

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY 16 SEPTEMBER, Heckfield Village Hall, 7.30pm

Parish Councillors Keith Alderman (Chairman), Guy Chessell, Jennifer Roberts;
Clerk Susan Turner; Guests County Councillor Tim Davies

2024.

72

WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Apologies Andy Piercy, Ward Cllr Anne Crampton.

73

PUBLIC SESSION No members of the public present.

74

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS meeting of 19 August, agreed and signed.

75

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST in items on the Agenda, none.

76

REPORTS TO MEETING *County Cllr Tim Davies' report*

.1

HCC finances Next financial year 2025/26 is ok; beyond that looking at potential for a Section 114 ('bankruptcy') notice. 'If Government hadn't capped Council Tax rises, wouldn't have the problem.'

Issuing a S114 Notice isn't a panacea – and local authorities can't go 'bankrupt' as such – still need to solve the problems. See **APPENDIX I notes on S114 Notices**. Possibilities are to cut services as County is doing, look at assets, or an influx of funds from Government which unlikely as so many in the same boat. Sooner or later will look at Council Tax.

.2

Police

i

Yateley Police Station is due to re-open to the public in November. Hart North FB page (02 September) posted that refurbishment has begun on the front counter area. Opening hours not yet known.

ii

PACT meetings and request for these to be re-started, included in email to Donna Jones. Attended a meeting (11 Sept) with Yateley Town Council. This is 'town' not 'rural' but the same police. PCC advice was to speak to District Commander, will find out who this is.

.3

A30 Breach in the sewer pipe beyond the Crooked Billet towards Hartley Wintney. Thames Water fixed, put camera down and found more breaches – put in a temporary overland sewer, reportedly now all working.

77

HOUND GREEN

.1

Phone box update

AGREED Phone box looks excellent, glazed, gloss coated, received many good comments.

TO RECORD Thanks to volunteers.

AGREED Galvanised steel cabinet required for electrics. Action AP, GC to source.

.2

Green maintenance

- Wildflower areas – cutting date tbc. The blue scabius is flowering well, and flowers into October. To monitor for an October cut.
- Coppiced Goat Willow and area by phone box to be cut back late winter (Feb time).

.3

Pond

Hart Countryside grants scheme, closing date 31 October, total eight grants available,

- up to £1K (five); £5K (one) and £10K (two).

www.hart.gov.uk/countryside-and-leisure/countryside-grants-scheme

Criteria for assessing applications: Biodiversity enhancements / health and wellbeing benefits (depending on aim of project) 20%; Value for money 30%; Educational benefit 10%, Method 30%, Sustainability 10%.

AGREED To engage the school (Whitewater) Action JR, KA.

To draw up a plan for the pond project (plus site visit) ST, KA.

.4

Glebe Wood jobs list

- i. To cut back brambles encroaching on paths and track (LM).

For signature (p1 of 3)

- ii Winter tasks for LM or for volunteers / working party
 - Remove the small dead tree propped up across the circular path
 - Remove the stump in circular pathway (houses side) near entrance
 - Lift the Blackthorn arch
 - Take out dead / dying Ash trees.

78 PARISH AND HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE

.1 Lengthsman tasks – awaiting dates.

- 1 Glebe Wood see 77.5 above.
- 2 Red Hill / Plough Lane.
 - Cut /strim/ tidy vicinity of Red Hill / B3301 junction - incl hard standing opposite bus shelter
 - Strim verges adjacent to bus shelter. (Noting the triangle of land behind the bus shelter belongs to Hatch Farm.)
 - Cut undergrowth, overgrowth back from pavement, corner of Plough Lane / B3011 junction.
 - Strim around Plough Lane Village Gateways.
- 3 Bus shelter maintenance check

.2 Magnolia tree by memorial bus shelter, secured by post and two straps (Wed 21 Aug).

.3 Manure stored on field (by Plough Lane) in process of being removed.

TO NOTE Guidance see www.gov.uk/guidance/storing-organic-manures-in-nitrate-vulnerable-zones

- 'Locating and constructing temporary field heaps. You must:
- make sure your field heap is at least 10 metres from any surface water (such as a river, pond or ditch) or land drain, or 30 metres if the land slopes at 12 degrees or more
 - make sure the location of the field heap is not liable to being waterlogged or flooded
 - locate field heaps at least 50 metres from a spring well or borehole
 - move the field heap at least every 12 months
 - leave a two-year gap before returning to the same site
 - keep a record of the sites used for field heaps and the dates of use.'

79 PLANNING

.1 Parish Planning Applications **APPENDIX II**

Application for discussion

[24/01868/FODI](#) (02 Aug 2024) Blue House Farm, Bottle Lane. Diversion of footpath in relation to development granted planning permission under 22/03030/FUL

The application map **APPENDIX III** indicates that the proposed route of FP10 will continue to join Bottle Lane via the Blue House Farm driveway entrance, and then is diverted to a gravel path starting immediately beside the driveway. The Parish Council is content with this solution. But noting the description just says 'a gravelled path sited to the west of the existing driveway', which isn't very specific; the Parish Council was opposed to the previous proposal which showed the path leaving Bottle Lane some distance to the west of the driveway and so requiring an additional ditch crossing and entrance point through the hedge. Action: ST to respond accordingly.

.2 NPPF consultation and new Standard Method housing figures

MHLG's NPPF Consultation to 11.45pm on 24 September 2024.

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system

Headline is the new Standard Method calculation. Previous Government's Standard Housing Assessment Method was based on demographics and an 'affordability ratio'.

The New Government's Standard Method is based on current housing stock and a stronger affordability uplift; this (on one calculation) gives Hart a proposed allocation of 734 (homes per annum).

Proposed SM figure (per 1,000)	17
Proposed SM figure	734
Current SM figure	279
Current Local Plan figure	432
Average delivery (3-year average)	580

Hart's current Local Plan was adopted 30 April 2020, thus the Five-year review is due Spring next year and will need to account for new Standard Method housing figures as per the outcome of the Consultation.

For signature (p2 of 3)

Parish Council response to the consultation to include some positive comment but, in particular, opposition to:

(Q6) Strengthening the presumption in favour of development

(Q7) reintroducing a mandatory five year housing land supply

(Q9) reintroducing the 5% buffer

(Q16-19) the concept and application of an affordability uplift

(Q82) removing the footnote text:

'The availability of agricultural land used for food production should be considered, alongside other policies in this Framework, when deciding what sites are most appropriate for development'

(Q103) transitional arrangements preventing Regulation 18 and most Regulation 19 Plans proceeding to examination under the current (Dec 2023) NPPF and housing numbers.

80 REMEMBRANCE

Wreath and poppies

Reference the single use plastic disc in the traditional RBL 'Poppy Appeal' wreath.

AGREED To seek a solution with less plastic and to order an additional 50 lamp post poppies. Action ST.

81 FINANCE 2024/25

.1 Accounts to date – **APPENDIX IV** Bank reconciliation @ 16 Sept = £25,878.01

Payments Since last meeting of 19 Aug

19	PGGM 2765 – Righting Magnolia	£204.00
20	Clerk – Salary August	£432.60
21	PGGM 2771 – Maintenance August	£351.30
22	Heckfield Village Hall 06 – Meeting venue August	£32.00

.2 Budget update **APPENDIX V**. To compile a three-year-plus budget showing a path to rebuilding allocated reserves for five/seven-year cycle of tree works on Hound Green. Action ST.

.3 Grant funding applications

- Cllr Tim Davies' devolved budget 2024/25 – ref phone box defibrillator see 77.2
- Hart Countryside Grants scheme – re Hound Green pond see 77.4.

82 FURTHER REPORTS AND UPDATES

.1 Hazeley Heath RSPB awaiting the outcome of funding review and proposed cuts.

.2 Plough Lane – horse box Removed all Summer but returned on 12 September.

.3 Invitation to Hart Chairman to Parish Council meeting; invitation declined (10 Sept). 'After careful consideration, the Chairman suggests that your invitation be extended to the Leader of the Council instead. The Leader would be better placed to provide a briefing on any issues you may have.'

Noting the invitation had been in response to Hart Chairman's introductory email to Parish Council Chairman and was for reasons of good communication only.

83 NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

7.30pm Heckfield Village Hall – 21 October, 18 November

Meeting close with thanks to all

For signature (p3 of 3) Date

APPENDIX I IMPLICATIONS OF A SECTION 114 NOTICE

www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/explainer/local-authority-section-114-notice

A S114 notice is a local authority equivalent of 'bankruptcy' – but Local Authorities can't go 'bankrupt' as such. A S114 notice from the Finance Officer indicates that expenditure is to become 'unlawful' as per the Local Government Finance Act 1988 – most likely because expenditure is expected to exceed available income for a particular financial year.

Once a section 114 notice is issued, the authority may not incur new spending unless the Finance Officer permits it – and must find a way to balance the budget while maintaining statutory services and honouring existing contracts.

Options are cuts to non-statutory services – as per the recent 'Future Services Provision' consultation; also reallocating budgets. Capital and resource budgets are supposed to remain separate – but Government can grant a 'capitalisation direction' to allow a local authority to use its existing capital budgets to cover day-to-day spending. This is often the response to a section 114 notice.

'Capitalisation directions' also allow councils to use assets sales, usually to be returned to their capital budgets, or borrow more to fund day-to-day costs. Neither of these are sustainable approaches to funding local authority services. Neither approach solves the underlying problems of insufficient funding and rising demand for councils' services.

Government has allowed some local authorities that have issued section 114 notices the power to raise council tax above the 5% limit. In 2023/24, the government allowed Croydon to raise its rates to 15%, and Thurrock and Slough to 10%.

If Government chose to, it could provide local authorities with funding to cover their in-year deficits or to repay some of their loans. But this is rare. Government can also intervene in the local authority management. (This can happen without a section 114, but is a common outcome of a notice.)

APPENDIX II PLANNING UPDATE 16 SEPT – MATTINGLEY**APPLICATIONS NEW SINCE LAST MEETING**

24/01868/FODI (02 Aug 2024) Blue House Farm, Bottle Lane. Diversion of footpath in relation to development granted planning permission under 22/03030/FUL

APPLICATIONS PENDING RECENTLY DECIDED

24/01562/AMCON (**Pending**, Validated 07 Aug 2024) Hatts Cottage, Hazeley Heath. Variation of Condition 2 (approved plans) attached to planning permission 23/01108/FUL dated 20/09/2023. To change the position of the approved garage/annex building and remove chimney from stairs hall in main house. (No objections received from Ecology and HCCCS).

24/01404/PREAPP (**Pending**, Validated 11 Jul 2024) White Cottage, Hazeley Lea. Two storey side extension along with repairs to listed building.

23/02194/FUL (**Pending**, Validated 19 Oct 2023) The Barns, Aldermoor Farm. Retention of office building and use of former office building as a beauty studio.

APPENDIX III FP-10-BLUE HOUSE FARM FOOTPATH

SECTION 4 (PART B) - DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED HIGHWAY					
Section of Highway	Status	Description	Proposed Width	Proposed Limitations & Structures	Name and Address of each Owner/ Occupier/ Lessee and Rights of Statutory Undertakers
The proposed route would replace the existing highway, and could retain the existing identifier Footpath 154/10/1	Footpath	<p>From Bottle Lane (U.236) - grid ref SU 7253 5774 - north-westwards on gravelled footpath surface (sited to the west of the existing driveway).</p> <p>Then west at grid ref SU 7249 5783 along existing track.</p> <p>Then north-north-west at grid ref SU 7242 5781 along field edge to junction with footpath Mattingley 11 (154/11/2) at grid ref 7238 5798.</p>	3 metres	None	<p>The owner of Blue House Farm, Bottle Lane, Mattingley, Hook, Hampshire RG27 8LJ is the sole owner of the land crossed by the proposed footpath.</p> <p>There are no occupiers or lessees.</p>

Proposed Footpath Diversion Plan - Blue House Farm



LEGEND

Public Footpath

Footpath to be Extinguished

Footpath to be Added

£7,331.66

APPENDIX V: BUDGET, LATEST ESTIMATE

MPC YEAR END COMPARISON			2024/25 TO DATE	2024/25 LATEST - AUG 24	2024/25 BUDGET - MAR 24
AT 16/09/2024	2022/23 YE	2023/24 YE			
EXPENDITURE					
CLERK'S SALARY	£4,758.60	£5,623.80	£2,163.00	£5,191.20	£5,191.20
CLERK'S ALLOWANCE	£324.00	£324.00		£324.00	£324.00
CHAIRMAN'S EXPENSES				£100.00	£100.00
TRAINING					
FINANCE / GOVERNANCE	£1,393.55	£1,708.01	£1,438.14	£1,750.00	£1,750.00
PRINT / PUBLISH / DESIGN	£100.00				
COMMUNITY / DONATIONS	£25.00	£225.00	£50.00	£500.00	£500.00
HOUND GREEN -contract	£3,040.08	£3,252.72	£1,463.75	£3,512.94	£3,512.94
HOUND GREEN other	£180.00	£180.00		£500.00	£500.00
MAINTENANCE (OTHER)	£562.50		£170.00	£500.00	£500.00
GLEBE WOOD		£500.00		£500.00	£500.00
Projects					
HOUND GREEN TREES	£8,574.08			£1,000.00	£1,000.00
HOUND GREEN POND					
Jubilee	£864.47				
Benches	£1,057.38				
Phone Box	£1,378.23	£169.81	£1,064.35	£1,600.00	£1,600.00
Defibrillators		£2,993.69			
Plough Lane gateways		£2,975.00	£369.00	£3,500.00	£3,500.00
Shoulder Mutton					
Footbridge - HG					
Access/ROW					
SID/SLR					
Dragons Teeth - HG					
Track - HG					
Mapboards				£1,000.00	
Bins					
Goal posts & installation					
VAT	£2,469.60	£1,423.60	£613.42	£613.42	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£24,727.49	£19,375.63	£7,331.66	£20,591.56	£18,978.14
Expenditure less projects	£12,853.33	£13,237.13		£14,491.56	£12,878.14
Expend less projects, less VAT	£10,383.73	£11,813.53		£13,878.14	£12,878.14
INCOME					
PRECEPT	£12,000.00	£12,600.00	£14,743.00	£14,743.00	£14,743.00
County Cllr Dev budget	£2,105.66	£1,000.00		£1,000.00	
Vat refund		£3,412.20	£1,423.60	£1,423.60	
Bank interest	£161.99	£255.16	£196.11	£200.00	£200.00
TOTAL INCOME	£14,267.65	£17,267.36	£16,362.71	£17,366.60	£14,943.00
Surplus // Deficit	£10,459.84	£2,108.27	£9,031.05	£3,224.96	£4,035.14
Balance	£18,955.23	£16,846.96	£25,878.01	£13,622.00	£12,811.82