

MINUTES of the HOUGH ON THE HILL PARISH COUNCIL (PC) MEETING held at 7 pm in Hough on the Hill Church on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

Present: Cllr Stewart Sharman (SS) (Chair), Cllrs S. Allen (SA), R. Harris (RH), V. McLean (VM) and A. Seage (AS) and 7 members of the public.

The Chair welcomed all present. The Chair thanked Lesley Frances for her hard work during the last 7 years as clerk. The Chair welcomed Donna Lang as the new clerk. The Chair explained that the role had been advertised and two people had applied for the role. Councillors were asked about the current situation regarding potholes across the parish. Clerk advised that Fix my Street had been used to report the potholes and an update would be provided once the works had been completed. Cllr Maughan had also been informed of this via email by the clerk. A member of the public who works for Lincolnshire Highways would report the issue to expedite. Members of the public asked about the playing field and suggested extra seating, allotments, wilding areas and a new village hall as options under the Prosperity Funding Scheme. There was a brief discussion re: flooding which was to be addressed under a separate Agenda item.

47/23: Apologies from Cllrs Milnes, Maughan, Rann and Pope.

48/23: There were no declarations of interest. Cllr Allen had recently become a trustee of the Hough on the Hill Relief in Need Charity. Although she was not required to complete a Declaration of Interest Cllr Allen wanted it recorded.

49/23: The **Minutes** of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023 had been read, approved and it was resolved that they be signed.

50/23: **Staffing Committee** Cllr Allen wished to set up a staffing committee. This had been suggested in June 2023 when it was unanimously agreed that whilst LALC recommended that there should be a Staffing Committee there was no obligation and therefore issues would be dealt with as they arose.

51/23: **Civility and Respect Pledge** All councillors had attended training. A vote was taken to sign up to the Pledge and it was unanimously agreed to take up the Pledge. The Clerk is to arrange paperwork.

52/23: Planning:

**S23/1000** - Extensions at Grange Farm Cottages – withdrawn.

**S23/1099** – Extension roof light and Porch at Wayside Farm – approved.

**S23/1130** – Removal of metal shed, add block paving and new hedge at Wayside Farm – Approved.

**S23/1559** – Change of use and extension at Park View – Withdrawn.

**S23/1598** – Tree works at Wayside Farm – approved.

**S23/1700** – Extensions at Grange Cottage -Approved.

**S23/1943** – Change of use at 7 Gelston – pending consideration.

Neighbourhood Plan: The Chair reported that the professional consultant that the PC had engaged had now briefed the PC twice. The delay in reporting back to the PC is because the consultant had called into question some of the elements in the latest NP and that it should better reflect the Local Plan. There is a further meeting with the consultant after xmas to discuss next steps. There was a discussion as to whether the Local Plan takes precedence over the NP – whilst it is clear that when dealing with planning applications the NP has priority, in shaping the NP it should reflect the Local Plan. The Chair expressed concern that comments on Nextdoor re the NP were divisive and unhelpful.

**53/23: Highways**

Potholes – As discussed in the public forum the potholes have been reported on Fix my Street and a member of the public who works for Lincolnshire Highways would look to expedite.

SIDS *Cllr* Mclean and Andrew Barrett, a resident of Brandon, are running the SID project. There has been a noticeable reduction in the speed of traffic since the SID has been deployed in Brandon and Hough. Moving the SID has reduced speeding by 10%. It is possible to download the data from the SIDs to capture average speeds. Andrew Barrett will look to action this once sufficient data has been collected. More brackets are required to mount the SIDs and the clerk will look into the costings of these. The Chair thanked *Cllr* Mclean and Andrew Barrett for their hard work in overseeing this.

**54/23: Defibrillators - Electrical Checks** *Cllr* Rann provided a report in her absence. All defibs had been checked and there were no issues. The Chair thanked *Cllr* Rann for organizing her workforce to do this at no cost to the PC. The VETS list had been handed over to *Cllr* Allen – as landlines are becoming increasingly rare *Cllr* Allen is going to enquire and update on the use of mobile phone numbers. Once confirmed *Cllr* Mclean is to provide an updated VETS list in News and Views and to review and adjust monthly.

**55/23: Litter Pick** *Cllr* Pope organized the first litter pick which was a success. Another litter pick will be arranged for spring next year. *Cllr* Mclean agreed that she would co-ordinate with *Cllr* Pope and the PC produce a short article in News and Views to highlight success and the date for the next event.

**56/23: Play Area** *Cllr* Allen had conducted the November inspection of the play area and reported that moss was growing on the MUGA. It was agreed this would be cleared in the spring. *Cllr* Seage noted that the playing field was underutilized at present. *Cllr* Seage suggested a number of options to be considered: allotments, rewilding and a community orchard. *Cllr* Seage will organize a leaflet drop to collect ideas and work with the Chair to draw up options. *Cllr* Allen advised that she has allotments, they require a water supply and are not that easy to maintain. There is another year on for the grass cutting contract before having to readdress the precept budget the following year. There is an invoice outstanding on the works done to replace the roof. *Cllr* Harris to assess before payment.

**57/23: Prosperity Fund** There have been no ideas as yet from the public since this was previously advertised under the last PC. *Cllr* Mclean to write a short article in News and Views with the help of *Cllr* Pope. The clerk will arrange for it to be posted on the website and noticeboards. Passing places had been discussed in previous meetings but the member of the public who works for Highways said they are not the panacea, expensive to build and maintain. It was resolved unanimously not to proceed with passing places as a project

**The Village Green Gelston** Clerk reported that this had been successfully registered with Land Registry and the documentation was in the post. *Cllr* Rann to put forward proposals.

58/23 **Flooding** Storm Babet (aka Storm Bidet) caused two houses in Brandon to be flooded and a series of drain blockages in Hough that resulted in excessive flooding of roads and ditches. The Chair expressed concern that whilst Fix my Street is the preferred route to addressing flooding, potholes etc that the PC should have a united approach. Furthermore, it prompted a wider discussion re: Community Response Cell/Emergency Plan. *Cllr* Allen agreed to look into this. *Cllr* Harris reported that *Cllr* Maughan had confirmed that a drainage survey was to be conducted in Hough on the Hill in January. A member of the public who works for Lincolnshire Highways, commented that a survey of Hough had been carried out a year ago and whilst there was work still to be done, there was an issue with parishioners filling in ditches in their gardens which had exacerbated the flooding. It was confirmed that the houses affected by flooding had reported the issue to LCC and the Flood and Drainage Board had met last week.

59/23: **Passing Places** This had been discussed under the Highways agenda. It was put to a vote on proceeding further with setting up passing places and unanimously decided against.

60/23: **Noticeboards** These have all been refurbished and a new key which operates all noticeboards has been handed to the clerk. The Chair thanked *Cllr* Rann for organizing this through her workforce at no cost to the PC.

61/23: **Finance**

- (a) Resolved to not gift a donation to public charities but offer fundraising if the opportunity arose in the future.
- (b) Resolved to refund Donna Lang's stationary costs at £46.92.
- (c) Resolved to refund Lesley Frances £107.85 for work done in October and a further £770.31 for work done up to 6<sup>th</sup> November and refund of Hough on the Hill's laptop. It was recorded that the laptop is to be listed on the asset register of PC.
- (d) VETS – *Cllr* Allen to check phone numbers before invoice paid.
- (e) Internal audit carried out and passed. Invoice paid.
- (f) Resolved to sign the bank reconciliations dated 30.9.23 and 31.10.23
- (g) Resolved to approve precept budget 2024/25.

62/23: **Hough on the Hill Relief in Need Charity** *Cllr* Allen had attended her first meeting as a trustee. Wanted to highlight the fact that there is potential for members of the public who have lived in the parish for two years to apply for funding. There are certain criteria and members of the public are encouraged to contact the Clerk in the first instance who will pass their details onto the Charity.

63/23: **Correspondence** None.

64/23: **Meeting Dates 2024** The Chair proposed the following meeting dates to be held on a Thursday 7/3/24, 9/5/24, 5/9/24 and 7/11/24 – all dates unanimously agreed.

65/23: **Date of next meeting** Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

Meeting closed at 8.45p.m.

Closed Session followed.