Hougham Without Parish Council

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**Minutes of the Meeting**

**Tuesday 16th January at 7.30pm**

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Note: there will be a pre-meeting at 7.15pm to meet the three applicants for the Casual Vacancy of the Council.

Ms Jennifer Smith was majority voted into the Council through a formal Council vote. l

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| Minute number  | Description  | Owner  |
| 82/23  | Welcome from Chair and to receive apologies for absenceThere are none.  | Chair |
| 83/23 | To agree the Minutes dated 21st November 2023The Minutes were agreed except of two amendments of the minutes, to be circulated and agreed by email.  | Clerk |
| 84/23 | To consider any matters arising from Minutes of 23rd November 2023Cllr Hibbert suggested sending the Council’s insurance policy, accident clause regarding over 75’s in question, to Dover MP. Cllr Green had two suggestions for 74/23 which have been added. Cllr Robinson would like to raise the issue of the insurance policy. Clerk has agreed to highlight to both the MP and KALC.  | ClerkClerk |
| 85/23 | To hear questions from the public. Why has the Parish Council decided not to take up the matter of the milestones? Cllr Green explained that the Hougham Village Hall committee had asked the PC if they could intervene to retrieve the millstones that belonged to the Tanton Windmill. It was explained that the PC had discussed this request at their last meeting, and felt it was outside of their jurisdiction. After a lot of discussion, it was decided that the millstones that were taken off of Tantum Windmill land, by a parishioner. The Council **RESOLVED** that they will request of the parishioner to place the millstones where the Village Hall Committee request.  | Cllr Lamb |
| 86/23  | To agree the precept for the final decision tonight Balance 10/1/24: £ **12,584.64**Cllr Lamb shared the 5-year budget plan that has been put together. £5000 needs to stay in reserve due to the promise made to the village hall should they meet their funding requirement to call the grant in. There was a lot of discussion about what the precept is needed to cover in terms of fixed, advisory and discretionary items. It was RESOLVED that the Council would add 7.5% to the precept rounded up to a precept demand figure of £13,710 Action: Clerk to complete the precept form of £13,710 to Dover District Council   | Clerk |
| 87/23 | Chair’s Update/Report Chair shared the email received from Ferrari Press Agency regarding if anyone from the Council is around to discuss the pothole situation. Cllr Green shared the letter sent to Cllr Gough (1/1/24) but there is no reply received yet. Cllr Lamb thinks that the villager’s action managed by Cllr Oxenham should stay separate to the Parish Council perspective, which will follow more formal routes with Kent County Council. The Council and the Community Action Group will remain separate entities, with the Council pursuing remedy through official channels. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council will not reply to the press on this issue. The Council **RESOLVED** to support the principle of the Community Action Pothole Group.  |  |
| 88/23 | **Councillor’s Updates/Report** There was some discussion about the state of the road and the lack of buses. The Chair agreed to consider the issue of buses in the next ordinary meeting. *Action: to consider adding the issue of buses as an item on the next agenda* | Chair/Clerk |
| 89/23 | **To update on the Village Green Working Party** Working Group of 9 people, the committee are meeting a possible supplier tomorrow. The Group are starting to consider financing the project.  |  |
| 90/23 | To update on the issues with the Waste site.There is a report from DDC that there have been investigations showing that since 1993 (when a certificate of lawfulness was issued for use of the land as a waste transfer station), the site has significantly expanded beyond the piece of land measuring 24cm by 29cm which is certificate related to. However, the Council were told that DDC planning enforcement do not have the power to take any action over this site as KCC are now the statutory body for planning matters on waste transfer stations. The findings of DDC investigations have been passed onto KCC to investigate further.   | Chair/Cllr Hibbert to consider chasing KCC |
| 91/23 | To discuss the caravan parked on grass verge, Gravel Hill, West HoughamThe van has now moved. There was a recap on the history and the actions taken. It was underlined that there was no legislation that was useable by KCC at the time, and it was also advised to do a community caring act by approaching and asking if they were alright.  | Cllr Green/Chair  |
| 92/23 | The Caretaker – decision to appoint. Need to decide contracted or employed.Weekly inspection of play equipment£15 per hour, one hour per week. They will need training with Cllr Oxenham The Council has **RESOLVED** to offer the one-year contract to the one applicant.  | Clerk/ All |
| 93/23 | Cheques to be agreed and paid:* Employee wages/office allowance Dec/January (including NALC inflationary payment backdated to April 1st 2023 £758.78
* Ability Payroll (Dec/Jan) £13.00
* Contractor wages (Dec). £65.00
* HMRC (paid due to deadline) £194.60
* Annual pension compliance fee (Ability P/roll) £32.00
* Microsoft @£7.99 per month for 6 months. £47.94
 | Chair/All and Signatories to sign.  |
| 94/23 | Training for councillors via KALC:Main Features of this issue: Kent County Council Roadshow - Adult Social Care: digital services and how to find information* Date: Thursday 25th January 2024
* Time: 2pm-3:30pm
* No cost to the attendee
* Format: Online (Please contact me – support@kentalc.gov.uk – for joining instructions)
* Description: This event is intended for Local Councils to find out about available services so that they can signpost these to residents. These include adult social care options available to people in Kent, ways for people to stay independent at home and the different ways in which people can pay for adult social care. The Kent County Council team will join us on Zoom for a workshop and Q&A. Do join this event to learn about the new digital tools relating to Adult Social Care, to speak with KCC Adult Social Care staff and to obtain answers to your questions!

 and  Community Prepared – Community Emergency Planning Workshop, Part 1* Date: Wednesday 24th January 2024
* Time: 6pm-7:30pm
* No cost to attendee
* Format: Online (joining instructions provided by Community Prepared after registration)
* Description: This is the first of a two-part workshop. Part 1 will examine the purpose and potential of emergency plans with a sharing of ideas of what your next steps could be. **(Part 2 will take place on Wednesday 31st January, 6pm-7:30pm and will focus on specific elements of your developing emergency plan. There will be an opportunity to work on your plan between the two sessions and share it with Communities Prepared for feedback.)**

  Other Upcoming Training Courses: 1. Communicating with your Community Part 2: Engaging with your Community
* Date: Tuesday 16 January 2024
* Time: 2pm-4pm
* Format: Online
* This session will help you to consider practical ways to implement your communications strategy and engage with your community. We explore how councils can communicate and engage, as well as build sustainable conversations. Discover the tools, strategies and techniques needed to better promote your own messages but also to better respond to the voices within your local community. This event is led by Breakthrough Communications. **Due to the interest in and enthusiasm for the recently offered Part 1 and in recognition of the fact that many Councillors are not able to participate in training during the day, we will shortly be offering Communicating with your Community, Parts 1 and 2, in an evening slot.**

 1. Introducing Allotments Law and Management to Local Councils
* Date: Thursday 18 January 2024
* Time: 9:30am-1pm
* Format: Venue-based at Jubilee Hall, Pippin Road, East Peckham, Kent TN12 5BT
* Description: Allotments are more popular than ever. Waiting lists for a tiny plot of land that can be cultivated for pleasure, economy and health have soared recently. Many of our Local Councils have “Allotment Gardens” for hire. This workshop, led by Roger Taylor, will enable you to discover the legal requirements surrounding allotments, their management and how to operate best practice.

 1. Mastering Planning Application Responses: Training for Local Councils
* Date: Wednesday 24 January 2024
* Time: 7pm-9pm
* Format: Online
* Description: Join our two-hour training session designed to empower Local Councils in navigating the intricate world of responding to planning applications. Planning applications can significantly impact the development and character of your community, making it essential for local leaders to be well-informed and proactive in their responses. KALC training consultant, Alison Eardley, will guide you through the entire process, from understanding the legal framework to crafting compelling responses that ensure the best outcomes for your community.

 1. Chairing Meetings Effectively
	* Date: Wednesday 31 January 2024
	* Time: 6pm-8pm
	* Format: Online
	* Description: This session is designed for councillors, regardless of whether you are an experienced chairperson or whether you are new to the role. We explore how to prepare effectively for meetings, how to get the most out of the meetings you chair and from other councillors, and how to deal with tricky situations. This event is led by Breakthrough Communications.

 Upcoming Finance Training:Join Steve Parkinson of Parkinson Partnership for any of the following upcoming finance workshops:* **Finance for Councillors** (Tuesday 16 January 2024 at 10am-11:40am or Thursday 25 January 2024 at 6:30pm-8:10pm)
* **Internal Controls** (Wednesday 17 January 2024 at 10am-11:40am)
* **VAT for unregistered councils (VAT126)** (Thursday 18 January 2024 at 10am-11:40am)
* **Procurement** (Thursday 25 January 2024 at 10am-11:40am)
* **Year end & audit – councils over £25,000** (Tuesday 30 January 2024 at 10am-11:40am)

 Registration Information:To book your place on any of these or other training sessions, start by following this link: <https://www.kentalc.gov.uk/Training__and__Events_21677.aspx> and selecting the training session of your choice.Benefits of Attendance:* Gain valuable insights and knowledge to enhance your role as a Local Councillor or Officer.
* Network with fellow Councillors and Officers and share experiences.
* Access resources and tools to support your ongoing professional development.

 These training sessions will contribute significantly to your effectiveness as a Local Councillor or Officer and, in turn, benefit your community as a whole. | Clerk/All  |
| 95/23 | The meeting was closed by Cllr Lamb at 21.23Date of next ordinary meeting of the Council: 19th March 2024 |  |