**Minutes of the Hoton Parish Council Meeting**

**Held in Hoton Village Hall on Monday 6th December 2021 at 8pm**

**In attendance**: Cllr Cassell (Chair), Cllr Eady, Cllr Doherty, Cllr Girgis, Cllr Dargie and

Victoria Webster (Parish Clerk)

*The meeting commenced at 8.00 p.m.*

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| 1. | **To receive apologies for absence**  Apologies were received from Cty Councillor Shepherd and Cllr Boker. |
| 2. | **Declarations of interests: disclosable pecuniary interests; personal interests; or personal interests that may lead to bias, by parish councillors to items on the agenda.**  There were no declarations of interest made. |
| 3. | **To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 1st November 2021** The minutes were proposed by Cllr Eady and seconded by Cllr Girgis. |
| 4. | **Questions and comments from members of the public (10 minutes)**  No members of the public were present so there were no questions or comments. |
| 5. | **To receive from the working group the 2022/23 budget proposal.  To agree or modify with the aim to agree on a final version.**  Cllr Eady thanked Cllr Girgis and Cllr Doherty for their help working on the budget. The 2021/22 budget was reviewed and the following was discussed/implemented:   * There are certain things the Parish Council wanted to achieve during 2022/23 and these have been captured in the assumptions. * The working group noted that the reserves should equate to one year’s worth of precept. * Based on previous history, the assumption was made that there would be roughly £10k remaining in the bank at the end of the financial year which is roughly around one year’s budget. * The working group felt it was important to deliver one improvement project from speed reduction, playing fields and village gates. * Carrying out one project would mean reducing the reserves to 50% of the annual precept and the working group felt the risk was appropriate. * The Parish Council will not have to fund the replacement raised beds as this will be funded through the Playing Field grant. * The Playing Field Committee have previously agreed to donate £500. * General asset management needs to be included on the budget for items such as painting bus shelters, however, assuming residents will do most of the work, the Parish Council will only have to pay for consumables. * Verges are cut by the council and if residents feel they should be cut more often they can do this themselves.   Cllr Cassell asked about the reduction of reserves and if this will be built up again in subsequent years and expressed concerns how this will happen.  Cllr Eady explained this can be recouped the following year as there will be no large village improvement plan next year and the funds can be used to top up the reserves.  Grounds Maintenance Matrix  The matrix has not been updated for 10 years due to the Parish Council using the same suppliers during this time. The advantage of the company we currently use for grounds maintenance is their flexibility. Cllr Dargie has reviewed the matrix to reflect what she feels is more of a true reflection.   * Smaller jobs could be done by villagers in conjunction with a contractor. * The verge cutting has been removed. * Currently some areas are cut weekly and some fortnightly, discussed with contractor and agreed fortnightly would be more than adequate. * Spraying around the fruit trees will no longer take place. * Spraying the weeds along the fence line where the builder’s yard is has been taking place but the spray is ineffective and it should cut it back once a year instead with a flame machine. * Nettles will be cut back 3 times a year instead of 4. * A weed check will be carried out when they cut the nettles as this is currently on a as and when basis. * Paint was previously being used to paint the football pitch lines, which was washing away, so they have been burning the lines on instead at no extra cost, and they will continue to do this at the same frequency. * Weeds leading down to the tennis courts are an issue with degrading the path so the contractors will be asked to weed a couple of times a year instead of as and when. * The end of season cut back, need a plan as to what to do with that particular area. * The burial ground currently has 10 cuts for an 8-month period but ideally more are needed. However, as the burial ground does not belong to the Parish Council, we would need to either seek further funding to support this or enlist the help of volunteers to carry out the additional work. * Need to ensure that stipulation is put on the tender about the width of the burial ground hedge. * Need to ensure we are in a position to be able to request extra cuts etc if required and know what the cost of these will be. Make sure there is flexibility within the contract.   **Action: VW to contact the church to see if their insurance will cover volunteers to enable them to assist with the grass cutting.**  **Action: Cllr Doherty to contact Burton to ask how they police the contractors.**  The proposal is to increase the precept by 17%. All felt it would be better to clarify some of the assumptions and be able to justify the budget fully rather than agreeing to this increase now. |
| 6. | **Election of Vice-Chair**  There were no volunteers for the position. |
| 7. | **Police Report and Correspondence**  The content of the October report was noted. |
| 8. | **Borough Councillors Report**  There were no Borough Councillors reports presented at the meeting. |
| 9. | **County Councillors Reports**  There were no County Councillors reports presented at the meeting. |
| 10. | **Co-option of Councillor**  Cllr Dargie has been discussing the position with a villager. |
| 11. | **Business**   * 1. To agree the cost of mole removal for the playing field   It was agreed to spend up to £100.   * 1. To discuss the Asset Maintenance Plan   The asset list needs reviewing and items need inspecting.  **Action: VW and MD to do this in January.**   * 1. To review and agree the Maintenance Matrix   Discussed above.   * 1. To consider any further action regarding lakes, footpaths and fences close to the DNRC boundary   Councillors want more clarification as to the DMRC plans to enable the Parish Council to communicate these to the village. If there had been better clarity in the past we would not be having these issues. The path has been walked for 20-25 years which is why there has been concern at it being changed  **Action: Cllr Doherty to find out who the best person to liaise with about future plans and the path.**   * 1. To agree that we approach the DMRC to provide a viewing platform over Dukes Lake, located on the southern bank of Kings Brook   As discussed in the above conversation. |
| 12. | **To Receive Reports from Councillors**  Cllr Dargie had a meeting with Brooksby College to discuss the raised beds project for their students, which they feel is a good project to take on and we would only have to pay for transport and materials. The College will get back to Cllr Dargie next week. |
| 13. | **To make comments and agree action on the following planning applications:**  *(Italics is for information only)*  *P/21/2153/2. Erection of two storey dwelling following the demolition of existing bungalow*  Cllr Eady reviewed a planning application to remove 3 conifers, he found no objection to this application. |
| 14. | **Correspondence – Discuss and Agree Response to the following:**   1. Email from LCC re HGV Data Survey results   To be taken to the HGV working group   1. Letter received from Hoton Village Hall   Cllr Doherty is happy to look after the equipment and it will be moved in January.   1. Email from Hoton Village Hall regarding website access   The Parish Council don’t have enough information to be able to make a decision.  **Action: Contact email company to see if there are different levels of permissions and seek further clarification as to what the Village Hall want to be able to do.** |
| 15. | **To Receive the Clerks Report**  Cllr Dargie confirmed the telephone kiosk has been painted and the boards have been removed.  A price has been obtained for the bolt for the playing field and funding has been earmarked. |
| 16. | **Finance**   * 1. Financial update   To be confirmed shortly   * 1. To agree payments due for the month:   Cllr S Isbister - Lighthouse Fee (October) £18.73  V. Webster wages (October/November) £560.17  M&BG £270.00  LRALC – Playground Inspection Training £120.00  It was agreed that these payments should be made and cheques were signed by two councillors. |
| 17. | **To agree items for the Press Release**  Success of the recent Volunteer Day.  Volunteer Day, 13th March 2022 to be advertised.  Thank you to Cllr Isbister. |
| 18. | **To receive agenda items for the next meeting**  How tasks are divided up between Councillors.  Use of personal equipment. |

*The meeting closed at 9.54*

These minutes are signed as a true and accurate record.

Chairman Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_