

MINUTES OF MEETING OF HARDINGTON MANDEVILLE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 20th
MAY 2025 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions – Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status & any disability); Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety and Human Rights.

Nancy Chapman, Parish Clerk

Present

Robin Carpenter (Chairman), Robert Halls, Jo Szmaj, Peter Higgins, Mark Pollock and Malcolm White.

In Attendance

Nancy Chapman, Mike Hewitson and 2 members of the public.

Before the meeting commenced there was an opportunity for the public to speak:

A parishioner commented that they were disappointed that St Mary's PCC have decided that they do not want to store the Village Bier in the Church. She was disappointed that they do not recognize that it is a community asset and has an historical value.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

2. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND SIGNING OF DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Robin Carpenter was elected as Chairman and signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

3. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

- a) Joanna Szmaj was elected as Vice Chairman.
- b) Robert Halls was elected as Village Hall Representative.
- c) No Highways Representative was elected.
- d) Robin Carpenter agreed to continue as Footpaths Representative.
- e) Malcolm White agreed to continue as Parish Environment Officer.

4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15th APRIL 2025 (Already Circulated)**

The minutes were approved as correct records of the meeting.

5. **COUNCILLOR VACANCY**

Currently one vacancy on the Parish Council.

6. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

7. **MATTERS OF REPORT**

None

8. **SOMERSET COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS (BY INVITATION)**

The Somerset Councillor's reports have been previously circulated. Cllr Hewitson commented that the main focus at the moment was the recent 6 month 'temporary closure' of Yeovil's Maternity Hospital. The Council view is that it must re-open and they are doing everything they can to support this. They are currently re-directing patients to Dorchester and Taunton hospitals.

The Ham Hill Visitor Centre is currently under construction. Chinnock Hollow now has a TRO that permanently closes the road, but this can still be reversed in the future if funding to re-open it becomes available.

9. PLANNING AND PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a) There were no planning applications received after publication of the agenda.

10. HIGHWAYS

Chris Turner reported that 3 new issues were in hand, they were 3 that need to be reviewed, 7 were rejected, and 3 marked as complete, but were not completed!

Chris feels that the Highways Reporting tool is inadequate as it doesn't let users know whether the Highway issues raised have been fixed or not and if they have been added to the list of outstanding future projects. Chris explained that he felt he had no real power to communicate the issues to Highways effectively.

Chris Turner, Cllr Carpenter and Cllr Patrick are meeting with Lee Norman to discuss Highways issues within Hardington on the 5th June.

11. FOOTPATHS

- a) **Footpath gate required to replace further remove stile (top of Y10/20).** The Rights of Way team agreed to put a new Pedestrian Gate to replace the missing stile.
- b) **Bridge on Y10/46** – The Rights of Way team stated that the landowner would not have to pay for a 'permissive path' if they wanted to divert the existing path. But if a permanent diversion was required then the landowner would need to apply and the costs are in the region of £2000. The Chairman agreed to contact the landowner.
- c) **Vehicle use of Moor Lane to North Lane Bridleway(Y10/50).** It was agreed that the Rights of Way team will put a 'No Unauthorized Vehicles' sign at the end of the bridleway on North Lane.
- d) **Deteriorating surface of the footpath from Moor Lane to the Village shop (Y10/51)** the Rights of Way team replied that this will need to be reported to Highways, as the Rights of Way team don't have the means to repair tarmac paths.

12. PARISH ISSUES

- a) Storage of the Village Bier – Rev'd Macaulay has written a response to the request from the PC stating that they would like the Bier to be stored in the church. In this letter it stated that St. Mary's Church (himself and the PCC) can't offer to accept ownership or responsibility for the Bier. Other options were discussed including making space for it in the Village Hall garage and possibly seeing if there was space with Somerset Heritage. It was also decided that it was worth trying to get a value for the Bier if possible.
- b) The Chairman has spoken to the owners of 'Beck Lodge' on Moor Lane and they have kindly agreed for a new dog poo bin to be stored near their hedge on Moor Lane (near the entrance to the footpath Y10/51). The Clerk agreed to provide prices for a dog poo bin for the next meeting.

13. COMMUNITY FIELD

- a) A resolution was passed to approve the Halycon price increase (for mowing the grass) from £1946.88 to £2005.20 (£167.10 monthly standing order). The Clerk has asked them to weed-kill the community field.

14. FINANCE

- a) As both Income and Expenditure are below the £25,000 thresholds, a resolution was passed to sign the 'Certificate of Exemption' from the limited assurance review under section 9 of the Local Audit Regulation (Smaller Authorities) 2015.
- b) There were no comments on the Annual Internal Audit Report.
- c) A resolution was passed to approve the Annual Governance Statement.
- d) A resolution was passed to approve the Accounting Statements.
- e) A resolution was passed to approve the Parish Council Insurance due 1st June 2025 £544.04 - (previous year £502.53)
- f) A final CIL payment of £775.10 (to be spent on Community Infrastructure (transport, flood defence, etc) within 5 years) has been received from Somerset Council for the 'Land North of Tall Elms' housing development.
- g) A resolution was passed to pay the following invoices:

- S Ogden - Ranger fees May £126.00 + No Parking Sign (£43.42 + VAT=£52.10)	£178.10
- VHC - Annual Wifi connection (11 x £25.99) for Village Hall	£285.89
- N Chapman – Reimbursement for 2 x 3m x 3m Gazebo (£856.64 +VAT £171.34)	£1027.98
- Richard Keylock Accountancy - Internal audit (£85.00 + VAT £17.00)	£102.00

15. PARISH RANGER SCHEME

- a) Stewart tasks for this month was mainly strimming. Stewart has informed the PC that he will be moving sometime in the next year and that we may want to think about replacing him as Ranger. Stewart has placed the 'No Parking' sign on the Notice Board post (opposite the Mandeville Arms). It was decided that this was quite noticeable and is not going to upset anyone there. He has highlighted that the Wooden top over the Village Pump, has become rotted and could do with replacing. The Clerk agreed to get quotes for this. Stewart also noted that he fell down a manhole by the main Hardington Signpost (Primrose Hill). Cllr White commented that the manhole was for stopcock for one of his fields and agreed to check it was not dangerous now.
- b) The following footpaths require strimming; Overgrown junctions, Penn Lane to Broadstone Lane Footpath (Y10/20), Broadstone to Rectory Lane Footpath (Y10/19) and also Moor Lane to North Lane Footpath (Y10/46).

16. CORRESPONDENCE

St Mary's Church have sent a letter to the Parish Council thanking them for the £300 donation towards the upkeep of the graveyard.

17. VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE UPDATE

The VHC raised £112 from the April coffee morning. The last film night raised £179. The next film is 'conclave' to be show on the 22th May. The '100 club' tickets have now been sold. A new fridge and a toaster have been purchased from the £200 donation form Leonardos.

18. MATTERS OF REPORT & ITEMS OR NEXT MEETING

Chairman: None.

Councillors: None.

Clerk: None.

19. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING & CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 9.00pm. The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, 17th June at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.