



Harlaxton Parish Council

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Parish Council Meeting

7:30pm on Wednesday, 27 November 2024

Harlaxton Village Hall, 3 Church Street, Harlaxton, NG32 1HU

Minutes

1. Meeting Opened at 7:30pm: Thanks were given to Cllr Vernon of LCC and Cllr Leadenham of SKDC for attending.
2. In Attendance: Cllrs Wicks, Clawson, Smith, Phillips, Gabriel and Cartlidge
3. Apologies (Non-Attendance): n/a
4. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests. Cllr Cartlidge acknowledged membership of the HSSC committee and sponsorship of the Harlaxton Cricket Club.
5. Co-option: It was unanimously approved to adopt Susan Wilson. Susan to complete the paperwork for SKDC.
6. Resolution to approve minutes of Parish Council Meetings: PCM of 30 October 2024: Approved unanimously.
7. Public Forum (15 Minute Presentation/Discussion): No villagers present. Cllr Cartlidge read out emails received regarding tree adjacent to No's 25 and 27 Parklands Drive, a request for a dog bin down The Drift, and enquiries regarding the hire of the Manor Drive Sports Field for football practice.
8. Updates - County Councillor, District Councillor, Police & Crime: Cllr Vernon [LCC] reported on (1) the confirmation of the Devolution of Greater Lincolnshire, with the election in May 2025. (2) The High Street, Harlaxton roadworks have now been postponed, new dates are awaited. (3) The Anglian Water Sewage Treatment Work improvements off Manor Drive are now complete. (4) An update on the cleansing of the A607 drains [which was pushed by Cllrs Wicks & Cartlidge at the Ward Meeting on Friday 22 November] is now pending. [Thanks were given to Cllr Vernon for following this up]. Cllr Leadenham [SKDC] reported on (1) Thanked those who attended The Ward Meeting. Another will be scheduled for next year. (2) Raised awareness of the numerous text and email scams that are about at the moment. (3) Has issued the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership report for sharing amongst Councillors, and thanked the Harlaxton Community Speedwatch for being so proactive in recent weeks. [Thanks were given to Cllr Leadenham for supporting the CSW so much in recent weeks]. (4) The next CSW training day is Monday 2 December from 7pm at the Harlaxton Sports and Social Club, who have kindly provided the venue without a fee.
9. Updates and Discussions
 - 9.1. Finance Update: Detailed bank reconciliation reports and budgets vs actual expenditures had previously been shared with all councillors. Notable unused expenditures includes the Clerks salary and PAYE [currently fulfilled by a council volunteer], Manor Drive Sports Field drainage [pending a start date from the contractor], The HSSC/Sports Field car park resurfacing [pending the resolution of the ongoing insurance claim], lower than expected grass cutting costs due to a contractor broken machinery, and no May 2024 election charge [5 councillors were elected unopposed]. Unplanned expenditure included £240 for a new waste bin on Manor Drive, £400 on the Community Speed Watch equipment, and pending work on various trees, including Coopers Plantation. Overall the finances are in a healthy position, however it is likely that the 2024-2025 will be fully exhausted. Meanwhile 2025 will see increased expenditure due increased contractors costs for grass cutting, further tree maintenance and the pending HSSC car park repairs.
 - 9.1.1. Invoices/Expenses received: Invoices were approved for payment from BDG Mowing for £570 + VAT for three cuts in October, £17.69 to Link Magazine for the distribution of the winter Village Voice, and £160 expenses for the weekly cuts of the A607 verge near the Bus Shelter by Irvin Metcalf. It was noted that Irvin will no longer be cutting the verges, which are now included in the pending 2025-2026 grass cutting quotations. Thanks were given to Irvin for his many years of hard work.

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- 9.1.2. Precept 2025: This was discussed at length. Concerns raised about significant increases in costs to the grass cutting, tree maintenance and the inevitable increase in cost to repair the HSSC car park [the previous quotes are from October 2023].

Recent Precepts were noted as follows:

- 0% increase for 19/20
- 2% increase for 20/21
- 5% increase for 21/22
- 0% increase for 22/23
- 0% increase for 23/24
- 7.5% increase for 24/25

In light of the increasing costs, it was agreed to ask for a 25/26 precept increase of 10%; an increase of circa £6 on the Band D charge.

- 9.2. Proposed Development off Swine Hill (Cllr Gabriel): No further update from SKDC. Cllr Wicks, who attended the Ward meeting on 22 November, reported that the government will force an increase on SKDC's housing allocation from 700 to 912 per year. Cllr Leadenham [SKDC] advised that SKDC has enough quota for up to 1100 per year for at least five years, without Swinehill.
- 9.3. HPC Bins around the Village: The Community Cleaner has reported that the replacement bin on Manor Drive is working well. There have been no further reports of full bins between weekly emptying exercises. The installation of the former Manor Drive bin to Rectory/West End is pending. Cllr Wicks advised that there are two bins in close proximity on The High Street, one at the bottom of Trotters Lane and the Gold Best Kept Village 2021 near the Obelisk and Phone Box/Information point. It was suggested that the Trotters bin could be moved to the bottom of The Drift, in support of a recent villager request. Thanks were given to Cllr Wicks for this suggestion, which will be followed up with SKDC, who are responsible for Harlaxton bins.
- 9.4. Traffic
- 9.4.1. A607 Consultation: No further updates. Cllr Cartlidge advised that this was raised at the Ward meeting, and HPC has repeated their request to receive a copy of the letter sent by Gareth Davies MP to LCC Highways.
- 9.4.2. SID (Speed Indicator Device): Currently on the High Street facing South. It was agreed to move this to Swinehill facing South [up the hill].
- 9.4.3. CSW (Community Speed Watch): Cllr Leadenham said that Harlaxton has been the most proactive since being set up. Thanks were given to all efforts to DB, KL, CG and to Cllr Leadenham for joining in to make up numbers. The next CSW training session by Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership [LRSP] is Monday 2 December.
- 9.4.4. School Traffic & Parking: Cllr Vernon said that it was minority of inconsiderate drivers causing mayhem during school times. Cllr Vernon to raise the matter with Lincolnshire County Council and ask for Enforcement to make random visits to help educate drivers. Cllr Wicks confirmed the HPC has written to the school, who have confirmed that they will write further letters to parents to ask them to be more considerate with their driving and parking when dropping off and collecting.
- 9.5. LCC Highway Gulley Cleansing: The absence of works to complete the cleansing exercise was raised at the Ward Meeting by Cllrs Wicks and Cartlidge. Cllr Vernon to follow up.
- 9.6. Anglian Water work on the High Street: Cllr Vernon is following up the cancelled repair with LCC Highways.
- 9.7. LCC's Emergency Plan: Awaiting a draft example that HPC can follow. Cllr Vernon to follow up.
- 9.8. PCM Dates: It was agreed that the PCM on Wednesday, 18 December should continue. Further meeting dates after 28 May 2025 will be agreed at a future meeting.
10. HSSC
- 10.1. Car Park and Manor Drive Flooding: AXA have responded that they are still considering our complaint. Letter to Board Directors have elicited responses confirming that the Board are considering the ongoing claim. Cllr Cartlidge presented a quotation of £700 + VAT from an independent Loss Adjuster who would be able to review our current position and make strong representations directly to AXA's board of Directors. The benefit being that they could respond to the Claim in Loss Adjuster terminology and assist in ensuring that HPC is properly represented for its significant consequential losses [currently nearly £19k] and the pending repair of the HSSC car park surfacing; AXA had previously offered £3000 but have since increased this to £6000, however the 2023 quote was for over £10000. This was discussed and, given the remaining short time before AXA make their determination, it was unanimously agreed to proceed with the independent Loss Adjusters quote.
- 10.2. Channel Drain to the rear/south of HSSC: Remedial works outstanding. Cllr Cartlidge to follow up with the contractor.
11. Sports Field
- 11.1. Playing Area Equipment. Latest inspection report (Cllr Wicks): Cllr Wicks advised that a villager has recently cut and tidied up the grass around the HSSC and Play Area. Thanks were given to AW. Cllr Wicks is dealing with some minor repairs, no funds are currently required.
- 11.2. Drainage/Maintenance: The appointed contractor has not materialised on their suggested dates and has not been returning calls. Cllr Cartlidge to follow up.

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12. Grass Cutting, Hedges, etc
 - 12.1. Village Tree Survey & Tree Work [Cllr Gabriel]:
 - 12.1.1. Concerns have been raised by No 25 Parklands regarding the close proximity of the tree to their boundary fence. The subject oak tree is substantially mature and has a tree preservation order predating the development of Parklands in the 1970's. It was agreed to reduce the ivy by cutting back, and to remove small overhanging branches up to 3m. A working party will be arranged by volunteers.
 - 12.1.2. Concerns have been raised about falling branches from an oak tree near No 27 Parklands. Land Registry plans for No 27 and the adjacent land to be purchased and Councillors to observe and seek advice from a tree surgeon.
 - 12.2. Gregory Close Trees: Work planned for 5 December.
 - 12.3. HPC Grass Cutting, Coffin Walk & LCC Verge on A607: Only two quotes received thus far. A third quote is pending. Agreed to discuss and decide contractors at the PCM on Wednesday, 18 December.
13. Village Voice: The Winter edition has been delivered. Cllr Wicks offered to write the keynote introduction for the Spring Edition. Cllr Phillips will proof read before going to print.
14. Any other business: Street Lighting – Councillors thanked SKDC for the change to low wattage LED units, but expressed concerns that in some areas the road are now far too dark between the widely spaced lamp columns. HPC asked Cllr Leadenham to carry out an inspection with a view to the installation of additional street lamps in the areas now too dark – e.g. Swinehill and around Parklands Drive.
15. Next scheduled Meeting of the Council: Wednesday, 18 December 2024 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall
16. Meeting close at 9:04pm.