*Hougham Without Parish Council*

*13 Victoria Road, Capel-le-ferne, CT18 7LR*

*Email: cathy.finnis@googlemail.com*

Tuesday 9th January 2018,

**Minutes of the Meeting.**

**Present:**

Chairman Andrew Finnis (AF)

Vice-Chair Jodie Lamb (JL)

Don Taylor (DT)

Barry Barton (BB)

Chris Bryant (CB)

Dave Ash (DA)

Eddie Collins (EC)

Cathy Finnis (CF) – Clerk to the Council

Geoff Lymer (GL) Kent County Councillor

3 members of the public in attendance.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**17/79 To receive apologies for absence.** There were no apologies.

**17/80**  **To identify any member’s interests**, none declared.

**17/81 To hear questions from the public**: None questions asked.

**17/82 To confirm the minutes** of the meetings held on 14th November and 12th December 2017.

14th November 2017: it was RESOLVED that these were an accurate reflection of the meeting.

12th December 2017: it was RESOLVED that these were an accurate reflection of the meeting.

**17/83 To consider matters arising from the minutes in item 4.**

There were no matters arising from either 14th November or 12th December 2017

**17/84 To review councillor’s reports: -**

**(a) County and District Councillor reports.**

Geoff Lymer.

* Almost a year ago there was a request for funding from the village hall to repair for the hall floor. AF to forward the new hall secretary’s email (Diane Oxenham) to GL.
* KCC arranging grants for community transport. Criteria – Hougham fulfils it. Asked Capel – le – ferne and Alkham and they are happy for Hougham to lead it. Maintenance and servicing of the vehicle shared between each. Used by Church Hougham/West Hougham/Capel and linking to B2011 with Stagecoach then linking to Alkham. In addition it would mean the ability to link up within the villages. Also to include Ewell Minnis linking to Alkham Valley. In addition, there is the issue of conveying children to the local school at Capel – le – ferne. Also youth into town in evening (last bus back e.g. 23.00) Grant – KCC will give grant up to about £10,000. Two proposals – one minibus ready or cash £10,000. Rather go for the £10,000 (advise 2nd hand, £7,500 - £8,000). Local coach companies re servicing and source other items such as tyres etc. (cost price). KCC is discussing volunteer drivers – two PSV licenced (public service vehicles), GL would prefer to employ volunteer drivers. (deadline for application March 2018). Fares would pay for the wages. O licence – operators (? restricted). 7 passengers would generally pay for the cost of a journey. KCC Philip Lightowler available in advisory capacity. GL offered to complete the grant application for the group of villages and this was accepted and took the hard copy of the form from AF. GL then left the meeting to attend another parish’s council meeting.

**(b) Financial report from BB**. There were 4 cheques that hadn’t yet been cashed – taxi service, Dover Deal Citizens Advice, Kent Air Ambulance and KALC. BB explained that the council’s cashbook entries had been reconciled with the bank statements up to end of December and all tallied and he submitted a signed report.

**(c) Village Green**: – (i) AF indicated a grass cutting contract specification has been sent to a number of prospective new contractors for 2018. AF enquired if DT wanted to be considered for this contract this time? DT then stated that the “clerk” had not considered he was qualified the last time? Both AF and CF disputed this but DT persisted forcefully and insisting in an accusatory manner that is what CF had said to him at the time. This was again disputed but CF became very upset and left the meeting. After a short adjournment, AF restarted the meeting stating that Cathy had gone home. He said it was not appropriate to talk to the clerk in that accusing way and that this behaviour was against our Harassment and Bullying Policy. This previous event had taken place 3 years ago and DT’s comments were not as AF recalled the situation. DT again insisted that that those words were said and he took a specification for the work.

(ii) Weekly Inspection reports – received from Simon Withey with no major issues apart from the continuing molehill infestation, which is proving difficult to control.

**(d) Update to Clerk’s contract/pension changes.** JL confirmed that she had received written confirmation from CF accepting the council’s proposal regarding the clerk’s pension question. BB confirmed that the changes to the clerks contract had still to be completed.

**(e) Update on Church Hougham phone box** – questions on whether the light bulb had failed or was the electricity disconnected? *AF to investigate*.

**(f) General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)** – Cllr Barton reported on the KALC course he had been on for this new legislation that will affect all organisations including parish councils. He went through the major issues and suggested our PC needed to make a number of decisions and that should occur after AF and CF had been on a similar course at the end of January. There is a date of 28 May 2018 when all organisations will have to be compliant with the regulations and so there will be a lot of work to be done to meet this timescale.

**17/85 To consider a grant application for the Newsletter printing** to the new editor, Anne Turner. It was RESOLVEDto make a grant to cover the next 6 month’s printing of £219.60. AF confirmed that the previous editor Judith Piggott has supplied a closing statement with details of her costs and income to end of December with a cheque to HWPC to pay back the remaining grant she held.

**17/86 To agree the council’s five-year budget plan.** The 5-year plan tabled at the last meeting was to be updated following the final precept decision and other recent changes e.g. to clerk’s salary and so AF to make these modifications and circulate the plan for the next meeting.

**17/87 To agree the parish precept for 2018/19.** The revised ready reckoner from DDC was used to update the figures from the November meeting’s discussion. Given that the payment is still due from UK Power Network for their use of the village green it was RESOLVED that no increase of our precept was necessary this year and that we should precept for 2018/19, the same amount £9339.45. AF pointed out that the ready reckoner showed that our parish “Tax Base” has slightly increased this year and this has the effect of reducing the yearly cost for all Band D properties by 50 pence to £51.01 per year. BB asked that this point be made clear in the next village newsletter, *action agreed for AF.*

**17/88 To agree action on the proposal to fit a gate at the footpath entrance of the village green**. This had been discussed following a site meeting of interested parishioners and was RESOLVEDby the council not to fit a gate at this entrance. Further fencing to the entrance is to be completed – *Action AF/DA.*

**17/89 To agree action on planning applications received** including (a) Proposed changes to Public Rights of Way near to Poulton Farm as detailed by Mr Moynan. AF suspended the meeting for a short period whilst Mr Moynan, who was in attendance, addressed the council on the details of his proposal to modify the designation of rights of way around Poulton Farm and create a new access around the farm, which will have the effect of connecting two footpaths that officially do not connect. He stated that at present they do accept walking access between the disconnection and this is through the centre of the farmyard and the proposed new access way will avoid this. Mr Moynan answered a number of councillor questions and then AF reopened the meeting and following discussion the council indicated that when Mr Moynan proposal is formally received from the Rights of Way department we expect to support the proposal.

**17/90 To receive and distribute council’s correspondence.** None received.

**17/91 To agree payments: -**

* Clerk wages and office allowance Dec Jan as advised to council
* County Taxis – Nov £48 & Dec £60 £108.00
* Village Green Inspection Nov/Dec S.Withey £80.00
* Office Expenses – Stamps for clerk £6.72
* Payroll Masters Set up cost £45 + Sep-Dec17 Fee 24.68 £69.68
* Travel expenses to Cllr Barton GDPR Course £13.05
* Newsletter Printing (6 month) Grant to Anne Turner £219.60

AF closed the meeting at 21.22.

The next scheduled meeting of Hougham Parish Council is due on Tuesday 13th March 2018, at Hougham Village Hall, and will be confirmed during the week before.