

MINUTES

Parish Council Meeting Minutes

28 January 2025 | 19:30 | Marianne Simpson

25/001 Attendance and Apologies

In attendance Cllrs Seb Howells (Acting Chair), Alistair Thomson, Christina McDonagh, James Bowers and County Cllr Steve Robinson, District Cllr Maggie Dutton. Also Present: Clerk Marianne Simpson

Apologies: Cllrs Kate Kay, Chris Blackwell, Matt Peters, Miranda Waller

25/002 Declarations of interest or requests for dispensations

None.

25/003 Approval of Minutes

The minutes, previously circulated, of the last meeting held on 26 November 2024 were confirmed as a true record and Council resolved to accept the minutes.

25/004 Chair's announcements

Cllr Howells noted that the Nymphsfield community pub has until 31st January to raise money to reach its Stroud Crowdfunding target. If anyone wants to support them and buy shares, they have a website.

Cllr Howells also reported there is a Stroud area community energy network meeting at 6:30pm at SDC offices tomorrow. All can attend to find out about solar panels etc.

25/005 Consider changes to the order of business

None.

Meeting adjourned for members of the public to address the Council

No members of the public present.

25/006 Receive reports from District and County Councillors

County Cllr Robinson reported on GCC

National Government has made it clear that it wants reorganisation of Local Government. The Leader of GCC County Council has written to the Local Government Minister, inviting him to postpone the May 2025 elections. The Chief Executive feels that it is better to fast-track this decision as it minimises the uncertainty for staff and Gloucestershire would be in a better position for joining with other counties in a Combined Authority. Stroud District Council (SDC) will disappear. Parish and Town councils will remain. The PC may want to take on assets owned by Stroud District Council (SDC) which would benefit Horsley residents, rather than these assets going into a county-wide authority. He has requested Horsley Hill and The Street are resurfaced if new funds become available. If the county elections do take place, it will be just for 2 years. Cllr Robinson wants to stand again.

Cllr Dutton reported on SDC

Lot of activity on the council plan to be in place in April 2025. A review of the council's net zero 2030 strategy with new objectives around carbon, plus the ecological crisis. Air quality will be measured – baseline monitoring due to particulate modelling.

Cllr Howells and McDonagh noted the air quality and particulates in rural areas like Horsley are often worse than in towns due to use of wood burning stoves. Also, the traffic to the tip was cited.

Cllr Dutton added there is nothing to report on the local plan. Regarding waste, Ubico will soon collect batteries and vapes. They cause fires in bin lorries if they are put in household waste. SDC lead the way in recycling. Fleet decarbonisation. Alternatives are biofuels. New campaign on home improvements to help homeowners save money on energy bills and cut carbon emissions. A one-stop shop for climate home initiatives. It will be a comprehensive service with energy efficiency partners, Furbnow will make it easier for residents to improve their homes' energy efficiency. It will not include discounts but should give people more confidence on what to do.

25/007 Clerk's report and Correspondence

The Clerk's report (for information only) and all correspondence had been circulated prior to the meeting and confirmed.

The Clerk noted the new Procurement Act 2023 will be implemented on 24 February 2025. As part of that, Government will require anyone who provides services to the public sector to register on the Central Digital Platform. If you're planning to do business with Gloucestershire County Council, or any other public body, you need to register on the Central Digital Platform by 24 February. If you have not registered by this date, you won't be able to do business with any public body.

GAPTC have produced a Climate and Biodiversity Action Toolkit. Also, SDC have produced a Biodiversity Policy template.

25/008 Report on planning decisions and planning applications

Planning applications

- S.24/2206/HHOLD Erection of a single storey rear extension. Alterations to garage roofing, fenestration and rebuild attached plant room. Barton End House, Bath Road, Nailsworth
Cllr McDonagh had looked at it. It is Grade 2 listed but no objections had been made. All agreed 'No comment'.
- S.25/0014/AGR Erection of a polycrub polytunnel. Box Tree Cottage Hartley Bridge Hill Horsley
Cllr McDonagh said it is an application to determine if they need a planning application. It is next to the essences building. All agreed 'No comment'.

Planning decisions

None.

25/009 Authorise payments of the parish council and receive financial matters

9.1 Council ratified payments made between meetings:

Date	payee	description	total	VAT	pay
13/01/25	British Gas	Pavilion gas	£26.51		DD
27/12/24	British Gas	Pavilion electricity	£504.51		DD
06/12/24	CJ Spring (Angel Duster)	Pavilion cleaning Nov 2024	£270.00		£270.00
06/12/24	Thomas Roper	Orchard hedge- trimming	£780.00		£780.00
06/12/24	Forest Green & Nailsworth RBL	RBL wreath	£27.50		£27.50
04/12/24	Nest	Pension	£43.08	-	DD
04/12/24	Water Plus	Pavilion water	£70.51	-	DD

The Pavilion gas boiler has been removed as it was not working, and the hot water is provided by an emersion heater. British Gas need to remove the meter.

9.2 Payments received between meetings were noted:

date	from	description	total
13/01/25	O L Cottle stonemason	Memorial Bruton	£241.00
13/01/25	O L Cottle stonemason	Memorial Hands	£119.00

The GCC Build Back Better Fund application has been approved for £1500, to go towards the play area replacement log stepping stones and sunsail timber supports.

9.3 Council approved payments for authorisation:

date	payee	description	total	VAT	pay
17/01/25	Clare Perla	Payroll services Oct -Dec 2024	£60.00	-	£60.00
01/12/24	Chris Miller	Horsley Festival Culture and Community Unwrapped Charity insurance	£159.01	-	£159.01

Councillors had asked what the insurance was for. Clerk advised it was the Horsley Festival funds. Cllr Thomson proposed to reimburse the insurance but note that the PC cannot operate as a bank. The understanding is that the money would be held for a future festival. Any spend of the festival funds must be approved by the parish council, in the normal way.

9.4 Council received the monthly financial update and bank reconciliation to 31 December 2024.

9.5 Council considered renewal of the horsleyparish.co.uk domain. Cllr Howells reported the existing horsleyparish.co.uk domain expires in February and proposed it is renewed for 1 year at a cost of £15.59, to facilitate continued delivery of emails to old addresses. All agreed.

9.6 Council reviewed the bank accounts as Lloyds Bank will start charging £4.25/account/month (not 32 - day account) from February. Cllr Howells reported the Cambridge and Counties savings account, a 31-day notice account, gives 3.55% interest. The parish council does not need dual signatory on a saving account as withdrawals will go to a linked current account. This account could replace the Lloyds 32-day notice account which pays less interest. Then keep the Lloyds current account. Cllr Thomson agreed and proposed £40,000 is moved to the Cambridge and Counties account. All agreed.

9.7 Council considered quotes and options for the Village Hall carpark resurfacing, previously circulated. Adjust ironwork to correct finished height allowing to replace 1 No. inspection cover with a new cast cover and frame. Supply and install kerbs. No additional drainage works or line markings have been allowed for. Cllr Thomson proposed to accept the lowest quote, but to request there are line markings for car spaces, seconded by Cllr Bowers, all agreed.

9.8 Council to consider quotes and options for Play area works.

This was deferred to the next meeting, as a third quote had not been received.

9.9 Council considered costs for cloud-based financial management solutions, previously circulated. Clerk outlined the costs for the accounts subscription and the cemetery subscription. There were optional extra costs for cemetery data import and cemetery mapping.

Cllr Thomson proposed a decision on this is delayed, while the Clerk gets more familiar with the service to determine whether it would be useful.

9.10 Council approved the draft budget 2025-26, previously circulated.

9.11 Council considered the precept for 2025-26 against the budget. Council agreed to set the budget at £46.805. This will result in an annual increase of £13.06 for a Band D property, or 25p/week. This will

cover the increase in the pavilion energy and maintenance costs and fund projects, including resurfacing the Village Hall carpark and repairs in the play area.

25/010 Consider the legislation around the gov.uk domain for website and emails

Cllr Howells reported on progress adopting the gov.uk domain. Using gov.uk requires compliance with relevant guidance from the National Cyber Security Centre and this applies both to email and webpages. Other legislation applicable to Parish Councils must also be complied with. Website has an accessibility statement. We have considered the Accessibility Regulations, and we have adopted the Accessibility Statement accordingly.

We have adopted the cyber security procedures outlined by the Cabinet Office as the standard.

25/011 Update on highways and footpaths

11.1 The bike shelter is being progressed. There are a number of snagging issues which need to be resolved before the final invoice (40% cost) will be paid.

11.2 No update on the Community Speedwatch Group and additional traffic calming signs.

11.3 Nothing to report on the VAS data. No data has been downloaded. The lower VAS is not working.

Action: Clerk to report to the supplier.

11.4 There are a couple of damaged stiles in the parish. Action: Clerk to find out who the landowners are and report the damaged stiles.

25/012 Consider maintenance of Parish Council owned land

12.1 Cllr Matt Peters had circulated a report in his absence.

Both pavilion toilets now have new flooring laid. A few other fittings to be added shortly - commercial bins and paper dispensers. The shop is requesting more chippings on the track as dirt is being tread into the shop.

Shop sales for December were £8,157 (2023: £8,803)

Sales ytd £81,550 (2023: £79,707) Note that Christmas close was for a longer period this year.

December expenses include volunteers Christmas meal cost of £549. There is a profit year to date of £1,422. Cash end December 2024 £28,703 with outstanding creditors of around £1,600. December paid hours were 136.5 (Nov. 173.5, Oct. 182.0)

12.2 Update on GCC ash dieback. An application for 2500 has been submitted by the HPC. Action: Cllr Waller to contact the GCC Ash Dieback officer to detail when and where the whips/trees will be delivered.

25/013 Consider Policy updates

- Biodiversity Policy – in progress. HPC need a budget for it. Lots of grants, initiatives. Action: Clerk to circulate draft review as not all councillors had seen it.
- IT Policy – previously circulated. Free training on security is available from the National Cyber Security Centre and all councillors should look at it. Cllr Howells proposed the policy is adopted, Cllr Thomson seconded, all agreed.
- Financial Regulations – updated NALC financial regs. Allows for less than 3 quotes if the contractor is a specialist. New procurement act. Approve 2 signatories for PC bank payments. Cllr Howells proposed the new regulations are adopted, all agreed.

25/014 Councillor items for future discussion

Cllr McDonagh reported she is on the committee for the church repairs. The 3in1 boiler has packed up. The dioceses do not want you buy a new boiler, must go green. They have relented and the school is to pay. Alternatives should be in place by June 2027, eg heat pumps, Solar panels, etc.

Clerk asked for confirmation on the meeting dates for 2025. Council agreed to have a council meeting in August but not to meet in July or December. Clerk to update the website.

25/015 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 25th February 2025 in the Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 9:26 pm

Chair's signature..... Date