

Hessett Parish Council

MINUTES

of the meeting held at Hessett & Beyton Village Hall, Hessett on
Monday 24th January 2022 at 7.30pm

Social distancing and other Covid-19 mitigation measures were in place.

Present: Councillors: Michael Poulter (Chair), Katie Mitcham and Debbie Willis.

In attendance: Maximilian Clay (Clerk to the Council),
County Councillor Otton (part) and 3 members of the public.

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and thanked everyone for co-operating with Covid-19 mitigations.

59. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Turvill and the Council resolved to approve the reason.

60. Declarations of Interest

- a. There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests declared.
- b. There were no Other Disclosable Interests declared.

61. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 15th November 2021 were agreed to be a true record and the Chair was authorised to sign them as such.

62. County & District Councillor Report

County and District Cllr Penny Otton had submitted a written report and this was received. C Cllr Otton added that budget meetings would take place in February but that no figures were yet available.

63. Public Forum

The Chair opened the public forum. A resident spoke in relation to outstanding planning enforcement action relating to Bridges, The Street. Plans had not been adhered to and enforcement had been initiated but not followed up; there had been a lack of consistency and action on the part of the Planning Authority which it was felt gave the message that anyone could do whatever they wished. There was no other business under this item.

64. Clerk's Report & Administrative Business

The Clerk reported that no decisions had been taken under delegated authority.

The District Joint Plan - This is having to be reviewed because the Inspector has not agreed it yet. This may have an impact on speculative development in some places.

The Woodland Trust - Had confirmed that trees will be available at no cost.

Village Boundary 'Gates' - These had been inspected and it was found that someone had scrubbed or scoured them, damaging the surface, which is why they looked so poor at present and this had allowed moisture penetration with resulting rot. The extent of the rot will only become clear on a fuller inspection but they may need replacement - discussion of this will arise under item 69.ii (budget).

New Code of Conduct - There is a new Councillor Code of Conduct being produced and it is hoped that this will be available to be adopted in May.

New Benches - These had been delivered and look very good - Graham Baully has kindly agreed to help place them on the green.

65. Queens Platinum Jubilee/ Big Picnic Working Group

Cllr Turvill had met with the Tony Ciorra and as a result the group was working on developing more activities in an effort to encourage the community to inter-act, rather than to stick to the groups in which they arrive. A further meeting will be held.

66. Bus Shelter

The Council discussed a request from a resident to place a bus stop on the Green for the use of school children in particular. As a precursor to discussion it was noted that, because the Green is registered as such, nothing new can be placed on it but that there could be alternatives if the desirability of a bus shelter was agreed.

In discussion it was noted that at present there are about 15 secondary and 9 primary aged children being picked up from the Green but that this varies considerably over the years as does the location of the school bus pick-ups, depending upon the part of the village children in which children live. This means that making permanent provision is not straight forward and it was also noted that there are already other pick up points in the village at present.

It was agreed to explore the use of the car park area, if it can be expanded, for this purpose

67. Repairs to Play Area Fencing

After brief discussion it was agreed to move ahead with the works at a cost of up to £4,000 including, if possible, a second gate.

68. Co-options

The meeting voted unanimously to support the recommendations of the working group and so co-opted Lynn Heymoz and Margaret Shaw to the Council.

69. Finance

- i. **Financial Statements** - there were a number of questions, following which the Council resolved to receive and approve the financial statements and bank reconciliation for the 3rd quarter.
- ii. Two versions of the budget were presented and the Clerk recommended version B which included greater provision for capital items and increased grant-giving. There were a number of questions about the budget including a discussion of grant giving and capital expenditure. Following discussion it was agreed to include sums for the replacement of the boundary gates, and the replacement of the play area fencing (which would be carried out sooner if possible). It was resolved to adopt version B of the budget for 2022/23.
- iii. In discussion it was noted that Hessett's precept is lower than that for most comparable councils but it was felt that at this period of high inflation, and with reasonable reserves in hand, it would be helpful to residents to keep the increase to the minimum and review this in future years. Following this discussion, the Council resolved to set a precept of £10,349.
- iv. The Council received the schedule of receipts and payments and resolved to approve the payments.

70. Planning

a. The Council considered responses to a planning application consultation:

- i **DC/21 0607 and DC/21/06808** - Wilwyn, The Street, Hessett: Application for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent: *Erection of rear extension and re-roofing (following demolition of conservatory); Erection of replacement front porch extension and formation of parking space and metal railings. Internal and external alterations as per Design & Access Statement and Schedule of Works.*

After some discussion it was agreed that the proposal represented a considerable improvement on both the existing building and the previous iteration of proposed changes and the Council resolved to support the application.

b. To receive update reports on planning applications considered previously

- i **DC/21/04402 - 7 Lime Tree Close, Hessett:** *Revision of sitings; Erection of two storey side and first floor rear extensions (following demolition of existing side ground floor store/hall and rear sun room) and erection of a cart lodge.* Granted.
- ii **DC/21/05522 and DC/21/05523 - Wilwyn, The Street, Hessett; Planning and Listed Building Consent:** *Erection of rear extension and re-roofing (following demolition of conservatory and chimney); Erection of replacement front porch extension and formation of parking space and metal railings.* Refused.
- iii **DC/21/05524 and DC/21/05525 - Alwyd, The Street, Hessett; Planning and Listed Building Consent:** *Construction of new porch, replacement of windows and enlargement of door, installation of railings around front garden (following demolition of existing porch).* Granted.
- iv **DC/21/05717 - 3 Heath Close, Hessett:** *Erection of part single, part two storey rear extension (following demolition of conservatory).* Granted
- v **Bridges, The Street** - It was agreed that the lack of enforcement of the conditions that were placed on this development by the Planning Authority was highly regrettable and part of a wider picture of inconsistency that undermines the whole process. It was agreed to write to the Chief Executive to register our dissatisfaction and to pick up on the particular issue of the opening window at this property that should be a fixed window.

71. Five Bells Inn

Works are progressing well and it was hoped that the pub would open in spring or summer.

72. Village Association Constitution Working Group

The Council received an update following a meeting of this working group.

The group had been mandated by the public meeting held in November, to draft a constitution for the Village Association that would be “a voluntary group that would arrange events in the village and co-ordinate voluntary work to support the life of the village.” This was in the context that “The group would be independent of the Council but would need to establish a committee and a constitution, in order to be eligible to raise funds and receive financial support, from the parish council or elsewhere. As in many neighbouring villages, a Village Association can work more nimbly and beyond the statutory frameworks that limit councils and can be a successful way of building community.”

The public meeting had agreed that once a constitution was drafted, a further public meeting would be held in January 2022 to seek support and agreement from the village as a whole.

Unfortunately, most of those present at the working group decided to ignore the mandate given by the November public meeting and to instead create a constitution focused on events only and form an unelected committee, without further reference to the wider village.

The Clerk agreed to draft a constitution in line with what the working group decided, while making clear that this was not in the spirit of what the public meeting had asked for and mandated, and he urged the inclusion of a clause broadening the objectives beyond events. The Clerk had also encouraged the group to adhere to the commitment to take a draft constitution back to a meeting of the village as a whole, but this seemed unlikely to happen the majority made clear that they thought this a waste of time.

73. Date of Annual Meeting

The Council resolved to change the date of the Annual Meeting to the 23rd May 2022.

74. Councillors' reports and items for future agendas

Telephone Kiosk - Cllr Willis reported that 12 volunteers had attended a meeting to consider what needed to be done and a first clean-up had happened. Further work would wait for better weather.

Village Hall Committee - Cllr Willis reported that the committee had met and discussed their lease

and trust arrangements and had formed an asbestos management plan.

A request had been made to allow users of the hall to use the Council's television and after brief discussion it was agreed that this would be allowed subject to the Clerk being informed of any planned use and to liability for licencing and any damage remaining with the Hall/users.

Use of Heath - It was agreed that a policy for this would be helpful and it was resolved that the Clerk create an initial draft for discussion at the March meeting.

Following discussion of two items of reserved business, **the meeting closed at 9.43pm**

Signed as a true record by authority of the Council

Chair

Date