

**MINUTES OF HITCHAM ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 9TH MAY 2016 IN THE VILLAGE HALL COMMENCING AT 7.30PM**

Present: Allan Scott, Chairman; Pauline Squirrell; Wendy Crease; Paul Beedham; Brian Hubbard;
Rob Whiting; Giles Hill, Community Play Area Co-ordinator; Jenny Anthill, County Cllr
and Michael Creffield, Babergh District Cllr.

1.	Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman for the coming Year: Allan Scott was re-elected as Chairman for a further twelve months. Proposed: Wendy Crease. Seconded: Pauline Squirrell. All in favour. Pauline Squirrel was elected as Vice Chairman for the coming twelve months: Proposed: Brian Hubbard. Seconded: Paul Beedham. All in favour.
2.	Apologies for Absence: These had been received from Jim Morgan .
3.	Declaration of Pecuniary Interest: None was declared.
4.	Matters Arising from Meeting held on Monday 7th March 2016 a) Fen Lane Mast and Road Condition: Discussions on road repairs are still on-going, but as various telephone companies are still putting their antennae on the mast these will probably not be carried out until all work is completed. The road repairs will be an internal matter between the contractors. Bildeston has now got better coverage and there is now also coverage round Hitcham Church. b) VAS sign: Steve Merry, from Highways, had forwarded maps showing possible sites for the poles on which the VAS can be sited. The Councillors studied the maps and decided on a selection of possible sites which Mr Scott was asked to pass on to Mr Merry for his final decision on three of these sites. c) Affordable Housing; Mrs Squirrell reported that there does not appear to be any way forward with the proposed development at the rear of Causeway Estate. Highways have turned down the site due to lack of visibility splay. It also appears that the additional land that could possibly have been obtained for the development is owned by Babergh, not West Suffolk, so it would be up to the planning authority to talk to Babergh about possible possession. Cllr Creffield was asked to take the matter of this development up with Babergh. He was given a brief history of this long running situation and Mr Hill provided him with copies of previous correspondence and plans. d) Lost Post Box: Mr Whiting had again been in touch with Royal Mail on behalf of residents local to the White Horse, but was told they have no obligation to replace it. e) Noticeboard: The Clerk gave information on a suitable lockable board for Council consideration. It was also felt that the present noticeboards should be repaired, but not replaced as they had been gifted to the village.
5.	County Councillor's Report: Cllr Anthill reported on the following: a) Control of County Council: Following the recent Council by-elections the loss of Haverhill Cangle ward to UKIP meant the Conservatives no longer had control of Suffolk County Council. The Annual Council meeting is being held later this month when the opposition may use its majority to make changes. <p style="text-align: right;">cont....</p>

- b) Devolution: Due to Cambridgeshire County Council resisting the Government's instruction to join with Norfolk and Suffolk no deal is being struck for Suffolk at present.
- c) Education: Suffolk schools rated Good or Outstanding stood at 80% in April 2016. This is a 6% increase on ten months ago. This is 3% up on the national average over the same period.
- d) Primary Education: No children in Cosford Division have this year been turned down for their first place choice of school.
- e) Suffolk Household Waste Recycling Centres: Due to public demand, from 1st June 2016 opening hours are being changed to give users extended hours on Sundays, Bank Holidays and Thursdays during the summer months. However, they will all be closed on Wednesdays.
- f) Community Transport: Newly reorganised community transport services will start on 14th June 2016. Area launch events are being held. Hadleigh Town Hall is hosting one on 27th May. Cllr Anthill would be interested to hear from any resident dissatisfied with the new service. She will forward any comments on to the councillor who has special responsibility for this area.
- g) Fire Service Changes: Published final proposals are less radical than first thought. They involve maintaining the same number of fire stations across the county which means that the first fire engine to respond to 999 calls across Suffolk will not be directly affected by the changes. It will also provide additional support and resilience to on-call fire engine availability during weekdays.
- h) Hitcham: All has been relatively quiet this month.

6. District Councillor's Report:

- a) Cllr Creffield explained that although he was no longer on Babergh's Planning Committee he would still be able to assist with any problems.
- b) The Joint Venture between Babergh and West Suffolk are moving their offices to Needham Market.

7. Community Play Area:

Mr Hill is checking on the state of the hedges and grass.

8. Police Report:

- a) The Clerk had forwarded an email from PSCO Laura Mansell to the Councillors. This explained that there were no available officers to attend our meetings and that, due to redundancies, police reports were no longer being produced. There is, however, a link to a police web site which will eventually show up-to-date information on local criminal activity. The email also included a report from her Sergeant explaining the position in more detail. PSCO Mansell is meeting with all Parish Clerks in her area to discuss the current situation and is due to meet Mrs Neun on 20th June.
- b) Mr Scott stated that there was a need to look at a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme within the village as the level of policing is decreasing rapidly. Mrs Squirrell added that the Farm Watch Scheme worked well for the farming community.

9. Correspondence:

- a) An email has been received from Babergh Council on behalf of a resident living on the Causeway Estate asking whether the street sign could be amended to include the words 'cul de sac' in the hope it would deter lorries, vans, etc. from using the estate as a turning area. After discussion it was felt that a change of wording could encourage more people to use it as a 'turn round' facility. It was agreed to put the matter under review in order that further suggestions could be considered. The Clerk will reply to Babergh.

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10.	Planning Matters: There were none to discuss.																					
11.	<p>Accounts:</p> <p>a) The Council were provided with a copy of the BDO Accounts Review document for 2015/16 and after perusal approved Section 1(Governance) before going on to check and approve the accounting figures in Section 2 with the Balance Sheet and supporting papers provided by the RFO. Acceptance of the Annual Accounts Review Sections 1 and 2 was proposed by: Mrs Squirrell. Seconded by Mr Hubbard. All agreed. Mr Scott duly signed the Review of Accounts pages 1 and 2 where appropriate.</p> <p>The completed Annual Accounts Review, with necessary explanatory notes, needs to be returned to BDO by 29th June 2016. The month long period for the Exercise of Public Rights which allows residents to have sight of the Parish Council accounts must be advertised between the 6th June and 15th July.</p> <p>To comply with the Transparency Code the following must be published on the website before the 1st July: the 2015/6 Balance Sheet; a list of all expenses/income over £100 incurred during 21015/16; a list of Council members; a copy of the internal audit report (page 2 Annual Review); a copy of the governance report (page 1 Annual Review) and list of variances above or below 10% in expenditure/income between financial year 2014/15 and 2015/16 as required for the Annual Review. The RFO will ensure this is complied with.</p> <p>b) The RFO presented the account reports and an up-to-date budget forecast. As all cheques had been cleared the current balances stood as follows: Hitcham Parish Council account £15,690.13 (this figure includes the first half of this year's precept, £3,275, and a Transparency Fund refund of £525.03) Hitcham Community Area account £260.57</p> <p>c) The following payments were approved and cheques drawn accordingly from the Hitcham Parish Council account:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">SALC</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: right;">£6.73</td> <td style="width: 50%;">3 copies of 'Good Councillor Guide'</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Parking Shop</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£624.00</td> <td>Community Speedwatch road signs x 4 *</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Safety Suppy Co.</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£44.92</td> <td>Hi-vis jackets x 12 *</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mill House Media</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£60.00</td> <td>Annual website hosting fee</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mrs D Neun</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£300.00</td> <td>April-June 2016 Clerk's salary</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HMRC 120PW00311648.1703</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£75.00</td> <td>April-June 2016 Clerk's PAYE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SALC</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£301.29</td> <td>2016/17 subscription</td> </tr> </table>	SALC	£6.73	3 copies of 'Good Councillor Guide'	The Parking Shop	£624.00	Community Speedwatch road signs x 4 *	The Safety Suppy Co.	£44.92	Hi-vis jackets x 12 *	Mill House Media	£60.00	Annual website hosting fee	Mrs D Neun	£300.00	April-June 2016 Clerk's salary	HMRC 120PW00311648.1703	£75.00	April-June 2016 Clerk's PAYE	SALC	£301.29	2016/17 subscription
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12.	Questions to the Chair: a) The Clerk was asked to report a bank and verge collapse in the Battsford Road, passed Eastwood Farm going towards Battsford. to the Highways Department.																					
13.	Date of Next Meeting: This is arranged for Monday 4 th July 2016 in the Village Hall commencing at 7.30pm As there was no further business the meeting closed at 21.05.																					