

Horrabridge Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 13th February 2018 in the Village Hall

Present: Cllr P Beard (Chair), Cllr S Roche (Vice Chair), Cllr A Moorhead,
Cllr E Hemsil, Cllr A Collins, Cllr T Lear, Cllr A Minns, J Temple (minutes)

In attendance: 17 members of the public

1. Apologies

Cllr D Keane, Cllr D Cloke, Clerk A Taylor

2. Public Question Time

The Treasurer of the Twinning Committee requested invoices for their use of the hall from October and November 2017

The Council was thanked for the new gritter after the recent icy weather

There were several comments and questions regarding the recent External Auditors report which were dealt with as an agenda item. However, it was confirmed that the Annual Return was not approved in a full Council meeting and that at present, in the absence of the Clerk, there is not an alternative Responsible Financial Officer.

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Moorhead declared an interest relating to an item in the Part 2 meeting

4. Ratification of Minutes

Due to the ongoing sickness absence of the Clerk it was not possible to ratify the minutes of the January Council meeting. The minutes were taken by the Clerk, but she was taken ill before she had an opportunity to prepare them. The minutes were therefore prepared in collaboration by Councillors. Original notes are to be collected from the Clerk as soon as practically possible and the vote was therefore postponed. Discussion followed regarding the protocol for missing minutes which is to be referred to DALC for advice.

5. External Audit Statement

The following statement was read out by Cllr Hemsil:

Following an External Audit carried out by Grant Thornton it has been brought to the attention of the Finance and General Administration Committee that certain procedures have not been followed by the Council.

Please be assured that these failings will be addressed and corrected.

We are not aware of any financial failings. An Internal Audit was carried out in August 2017 and nothing was highlighted that gave the Council any concerns in this area.

The report by Grant Thornton is available on our website and posted on our notice boards. Meanwhile, an internal investigation will be conducted to determine where the failings lie.

6. Matters arising from January's minutes

- a) Cllr Hemsil confirmed that the proposed chain link fence is not permitted for Health and Safety reasons. The matter has been passed to Devon County Council as it is now the responsibility of the Highways Agency
- b) Storage of road salt – no progress to report

7. Police Report

No Police Report received.

8. Planning

- a) 0004/18 Land South East of The Manor, Plymouth Road. Construction of dwelling – OPP approved
- b) Leaping Salmon granted PP with a few conditions
- c) TP018/0007 To raise the crown of the cedar at the eastern end of the church graveyard – supported
- d) 0045/18 12.5m phone mast - objected

9. Finance

- a) Cllr Hemsil presented his finance report from the last Finance and General Administration sub-committee as follows:
 - Reconciliations for the 2nd and 3rd quarter were not available for signing off
 - There was discussion regarding the current burial charges which may need to be increased in line with other Parish Councils
 - It was agreed to recommend a suspension of allotment charges for a period of six months for any inconvenience caused during the building works. Issue date of last invoices to be confirmed.
- b) Purchase of gritting machine has been made and the gritter is now in use.
- c) Weir Park play equipment refurbishment - Cllr Moorhead expressed concern at the quality of the repair to the Eagles nest and proposed that payment be withheld until the work was completed satisfactorily. As the total repair bill is in excess of £11,000 and the repair to that piece of equipment is £6,000 it was proposed by EH, seconded by PB and agreed unanimously to withhold that part of the payment.
- d) The following cheques were approved and signed:

MT Hall -	£ 720.00
J Temple -	£ 35.00
Yelverton Garage -	£ 53.01
Leg O'Mutton -	£ 280.00

The invoice of £2592.00 for the purchase of the gritter was approved but the cheque not signed as payment details are required.

10. Open Spaces

- a) Fillace Park trees – 3 quotes had been received for the removal of 4 Hawthorn trees. Countrywise Tree Care have quoted £108 and it was agreed that they be instructed. Proposed EH, seconded AM, unanimous

- b) Cllr Hemsil requested that the old Noticeboard in Weir Park be removed as it is in a state of disrepair and not used. Tom to dismantle.
- c) Dog waste bin for Copperfields – the Council are in possession of a spare bin but there was discussion about where it could be sited as the Council does not own any land in that area. Cllr Moorhead to investigate and report at the next meeting.
- d) Cllr Moorhead has received requests that one of the dog waste bins in Fillace Park be relocated out of the mud. He will contact EA for advice.

11. Reports from Organisations/Representatives

There were no reports received

12. Any Other Business

- a) Cllr Collins reported that the site survey on the War Memorial has been carried out and he is now awaiting the report. There is a grant available to cover 75% of the refurbishment costs which will include a thorough clean and replacing some of the letters. He hopes that the village may be able to fund raise for the remaining 25%
- b) Cllr Collins proposed that a Dictaphone be purchased for the recording of meetings. He will obtain quotes for future discussion
- c) Cllr Roche advised that the next meeting of the Horrabridge Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group will be held on 20th February. It is hoped that this group will become more public led rather than Council led. New members are still welcome.

13. Public Question Time

Regarding the Hawthorn trees to be felled in Fillace Park it was mentioned that these have in the past served a valuable purpose in protecting neighbouring properties from footfalls. Unfortunately, it is believed that at least 2 of the trees have been deliberately poisoned.

There was debate between Joe Sweetinburgh and members of the Council regarding his requests for information relating to the sale of Walkham Meadows, in particular invoices from the Solicitor who dealt with the sale for HPC. He was advised that as the HPC legal bill was paid by DCH no invoice was received, however Cllr Beard advised that he will speak with DCH.

Discussion continued around the External Audit report and Cllrs confirmed that a full investigation will take place and procedures tightened to prevent any further failings.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 13th March 2018 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

The meeting closed at 8.18pm