

Minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2025 in Huntington Community Centre commencing at 7pm.

PARTICIPANTS: Councillors J Newman (Chairman), C Benton (Vice Chairperson), P Wetton, J Ashley, B Lester, M Tym, M Thompson, R Bailey, S Tunas Bana, (Mrs) D Davies and (Miss) A Smith (19.12).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs L McClymont (Clerk), and 7 members of the Public in attendance.

38/25) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mr D Wheatley (Finance Officer), Cllr David Williams – County Councillor
Noted

39/25) PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Littleton Frier – Thanked the Parish Council for supporting and objecting to the Planning Application for a car sales showroom which would see an end to their business.

Friends of Littleton Colliery Thanked the Parish Council for providing a lovely Memorial Garden and keeping the mining history alive. They proceeded to provide members with a full and informative presentation of their proposal to raise funds to install a memorial to those who died underground at Littleton Colliery. The proposal consisted of 3 options and the Friends of Littleton Colliery group would prefer the 1st option of a mounted plaque on the base of the wheel, this would mean removing a plaque that is already in situ. The artist took members through the 3 options explaining fully what each memorial would be made of and the size, design, and positioning.

They group confirmed that they would raise all the money to fund the installation, and they would come to an agreement about the Parish Council becoming responsible for the ongoing care and maintenance of the structure going forward.

Cllr Ashly proposed holding a site meeting to discuss the project on site in the hope of understanding the 3 different proposals fully.

Friends of Littleton Colliery explained they have formed a project group, opened a bank account and they really needed approval for the project to go ahead before starting to raise the funds needed. The project could be between £5,000 and £15,000 depending on which project is approved so there is considerable work to be done

Cllr Lester proposed that the Parish Council make an agreement in principle to allow the group to progress the project. This was seconded by Cllr Thompson and agreed by all members.

The Chairman confirmed that there would be a site meeting to consider the options and identify the best option. This would then be brought back to the April meeting to discuss and agree which option the Parish Council would support in the Memorial Garden. It was agreed to hold the meeting on Saturday 22nd March at 10am

Mr Follows Inglewood Investments – Apologised about the recent issues with noise made by the contractors working on the tree removal on his land. The contractors had worked late due to the reported high winds and in the interest of safety to remove trees that would have been unsafe in high winds.

Noted

40/25) CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ANY OTHER AGENCIES PRESENT

The Chairman took members through his written report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman informed members that Dennis Silvester had submitted his resignation as a Parish Councillor. Members approved the recruitment poster for circulation. The Clerk reminded members that the vacant position does need to be advertised properly via South Staffs in the first instance, but we do already have one vacant seat.

Noted

41/25) COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT - CLLR DAVID WILLIAMS

Cllr Williams was not in attendance and had not supplied a written report.

Noted

42/25) DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT

Cllr Ashley took members through his written report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Members accepted the report as written. The Clerk did clarify that the regulations around allowances did change a few years ago and there is a requirement for an independent review, South Staffs offer the services of their independent review panel.

Noted

43/25) MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON THE 13th FEBRUARY 2025.

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th February 25 had been circulated for members consideration. Cllr Tunas Bana proposed that the minutes be approved and signed as a true and accurate copy. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and all members unanimously agreed.

Resolved

The minutes of the Parish Council held on 13th February 24 were approved as a true record of the meetings and were signed by the Chairman.

44/25) MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising that would not be covered by an agenda item.

45/25) FINANCE

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Salaries for March 2025	£ 4,874.53	
NEST Pensions - March	£ 278.22	
HMRC (PAYE/NIC qtr. to 31/3/25)	£ 2,121.91	
Cropper Grounds Maintenance (Feb)	£ 672.49	
H. Caulfield (phone - March)	£ 5.00	
St Giles Hospice (donation)	£ 300.00	
Design 380 Ltd (Web Hosting renewal)	£ 144.00	
D. Wheatley (stamps)	£ 27.20	
MSJ Plumbing (fit new water heater & gas safety check)	£ 690.00	
HAGS SMP (play area annual inspection)	£ 222.00	
TFM (patio cleaning fluid and white spirit)	£ 24.03	
The Works (Xmas event expenses)	£ 108.00	
Chase Alloys (aluminium for bus shelters)	£ 643.20	
L .McClymont expenses (Easter Event)	£ 130.44	
PJ Entertainments (deposit for Clown hire -Fun Day & Xmas Event)	£ 300.00	
TOTAL	£10,541.02	

DIRECT DEBITS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST MEETING

Coopers Waste	£ 88.49	
BT (Internet)	£ 70.74	
Microsoft (365 subscription)	£ 101.16	
Yu Energy (Electricity)	£ 120.78	
Yu Energy (Gas)	£ 538.80	
E-on (electricity)	£ 10.08	
TOTAL	£ 930.05	

INCOME FOR MONTH

TOTAL	£ -	

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

CURRENT ACCOUNT BALANCE	£33,619.34	
LESS PAYMENTS AGREED	£10,541.02	
LESS OUTSTANDING CHEQUES		
BALANCE IN CURRENT ACCOUNT	£23,078.32	
TOTAL	£23,078.32	

ON DEPOSIT

BUSINESS INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNT		
General reserves + interest	-£22,746.47	
Memorial Garden sink fund - per "recommendation"	0.00	
Community Centre sink fund	£ 12,502.08	
Leisure Park sink fund - per budget	£ 17,720.68	
Sports Ground sink fund - per budget	£ 10,560.57	
Bus Shelter sink fund - per budget	£ 4,956.80	
Election expenses sink fund	£ 16,258.38	
Play Area sink fund - per budget	£ 41,500.28	
Skate Park sink fund - per budget	£ 20,000.00	
Village Green sink fund - per budget	£ 12,127.89	£112,880.21
Total	£112,880.21	

a) Payments – The Clerk took members through the payments presented.

It was proposed by Cllr Newman that all payments are approved payment. This was seconded by Cllr Tunas Bana and agreed by all members. All payments approved.

b) Financial Statement – The Finance Officer took members through the Finance Statement. Members accepted the Financial Statement as presented.

c) Stand By Me Rent Request – Cllr Benton declared an interest and left the room. Members considered the request for reduced rental while getting established and it was agreed that this provision is needed in the community. Cllr Ashley proposed a reduced rental of £5 per week for 6 months (to the end of September). This was seconded by Cllr Tunas Bana and agreed by all members.

d) St Thomas' Church Grant Request – Cllr Ashley declared an interest and left the room. Members discussed at length the issue of supporting this request to fund the purchase of Christian-based books to all pupils in year 6. Cllr Benton proposed that the grant request is refused as we wish to keep Huntington Parish Council a secular organisation. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and at vote 7 members voted in favour. 2 members abstained to vote Cllrs Tym and Bailey.

e) Wednesday Craft Club Grant Request – Cllr Ashley declared an interest and left the room. Members discussed at length the request for £900 towards rental costs. Cllr Benton proposed that the grant application as it stands is refused and advise them to contact the owner to request lower rental cost. However, Huntington Parish Council would be prepared to offer a £50 Hobbycraft voucher for the group if that is what they wish. This was seconded by Cllr Tunas Bana and at vote 8 members voted in favour and 1 against.

f) Quotation VE Day Afternoon Tea – Members had been circulated with the costs of providing an afternoon tea from the VE Day 80th Anniversary celebration. Members discussed how reasonable the quotation from The Cabin Café was and that they were reliable and excellent quality last time we used them. However, there had been no interest in the event despite advertising for Veteran nominations. It is a national event with lots of other activities on the same day. Cllr Smith proposed that the VE Day 80th Anniversary Event be cancelled due to lack of interest and that The Cabin Café be thanked for their quotation. This was seconded by Cllr Tunas Bana and agreed by all members.

g) Quotation Fun Day Table Football – Members had been circulated with the detailed quotation to have qty 4 table footballs and associated equipment at the family Fun Day. Members felt that £1,750.00 was too expensive when the overall budget is only £3,000. Cllr Smith proposed that the quotation be refused, and we do not pursue. This was seconded by Cllr Newman and all members agreed.

Resolved

- That all payments are approved for payment as presented.
- That the Finance Summery report was accepted as presented.
- That a reduced rental of £5 per week is approved until the end of September for Stand by Me.
- That the grant request from St Thomas' Church for funding to provide a Christian-based book to all pupils in year 6 is refused.
- That the grant request for £900 for rental cost for the Wednesday craft club is refused, the offer of £50 Hobby craft voucher is to be offered if they would like it.
- That the quotation from the Cabin Café is refused due to cancelling the event due to lack of interest.
- That the quotation for Table Football be refused as too expensive for our event.

46/25) PLANNING

The following planning item has been received for consideration this month.

Planning Number 24/00902/OUTM	Application: Outline planning permission for up to 39 dwellings including access details and all other matters reserved	Address: - Pear Tree Farm Stafford Road Huntington CANNOCK WS12 4PE
Decision Consultation up 18 th March 25		
The Parish Council can see no planning reasons to object to on this application. Members agreed that the Clerk should contact South Staffs Planning authority to request some S106 money to improve public space such as the play park resurfacing project.		

47/25) CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence had been circulated via email and noted by members.

Date	From	Topic	Action
17/02/25	Stand By Me	Request to consider a reduced rental charge while the group is establishing.	Circulated via email discussed in Finance
25/02/25	St Thomas' Church	Request for grant funding to purchase books from the Scripture Union for the children moving on to secondary school	Circulated via email discussed in Finance
25/02/25	Moorhill Pre-School	Report of damage to a wall in the Community Centre by a child.	Handyperson has repaired. The nursery has been advised any bill will be sent to Moorhill nursery. Resolved That members agreed the cost of material £25 and labour £45 to be invoiced to the nursery. Proposed by Cllr Newman, seconded by Cllr Smith agreed by all members.
27/02/25	South Staffs Council	Details of Parish Remuneration Panel	Circulated via email
28/02/25	South Staffs Council	Proposed Local Government Re-organisation	Circulated via email
03/03/25	The Cabin Cafe	A quotation to provide an afternoon tea for the VE Day Anniversary Event	To be discussed in Finance. Event cancelled due to lack of interest.
10/03/25	Table Football Plus	Quotation to attend Family Fun Day	To be discussed in Finance. Agreed too expensive.
10/03/25	Jacquie Tranter	Request for grant funding for craft club at the scout hut	Circulated via email discussed in Finance
10/03/25	Dennis Silvester	Resignation of position as Parish Councillor	

48/25) COMMUNITY CENTRE

Cllr Newman took members through his written report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Members accepted the report as presented.

Noted

49/25) AMENITIES

- a) **Village Green** - Cllr Ashley took members through his written report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Members accepted the report as presented. Members discussed the issue of rats in the area. The clerk reported the advice from the pest controller regarding the legal issues with using rat poison in public areas and the fact that while residents continue to put food

out the rats will stay in the area. For treatments to work the food source needs to be removed permanently and the rats will go away. Contact had been made with the housing association who believe there is no issue with food being put out. Cllr Ashley agreed to contact the Housing Association regarding the food being left out by residents.

- b) **Littleton Leisure Park** – Cllr Wetton took members through the report he had written which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Members accepted the report as presented. Cllr Ashley reported he had received comments regarding flag not flying. Cllr Lester agreed to speak to the secret flag society. Cllr Wetton reminded everyone that the biannual site meeting will be held on Sunday 6th April at 10 am meet on the car park.
- c) **Sports Ground** – Cllr Lester took members through the written report he had written which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Members accepted the report as presented.

Resolved

- a) That Cllr Ashley will contact the Housing Association regarding the food being left outside their properties.
- b) Noted.
- c) Noted.

50/25) PUBLIC EVENT

Cllr Smith took members through her written report which had been circulated. Members accepted the report as presented. Cllr Newman confirmed that he was unable to purchase a reasonable rabbit costume for the Easter Egg Hunt, members agreed the mascot was too expensive and agreed there would be no Easter Bunny mascot at the event. As agreed earlier the VE Day 80th Anniversary Event has been cancelled due to lack of interest, Cllr Tunas Bana agreed to put the information out on social media to inform the public.

Noted

51/25) COCKSPARROW LANE ROCK STAR STABLES SIGNAGE

Concerns were raised at the positioning of some new signage for Rockstar Equestrian Stables along Cocksparrow Lane. The signs are sighted close to the edge of the road and are lower than normal road signs and are dangerous for cyclists as they could hit them. The Clerk requested photos of the signage to send to County Highways to investigate if they have been installed with the appropriate permissions.

Noted

52/25) ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT MEETING.

Members were reminded agenda items and supporting reports need to be emailed to the Clerk the week prior to the meeting to be included.

- Friends of Littleton Colliery Group – To discuss the site meeting

Noted

53/25) DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 10th April 2025, commencing directly following the Annual Parish Meeting in Huntington Community Centre.

Signed _____

Date _____

54/25) CONFIDENTIAL

Resolved

In accordance with section 1 of the public bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 the Council Resolved that the Public were excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

55/25) STAFFING

Cllr Thompson enquired if the subject was concerning the Ranger, which the Chairman confirmed it was about the post.

Cllr Thompson declared a personal interest and left the room.

The Chairman reported that South Staffs HR are continuing to support the Clerk with professional HR advice and guidance and confirmed that this case is continuing as a long-term absence with no identifiable return date. Therefore, Cllr Newman proposed that approval be made for steps to be taken to employ a temporary Ranger to cover the duties, the current contract hours are 31 hours. This was seconded by Cllr Tym and unanimously agreed by all members present.

Noted

There being no further matters for discussion the meeting was closed by the Chair at 22.21

Signed _____

Date _____