

HELMDON PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the meeting of Helmdon Parish Council held on Wednesday 24th May 2006 in the Reading Room, Church Street, Helmdon at 8:30 p.m.

Present: Councillors Bearman, Brookhouse, Burns, Earl, England, Gittens, Moody (Acting Clerk), Smith, & Spendlove.

There were six members of the public present.

1. Approval and signature of the Minutes for the meeting held on 22nd March 2006

Action

Cllr Bearman proposed, seconded by Cllr Moody, that the minutes for the meeting held on 22nd March 2006 be signed as a true and correct record. All in favour except Cllr Spendlove, who abstained.

2. Matters arising from the Minutes for the meeting held on 22nd March 2006

None.

3. Open Forum

- a) Mrs Lidgley praised Atkins for their work, especially the “extras” such as the church access. She also asked when the remaining signs and cones would be collected. Cllr Bearman said these would be collected very soon.
- b) Mrs Lidgley urged everyone to sign MP Tony Baldry’s petition in the Banbury Cake.
- c) Mrs Lidgley asked for any update regarding the Central Railway re-opening. Cllr Burns confirmed there was none.
- d) Mrs Lidgley asked if Helmdon was entered into the Churchyard competition for Village of the Year. The Acting Clerk confirmed the entry fee had been sent off.
- e) Mrs Lidgley proposed tidying up the back of Jenners Piece and said that Mr Payne might do it if approached. Cllr Burns will ask Mr Payne.
- f) Mr Short asked if the Council would like to comment any further on local police staffing. Cllr Brookhouse said that PC Shillito may not be moving on as quickly as first expected.
- g) Mr Short asked how much the Council had spent on training over the last three years and questioned if the Council were getting value for money given the loss of the clerk. The Acting Clerk confirmed that approximately £300 out of a precept of £28,000 had been spent on training.

Cllr
Burns

4. Finance

- a) To receive the financial statement:

Cash & Investments	
Current Account	13,286.17
Deposit Account	8,216.83
Nottingham Bond	500.00
Total	22,003.00

b) Bills for payment:

Accounts Payable	Cheque No.	
Allianz Cornhill – Insurance Renewal	000567	1,283.06
Brackley Cottage Hospital – Donation for 05/06	000568	1,000.00
Powergen – Electricity	000569	99.24
Parish Clerk – Salary (Final payment)	000570	340.00
K Hardiman – Pump Garden	000571	40.40
Total		2,762.70

Cllr Spendlove proposed, seconded by Cllr Bearman, that the above bills be paid.

Cllr Brookhouse declared an interest in the account payable to Brackley Cottage Hospital and did not vote. The remaining councillors were all in favour.

Accounts Received	
J Cairns – Allotment rent	5.00
Total	5.00

c) To approve Annual Return as proposed by Finance committee:

The Acting Clerk confirmed that the accounts for 2005/2006 were complete and that they had been certified by Sarah Smith as the Responsible Financial Officer for that year. It was hoped to propose the accounts to Council for adoption but the Acting Clerk pointed out that the statutory notice period had not been served and that it would be better to leave this item in abeyance until the next meeting. All in favour.

The Acting Clerk to ensure that the proper notices are now served.

The Acting Clerk stated that the Internal Audit would be taking place on 6th June.

Cllr Brookhouse suggested re-evaluating the opening of a new Co-op account since many local Post Offices are being closed down and this was the method of choice for paying in to the account. No proposal was made.

Cllr Brookhouse proposed, seconded by Cllr Smith that the Council be authorised to spend up to £500 on a new computer when a new clerk is appointed. Cllr Gittens confirmed that the existing PC is at the end of its useful life. All in favour except Cllr Spendlove, who abstained.

5. Correspondence

The Council received the following correspondence:

South Northamptonshire Council

- Copy of newsletter sent to council tenants re transfer of housing stock to a Registered Social Landlord
- Further Electoral Review of South Northamptonshire (no change affecting Helmdon, which remains in Astwell Ward)
- Landlord News and Views newsletter

**Acting
Clerk**

Northamptonshire County Council

- Northamptonshire Local Transport Plan 2006/07 – 2010/11. Also available at: <http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Transport/>
- Northamptonshire Minerals Local Plan: Notice of Intention to Adopt. Also available at: <http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Environment/Minerals/>

Miscellaneous

- The Miracle Times – Playgrounds magazine
- RoSPA – Notice of Inspection to take place in June
- SNVB – Voluntary Action in South Northants magazine
- Committed2Equality – Sales letter re. Equality Practices for employers
- Clerks & Councils Direct magazine
- J Cairns – Allotments remittance £5
- C&E Garden Services – Copy of public liability insurance
- BDO Stoy Hayward – Local Council Briefing, Spring 2006
- Northamptonshire Police – Changes to staffing in South Northants Sector
- Yorkshire Bank – End of year statements for deposit and current accounts

Accounts Received

- Allianz Cornhill – Insurance renewal documentation – £1,283.06
- Powergen – March Statement - £99.24
- K Hardiman – Bulbs and plants for Pump Garden - £40.40

6. Annual Parish Meeting 2006 (Debrief)

a) A proposal to carry out a Village Design Statement had been received at the Annual Parish Meeting. After some discussion Cllr Moody proposed, seconded by Cllr Spendlove, that all councillors acquaint themselves with the programme so that a more informed discussion can take place at the next meeting. Acting Clerk to send an Internet link with more information to all councillors and agenda for next meeting.

b) The Acting Clerk read out a response from Atkins which covered the various points raised at the APM. The road surface from the B4525 to the 30 mph sign just above the Bungalow Stores will be inspected and patched where necessary.

Cllr Brookhouse wished to comment on two items raised by members of the public at the APM:

i) Member of the public complaining about unsympathetic street lighting: Cllr Brookhouse was involved in the choice of street lighting in 1982 and in his opinion had made the best decision at the time. Cllr Moody asked if the choice had been revisited since 1982 and Cllr Brookhouse confirmed it had not.

ii) Member of the public stating the Council was “very lucky” to have got the churchyard extension: Cllr Brookhouse was involved in the acquisition of the churchyard extension for the parish and said that there had been a lot of work over a six year period to secure it.

7. Arrangement for judges’ visit on 6th June 2006 for Village of the Year competition

Cllr Burns suggested organising the judges’ visit along the same lines as last year and confirmed that he had already spoken to Mr Phillips at the Bell PH. The Acting Clerk was instructed to write to all village groups and organisations with an invitation to attend the Bell at 10:00 a.m. on 6th June. Cllr Burns will approach village businesses to see if they would be interested in hosting the judges for a quick visit.

All
Acting
Clerk

Acting
Clerk

Cllr
Burns

8. Decide strategy to fill Parish Clerk vacancy

Cllr Burns confirmed that there had been no formal applications received by the 30th April deadline. Cllr Burns and Cllr Moody had been approached by one potential applicant each and it was decided to approach both and ask them to lodge a formal application.

**Cllrs
Burns &
Moody**

An Appointment committee comprising Cllrs Brookhouse, Burns, Spendlove and Moody will meet to review the job description and contract of employment. Date to be set at the end of the meeting.

**Cllr
Burns**

9. Proposal to support Parish Paths Group with a donation of £200 towards producing a Parish Map

Cllr Brookhouse proposed, seconded by Cllr Earl, that £200 be donated to the Parish Paths Group for the production of a new village footpaths map. All in favour.

10. Registration of Jenners Piece with Land Registry

Cllr Burns stated the legal costs would be between £250 and £500 but that he was still speaking to local solicitors. The Acting Clerk suggested that the Land Registry be contacted with the specifics of the piece of land in question to ascertain whether registration was even possible. The Acting Clerk was instructed to write to the Land Registry and put the item on the agenda again at the next meeting.

**Acting
Clerk**

11. Playing Field Committee

a) To decide how to move forward with the outstanding lease agreement for the school field:

Cllr Moody suggested writing to the new officer at NCC restating the position as set out in the last letter to Mr O'Garro.

Cllr Brookhouse again raised the issue of availability of the playing field during school hours and said that the proposal to erect a fence dividing the play area from the rest of the school field needed revisiting.

**Acting
Clerk**

The Acting Clerk was instructed to write to NCC.

b) To consider recommendations from the Playground committee regarding Risk Assessment:

Cllr Earl circulated a completed risk assessment for the play area, which contained the following proposals:

- a) To remove the picnic table, which is in a poor state of repair
- b) To repair the tyre swing
- c) To invite tenders for the replacement of the fence on gravel path
- d) To patch the surface of the steps leading to the top of the slide
- e) To install barriers to prevent pedestrians walking in front of swings (Cllr Brookhouse has secured some old railings from the disused Baptist Chapel that would be fit for purpose)

**Cllr
Bearman**

**Cllrs
Earl &
B'house**

Cllr England proposed, seconded by Cllr Bearman, that the Risk assessment be adopted by the Council and signed off by the chairman. All in favour.

12. Proposal from Cllr Gittens to purchase security and signage for the allotment gates

Cllr Gittens proposed, seconded by Cllr Earl that up to £75 be spent on a sign for the allotments stating that they are for the holders' use only, and a padlock to secure the front gate, with a key for each holder. All in favour.

**Cllr
Gittens**

The meeting closed at 10:23 p.m.

**The date of the next meeting is Wednesday
26th July 2006**