**Present:** Chair A Hucker Cllrs T Hucker F Green, V Curtis

**Also Present:** County Councillor Clarke,J Gregory Proper Officer plus 2 members of the public

 **Public Participation**

No issues or comment was raised.

**12/22.23 001 Apologies for absence**

Cllrs Corney and Francis had given apologies and both were ill at this time. County Cllr Ham was also not well and sent apologies.

**Resolved; Apologies noted and in the circumstances absence authorised where appropriate.**

**12/22.23 002 Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to advise any Declarations of interest in today’s agenda items or any pecuniary interests in line with Councils’ Code of Conduct.

**Resolved: Cllr Hanley expressed his residency in Pond Cottages which may affect 12/22.23.005 and would abstain from voting.**

**12/22.23 003 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

 To receive the minutes of the meeting held 9th November 2022

**Resolved: Minutes of the previous meeting was signed by the Chairman as a correct record in the presence of the Proper Officer and meeting attendees. One amendment noted in public participation to the name of the road which would be amended to read “High Street”.**

**12/22.23 004 Reports**

1. **To receive the County Councillors Report**

County Cllr Clarke stated that bus services were being cut generally but with an upturn in the Bridgwater area.

Castle Cary railway station was undergoing some improvements to access in relation to the car park.

The Council tax scheme had agreed some new reductions with carers receiving a 50% reduction. Those with empty properties for more than 5 years will be subject to a 200% supplement and those empty for more than 10 years will be hit with a 300% supplement. This is to encourage homes back into the rental market.

The County Council is providing a cost of living grant of up to 1K for heating, food and white goods. There is a 3.8 million fund available for those in need.

Changes will be made to the postal voting system. Those with a passport and internet connection will find it easy however those without may require support and it could mean that 4% of the nation may not vote as a result.

There is currently a boundary review taking place and lots of talk and argument about names of the new areas.

There was no news on LCN’s however we have been promised them in place by 1st April.

It has yet to be decided who will deal with planning and licensing in the new Unitary, the likelihood being this will remain at a district level.

It has been suggested by SCC that local parishes take on some of the work undertaken by SCC – the advice is not to do this as there will not be funding available. Councils are also asked to set the precept as normal and not to factor in inflation.

There is a warm space network opening up over the County with library’s the first to open its doors.

The Unitary deficit will start at 34 million rising in subsequent years to 74 million before reducing back to 36 million in 2026.

1. Chairman’s report

Cllr Corney sent a report via the Clerk, the saliant points included comments from residents on the planning application. Correspondence from the Rector regarding grant funding for Hemington Church, SCC collation of documents and noting thanks to the Clerk for the first grant monies received.

**12/22.23 005 Planning Applications for Consideration**

2022/2022 6 Pond Cottages Faulkland,Conversion of existing double garage and stable building to 1 bedroom self contained accommodation. Much discussion was had also taking into account comments Cllr Corney had ascertained from residents.

Resolved: It was agreed to recommend refusal of this application on the following grounds.

* **There was no parking and spaces were not allocated**
* **It was suggested it was an annex but it is a separate property**
* **Concern expressed that the Management Association has not been consulted along with neighbouring residents.**

**12/22.23 006 Play Area**

The Clerk advised that 3 grant applications had been made. One grant funder had closed its scheme. One was awaiting a decision and the third received a £3k grant. It was reported that some schemes required not for profit status or a charity. Cllr Hucker would explore the possibility of the former Youth Club in trying to access some funding

The septic tank lid was now urgent. As a temporary measure the area would be roped off

**12/22.23 007 Finances**

The following payment schedule was agreed:

 

 **Resolved: Payment schedule agreed**

Balance on Accounts as at 30.11.22 £19166.79

To set a precept for the financial year 2023/24

The Clerk reported that to cover some of the funds needed for the play equipment the precept needed to be increased. It was currently running at £14,569 and the suggested figure was £17,994. The reality for a Band D property is that this would go up by £11.34 per annum equating to 95p per month.

**Resolved: Members agreed the precept at £17,994**

**12/22.23 008 Traffic/Highways/other**

Cllr Corney was yet to liaise with Cllr Hucker regarding historic correspondence with SCC due to illness however Cllr Hucker had prepped a lot of the information back to 2015.

**Action: Chair to action when appropriate**

**12/22.23 009 Correspondence**

The Chairs report had indicated correspondence from the Rector regarding grant funding. With the Rector in attendance she was granted permission to speak indicating the volunteer workforce that was keeping this going and needed serious funds. There were many aspects to consider the financial situation of the church, the Parish and its limited funds/small precept and play park project its priority. Some compromise was noted with the Clerk advised to look at budgets in June when a clearer picture of the play park would be known and we would be three months into a new financial year .

**Action: Agreed to revisit June 2023 – Clerk to diarise.**

From previous meetings the Post Office situation was again considered. There was only 1 person in the village using this service. Cllr Hanley advised from a Hall committee perspective it wasn’t good use of heating and lighting. The person using the PO does have transport and all members of Council would happily organise trips to other local post offices. As stated previously the service was sporadic, little consideration given to advertising boards and customer service was lacking generally.

**Resolved: To give Mells Sub-Post Office notice to cease the service from 31st March 2023**

**12/22.23 010 Information / Items to Raise for consideration at the next meeting**

**12/22.23 011 Any Other Business**

There was a sunken drain near to Haywood Farm Terry Hill

 There was a host of potholes along Knowle Lane, one of which caused a split tyre. Cllr Hucker to supply clerk with photos.

 Cllr Corney had spoken to the Landlady of the Faulkland Inn regarding the burning of waste. Some further representation was required as this was still happening.

**12/22.23.012 Date of next Meeting**

The next meeting would be held on the 11th January 2023 at Faulkland Village Hall.

**12/22.23 013 Close**

 The Chairman thanked all those present for their time and contribution.

Meeting closed at 8.25pm

A signed copy of the minutes can be viewed by arrangement via the Parish Clerk and on its website.