

**DRAFT Minute Ref HPC 4/24**  
**Hothfield Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council**  
**held on Thursday 16th May 2024 at 7.30pm at Hothfield Village Hall.**

**DRAFT COPY**

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

CLlr Lloyd was nominated and the PC voted unanimously in support. CLlr Lloyd was re elected as Chairman and signed the Declaration of Acceptance.

**1.1 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

CLlr Pollock was voted in as vice chairman.

**2. NOTE OF PERSONS PRESENT**

CLlrs: Lloyd, Sutcliffe, Pollock, Cox, Brock, Gary  
 Mrs M Norris (Clerk)

**3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Received from: CLlr Bell due to attendance at another APM. CLlr Jephheart was also unable to attend.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

None declared.

**Declaration of Significant Interest**

None declared.

**i) To note the granting of any Requests for Dispensation and the decision**

No requests received.

**ii) Updating of Declarations of Interest for the Code of Conduct**

There were no declarations of interest. Councillors were reminded that they should update their Declaration of Interest with the Monitoring Officer if necessary.

**5. PUBLIC INTERVAL**

There was a number of members of the public in attendance. The chairman reminded all in attendance of the rules when participating in the public forum. A member of the public asked for clarification concerning item 17 on the agenda, Nine Oaks public Meeting, and whether that was a new meeting. The chairman confirmed that it was a report to be delivered by him about the meeting he had previously attended. The resident wished to point out that it was not in fact a public meeting and an email confirming that the attendance at the meeting was restricted was passed to the clerk. The resident requested that the minutes of this meeting make that known. The resident also said that the attendees at the meeting felt that Mr Lloyd accompanying Mr Pollock as an independent arbiter was not independent enough and requested that if there were to be any future meetings, that another choice of independent should be sought. A number of residents also commented on this particular matter as it was felt that Mr Lloyd was not independent as he was the chairman of the Parish Council. Mr Lloyd confirmed that he attended at Mr Pollocks request as an independent and not in his role as Chairman of Hothfield PC.

The Hothfield newsletter was also discussed and residents felt that the cover page of the newsletter was not shared equally by all those contributing to the magazine. The friends of the church in particular were unhappy that their articles were at the back of the publication. Cllr Lloyd in his role as editor confirmed that he would be happy to place the Friends of the Church articles anywhere in the newsletter for future publications.

Cllr Pollock was asked about the fenced off footpath that ends by a tree that is now at Cllr Pollocks property. Said tree was now causing damage to the neighbours' fence. The tree is now in full leaf and damage to the fence is increasing. The resident asked Mr Pollock when he will free the fence which in turn would open up the pathway. Cllr Pollock confirmed that there was a TPO on the tree and that would mean that he would need to investigate the proper channel to do this. Cllr Pollock confirmed that he would be happy to meet and discuss this matter further but at present he was not in a position to give a timescale. Cllr Lloyd also commented that the PC would work with Mr Pollock to see if the PC could assist in anyway with the TPO.

A resident raised the concerns about water leaking along Meadowview. The PC advised the resident to report it directly to KCC and, in addition, the clerk would also report it.

A question about improvements to the junction of Church Lane & Bethersden Road was raised. The chairman explained that the PC would welcome any suggestions on how to improve the junction. The PC are keen to seek advice from KCC Highways who will be commencing working shortly on the speed restriction measures in Hothfield. At one point there was a mirror there but it has been removed. Also, saplings on the verge restrict sight lines. At present a gate enters out onto the road. Cllr Pollock suggested that the possibility of the gate being moved further back.

Pot holes in the area were also raised. The clerk advised that residents should report pot holes directly via the KCC website. The PC will then intervene on resident's behalf if no progress is made.

A member of the public requested that Cllr Lloyd advertise the upcoming RSPCA dog show in the newsletter. Cllr Lloyd explained that the cut off for articles for the newsletter was the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month and unfortunately this particular item arrived after the print deadline. Cllr Lloyd confirmed that the poster will however run in the next edition.

There being no further matters raised the chairman closed the public interval.

#### **6. REPORT FROM BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

No report was received.

#### **7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

There were no matters for report not covered on the agenda.

#### **8. ITEMS FOR PLANNING**

**Case Reference:** PA/2024/0732  
**Location:** 2 Hall Farm Cottage, Little Chart Road, Hothfield, TN26 1EX  
**Proposal:** Lawful Development Certificate - Existing - development as a residential dwelling house and use of loft space at the property as habitable living space.  
**View Files:** [Click Here](#)

**Comments deadline:** before 21/05/2024

**Resolution:** The PC agreed a response of No Comment.

Appellant:	Mr & Mrs Oliver
Proposal	Demolition of 1no barn and buildings and replacement with a single residential dwelling with detached car barn/yoga studio.
Location	Hurst Hill Farm, Pluckley Road, Hothfield, Ashford, TN26 1ER
Appeal Start Date:	30/04/2024
View Appeal Documents:	<a href="http://www.ashford.gov.uk">www.ashford.gov.uk</a> using the planning application search links and inputting the appeal reference AP-90655

An appeal has been made against the decision of Ashford Borough Council to the Secretary of State in respect of the above site.

Resolution: The PC agreed to seek further advice from the planning department and the Borough Councillor.

Cllr Lloyd took the opportunity to update members of the PC regarding the planning application for the Esso Garage, Hothfield which had recently been raised at the Planning Committee. Cllr Lloyd, alongside Cllr Bell, had attended and Cllr Lloyd spoke on behalf of HPC, he raised all the objections that we had received from residents, Cllr Bell also raised issues. The agent on behalf of the Esso garage was also at the meeting and for the first time it was confirmed that the food outlet would be Greggs. What remained unconfirmed at the meeting by the agent was the operating hours which is of concern to residents. However, the Planning Committee made the decision to accept the application. Cllr Lloyd explained that there were many objections that the Planning Committee did not appear to take into account. Cllr Lloyd explained that there is no appeal process for this application but the Parish Council should monitor the situation carefully going forward to ensure that the conditions set by the Planning Committee concerning the lighting, opening hours, noise etc are being fulfilled correctly.

Cllr Cox confirmed that the conditions of the hours are 8.00am to 7.00pm.

#### **9.ELECTION OF OFFICERS TO EXTERNAL COMMITTEES**

Cllr Cox – KALC

Cllr Sutcliffe- Village Hall

Cllrs Lloyd, Sutcliffe - Disciplinary & Grievance Committee (Reciprocal arrangement)

#### **10.FINANCIAL REPORTS**

a) **Bank Reconciliation** As of 12<sup>th</sup> April 2024

£1053.19- Direct Reserve Acc  
 £63,909.00 Business Reserve Acc  
 £100.00 Current Account  
 £1369.86 Current Account  
**Total £66,432.16**

b) **Accounts for Payments** May payments total 1055.32 this is made up of the following:

Salary £388.48  
 Salary £366.95  
 HMRC £91.60  
 PublicStar£190.29  
 EDF (D/D) £18.00  
**Total £1055.32**

c) **Earmarked Funds**

Muga £10,000  
 Youth £2,409.00  
 Solar £34,993.67  
 Village Projects £2,141.88  
 Garden Comp £273.00  
**Total £49,817.52**

- d) The Accounting statement for 23/24 was presented to the Parish Council it was agreed and signed off by the Chairman and the RFO.
- e) The Annual Governance Statement 23/24 was agreed by and signed by the Chairman and RFO
- f) The Certificate of Exemption 23/24 was agreed and signed by the Chairman and RFO
- g) The Notice of Appointment of date for the exercise of public rights was agreed as commencing on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2024 and ending on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

**11. INSURANCE ARRANGMENTS**

The clerk reported that the insurance is due for renewal on the 1<sup>st</sup> June. The schedule had been sent to all prior to the meeting. The premium has increased in the region of £40.00. The PC requested that the clerk request a tie in quote from the existing provider and in addition get another comparable quote.

Action: Clerk

**12. CCTV**

Cllr Cox reported on his findings at this point in time and requested permission to proceed with a survey. The cost of the survey was £350.00, this would include a surveyor attending Hothfield to consider the areas identified as potential spots. The PC felt that CCTV would act as a deterrent for antisocial behaviour although more advice was needed by professionals.  
 The PC resolved to pay for the initial survey.

**13. SPEED RESTRICTIONS**

Cllr Sutcliffe confirmed with KCC that the quote for the speed restrictions of £14k was the cheapest quote. KCC have suggested that if the PC are unable to afford the whole works in one payment the works could be split over a 2 year period. The recommendation if this was to be considered is that

the Gateways could be done in Year 1, and the hardstanding and curve in Year 2 although year 2 would have to be requested.

The PC agreed to proceed with the work at the price quoted but Cllr Sutcliffe will query the particular part of the work raised by Cllr Cox to understand if it is necessary.

#### **14. MUGA SIGNAGE**

KALC – Cllr Pollock requested the PC agreement to continue with the quote for the Muga signage. The PC were happy to proceed on the basis of the quote but a revised invoice was required to include installation costs and the invoice should be made out to Hothfield Parish Council in order for the VAT to be reclaimed.

#### **15. INCREASE TO CLERKS HOURS**

The clerk requested that the Parish Council consider increasing her hours from 5 ½ per week to 7. This was due to the increase in work since she started in post 5 years ago. The Clerk left the hall whilst the item was discussed.

The parish council agreed to the increase in hours from 5 ½ to 7 to take immediate effect and advised the clerk that she would need to report back after 2 months if the increase was not sufficient.

#### **16. VILLAGE TRIANGLE**

The Clerk had spoken with Kenny re the village triangle. Kenny was happy to clear the triangle in the first instance and then move on to planting. The PC requested that the clerk raise a contract for approval by both parties.

#### **17. NINE OAKS MEETING -25<sup>th</sup> April**

Cllr Lloyd reported that he had attended the meeting as an independent observer. Martin & Helen of Nine Oaks had held the meeting to discuss with immediate residents, plans for Nine Oaks following the licence hearing and concerns raised from that. Nine Oaks intend to run open air events including theatre performances and wine tours and tastings, the licence is from Thursday – Sunday. Tours and tastings will take place on Fridays and Saturdays at 11.00am and 2.00pm. Currently open air theatre events are scheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> July and 15<sup>th</sup> August.

Martyn & Helen provided a detailed breakdown of their background and their plans for the vineyard for 2024 and they answered questions. Concerns from residents were heard in particular relating to traffic and noise issues which Martyn and Helen answered but have said that, if there are any further concerns that were not addressed, to bring it to their attention via email. Cllr Cox asked where will the visitors park and Cllr Pollock advised that it would be in the field.

#### **18. CHURCH LANE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS**

This item was raised as a discussion item to get an idea of what improvements could be made. The clerk suggested that this concern be raised as part of our HIP (Highways Improvement Plan) and we would then be able to seek advice from KCC. This was agreed and the clerk will raise this with the Highways Officer.

#### **19. ASHFORD PLAN**

The chairman had met recently with the chair of Westwell Parish Council as a number of sites in and around Hothfield and Westwell had been nominated at this very early stage of the call for sites.

The chairs of both parishes felt that a joint local plan committee should be established and this could act as a focal point for local residents as it was felt that there may be a number of concerns surrounding the size and shape going forward. Cllr Lloyd would like another volunteer from the PC to also join. Cllr Cox volunteered.

## **20. VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (UPDATE)**

There has not been a meeting during this period the next meeting is scheduled for Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May which will be the AGM.

## **21. MUGA**

Cllr Fletcher was not present to provide a report.

## **22. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The clerk advised that the NALC had updated the financial regulations. The clerk will issue to members for review.

## **23. CONFIRMATION OF DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

It was resolved that future meeting for 24/25 will take place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at the village hall.

## **24. FORUM FOR INFORMATION**

- Newsletter – residents of Coach Drive have not received their newsletter.
- A volunteer was sought to deliver the newsletter to Beech Drive
- Deadlines for the newsletter is 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. For information, the RSPCA dog show event will be included in the next newsletter to be distributed.
- A number of cars have appeared around the village that do not appear to be owned locally. It was felt that this should be looked at particularly following the number of cars that had been parked illegally in Coach Drive.
- Coronation Orchard- Cllr Cox proposed to create a map of potential areas of consideration for the orchard alongside requesting a call for volunteers to plant and look after the trees. The land the trees are planted on does not need to be PC owned land but does need to be accessible by the public – a piece of land has been suggested to Cllr Cox by the owner but at this time a decision on whether the land would meet the accessibility requirement was not known
- A comment regarding a lack of information of what the PC are doing had been made. Cllr Lloyd suggested that it may be of benefit that a synopsis of the PC minutes be included in the newsletter.

## **25. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

No items were raised.

There being no other matters the Chairman thanked attendees and called the meeting to close at 8:50pm

**Chairmans Signature:**

**Date:**