

A meeting of the Newsletter Working Group of Halberton Parish Council  
will be held in the Committee Room at Village Hall, Halberton  
on Tuesday, 5 March 2024 at 7.30pm

All Members of the Working Group are summonsed to attend for the purpose of transacting the business specified in the Agenda below.

Susan McGeever  
Clerk, Halberton Parish Council  
27 February 2024

**AGENDA**

| ITEM |                                                                                                                                              | REPORT PAGE |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1    | Apologies                                                                                                                                    | N/A         |
| 2    | Declaration of Interest                                                                                                                      | N/A         |
| 3    | Public Forum                                                                                                                                 | N/A         |
| 4    | Approval of the Minutes dated 2 January 2024                                                                                                 | 2-4         |
| 5    | Matters arising from the aforementioned Minutes<br>- general discussion on the way forward and Parish Council responses<br>- reader's survey | N/A         |
| 6    | Working Group Membership/Secretary/Recruitment and distribution of workload for Issue 172                                                    | N/A         |
| 7    | Comments about the previous edition of the Newsletter                                                                                        | N/A         |
| 8    | Business Directory<br>- advertising charges for charities who want a regular advertisement                                                   | N/A         |
| 9    | Consideration of contents for the next edition of the Newsletter                                                                             | N/A         |
| 10   | Important Dates for Newsletter production and mailing                                                                                        | N/A         |
| 11   | Local distribution and distribution coverage                                                                                                 | N/A         |
| 12   | Date of next meeting                                                                                                                         | N/A         |

| ITEM |                                              | Report Page |
|------|----------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 4    | Approval of the Minutes dated 2 January 2024 | 2 to 3      |

## Halberton Parish Council

### Minutes of the Newsletter Working Group Meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

Present: The Clerk, together with Councillor Graham (Chair), D Charles and J Wooding

D Charles recorded the minutes

#### 1. Apologies

C Jobson and I Batchelor

#### 2. Declarations of interest

None

#### 3. Public Forum

No members of the public were present

#### 4. Approval of Minutes dated 7 November 2023

The minutes were approved as accurate and signed by The Chair.

#### 5. Matters arising from the aforementioned Minutes

##### 5.1 Newsletter review

a) DC briefly outlined the contents of the newsletter position statement circulated to Group members. One amendment was noted and a revised copy will be issued.

##### **Action; D Charles**

b) The Clerk gave a verbal overview of the results of the Halberton newsletter reader survey. Drawing conclusions is impossible because although over 700 copies of the newsletter are distributed only three responses had been received. DC described the results of two separate Parish Council reader surveys he had located online (Banwell, Somerset and Great Nottley, Essex) and said he felt there were similar messages coming from both of them that may be helpful to bear in mind:

- The majority (over 70%) of respondents to those surveys said they read every issue of those magazines.
- 60% to 65% said the content that interested them most is information about the Parish Council and updates on issues that the Parish Council is addressing. The articles of least interest are those submitted by charitable and voluntary bodies.
- Various suggestions had been made about additional content to cover local interest matters (e.g. an interview with the local road sweeper...), all of which would require someone on the production teams to perform the role of a staff writer.
- Over 60% felt that the information that interested them most should also be placed online but not to the detriment of those who, for whatever reason, are unable to use the internet.
- About half thought the magazine should be produced quarterly, half thought it should be produced less frequently than that.

c) A wide ranging and lengthy discussion followed during which the following points were noted:

- i) Finding sufficient volunteers to assist in the production of the Halberton Newsletter remains a problem and the lack of resources curtails what might otherwise be possible.
- ii) We have twenty volunteers who deliver newsletters in every kind of weather to every household in the Parish, wherever they may be located. It was noted that very few of those individuals attended the thank you event at the Village Hall in December 2022. Councillor Graham proposed another thank you event, perhaps at Easter, and said she would raise the matter at a Parish Council meeting.

**Action; Councillor Graham / Clerk.**

- lii) DC asked if the newsletter is recyclable. If it is, can we put something on it somewhere prominent to say so. If it isn't then given that the newsletters we produce in a year would create a stack of paper 71 feet high (the height of a couple of two storey houses including their roofs) then recycling must be given serious consideration

**Action; Clerk (check with the printers)**

- iv) In the commercial environment a production team of a magazine often includes the social media and website managers as a part of that team to ensure consistent, timely messages.

d) DC said he felt that it is time to undertake a review of the Halberton Newsletter for the following reasons:

- The impact of more immediate forms of communication (e.g. social media)
- The difficulty in recruiting volunteers to the Working Group and the uneven distribution of the workload within that group
- The deterioration in the financial return since Covid

This was agreed and it was noted that this Group must get an approval in principle from the Parish Council for the review to go ahead (for the reasons stated above) with further more detailed work to follow.

**Action; Clerk**

## **6. Working Group Membership / Recruitment and distribution of workload**

No volunteers have come forward to fill the vacant roles on the Working Group.

## **7. Comments about the previous edition of the Newsletter**

Noted that the Clerk has apologised for the omission of a St Andrew's church event in the list published in the December / January issue of the newsletter.

## **8. Business Directory**

The following written comment from CJ was noted:

"The increased prices for adverts that took effect from the Feb-Mar 2023 edition have raised the income each month, and from the Feb-Mar 2024 edition all the adverts will be at the new prices. The advertising income for the Dec-Jan edition was £1,014. For comparison, the income for the Dec 22-Jan 23 edition was £801. I think this means that in 2024 advertising income should cover printing and delivery costs (unless printing costs increase, which they may well do) with a surplus of £50-100 per edition, but unless we find a volunteer editor and/or more advertisers there will still be a loss".

## 9. Consideration of the contents for the next edition of the newsletter

- a) The usual articles / advertisements from Councillors, St Andrews, Mid Devon Singers, Bell Ringers, etc. to be requested **Action; Clerk**
- b) Halberton History Group **Action; J Wooding**
- c) Community Growing Area **Action; Clerk**
- d) Road closures and traffic news **Action: D Charles**
- e) Cover photograph. Agreed something on a “Spring lambs” theme. **Action: Clerk**
- f) Neighbourhood Watch. Local crime figures are still not available online. Article to be about the five most common scams. **Action; Clerk, D Charles.**
- g) Village Hall to include a list of all the regular events held there **Action; Councillor Graham.**
- h) Grand Western Canal 2014 anniversary of becoming a Country Park. **Action; Clerk (to contact Mark)**
- i) DC has one photo taken at the Military Wives Choir concert. **Action; D Charles (forward to Clerk)**

## 10 Important dates for Newsletter production and mailing

- Deadline for articles 12<sup>th</sup> January
- Newsletter to Brightsea 17<sup>th</sup> January
- Delivery to Village Hall 24<sup>th</sup> January (for distribution the following weekend)

## 11 Local distribution and coverage

John and Margaret Anderson will not be available to assist with distribution of the next newsletter. D Charles will cover in their absence.

**Action: D Charles.**

## 12. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Working Group will take place on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024.