

H C P C

For And On Behalf Of
Hill Croome Parish Council
Clerk - Michael Brooks
Vine Cottage Baughton Earls Croome WR8 9DQ

Minutes of the meeting held at Earls Croome Village Hall at 19:30 Monday 8th April 2024

Present – Cllrs. Smith, Brooks, Wall and Eaton and Phillipps

1. **Apologies** – Cllr Owenson MHDC

2. **Minutes of previous meeting held 5th February 2024** – signed as a true record.

3. **District and County Councillor Reports:**

Cllr Allen and Cllr Owenson provided written reports in advance of the meeting, both having to attend elsewhere. Cllr Allen later arrived and provided a verbal account.

4. **Village Memorial – path proposal**

The update from the County Highways is that they would expect to be responsible for the path to ensure it be constructed to their specification as liability would remain with them. The Clerk replied with the three possible construction types – gravel, resin or grass reinforcement – with a view to the Department pricing up the work. Currently awaiting a response to these proposals but it is difficult to see how pricing could be given without having a more specific plan.
Item to be on next agenda in the hope that an update has been received.

5. **Finance:**

- a) Full reconciliation provided to Council including expenditure/receipts since last meeting.
- b) Confirmation received from Cllr Phillipps that paperwork has been submitted for the Lloyds mandate and the Clerk awaits the car reader.
- c) Annual AGAR completion and ratification:
 - i) Certificate of Exemption 2023-2024 – signed for submission.
 - ii) Annual Governance Statement 2023-2024 – agreed and signed.
 - iii) Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023-2024 – agreed and signed
- d) New website – Clerk updated the council in relation to the likely closure of the County Council website provision – MyParish – used to satisfy the Transparency Regulations for the publication of accounts, the Annual Returns, and other documents. Arrangements are being sourced elsewhere by CALC to try and help find an alternative but there is a likelihood that there will be set-up and maintenance costs, hitherto not in the Parish budget. Further update for the next meetings.
- e) Update to the computer – the Clerk reported that the current computer, now in its fourth year of use is unable to cope. When purchased it was a relatively modest specification with only an i3 processor and current updates have slowed it to an inefficient crawl. A request to replace the item with a more up-to-date and higher specification was received. Research indicates that a suitable model would be in the region of £800-1000.
The chairman proposed that the necessary purchase be approved, supported by Cllr Wall. It was agreed that the Clerk arrange for the purchase in the near future.

Chairman - Phillippe Smith Clerk - Michael Brooks

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- f) Internal Audit – the Clerk reported receiving the documents in preparation for the audit. This is the first time such an audit has been carried out and the paperwork is significant in volume. For the future it will be more straight forward as the process will be familiar. Arrangements are being made for the return of the questionnaire and subsequent submission of the required files and paperwork. The cost of the audit is £200 as previously agreed.
- g) Asset Register – a copy of the register was provided to Council and the contents scrutinised. All items are covered by the insurance and agreed to be an accurate record.
 - a. Register confirmed as an accurate record.
 - b. Items assessed for risk – suitably covered by insurance where appropriate.
 - c. Original Toshiba laptop to be blanked and disposed of, register to be revised.
- h) Public Availability for Inspection of the Accounts 2023-2024 – the notice is to be posted on Friday 31st May 2024, the period for inspection being from Monday 3rd June until Friday 12th July 2024.
- i) Battery for the Defibrillator – it has previously noted that the battery is showing two lights on the wear gauge, and it is noted that it would be useful to have a spare ready for use. The Clerk to arrange a replacement in the next few months, currently at a cost of £267.60 from Wel Medical for the *IPAD SP1* model.
Update – 9/4/2024 – two lights of three still showing – Clerk to monitor weekly.

6. Lengthsman Update:

The Clerk reported that the new Lengthsman started today (8th). The new contract is being readied to be backdated to 1st April once the new dashboard provided by the scheme is online. Email received late on the 8th so registration with the scheme is yet to done. Under the new scheme the work for the Clerk has intensified requiring the worksheet submitted by the Lengthsman to be copied onto the system. A monthly charge of £10 will be included each month to cover the extra time required.

- 7. **Planning:** The chairman reported the proposed housing development at Holly Green. Cllr Allen also confirmed the proposal albeit at an early stage.

8. Village Flag / Village Fete

The concept of having a village flag was discussed at the last meeting and it was apparent then that it was not likely to prevail if put to the vote. The idea was revisited, and a suggestion brought forward to instead create a village bunting. The idea is that at the village fete / Big Lunch materials will be provided to enable everyone to create their own artwork on a pennant to be sewn into bunting. The matter to be progressed outside of Council, with suggested date of the first weekend in June.

9. Parish 'Police Service Contract'

The latest contract has been returned with two priorities – speed and door-to-door salesmen.

- 10. **Training for Councillors** – Clerk to advise if new opportunities arise from CALC.

- 11. **Correspondence:** Items relating to – ponies loose on the public footpath, Cemex proposals at Uckinghall, Malvern Theatre funding.

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12. Councillor reports and matters for next Agenda;

- a. Nomination for the Chair – Cllr Smith
- b. Update for the Path on the green
- c. Internal Audit feedback

13. Date for next meetings

Monday 13th May 2024 – Parish Meeting at 7.00pm, Parish Council Annual Meeting at 7.30pm.

P. Smith
Chairman

Date 13th May 2024