

MINUTES OF MEETING OF HARDINGTON MANDEVILLE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY
19th NOVEMBER 2024 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), Joanna Szmaj, Robert Halls, Mark Pollock, Richard Beatson and Peter Higgins.

In Attendance

Nancy Chapman and three members of the public.

Before the meeting commenced there was an opportunity for the public to speak:
No items were brought for discussion.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Malcolm White.

2. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15th OCTOBER 2024 (Already Circulated)**

The minutes were approved as correct records of the meeting.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

4. **MATTERS OF REPORT**

None.

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

The Somerset Councillor's reports have been previously circulated.

6. **PLANNING AND PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a) Planning applications received:

- App No: 24/02285/REM Reserved Matters Application for approval of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of planning consent 23/02620/OUT; Outline application for a proposed dwelling, all matters reserved. Location: Land North of Peach Tree Cottage, North Lane. Hardington Mandeville. A resolution was passed to support the proposal.

b) The Pendomer 'Wetland project, the rear extension to Bridehay, Bishops Lane and also the Orchard Cottage proposals have all been approved.

c) Cllr Carpenter asked if there was any further update from the planning department regarding the person residing in a mobile home at Holtens. The clerk agreed to contact planning enforcement to chase this up.

7. **HIGHWAYS**

a) Chris Turner has kindly agreed to take on the role of PC Highways Representative! While Somerset Council have a tool available to report highways issue (see <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/report-a-problem-on-the-road/>), please also feel free to contact Chris if necessary (email: Highways@hardington.net).

b) Cllr Carpenter reported that numerous parishioners have been complaining about the state of the roads following the maize harvest. The area from hill end to the A30 is very bad, as is the ridge and North Lane. This has become an annual regular complaint at this time of year. It was suggested that perhaps farmers could use a road sweeper to improve it, at the earliest possible opportunity. It was agreed that the clerk should write to the land-owners asking if more could be done to rectify this in future years.

8. FOOTPATHS

- a) The Somerset County footpath representative has confirmed that he has landowner's permission for the 3 stiles on path Y10/20 and financial authorization. He is now waiting for his contractor to come available to fit them. Cllr Carpenter reported that the local Somerset footpath officer has been in touch stating that footpath funding will face budget cuts soon, and he stated that we should put in requests for footpath gates asap while they are available. Following discussion, it was agreed that we should ask for as many footpath gates as possible to replace stiles as these may not be funded in future years!
- b) Cllr Carpenter as asked the footpath officer to consider a footpath diversion on the bridge at Y10/45. The footpath starts on the south side of Chinnock brook, then goes over the bridge to the north side for 30 metres, before returning to the south side again! It would make more sense for the footpath to stay on the south-side and Cllr Carpenter has asked them to look into this.

9. PARISH ISSUES

- a) The Hardington marsh notice board has recently collapsed. The clerk reported that it is never really used and difficult to see given the overgrowth around it (and with social communication it is no longer necessary as before). It was agreed to put a notice in the messenger proposing that the notice board should be removed, unless any parishioners would like to oppose this.
- b) Somerset Rivers Authority have indicated that they are running a small grants scheme ('Community Flood Action Fund.), for local flood risk reduction (grants for between £3K and £20K available with a total fund of £200K). Further information will be sent out on December 10th. It was agreed this fund might be useful to help prevent Chinnock Brook floods around the footpath from North Lane to moor lane, possibly by re-enforcing the rivers banks. Cllr Higgins agreed to look into this.

10. COMMUNITY FIELD

- a) Kompan have now repaired the 'splitting' activity trail stepping stone.

11. FINANCE

- a) The new Lloyds treasurers account is being changed to a community account which now incurs fees of £4.25 a month and various charges for cheques and cash deposits. The clerk was intended to close the Nat West accounts, but believes it may be useful having a higher interest account (the Nat West instant access business reserve is currently 1.45%). The Clerk has agreed to see what alternative high interest accounts that Lloyds bank may have available for the parish council.
- b) The first draft of the budget plan for 2025-2026 was discussed in some detail. It was agreed that the VHC contribution should increase from £5500 to £6200. The PC insurance, the cost for emptying PC bins and a further allowance for potential highways work should also increase. It was agreed to increase the precept from £16,000 to £17,500. The Clerk agreed to update the budget plan and re-circulate to the councilors for comment, prior to it being approved at January's meeting.
- c) A resolution was approved to re-imburse the VHC for the VHC insurance (£1604.24).

d) A resolution was passed to pay the following invoice:

- S Ogden - Ranger fees November

£196.00

12. **PARISH RANGER SCHEME**

a) The Ranger has strimmed, unblocked several drains and also cleared areas of footpath 10/45.

b) The ranger has reported that he intends to continue clearing around the church, clearing drains where needed and possibly the final strim cut for the year.

13. **CORRESPONDENCE**

a) None

14. **VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE UPDATE**

£270 was raised from the last coffee morning on 26th October. The next one is on the 30th November. They received a donation of £140 from the Firework night. The Parish Council thanked Neil Robinson, Martin Hooper and the rest of the team for putting on another successful firework night.

15. **MATTERS OF REPORT & ITEMS OR NEXT MEETING**

Chairman: None.

Councilors: It was agreed that the Chairman should speak to the owner of Manor Farm to discuss the possibility of purchasing the area of land adjacent to the Village Hall for use for Village hall parking.

Clerk: None.

16. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING & CLOSURE**

The meeting closed at 8:49pm. There will be no being in December. The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, 21st December at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.