

Halberton Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Halberton Parish Council held at Halberton Village Hall on Tuesday 13 December 2022 at 7pm

Present

Councillors Batchelor, Browse, Campbell, Graham, Furmedge, Marshall and Saunders together with Councillor Radford (MDDC) and Councillor Slade (DCC). The Clerk, Mrs S McGeever, was also present.

Councillor Batchelor (Chairman) opened the meeting at 7pm.

207-1 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillor Ayre.

207-2 Declarations of interest

Councillor Batchelor declared an interest in the two planning applications which had been submitted for his property and, in accordance with protocol, he would not be present during discussions on those applications and Councillor Furmedge would take the chair.

207-3 Public Forum

The following items were raised during the Public Forum and would be discussed under the relevant agenda items:

Minutes of the meeting of 8/11/22 – Bycott Farm AD Plant

The minutes indicated that the maximum height of the buildings would not exceed 6m. This was incorrect, the plans showed a maximum height of 18m which was 70% higher than any other building at Bycott and 45% higher than the AD plant at Crown Hill. The building was of significant size and represented an industrial-scale operation and would be clearly visible within the parish including from the Grand Western Canal.

Note: The minutes reflected what had been said during the Public Forum at that meeting. The Parish Council had been given to understand that the buildings would be dug in and not exceed the height of the existing buildings. The official plans were not received until 9 November 2022.

Bycott Farm AD Plant

Residents expressed their concerns over the impact the proposed AD plant would have on the village of Halberton and, in particular, the risks and hazards it posed to residents. The health risks were not unique to this application and were well documented.

The application failed to fulfil the conditions set out in Devon County Council's and Mid Devon District Council's documentation in relation to AD plants and a number of key reports were inadequate.

The drawings themselves did not accurately depict the size and the scale of the buildings.

Further information would be submitted to MDDC and the Parish Council.

22/01730/MFUL

The applicant and agent were present to answer any questions the Parish Council might have pertaining to this application.

Minutes of the meeting of 1/12/22 – Bycott Farm AD Plant

The Public Forum section of the minutes reported that the claim that Bycott Farm sent slurry to the Crown Hill (Red Linhay) AD Plant was incorrect. However, there was documentary evidence to suggest that Bycott Farm sent 50% of its slurry to this AD plant.

The planning application itself did not refer to the existing traffic movements in and out the farm and this could be provide misleading information on the total number of movements.

The question was raised as to the actual movements at Crown Hill (Red Linhay) AD Plant.

Potholes

The matter of potholes on Batten Lane and onto Shutehanger was raised. The Clerk would report these online to Devon County Council.

Action: Clerk

207-4 To approve the minutes of Council meeting on 1 December 2022

It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes and for the Chair to sign them.

207-5 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman advised that the Parish Boundary Review had concluded and that Mid Devon District Council had voted that:

Bridwell and Lucombe Park should go to Uffculme given that the properties were inside the 30mph limit of Uffculme and that the small section of the Mid Devon Business Park situated on the Willand/Halberton boundary would go to Willand.

The remaining area of the parish to the east of the M5 including Muxbeare Lane, Hitchcocks and Langlands would remain in Halberton.

There would be a financial impact to the precept given the number of houses moving out of the parish.

The Chairman thanked the councillors for their help over the year and their attendance at the volunteer event and wished them a Merry Christmas.

207-6 Mid Devon District Council matters

a. To receive a report from the MDDC Council Member

Councillor Radford had submitted a report just prior to the meeting and it had been circulated to the Parish Council. There were no questions raised but the current financial situation was noted and, where possible, the need for Parish Council's to take on additional responsibilities such as grass-cutting if they did not already do so. (Inside 30mph MDDC or Parish Council/outside 30mph DCC.)

b. Grand Western Canal Group

No update had been received on the work of the Grand Western Canal Group.

207-7 Devon County Council matters

Councillor Slade had submitted a report for the meeting which had been circulated to the Parish Council. Councillor Slade noted that the Council's locality budget bid for the defibrillator had been successful and he had approved the Halberton Community Association's request for finance for hi-viz jackets. There were some funds remaining and he would be supportive of a bid from the Village Hall to upgrade their notice board.

He advised that the new CEO of Devon County Council should be starting in February and had significant knowledge of children's services.

Councillor Slade advised that, to the best of his knowledge, all black bins had been delivered. If a pick up was missed due to current weather conditions then it was likely the pick up would be on the following day.

He had spoken to Highways regarding the Bycott AD plant application and would provide more information to the Traffic Committee.

He also undertook to look at the policy for the instigation of humps in the road bearing in mind the hump present in the High Street had not been able to be re-instated when the road was re-surfaced.

Action: Clerk

207-8 Police matters

All correspondence relating to police matters had been forwarded to the Parish Council.

Police Advocate Scheme

Councillor Browse had attended the Councillor Advocate Scheme Seminar on Road Safety on Wednesday, 7 December 2022 in Barnstaple. He would be submitted a full report to the Traffic Committee but the main items to report were as follows:

- a) Operation Snap – this facility allows the public to upload dash cam footage of alleged poor driving to the police website with a view to assisting behavioural change
- b) how the speed limit operates i.e. speed limit plus 10% plus 2 so in a 60mph area you would need to be travelling at 68mph to be charged
- c) support for the cafe at Five Bridges and their approach to allow police officers to engage with young drivers.

Councillor Marshall thanked Councillor Browse for attending on her behalf.

207-9 Vacancies on the Parish Council

The Clerk advised no further applications had been received. There were currently 8 councillors out of a possible eleven.

Notices were published in the Newsletter and on the website but given the elections in May 2023, it was felt that more should be done to encourage people to step forward.

It was noted that two-thirds of the places had to be filled on the day of election to move forward to having the Power of Competence.

207-10 Covid 19/Avian Flu

Given that there were no longer updates on Covid 19 and that the parish was now outside the Avian Flu area, it was RESOLVED that this item would be taken off the agenda.

Any relevant information could be reported under Members Business unless the need to re-introduce the Item occurred.

Action: Clerk

207-11 Consideration of Mid Devon District Council's planning applications

The following planning applications were considered:

22/02135/HOUSE

Proposal: Erection of replacement single storey front and side extension to create annexe, single storey rear extension and first floor side balcony, reinstatement of verandah and chimney stack.

Location: Cott Farm Willand Cullompton

Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 302215 / 112218

It was noted that extensive modification appeared to have been carried out prior to the planning application, however, some of this may well have been under permitted development and was being included to make it clear to any purchaser in the future the works had been carried out in accordance with planning regulations.

It was further noted that much of the work had needed to be done and there were no objections on the portal.

It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council had no objection to this application.

22/02261/HOUSE

Proposal: Erection of single storey rear extension

Location: Apple Cottage Ash Thomas Tiverton

Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 300408 / 110980

It was noted that there were no objections on the portal, the extension was modest in size and the neighbour had received notification from MDDC of the application.

It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council had no objection to this application.

Councillor Batchelor left the room and Councillor Furmedge took the Chair.

22/02254/FULL

Proposal: Alterations and extensions to wedding venue including extensions to the bar and holiday accommodation; erection of a canopy in courtyard

Location: The Corn Barn Cullompton Devon

Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 301144 / 109184

22/02255/LBC

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for alterations and extensions to wedding venue including extensions to the bar and holiday accommodation; erection of a canopy in courtyard

Location: The Corn Barn Cullompton Devon

Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 301144 / 109184

The two applications related to The Corn Barn and it was noted that the majority of the work being undertaken was to adapt existing facilities and would not be evident from outside the property which was enclosed by a stone wall. It was a respected local business and the changes would not significantly affect the number of traffic movements.

It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council had no objection to these applications.

Councillor Batchelor returned to the room and took over the Chair.

22/01730/MFUL

Erection of a commercial building and associated hardstanding - Pitt Farm, Muxbeare Lane, Willand

The Parish Council had objected to this application and asked for it to be called in.

MDDC's Planning Department had asked the Parish Council to re-consider this request as the officers felt the Parish Council's concerns had been addressed.

The commercial building was to house C&O Tractors who would be selling and servicing Massey Ferguson tractors following the demise of MST.

The Parish Council was given to understand that both Hitchcocks and Mid Devon Business Park were at capacity and unable to accommodate the business. And the business was currently operating using a yard at Pitt Farm.

The agent advised that the business was complimentary to a rural area and no other site was available.

The Parish Council did not feel this addressed the question of using a green field site for industrial purposes but if no other site could be found and the site was for agricultural retail only then they could consider that the area of concern had been addressed.

The Parish Council were concerned that the Highways condition imposed on the previous development had not been carried out and was simply being transferred to this new application.

The agent advised that the only work remaining to be done was improvements to the actual road surface.

If the work was completed prior to the commencement of the work starting on the new unit then the Parish Council would again feel that the area of concern had been addressed.

Thus, if the conditions covered these two areas of concerns the Parish Council would feel able to remove their decision to call the application in.

In addition, they asked the Clerk to seek clarification of MDDC's forward planning for the area and whether further industrialisation would take place.

Action: Clerk

22/014292/MFUL – Red Linhay Silage Clamp

Condition on Planning Application

The building hereby approved shall be used only for agricultural purposes as defined in Section 336(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and if at any time the building ceases to be used or required for such purpose it shall be removed and the site re-instated in accordance with a scheme previously submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.'

As requested the Clerk had written to MDDC Planning to seek clarification as to how they would ensure that the silage clamp was used for agricultural purposes only as given in the condition above and what scheme previously submitted would the site be re-instated to should the condition not be met given that no approved scheme was in place.

No response had been received.

Action: Clerk to resend email

Other planning matters:

Crow Green

No retrospective application had been received from MDDC.

Five Bridges

No update on the 'potential breach of planning' had been received from MDDC.

The Orchard

No update on the 'potential breach of planning' had been received from MDDC. The Clerk had again asked if there was any potential land to provide alternative parking.

Pleasant Stream

It was understood there would be another site visit by Enforcement in January 2023.

Two Trees Solar Farm

No application had been received from MDDC.

207-12 Consideration of Mid Devon District Council's Planning Decisions

The following decisions were noted:

22/01952/NMA – Non-Material Amendment - CONSENT

Proposal: Non-Material Amendment for 18/01930/MARM to allow the garage roof height for Plot 69 to be lowered and render to Plot 78 to extend down to ground floor finished level

Location: Land at NGR 305578 112053 Uffculme Road Uffculme

22/01900/PNAG - CONSENT

Proposal: Prior notification for the erection of an agricultural storage building for machinery and fodder

Location: Land at NGR 303211 112574 (Yeo Farm) Sampford Peverell Devon

22/01816/LBC - APPROVED

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for the erection of a replacement conservatory

Location: Annexe Lake Farm Halberton Tiverton

22/01975/FULL - REFUSED

Proposal: Erection of 4 dwellings and associated works

Location: Land at NGR 300380 112580 (R/o Pethertons) Lower Town Halberton Devon

207-13 Highways matters and the Road Warden Scheme

Update and any new matters to report including:

a. Potholes

Reflectors had been placed on the two small bridges following repairs to the road through Sutton Barton, passed Pond Farm and on to the junction which had been in dire need of repair.

Action: Clerk to remain in contact with DCC and report potholes online as per Public Forum request.

b. Replacement of Halberton Milestone

No further update on delivery date for the replacement Milestone.

Action: Clerk to monitor progress

c. Herne Bridge

The Clerk advised that an exact date for the closure for one day during the February half term was awaited.

Action: Clerk to monitor

d. Training for the Road Warden Scheme

Councillor Batchelor advised that he would undertake the online course this winter.

Councillor Furmedge advised that he would undertake the Chapter 8 training. He was also on the list for the next strimming course.

Action: Councillors Batchelor, Browse/Clerk to monitor and organise Chapter 8 training.

Councillor Batchelor raised the matter of his role as Snow Warden given the recent weather and his inability to carry out works in Halberton village.

Following discussion, it was agreed that Councillor Batchelor would remain as Snow Warden but volunteers would be recruited around the parish who would be able to access the gritting equipment and assist in ensuring paths were safe etc.

Councillor Marshall agreed to put out a call for volunteers in the Newsletter and on social media and wondered if it could be linked to the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.

The Clerk directed the Parish Council to the DCC Snow Warden page which provided full details of scheme.

Councillor Campbell agreed to assist Councillor Batchelor.

Action: Item for the next agenda

207-14 Amenity matters

a. Platinum Jubilee Car Park

Lighting

Councillor Batchelor advised that the lights should now be on a timer that switched the lights on when a car entered or left the car park (energy saving practice)

Electric car charging points

Dependent on the Power of Competence being achieved

Platinum Jubilee lamppost

The base had been built.

Changing rooms

Investigation of costs ongoing.

b. Matters concerning Devon County Council in respect of:

The Mead and the provision of teenage facilities (bike ramps)

and

Community growing area

A response was awaited from DCC

Action: Clerk to follow up on a response and copy in Councillor Slade

c. Road safety in the vicinity of Lower Town (DCC)

A meeting had taken place at Sunnyside and the owners had requested that the Parish Council consider a) making a payment for the piece of land required for the pavement or b) undertook improvement works following the taking down of the wall which would require costings to be carried out.

Councillor Browse suggested that the plans for the path are drawn up by Devon County Council Highways Team as the initial starting point.

Action: Clerk to contact DCC

d. Footpaths

Definitive Review of footpaths in the parish

Councillor Furmedge had circulated the Terms of the Reference for the Working Group tasked with taking forward the Definitive Review.

It was RESOLVED that the Terms of Reference would be adopted and that Councillor Furmedge would contact all those who had expressed an interest in joining the Working Group. The group would then take the project forward.

Action: Councillor Browse/Furmedge and Clerk

P3 return

The paperwork for the 2023 grants had been received and it was now a question of walking the paths and documenting the work that had been carried out and any work that was needed.

e. S106 funding

Goal posts at the Mead

It was noted that the goal posts were ready to be erected at The Mead.

Equipment for the recreation ground

Councillor Campbell advised that he hoped to have the quotes ready for consideration at the January meeting. It was RESOLVED that the work required to make the fence safe should go ahead without delay.

Proposal to DCC bike ramps at the Mead

Dependent on proposal to extend lead.

Map of 5k run and adult gym equipment

Proposal to be written.

f. Land owned by MDDC Housing behind the bus stop at the top of Pond Hill

Correspondence had been received that the dead tree would be removed. Correspondence was ongoing with regard to the cherry tree.

g. Parish Notice Boards

The notice board in the Jubilee Car Park had been put up and a base of stones would be put in place to ensure ease of access. Barrie Corden agreed to hold the key and be the contact for community notices for display.

Location of second notice board

It was agreed that the potential to put the board at Ash Thomas would be investigated. The other option was to put the notice board at Hitchcocks.

Action: Councillor Furmedge

The Clerk asked if it was possible to improve access to the Brithem Bottom notice board.

Action: Councillor Batchelor

Wording of brass plaque for notice board in the Platinum Jubilee Car Park

It was RESOLVED that the following wording would be engraved on a brass plaque.

Platinum Jubilee Park

This park was officially opened on Friday, 3 June 2022 to commemorate the HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

h. Additional dog bins (Pigeons)

The Clerk advised that the sign was still to be commissioned.

It was RESOLVED that further signs were required and could be ordered at the same time.

Sign for Jubilee Path gate to advise locations of dog bins

Sign for cemetery advising of intention to flatten graves

Action: Councillor Browse/Clerk

i. Defibrillators

The contribution from the Locality Budget had been received and the Clerk would renew the contract and Councillor Graham would continue to be the point of contact. Ash Thomas would apply for a Locality Budget grant when their lease ran out in August.

j. Landmark Tree(s)

It was RESOLVED to delegate the choosing of the Memorial tree for the late Queen Elizabeth II to Councillors Batchelor and Ayre. This would be part of the Green Canopy project.

In addition, the Monkey Puzzle tree would be planted in the wild flower area of the cemetery.

k. Hi-viz waistcoats

The application was going forward from the Halberton Community Association.

207-15 Community items

To consider any other community matters including

a. Council IT tools Working Group to include Facebook page/Website/Communicating with Parishioners

Councillor Furmedge gave a presentation (attached to these minutes) on the progress made with the new Parish Council .gov.uk website and the community website halberton.org.

The next step was to move to the use of 'google docs' and the introduction of the .gov.uk email address for Parish Councillors. It was essential to ensure that all Parish Councillors could access and utilise the new processes which would look to modernise the way of working so that all could comment and contribute to any discussion or document. It was also important to remember that all decisions had to be made at a meeting with only those Parish Councillors present voting.

Action: IT Tools Working Group – projected live date June 2023.

The Planning Pages were a work in progress.

The Parish Council thanked the IT Tools Working Group for their work.

An article would be published in the Newsletter highlighting the fact that parishioners could sign up to receive information on traffic notices, agendas, minutes etc.

Councillor Furmedge then put forward a proposal to purchase a projector and sound equipment.

It was RESOLVED that a projector would be beneficial but the need for sound equipment was questioned and further work was needed to identify need.

Action: Councillor Furmedge to organise purchase of a projector

b. Internet connectivity Working Group

Councillor Furmedge advised the projected completion date for AirBand's work was Summer 2023.

c. Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Councillor Marshall confirmed that the pilot scheme would be set up in Millstream.

d. Anaerobic Digester Liaison Committee

Councillor Batchelor advised that he had spoken to the owners who wished to improve communications with the Parish Council and the village.

The ideal conduit would be the Anaerobic Digester Liaison Committee which included members of MDDC, the Parish Council and parishioners.

Action: Clerk to contact Councillor Radford

It was understood that data on movements in and out of the AD plant together with input and output quotas had now been uploaded to the MDDC website covering the last year. Given the traffic concerns, it was important to have information on traffic pollution, traffic movements etc.

Giving the outstanding planning applications, it was important that the Parish Council retained its autonomy and did not become too closely involved as a unit.

Given that there were two and potentially three AD plants located in a very small area, adherence to the planning conditions was important.

e. Parish Boundary Review

Councillor Batchelor had advised that the result of the Parish Boundary Review under Chairman's Announcements.

207-16 Traffic Committee

The Traffic Committee met had not met in December. The next meeting was scheduled for 4 January 2023.

a. Spatford Bridge

Notification of works to the bridge had been received, it was hoped would reduce collisions with the walls

b. Parking at The Hickory Inn/potential footpath

The outcome of the enforcement issue relating to The Orchard and/or the potential of another parking area needed to be resolved before a footpath could be considered.

Action: Clerk to continuing following up

c. Seddons signs

Action was with the Traffic Committee

d. Letter to farmers re tractors / posters by the primary school

To be brought forward in the(Spring).

e. 20's Plenty

Signs on order.

Action: Clerk

207-17 Newsletter Working Group

Councillor Marshall advised that letters had been sent out regarding the new advertising rates and to the two advertisers who currently had adverts on the front and back covers. When the directory became part of the Newsletter, these pages would no longer be available.

More articles were being received and it was good to see local communities submitting information.

The Parish Council contribution to the newsletter was currently a Chairman's Letter – Councillor Batchelor felt it would be appropriate for a different councillor to write the piece giving their view of the work of the council and their particular interests. Councillor Furmedge produced an ITC new page for each addition.

It was noted that printing costs had increased significantly over the year (£720 to £924) and more advertising was needed to meet the cost. It was hoped to find a volunteer who would take on contacting current and potential advertisers.

207-18 Review of Core Documents

a. Review of secondary and tertiary documentation including continuity plan

b. Emergency Plan

These items were ongoing and information was being gathered for the Emergency Plan and a further meeting would be needed.

207-19 Financial accounts 2022/23

a. Approval of Cemetery Fees and documentation for April 2023

It was RESOLVED to approve the Cemetery Fees (which remained at their current levels) for the year starting 1 April 2023.

It was RESOLVED to approve the Rules and Regulations documentation with effect from 1 January 2023.

b. Review of accounts of six month accounts to 31 October 2022

It was RESOLVED to approve the cashbook for the current account and the savings account both of which reconciled to the bank statements.

The budget monitoring showed that there had been an increase in receipts of some £14,500 which reflected the S106 and Vision Zero South West monies. The S106 funding had purchased the goal posts and benches/picnic tables. The Vision Zero South West funding had been used to purchase the VAS units and further expenditure would go on signage and the flashing lights for the school.

It was noted that several expenditure figures had increased. These including:

- I) the clerk's salary which covered the NALC pay increase of 2021/22, overtime and the increase in hours.
- II) the costs of running Cordwents due to the rates being paid and the electricity costs. The cost of the electrical work would come out of Cordwents reserves
- III) costs associated with the Jubilee

Funds had been moved from the reserves to cover some of these increases. That said there was £5000 remaining in the Vision Zero account and there would be a VAT refund.

c. Review of the proposed budget for 2023/24

The proposed budget was reviewed and the figures noted.

It was anticipated that there would be a reduction in cemetery income and that newsletter income would remain at its current levels giving the financial situation.

There would be increased costs associated with the clerk's salary (NALC increase 2022/23), provision of a budget for the May elections, the costs associated with Cordwents and the increase in fees and subscriptions relating to the work of the IT Working Group. A budget of £1000 had been set aside for the King's Coronation.

In order to offset these increases funds would be moved from reserves and the precept would be increased. A revised summary of reserves to November 2023 was noted.

Following the setting of the precept and the adjustment resulting in the figures, it was RESOLVED to approve the budget for 2023/24.

d. Setting of the Precept for 2023/24

The Clerk had proposed an increase in the precept of 12.2% in line with projected inflation over the coming financial year.

Taking into account the reserves and the running costs, Councillor Browse proposed that the precept should be increased at a level of 9% so as not to impact too much on parishioners. It was RESOLVED to increase the precept by 9%.

It was not felt that the Parish Council would incur any costs in the relation to Mid Devon District's Council request for parishes to take on work on their behalf. The Parish Council already covered grass-cutting and other possible activities.

e. Financial report 2022/23 for November

The financial report for November was noted and had been included in the budget monitoring figures.

f. Payments to approve (Council):

The following payments were approved:

T Scrace (Bus shelters)	£ 32.00
Source for Business (cemetery)	£ 18.05
Brightsea (Newsletter)	£924.00
SLLC (Cilca qualification)	£410.00
DALC (Cilca training)	£360.00
Nicholas Page (PROW P3)	£420.00
S McGeever (Wages, Fasthosts/Zoom)	£549.09
S McGeever (Parish Council computer/mouse/ Microsoft 365)	£497.78
C Graham (Newsletter)	£ 30.00

g. Bank signatories

Bring forward to next meeting

h. NALC pay award and review of Clerk's hours

Bring forward to next meeting

207-20 Members business including meetings attended, and miscellaneous matters (not for decision)

Devon Council Climate Network

Ongoing

Connecting the Culm/Catchment Visioning Workshop

Ongoing

Cullompton Health and Wellbeing

Ongoing

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Accounts

Ongoing

King's Coronation

Halberton Community Association would be hosting a bring and share lunch.

Details from Ash Thomas were awaited.

It was noted that the Royal Household had requested that celebrations did not reflect those of the Platinum Jubilee albeit that they would like parishes to light Beacons for the 80th Anniversary of D-Day in June 2024.

Vision ICT

Bring forward to January

207-21 Items for next meeting

Wildlife Warden

Review of Parish Council processes with regard to correspondence, meetings and planning applications.

Next meeting: Tuesday, 10 January 2023 at 7pm

Signed:

Date: