

LAMPOR AND HANGING HOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a MEETING of the PARISH COUNCIL

Wednesday 17 November 2021 at 7 pm
in the Old Laundry, Lamport Hall, Northamptonshire

1. ATTENDANCE, apologies and Declarations of Interest.

Present: Cllrs B. Cox, C. Dugmore, J. Farr (in the Chair), D. Gasson, R. Flavell-While, F. Allbury (Parish Clerk)

Apologies for absence: Cllrs C. Harris, P. May and Cllr K. Parker (WNC)

In attendance: Mr. Charles Blake, applicant of WNC/2021/0673

Declarations of interest: none

2 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 15 September 2021 were approved and signed by the Vice Chair.

3 MATTERS arising from the MINUTES

3.1 Grit Bins, Hanging Houghton and Lamport Triangle

Lamport Hall has kindly agreed to clear out the bin on the Lamport triangle and refill it. WNC attended to the bin in Hanging Houghton but didn't replace it as agreed. It was emptied of water and filled. The Clerk will contact them again advising that the bin is not fit for purpose and will fill with water again as soon as it rains.

3.2 White Lines, Manor Road, Hanging Houghton

WNC have advised that white lines are not provided on roads below 5 metres wide.

3.3 Road signage, Hanging Houghton

Give Way sign has been restored and safer crossing signage installed on Brampton Valley Way. No work will be undertaken on the Dead End sign.

3.4 Litter picking sticks

The Clerk purchased 6 sticks which were handed to Cllr Dugmore for storage with the hi viz jackets.

3.5 Village grass cutting 2021 season

Countrywide Grounds Maintenance were delighted that the contract has been renewed. The Clerk based the new contract on a maximum of 2 cuts per month April – September (£170 per cut)

4 HIGHWAYS

4.1 Footpath: Manor Road/Brixworth:

WNC have confirmed that this work will be undertaken within the next three months (from the date of their response – 22 October 2021).

4.2 Speeding and traffic issues: Lamport High Street

Mark Stocker has advised that following an incident with his own vehicle, temporary ANPR speed signage had been installed for a few weeks, but has now been removed. He said that now was the time to apply for a grant to cover the cost of permanent speed signage. The Clerk said that Mark Herod has appointed a member of his staff to liaise with Mark Stocker in order to form a small working party to make urgent progress with this matter. The Clerk will co-ordinate the project.

4.3 Hanging Houghton village sign.

Cllr Gasson said that whichever way the work was done the cost would be between £300 and £400. In view of the fact that the expenditure had not been budgeted for, it was agreed to defer making a decision until the new financial year in April 2022.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A parishioner reported a noise nuisance caused by barking dogs. Councillors said that there was nothing that could be done by the Parish Council. The Clerk will investigate referring the parishioner who made the complaint to the correct WNC department.

6. PLANNING

6.1 Mercedes Avenue Appeal. No further update available.

6.2 WNC/2021/0594: Grooms Cottage, Manor Road, Hanging Houghton
Construction of extension to outbuilding.

This planning application was dealt with by email. No objections were raised, and the Clerk advised WNC Planning accordingly.

6.3 WNC/2021/0673: Blueberry Lodge, Harborough Road, Maidwell
Construction of tennis court and associated fence enclosure.

The applicant for this planning application attended the meeting to give background and further information with regard to the proposed installation of a tennis court including a planting scheme to obscure the view. It was confirmed that the court would not be floodlit. The applicant then left the meeting. Following a discussion Councillors raised no objections. The Clerk would advise WNC Planning accordingly.

6.4 Cost of plans for future planning applications.

The Clerk has been advised that copy plans will no longer be provided free of charge and would cost £6.90 including VAT per page in future. A decision on requesting plans for future applications would be decided based on the complexity of each application.

7 FINANCE

7.1 Balance at Bank: accounts and budget for the current financial year circulated by email.

Balances at bank 17 November 2021: current account £3,983.84 and £1,728.88 in reserve account. When payments totalling £1,033.90 are made at this meeting the true total balance will be £4,678.82. £603.80 of the credit balance is allocated for maintenance of the telephone box and the defibrillator.

7.2 Items for payment to be made by bank transfer:

West Northants Council: election expenses (paid 4.10.2021)	£90.00
F.R. Allbury: salary and expenses	£519.10
HMRC: Clerk's PAYE	£94.80
Countrywide Grounds Maintenance Ltd:	£384.00
Village grass cutting September/October	
CPRE, annual membership fee	£36.00

Cllr Cox proposed that the payments should be made, seconded by Cllr Dugmore. The Vice Chairman will access the Bank account online after the meeting to verify that the payments have been made in accordance with those listed in the minutes.

7.3 Proposed Budget 1.4.2022 – 31.3.2023

The Clerk referred to the document circulated with the agenda. Explanatory notes on each item had also been provided, plus anticipated end of year balances with the current precept. Councillors noted that if all the items shown on the budget were spent, financial reserves would be severely depleted and it was imperative to ensure that the Parish Council held sufficient funds in the bank accounts to cover unexpected costs. The draft budget was unanimously approved as drawn. Proposed Cllr Cox, seconded Cllr Dugmore.

7.4 Precept requirement 1.4.2021 – 31.3.2023

Councillors agreed that in view of ever increasing costs and the fact that the precept had been held at its current level for three years, an increase of £1,500 should be requested, taking the total precept 1.4.2022 – 31.3.2023 to £7,300. It was also agreed that in future the precept would rise in line with the rate of inflation rather than needing a large increase every few years.

The Clerk will draft an open letter to all parishioners outlining the reasons for the Council's decision, attaching a copy of the draft budget so that they could see where the precept was spent, and this will be circulated via the community contact list, on the website and notice boards. Proposed Cllr Cox, seconded Cllr Dugmore. Carried unanimously.

8. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH/CRIME

The Clerk read out an update from Peter Dugmore Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator. Peter said that everything was thankfully quiet at present, and he hoped to keep parishioners updated through the dedicated Facebook pages and Twitter Account. He was considering another newsletter to coincide with Christmas planning.

9 NCALC TRAINING POLICY

NCALC are encouraging all parish councils to ensure they had a Training Policy for Councillors. The Clerk requested that the Parish Council adopt this policy as drawn. Unanimously agreed.

10 DEFIBRILLATOR

After investigation, it had been determined that the battery does not need replacing at the moment. The Clerk has included the cost of £240 for a new battery in the budget for next year. The re-training programme deferred from earlier in the year will be discussed again at the January Parish Council meeting.

11 ACRE: GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEME

The Clerk had circulated a questionnaire template with the agenda for Cllr Dugmore. Cllr Dugmore confirmed that this was not a Parish Council initiative but a rural community one which needed a co-ordinator and a few volunteers to work. It was agreed that she would edit the draft questionnaire received from ACRE to suit the needs of the parish, and that copies would be made available from the telephone box in Manor Road. Parishioners would then be encouraged to collect a questionnaire to fill in from the box, rather than delivering them by hand to every household. Cllr Dugmore will speak to Cllr May about advertising this upon his return from holiday.

12. CORRESPONDENCE

12.1 WNC Directory of Services: circulated by email

The Clerk said that this information was for Parish Council use and not the general public.

12.2 The Clerk said that she now receives almost daily updates from WNC on the weather that may affect road conditions and would circulate updates that contain information relevant to the parish.

13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

19 January 2022 at 7.00 pm in The Old Laundry, Lamport, Northamptonshire.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 8.00 pm.

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Date:.....2022