**MINUTES OF THE 1181st MEETING OF HOGHTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**HELD ON 30th October 2023 AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL**

**Present:** Councillor T Greenwood (in the Chair), B Mattock

M Urry, A Martin, and M Graham (Clerk to the Council).

**Also in attendance:** Two members of the public were present along with potential new Councillor, Darren Strange.

**Apologies for absence:** J Caton, Y Hargreaves and Councillor A Cullens BEM

S Fawcett of Samlesbury and Cuerdale Parish Council was welcomed; he stated that his Council were looking to run a training course on planning, and he invited Hoghton members to participate. The Chairman agreed this was a good idea and when a date was arranged, we would encourage our own members to attend.

1220: DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL/PREJUDICAL INTEREST

The Clerk reminded Members of their responsibility to declare any personal interest in respect of matters on the agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council’s Constitution, and the Members Code of Conduct. No one made a declaration at this stage.

1221: MINUTES

A concern with the Minutes of the meeting of 25th September 2023 having previously been circulated was raised by the Vice Chair; he stated that they were incorrect as the Council did not discuss the temporary traffic order for Quaker Brook Lane although the Clerk had rightly put it on the Parish Council Facebook Group to assist residents. It was agreed to draw attention to this in the 30th October minutes and the August minutes would be signed at the subsequent November meeting if this correction had been made.

1222: ADJOURNMENT

There then followed an adjournment to allow members of the public to raise issues and ask questions raised by prior notification. Darren Strange was welcomed as a potential new Parish Councillor; he would be asked at the end of the meeting if he wished to be co-opted to the Council.

1223: POLICE REPORT

The Police were not present.

1224: LALC REPORT

The Parish Clerk advised the LALC Annual Conference and Meeting will take place at County Hall on 4th November would be attended by J Caton and A Martin.

1225: ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Two councillors had held a joint meeting with Hoghton Scouts, Hoghton Village Hall and Holy Trinity Church representatives. Discussions took place on how best our £800 biodiversity grants from LCC could best be utilised. It was reported that it was a very positive meeting and further discussions would take place on how to involve local young people in habitat improvement. A report would be made at our December meeting.

1226 HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

1. SPIDS on Hoghton Lane

A report was given by the Parish Clerk. He had contacted LCC who were to make a site visit and make recommendations on final positioning. When the recommendations are received the Clerk would advise members and order the Speed Indicator for which agreement on expenditure had previously been agreed.

1. Covered Bus Stop

The bus shelter close to The Royal Oak on the 152 bus route towards Blackburn had been badly damaged. It was agreed to contact LCC to see if they are responsible for repairs.

1. TTRO’S

The work on Chapel Lane Rail Bridge had been completed and the Clerk had received an email from local residents thanking the Parish Council and County Councillor Alan Cullens for pressing for the work to be done. The resurfacing work on Quaker Brook Lane had also been completed. A TTRO for Station Road level crossing work in December had been advised; the Clerk would put details on our Facebook Group/

1. Footpaths by BT Openreach, Station Road

J Caton and A Martin had pursued this with the local grounds contractor working for BT Openreach. Some work had already been carried out by the contractor and further work would take place when tree preservation orders had been checked.

1227: CHORLEY DISTRICT & LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS

The Clerk was asked to write to Councillor Cullens congratulating him on becoming Chair of LCC.

1228: PLANNING REPORTS

No applications had been received.

1229: ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENTS

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| Payee | Item Number | Description | Amount | Notes |
| Easy Web Sites | 37 | WB Hosting 1st October | £27.60 | Direct Debit |
| Whitehead & Aldrich | 38 | Payroll Fees July, Aug, Sept | £108.00 | BACS |
| HMRC | 39 | Tax on Clerk’s Salary | £83.40 | Cheque |
| Mike Graham | 40 | Clerk Salary Oct 2023 | £333.60 | Cheque |
| Holy Trinity Church | 41 | Room Hire 30th Oct 2023 | £20.00 | BACS |
| Festive Lights | 42 | Xmas Tree Lights - paid by M Graham | £115.18 | CIL paid by cheque jointly with item 40 and 43 |
| Screwfix | 43 | War Memorial Plastic Chain | £9.48 | CIL paid by cheque\* jointly with 40 and 42 |

\*£333.60 + £115.18 + £9.48 = £458.26

The above were all agreed.

1230: Parish Finances and 2024/25 Precept Setting

a). Precept Setting

A lengthy discussion took place on our Parish finances which, aside from CIL monies that can only be spent on projects for the benefit of the Parish. A discussion paper had previously been circulated which explained we started the present financial year with our general account monies being £289.86 in deficit and this was anticipated to be a £4,000 deficit at the end of the 2023/24 financial year. The precept had been frozen at £6,000 since 2016/17 which is equivalent to a 32% reduction when allowing for inflation; it was recognised that we would have to make a substantial increase to take effect from April 2024 and this would need to also consider the need to work towards a good practice contingency reserve of two years expenditure.

It was agreed to advise Chorley Borough Council of our decision to make a 100% increase in our Parish Precept in April 2024 to £12,000 per annum with an inflation increase in future years (using the September inflation figure normally issued mid-October).  A £6,000 increase is equivalent to £16.90p per household (355 households) per year, £1.41p per month or 33p per week.

We would publicise the above decisions, and the reasons behind it, on our social media outlets early in 2024.

b). Parish Christmas Trees

It was agreed to take the donation of two Christmas trees From Duncan McDonald. The Vice Chair would look to see if he could get a discount on the deliver and taking away of the trees.

The trees would need to be erected w/c 24th November. Riley Green residents would advise when the lights would be switched on for their Pinfold based tree. The tree for the junction of Station Road and Blackburn Old Road would be switched on the 1st December. Mrs Nuttall of Chapel Lane had been asked to do the switch on. Discussions were taking place with Chorley Council on suitable lighting. It was agreed to publicise both switch on’s.

1231: LAND ADJACENT TO HOGHTON POST OFFICE

Progress was continuing via our solicitors Forbes who had supplied their quote for work which was £950 plus £190 VAT (reclaimable) as well as disbursements of approximately £120. It was agreed to accept the Forbes quote for work (CIL funds).

1232: COMMUNICATONS

Our Facebook Group continues to grow and now has 109 followers.

1233: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Darren Strange responded positively to being co-opted as a Hoghton Parish Councillor. This was warmly welcomed.

1234: NEXT MEETING DATE

Monday 4th December 2023 at Holy Trinity Church Hall.

The meeting closed at 20:55