**Hessett Parish Council**

**MINUTES**

of the meeting on **Tuesday 23rd July 2024 at 7.30pm** at Hessett & Beyton Village Hall

**Present:** Councillors Phil Barrett (Chair), Tim Elliot, Richard Merryfield, Andrew Pearson, Margaret Shaw,

**In attendance:** Michelle Fisher (Clerk to the Council), Cllr Penny Otton (SCC), Cllr Nickey Willshere (MSDC)

# 230724/01 Apologies for absence

All Parish Councillors in attendance. Apologies received from and accepted by the Parish Council for Cllr Penny Otton (Suffolk County Council) and Cllr Nicky Willshere (MSDC) who had tendered apologies due to prior pre-arranged commitments.

**230724/02 Part 1 Declarations of Interest**

1. There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests Declared
2. There were no other Disclosable Interests Declared

**230724/03 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 23rd July 2024 were agreed to be a true record. The Chair was authorised to sign them as such.

**230724/04 Public Forum**

**County & Borough Councillor Reports**

**County Councillor Penny Otton**

Cllr Otton confirmed that she sent a report prior to the meeting and the clerk confirmed receipt. A copy of this report will be available with the Minutes of the meeting.

The Clerk enquired regarding the money promised for the VASS Sign, Cllr Penny Otton agreed to investigate it and chase.

Cllr Otton informed the PC that an initial flooding report has been received by Suffolk County Council and they are still trying to find a group solution. They are scanning through the report and plan to set some money aside to complete some remedial work. They are currently deciding how best to allocate the funding. A resident present asked whether the County Council had put grips in lately? In response Cllr Otton confirmed that they had not.

The resident confirmed that the gutter machine had been through Hessett in the last few weeks. Cllr Phil Barrett expressed that the problem being is they have to empty the gutters regularly. Cllr Penny Otton stated that this should be done when they road sweep. It was confirmed by the PC that we have not had a road sweep. Cllr Otton agreed to investigate this.

Cllr Otton asked the PC to inform residents that Suffolk County Council have a call for Foster Parents and asked us to include this on our website asking for any interested residents to please contact them for further information.

Cllr Otton informed the PC that the 1088 will be closed for months due to the bridge.

Cllr Andrew Pearson informed Cllr Otton that road repairs were still outstanding. Cllr Penny Otton has questioned infrastructure.

A resident raised a complaint about the Mains Water at the front of Limetree Close; despite being reported for weeks, and the site clearly marked, the issues did not appear on Anglian Waters website. On contacting Anglian Water one of the excuses, they provided for the delay was that they were waiting for a license to excavate the road. The resident questioned Cllr Otton on this matter and it was recommended that he contact Highways in order for them to answer the question.

**District Councillors**

**Cllr Nicky Willshere**

NHS update

Budgets – Mid Suffolk confirmed that these were not as bad as thought they were. There is a District pot for community support in the form of Capital grants. Cllr Shaw asked whether these would be available to use towards floods.

The grant funding is limited to constituted community groups and organisations. Eligible groups include (but are not limited to): Town and Parish Councils, Village Halls or playing field management committees, sports clubs and centres, charities, social enterprises, community shops and community interest companies. The funding is not available for individuals or businesses.

Double Garage behind new house of pub clearly showed converted into a single bedroom. No planning in evidence. The PC agreed to consider applying for a Locality Award for new flooring for play park.

The PC asked MSDC to clarify the rota for how regularly they are cutting in Hessett, Cllr Nicky Willshere agreed to find out.

No Issues were raised.

There were no questions or comments from members of the public.

**280524/08 Planning**

1. There are no planning application consultations to consider
2. All Councillors noted the following determinations:

**DC/24/02126** – Aardvark House, Hubbards Lane. Mid Suffolk District Council granted the application for a balcony to the main bedroom. Hessett Parish Council raised no objection.

**DC/24/02704** – White Cottage, Heath Road. Discharge of conditions application DC/24/00281 Condition 4 (Biodiversity Enhancement Measures) was granted by Mid Suffolk District Council. Hessett Parish Council offered no objection.

1. No change in CIL money.

**280524/09 Clerk’s Report & Administrative Duties**

1. The Clerk advised that no decisions had been made under delegated powers since the last meeting.
2. The Clerk has responded to various letters, emails, texts and calls from residents regarding the Church Walk footpath, lawnmowers, hedges and flooding, some of which have been added to the Agenda to discuss today.
3. **The Clerk informed the PC that she had received a complaint from a resident. This resident had made allegations regarding the Parish Council Lawnmower asking why the lawn mower was stored at Cllr Andrew Pearsons’s brothers and why his brother was using it to mow his land. The resident asked why the residents should have to pay for a lawnmower and it be used for non-Parish business. The PC investigated this matter during the meeting and concluded as follows:**

* **The PC lawnmower is not being stored at Cllr Pearsons brother’s property.**
* **The Parish Lawnmower is only used for the purposes of the Hessett Parish Council.**
* **The PC mower is a self-propelled walk-behind and has never been used or stored by Cllr Pearsons brothers.**
* **Cllr Pearson has his own much larger ride on mower which he paid for, and maintains at his own expense, which he uses on the Heath and footpaths. His brother has a similar ride on mower.**

**Hessett PC agreed that Cllr Pearson goes above and beyond with his efforts for the PC and in his dedication to help keep Hessett a lovely village to live in. Cllr Pearson was upset by the allegations. It was agreed by the Councillors that the Clerk should write to the resident informing them of the PC’s investigation into this matter and asking for an apology for Cllr Pearson and his brother and to clear up any misunderstanding.**

1. The Clerk confirmed that the Audit had been completed and we had received our report. The completed AGAR forms had been submitted to PK Little John to be recorded as compliant.

**280524/10 Finance & Governance**

1. **(i)** Councillors agreed to defer the finance report to the next meeting noting there were no finance reports available as the Clerk had not received the card reader required to log onto the internet banking from Barclays; due to the lack of card reader any payments will be made and processed as soon as possible.
2. Councillors confirmed a full schedule of payments, supported by invoices and receipts and agreed to make the following payments by internet transfer:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| PAYMENT | INVOICE/RECEIPT REF: | AMOUNT |
| Hessett & Beyton Village Hall | 74BPP | 30.00 |
| HMRC | Employer Contribution 475PD017227303501 | 86.00 |
|  | Employer Contribution  475PD017227302503 | 86.00 |
| Michelle Fisher | Clerk Wages for August  (Resolved to be paid in August) | 430.40 |
| Mrs T Newell | HPC2401  Temporary RFO/ Assistant to Clerk | 491.85 |
| Michelle Fisher | Clerk Wages for July  Includes HMRC Tax Rebate | 688.60 |
| Clear Insurance  (BHIB) | LCO02049  HPC Insurance | 567.08 |

1. All Councillors agreed to renew the Insurance policy with BHIB (Clear Insurance Management), for an annual renewal price of £567.08.
2. Cllr Andrew Pearson suggested that RPA not be included on the next accounts spreadsheet as we no longer have this.
3. Assets: All Councillors agreed to defer reviewing of assets until the speed camera had been ordered and to allow Cllr Andrew Pearson time to review the assets register.
4. All Councillors agreed to adopt the new Financial Regulations as issued by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) with the adaptations for Hessett. To received updates/reports from officers and to action them accordingly.

**280524/12 Speeding**

Cllr Phil Barrett confirmed that the speed post positions had been agreed and that the PC are awaiting installation. The Councillors agreed that the Clerk should order the speed camera from Westcotec. Cllr Margaret Shaw agreed for the speed camera to be delivered to her address. Cllr Phil Barrett suggested that the PC ask residents to volunteer to join a working group to help manage the speed camera movements within the village. All Councillors agreed that this would be a good idea. Any residents who wish to volunteer are asked to contact either the Clerk or Cllr Barrett.

**280524/13** **Telephone Kiosk**

Cllr Margarett Shaw informed the PC that there is nothing further to currently report. Cllr Shaw is in the process of organising the map and is consulting with a graphic designer.

**280524/14 Flood Update**

The Clerk had received no further updates from Suffolk County Council. As stated in these Minutes (Minute Ref: **230724/04**),Cllr Penny Otton updated the PC in her report. Namely, that an initial flooding report had been received by Suffolk County Council and they are still trying to find a group solution. They are scanning through the report and plan to set some money aside to complete some remedial work. They are currently deciding how best to allocate the funding.

Cllr Phil Barrett stated that he had received one offer to volunteer to help with a flooding survey to see where the problems are and to take measurements, but he is looking for more volunteers.

Cllr Elliott informed the PC that Suffolk Wild Life Trust recommend that when maintaining ditches, one side should be cut back but to leave the other side for food and cover for wildlife and to alternate this each year. In Hessett the stream runs through the centre of the village; the PC has received complaints that the ditch near the pub is not being cleared back, environment wise growth should be encouraged based on the advice of the Wild Life Trust, but the problem with the reeds in the case of Hessett is because it’s a Culvert.

**280524/16 Church Walk**

The Clerk has received further complaints regarding the Church Walk. It has been suggested by a resident that a group of volunteers help maintain this walk with a few residents already expressing an interest to volunteer. The Clerk explained to the Councillors that several factors should be considered:

1. Permission from the owners of the land
2. Whether the Council manage the volunteers or whether the details be passed onto the landowners or land agents with the resident’s permission.
3. If the PC are to consider managing a work group, then the necessary risk assessments and insurance would need to be in place. Ensuring health and safety policies are monitored.

Councillors agreed that we receive regular complaints regarding the Church Walk and that it would be good to find an ongoing resolution. The Clerk is to contact the land agents and ask if it would be helpful and whether they would be interested in volunteers to help maintain the Church Walk.

The Clerk informed the PC that she had corresponded with the Footpaths Officer who has asked that the PC inform them what grounds we maintain and how regularly. Cllr Phil Barrett suggested that we respond informing them that we cut the greens and on occasions we cut back the footpath by the church due to the volume of complaints. The Chair has asked Cllr Willshere of MSDC to confirm how regularly they cut and the rota for Hessett.

The Clerk informed the PC that she had asked the footpaths officer how regularly they maintained the Church footpath as the PC had not seen anyone come to cut it. The Footpaths Officer responded asking the Clerk how the PC could possibly state that we have not seen anyone cut the grass and suggested that we could not possibly watch 24/7 to assert this.

The Chair requested that we discuss the Church Walk again at the next meeting.

**160523/18 Councillors’ Reports and Items for Future Agendas**

Cllr Andrew Pearson as the PC representative for the Village Hall Committee received a request from the Village Hall asking for the PC to remove the name and phone number contact details we have listed for them from the PC website and to leave the hire rates but no price. The PC is asked to leave the email contact for the village Hall on the PC website for the public to contact them with any enquiries.

Cllr Elliott informed the PC that he was officially standing down from his position on Hessett Parish Council. The Clerk asked Cllr Elliott to confirm this in writing. The PC thanked Cllr Elliott for his service and said that he would be dearly missed.

**The Council agreed the following items should be added to the next meeting Agenda**

* **Dog Bins/ Dog Bin replacement and collection**
* **Playground**
* **Heath Maintenance**
* **Flooding**
* **Church Walk**
* **Grass Cutting for 2025**

**The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.45pm**

**Signed as a true record by authority of the Council**

**Chair**

**Date**