

# **HITTISLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 in the village hall**

Present: Cllrs Mark Brown, Gill Fisher, Libby Turrell (chair), Cathy Wetherden; Beryl Watson;  
MDDCllr Derek Coren;

1. Apologies: Ruth Curtis (clerk), Cllr Dack; DCCLr Cllr Frank Letch.  
The absence of Cllr Brian Howell was sorely felt and a minute's silence was observed for private reflection.
2. Declarations of interest – Cllrs Brown, Turrell and Watson declared an interest in the development on Parsonage Lane as neighbouring properties (item 8)
3. Minutes of the last meeting 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022 were approved and signed as a correct record.
4. Matters Arising
  - 4.1 Code of Conduct Review – councillors reviewed the current Code of Conduct, adopted July 2012, and the more recent 2019 version. The only reason for leaving a meeting as stated in the 2012 version is if a councillor has a financial interest in the matter under discussion. This code has been adhered to at all times. However, having read the 2019 version, councillors expressed a preference for this later version as it is more detailed and set out more clearly. It also includes a section clarifying conduct in relation to Gifts and Hospitality. It was resolved to adopt the 2019 version of the Code of Conduct. The clerk to write to the parishioner who has queried this matter to thank them for their interest and enclosing a copy of the Code of Conduct.
  - 4.2 Wildlife Warden Scheme update – Cllr Watson reported that they are ready to start the soil testing at eight sites in March. Cllr Fisher has signed up to the Citizen Science Investigations project with Westcountry Rivers Trust and will be monitoring the stream at Hittisleigh Mill on a monthly basis.
  - 4.3 Crediton Policing Patrol parish council ride-along – Cllr Watson reported that this has been postponed until the end of February.
  - 4.4 Landmark Tree - Cllr Brown reported that a Hornbeam tree has been chosen and that the clerk is progressing this. It was suggested we could plant a few more trees, perhaps three, and this would be a very fitting memorial to Cllr Brian Howell. To discuss further at the next meeting.
  - 4.5 Budget 2023-4 – it was felt that the £135 annual support cost for the defibrillator could be met by the VAT reclaim for the defibrillator purchase (still to be received) whereas the £100 annual cost for the Volunteer Emergency Telephone System (VETS) should be met by the Parish Council. It was resolved to approve the budget with the amendment of the item 'defibrillator annual fee £50' to 'VETS annual fee £100'.
  - 4.6 Precept 2023-24 - following review of the budget and further discussion, it was resolved to request a precept of £2,150.
5. Highways
  - 5.1 West Studham flooding - Hittisleigh's road warden (and at least one nearby resident) continue to try and keep the road clear of mud and silt but there has been no assistance from Highways. Cllr Watson has called at West Studham several times but as yet has not made contact.
  - 5.2 Any new matters or updates - Cllr Brown continues to report local problems including the dreadful state of the lane heading to Cheriton Bishop just before it

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crosses over the A30, the six blocked drains outside Medlake Cottage and the fact that all the grit bins are empty. Everyone is asked to report all such problems online and to add their names to previously reported problems because it is felt that repeated reporting may increase the chance of some action.

6. District/County Councillor reports - MDDCllr Coren gave a fitting tribute to Cllr Brian Howell, 'Mr Hittisleigh', who has done so much for the community and helped so many people in countless ways. It is a great loss to this council, to the whole area and to Derek personally. Hittisleigh is the only place where MDDCllr Coren comes where he has a warmed cup for his tea – but that was Brian, a passionate man with a great heart who will be sorely missed. Our thoughts are with Carol and family.
7. Planning
  - 7.1 22/00505/MFUL Engineering works to create a level hardstanding for an agricultural building at Swallow Tree farm – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION response due 26<sup>th</sup> January - councillors agreed that this application has nothing to do with the agricultural building and everything to do with disposing of huge quantities of waste material and that a further letter of objection needs to be sent. Councillors to respond promptly to the draft response to be circulated following the meeting so the clerk can submit the final reply on time.
  - 7.2 Letter to MDDC re: communication on planning matters – to be discussed at the next meeting.
  - 7.3 Responses from Mel Stride – permitted development rights are being misused but this does not seem to have been understood by the recipients of our letters. Several councillors expressed a desire to meet with Mel Stride at one of his surgeries. Cllr Turrell to draft a further letter to Mel Stride and to send the draft to all councillors for their approval before submitting it.
8. Enforcement matters – councillors reviewed the response from the Enforcement Officer to the queries raised and noted the following:
  - Howards Copse NEW siting of caravan - the clerk to submit an online ENF form once the location has been identified.
  - Howards Copse GENERAL - MDDC say that they do not undertake the writing of general guidance. Cllr Turrell suggested councillors draft the guidance themselves and send it to MDDC for their validation before sending it to the owner occupiers. To discuss further at the next meeting.
  - Parsonage Lane mobile home - the mobile home has been on site for six months and it is understood that all services have been connected and the shed is not yet completed. MDDC confirmed that the siting of the mobile home is permitted while building operations are being carried out. The clerk to write to MDDC to ascertain what is considered a reasonable time frame for completing the building of the shed.
9. Correspondence
  - 9.1 For response
    - Mid Devon Mobility financial request – it was resolved to make a donation of £50
  - 9.2 For information – no comments on information circulated.
  - 9.3 New correspondence
    - Parish magazines - Cllr Watson was thanked for taking over the collection of the parish magazines from Chagford and organising their distribution. She has recruited a team of volunteers and produced a table showing 'who delivers where' so it should be straightforward to cover for any absentees.

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- Emergency Plan - Cllr Brown has produced a single sheet, 24hr Emergency Plan questionnaire to be delivered to every household placed inside the next parish magazine.
- Police Community Crime Prevention meeting - Cllr Turrell confirmed that Hittisleigh councillors will host a Police Community Crime Prevention session with our neighbourhood police team in the Village Hall on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February at 11:00 am.
- Exeter Community Green Energy is keen to facilitate a session in Hittisleigh with the emphasis on the practical measures that people can take up to make positive change. Cllr Turrell to arrange a date on a Saturday morning in April

**Next parish council meeting 7.30 pm Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023**