

Holton Parish Council meeting was held on Monday 17th April 2023 starting at 7.30 pm in Holton Village Hall Committee Room

Present:

Chairman - Robert Barter
Vice-chairman – Allan East
Councillor – Roger Farrow
Councillor – Brian Pridmore
Parish Clerk - Sonja Barter

1. **Apologies:** Councillor Andy Murray
2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the council held on Monday 27th March 2023 which had been circulated to all councillors before the meeting.

The Minutes were confirmed. Proposed by Brian Pridmore and seconded by Allan East.

All agreed

OPEN FORUM

3. **Declarations of Interest**
none
4. **District and County Councillor Reports –**
No District/County Councillor present.
5. **Matters Arising from the Minutes:**
none
6. **Wheatley Park School Access**
SODC Grant funding of £1095.00 for a key pad lock for the Holton gate at Wheatley Park School has been received and Allan East is waiting to hear from the site manager and make arrangements to hand over the contribution. A receipt from Wheatley Park School would be required for the Parish Council.
7. **The Definitive Map Modification Order application.**
No action at this time.
8. **Traffic, Road and Highway Matters**
Verge cutting discussed. The Clerk to contact the contractor when it looks necessary to start a small trim of the verges before the major tidy up at the end of the growing season.

9. Financial Matters

a. Accounts submitted for payment	VAT	Total inc. VAT
Richard Taylor Orchard	14.40	86.40
Richard Taylor Churchyard	17.00	102.00
OALC Membership 2023/24	26.00	156.00
Winckworth Sherwood		
Churchyard extension	226.00	1356.00
Holton Archive printing expenses		13.70
Clerk's salary April		485.00

Received

31/03/2023	District Councillor Sensory Play Equipment Grant	500.00
31/03/2023	District Council School Access Keypad Grant	1095.00
05/04/2023	Precept 1 st Half	9872.00

b. Bank balances after paying above amounts and monies received

Deposit £36,122.17 Current £2,512.07

c. Monthly Cash Reconciliation with Bank Statement

Allan East checked the cash balances with the bank statement, agreed the figures and signed the cash reconciliation.

d. Holton Parish Council accounts y/e 31 March 2023 were presented to the meeting and approved.

The Internal Auditor to carry out the audit and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return completed for the External Auditors Moore. co.uk.

e. Unallocated cash balance at year end. It was agreed to purchase a teak Coronation Bench to replace the broken bench in the Orchard. A bench can be supplied with Coronation Cypher for £516.67 including VAT. Enquire about base fixings.

This purchase was proposed by Roger Farrow and seconded by Robert Barter.

All Agreed

The total unallocated funds were £1,925.00. The Parish Councillors were not paid their allowances in 2022/23 and had previously agreed not to take their allowances in 2023/24 to help towards any shortfall in the play equipment costs. This and other savings on predicted costs made up the surplus.

It was proposed by Brian Pridmore and seconded by Allan East that the Clerk's Report be accepted, cash balances reconciled, the accounts paid and the Holton

Parish Council Accounts year end 31/03/2023 approved.

All Agreed

10. Churchyard extension land.

It was hoped that some progress would now be made with the transfer of land after the discussions on site with Richard Hunt and the payment of the Church Solicitors fees to date.

11. Playground Proposals

SODC Capital Grants have awarded the Holton Orchard Play Equipment £23,263.00 (49.64% of the project costs) letter dated 21 March 2023 Ref: SCAP22-23\100022.

The acceptance form has been signed and completed.

The grant of £500 for sensory play equipment Ref: CGS2R\100014 has been received.

The specification from Earthwrights received just before the meeting along with an overview of the design, the proposed schedule of works and the project timescale.

The artist impression of the siting of the play equipment was not particularly clear and it would be necessary for someone from the Parish Council to be on site when Earthwrights start the work.

The first payments for the work would be due shortly and it was agreed that when confirmation is received that the grant is to be paid then the provisional payments will be made. The playground equipment provided by Earthwrights in their specification total cost of £46,556 + VAT and £500 + VAT for the sensory play equipment was approved.

Proposed by Brian Pridmore and seconded by Roger Farrow.

All agreed

Thank you to Allan East who has successfully negotiated the play equipment specification, contract and grant applications on behalf of the village and Parish Council

12. Planning applications:

None.

13. Planning Decisions: South Oxfordshire District Council

None.

14. Parish Council Elections 4th May 2023

Holton Parish Council Uncontested Election. Robert Barter, Allan East, Andy Murray and Brian Pridmore were appointed unopposed for a further term as Parish Councillors. The one vacancy will be filled by co-option. Expressions of interest to be requested and the vacancy to be advertised in the Parish.

The Annual Meeting of Holton Parish Council will be held on Monday 15th May 2023. Roger Farrow will not be standing for re-election due to work commitments making it impossible for him to attend meetings of the Parish Council. Roger was thanked for his Parish Council work over his term of office, especially representing Holton on

the Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan Committee and keeping the Parish Council informed of the many discussions regarding the neighbourhood plan.

15. Annual Parish Meeting 25th May 2023.

Agenda: To arrange some representation from Brookes with information on the proposed housing development and possibly representatives from the Brookes Liaison Group to answer questions. Representatives from Village organisations to be invited.

Apologies from Brian Pridmore and Allan East as they would not be able to attend the Annual Parish Meeting.

16. Reports

Holton Village Hall Management Meeting. Holton Village Hall annual meeting to be held on 18th May. Coronation screened on the morning of 6 May with brunch. Bar open from 11.30 am, bring a picnic, tea and cakes served during the afternoon.

Brookes Liaison Group – Waiting to hear the Planners views and the date for the Planning Meeting when Brookes reserved matters are discussed. Attendance at that meeting would be advisable and if possible send representation.

Holton Orchard Committee – An Orchard Committee meeting to be arranged to update on the play equipment and orchard maintenance.

17. Publications/Letters and forthcoming events.

None

18. Items for referral to a future meeting

The Clerk wishes to continue in the role but will give ample notice of her intention to retire when the time arises.

Meanwhile it would be advisable to ensure that all the documents and procedures necessary for the Parish Council to carry out their role as an Employer are in place. A contract of employment - a model contract has been provided by OALC along with other documents involved with employing a Parish Clerk. This email with all the attachments to be forwarded to Parish Councillors for information.

OALC are offering training to Parish Councils in the essentials of employing people. This session is aimed at Councillors and Clerks who want to avoid the numerous legal and practical pitfalls associated with being an Employer. It will provide an overview of the essentials of getting it right when employing a Clerk or other members of staff. The course starts with recruitment and interviews, moves to induction and legal requirements of taking on new staff, issuing contracts, and then managing sickness and disciplinary issues and ensure that attendees are brought fully up to date with the latest legal changes.

Unfortunately no Parish Councillor was able to attend. It was agreed that the Clerk would attend this Zoom event and report back to the Parish Council. The course to be held on Tuesday 23 May 10 am to 11.30 am via Zoom. Cost £30.00 plus VAT for member councils.

It was noted that the Notice Board on the Bus Shelter needed painting.

19. Date of next meeting. The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 15th May 2023 starting at 7.30 pm. The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.