

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 Willshire (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 Willshire (MSDC) who had tendered apologies due to prior pre-arranged commitments.

230724/02 Part 1 Declarations of Interest

- (a) There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests Declared
- (b) 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 Willshire

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 Hesselst, Cllr Nicky Willshire agreed to find out.

No Issues were raised.

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

230724/08 Planning

(a) There are no planning application consultations to consider

(b) 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. Hesselst 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. Hesselst Parish Council offered

no objection.

(c) No change in CIL money.

230724/09 Clerk's Report & Administrative Duties

- (a) The Clerk advised that no decisions had been made under delegated powers since the last meeting.
- (b) 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.
- (c) The Clerk informed the Parish Council that a complaint had been received from a resident. The complaint included allegations concerning the Parish Council lawnmower, specifically questioning why it was reportedly stored at Cllr Andrew Pearson's brother's property, and whether it was being used to maintain non-Parish land.

The Parish Council investigated the matter during the meeting and concluded the following:

- The Parish Council lawnmower is not stored at Cllr Pearson's brother's property.
- The lawnmower is used exclusively for official Parish Council purposes.
- The Parish Council mower is a self-propelled walk-behind model and has never been stored or used by Cllr Pearson's brother.
- Cllr Pearson owns a separate, larger, ride-on mower which he purchased and maintains at his own expense. He uses this mower on the Heath and public footpaths in support of village upkeep. His brother owns a similar ride-on mower for personal use.

The Council acknowledged and appreciated the significant voluntary contribution made by Cllr Pearson in maintaining village spaces, recognising that his efforts go above and beyond his official responsibilities.

Cllr Pearson expressed distress at the nature of the allegations. In light of the investigation's findings, it was agreed that the Clerk would write to the resident to communicate the Council's conclusions and to request an apology to Cllr Pearson and his brother in order to address the misunderstanding and maintain respectful community relations.

- (d) 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.

230724/10 Finance & Governance

- a. (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.
- b. 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
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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

- c. All Councillors agreed to renew the Insurance policy with BHIB (Clear Insurance Management), for an annual renewal price of £567.08.
- d. Cllr Andrew Pearson suggested that RPA not be included on the next accounts spreadsheet as we no longer have this.
- e. 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.
- f. 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 receive updates/reports from officers and to action them accordingly.

230724/12 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.

230724/13 Telephone Kiosk

Cllr Margaret 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.

230724/14 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 Hesselsett 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 Hesselsett is because it's a Culvert.

230724/16

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 Willshire of MSDC to confirm how regularly they cut and the rota for Hesselsett.

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.

230724/18

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 Hessest 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

R. J. Barrett

01.10.24