

## **HARBERTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Ordinary meeting of Harberton Parish Council  
at 7.30pm on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at Harberton Parish Hall

### **In attendance**

#### **Harbertonford Councillors**

Cllr Beamish: Present  
Cllr Bowley: Apologies  
Cllr Davies: Present  
Cllr Palmer: Present  
Vacancy  
Vacancy

#### **Harberton Councillors**

Cllr Camp: Apologies  
Cllr Hambly: Present  
Cllr Paine: Present  
Cllr Morris: Present  
Cllr Williams: Apologies  
Vacancy

#### **Others**

D.Cllr McKay: Present  
C.Cllr Hodgson: Present  
Clerk Ms Radford: Present  
Members of the Public: 13

### **Public Session**

Residents are invited to give their views and question the Parish Council on issues on this agenda or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the Chairman, before the start of the Parish Council meeting. Members of the public may not take part in the Parish Council meeting itself.

- i) A Member of the Public (MoP) asked if any progress had been made in convening a multi-agency meeting, as it is now a year since parish residents were affected by flooding. The C.Cllr responded to say that the Devon County Council flood risk team will be compiling a report for the community and discussion on holding a meeting is ongoing. The C.Cllr suggested working with Sustainable Harbourne Valley to screen a film produced by the Environment Agency, and invite County Council officers to this. A request was made that Highways Officers joined that meeting as well as members from the Flood Risk team. The D.Cllr commented that following recent weather warnings, he is working with South Hams District Council (SHDC) to provide a reserve of sandbags that residents can access. A resident commented that the AquaSacs provided by the Parish Council were excellent and recommended these over sandbags. The D.Cllr confirmed that SHDC is looking into investing in Aquasacs also.
- ii) It was noted by a MoP that the farmer of the land above Screw Lane has completed flood mitigation works behind the northern hedgerow and along Screw Lane, and to a higher standard than expected.
- iii) It was noted that the C.Cllrs report has provided a number of links useful to residents who may be at risk of flooding.
- iv) The Clerk and Councillors were thanked for responding swiftly to requests from residents seeking Aquasacs.

### **Agenda**

1. **Apologies** were received as above. **It was RESOLVED** to sanction reasons for apologies given.
2. **Declaration of Interests**
  - 2.1. Register of Interests Cllrs were reminded of the need to update their register of interests if any had changed.
  - 2.2. Declaration of interests For cllrs to declare any interests (nature and scope) on items on the agenda.
3. **Reports** for information from:
  - 3.1. County Councillor Circulated a report by email that morning. The following matters were highlighted:
    - 3.1.1. Requests for waiting restrictions Any requests for any new waiting restrictions (double yellow lines) need to be requested in early September 24. The Parish Council was asked to let the C.Cllr know ASAP if it would like any requests to be submitted for consideration for the 2025/26 financial year.
    - 3.1.2. Divestment of Devon County Council's (DCC) pension fund The C.Cllrs motion to withdraw investments from companies selling arms to Israel has been deferred to December. It was commented that there would be time for the Parish Council to pass a motion in support of the C.Cllr's motion if it wishes.
    - 3.1.3. 20's plenty The C.Cllr is keeping pressure up on DCC to change policy to make 20's plenty standard.
    - 3.1.4. Greater Horseshoe Bats It was reported that following a reduction of a significant roost of Greater Horseshoe Bats in the Buckfastleigh area, work is taking place to establish the situation and to ascertain if the bat population has relocated in response to predators. The C.Cllr asked the meeting if they had seen an increase in the bat population elsewhere in the area. A cllr responded that there was a large population in the Bowden Pillars area.
  - 3.2. District Councillor
    - 3.2.1. Dartington Hall Trust The D.Cllr reported that he is part of a group looking at local supply chains. Dartington Cider Press is involved in a project that the Council is looking to seed fund. SHDC is supporting Schumacher College with its business plan, following the Trust's decision to close the college.
    - 3.2.2. South Hams Festival It was noted that a lot of queries have been raised on how the company producing the festival will work with Parish Councils on the development of the festival in which it is envisaged that a range of activities across the District will be co-ordinated to take place between 12<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2025.
    - 3.2.3. Royal England Prosperity Fund It was reported that organisations or businesses can receive grants for £10,000 if they can match it with £10,000.
    - 3.2.4. Sustainable South Hams Symposium The D.Cllr encourage Parish Councillors to attend the symposium as the purpose is to help Parish Councils know what they can do to support sustainability. There a budget of approximately £80,000 available to fund climate change and biodiversity related projects which is underused.

- 3.2.5. South Brent Woodland It was reported that land has been purchased with funding from DEFRA to create a community woodland facility, including agroforestry and a community kitchen garden.
- 3.2.6. Neighbourhood Plan It was noted that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is being changed to relax the use of onshore wind. It was commented that the South Hams District is unlikely to benefit due to the high number of conservation areas and problems with connecting to the National Grid. The D.Cllr shared his perspective that the priority for the District should be photovoltaics (PV) and is pressing for there to be fewer barriers in the way for installing PV on roofs. It was suggested that reference to installation of PV could be made in the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan, and village halls and community halls could be encouraged install PV. It was also noted that the new formulas imposed by the NPPF to calculate house building targets is likely to increase the current target of 550 homes to 850.

#### 4. Minutes

- 4.1. **It was RESOLVED** to sign the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Harberton Parish Council on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024 as an accurate record, with some minor amendments.
- 4.2. **It was RESOLVED** to sign the minutes of the EGM (Planning) of Harberton Parish Council on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2024 as an accurate record, without amendments.

#### 5. Report Matters Arising from the Minutes *Not otherwise on the agenda and for information only*

- 5.1. Harberton Devon Air Ambulance clearance area sign (Clerk) Ongoing.
- 5.2. Snow Warden registration and training (Clerk) Ongoing.
- 5.3. Parish Lengthsman (Clerk) It was reported that the Clerk has been in touch with one of the local lengthsman, also a Councillor of Strete Parish Council, who agreed to consider providing a quotation to undertake a condition assessment of the buddle holes in the Parish. No response has been received as yet. The Clerk has also been in touch with a local resident who expressed some interest in undertaking some lengthsman duties, who would require some training. The local Lengthsman was asked to consider being shadowed by someone interested in taking on duties in Harberton. Conversations remain ongoing. It was noted that the Parish Council would need to consider an approach to payment for training, and any requirements for ongoing commitment to the role should that investment be made.
- 5.4. Emergency Directory (Cllr Paine/Clerk) Ongoing. **ACTION: Cllr Paine** agreed to draft copy for circulation via the village email list calling for residents to suggest 5 things that would be helpful to share with others in case of a flooding emergency. This could include information you would have liked to have known in advance, having now experienced flooding in your property, information you didn't know before that could have been useful, or prevention information that could have benefitted the community.
- 5.5. New Parish Council Bank Account (Clerk) Administration around identity checks for signatories is ongoing.

6. **Co-option of Parish Councillors** It was noted that there has been some interest in one of the Harbertonford vacancies and nomination papers had been provided.

#### 7. Planning

- 7.1. Consideration of planning applications
- 7.1.1. 2025/24/HHO Householder application for extension to rear of property comprising single & 2 storey elements at Brock Hill House, Harbertonford. It was noted that the ground floor plan (existing and proposed) had been missing when this application was considered at the August meeting and an extension had been given to enable the Parish Council to review these plans. **It was RESOLVED** to make NO COMMENT on the application on the basis that cllrs believe the plans to be too basic on which to make a recommendation.
- 7.1.2. 2645/24/TPO T1: Oak Tree - Pollard just above first limb approx 8m high by removing dead crown, T2: Oak Tree - Remove one dead branch approx 150mm diameter from mid crown at 20 Jordons Brook Totnes (Follaton) **It was RESOLVED** to SUPPORT the application.
- 7.2. Receive a report on planning or appeal decisions Cllrs were informed of the following decisions made by the local planning authority:  
2552/24/ARC Application for approval of details reserved by condition 15 (Hard/ Soft Landscaping) to Planning Consent 1875/24/VAR at Moore Farm Barn, Harberton APPROVED
- 7.3. Receive a report on enforcement cases (for information only) A hard copy of the enforcement caseload was circulated amongst cllrs for information.

#### 8. Monthly reports

- 8.1. Finance Committee update No update. The next meeting of the Finance Committee is on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024.
- 8.2. Community Land Trust update It was reported that the CLT project is moving forward. The CLT has been asked to sign a memorandum of understanding with Hastoe. Hastoe has also asked the CLT to forward any CAD drawings produced by consultants.
- 8.3. Sustainable Harbourne Valley update It was reported that an Apple Day and a talk about bats is coming up in October, and a community bulb planting event planned for October. It was suggested by a cllr that the fruit corner and plants in Harbertonford Play Park could do with some tidying up.
- 8.4. Neighbourhood Plan update It was reported that the housing consultation period was extended to 18<sup>th</sup> August 2024 to encourage more residents to respond. Data from paper questionnaires were entered at two data entry meetings by members and observers of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Data was collated and raw results have been published on the Parish Council website. A work in progress summary has been shared

with the Parish Council for comment under item 10, before being discussed by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group next week. It was noted that Prana Simon had resigned from the committee. Several Harberton residents have expressed interest in joining the Steering Group, most of whom have been given a briefing by one of the current members and a reading list to help get up to speed with what's involved in the Neighbourhood Planning process and the history of compiling a plan in Harberton Parish.

- 8.5. Harberton Playing Field Association (HPFA) It was reported that the Clerk had been asked by the HPFA for a copy of the grass cutting contract with South Hams District Council. It was noted that there is no formal paperwork that lays out the cutting work order, and the Clerk had chased this with the District Council. It was commented by a representative of HPFA that having a cutting schedule is very useful when the playing fields are used for events. It was noted that the field had not been cut during August, apparently because the mower was broken. The D.Cllr agreed to follow this up, as it was agreed that it is reasonable for Parish Councils to have confirmation of the expected cutting schedule in the spring and to be able to reconcile this with the resulting invoice.
- 8.6. Harbertonford Play Area
- 8.6.1. Update from Harbertonford Play Area Action Committee (HPAAC) It was commented that the grass at Harbertonford play area has been cut twice a week, otherwise it gets out of control. It was reported that there has been quite a lot of involvement from members of the park committee in addressing the category B defects listed in the recent Allianz inspection report. This included replacing all the shackles on the swings, and repairs to the toddler spring. Plans are underway to reinstall the slide on the bank, siting it in a position to enable the creation of a second gateway when funds are available to purchase a second gate. In response to a query about fundraising it was commented that the funds in the bank account is dwindling and there has been no significant fundraising efforts. It was noted that Cllr Beamish had voluntarily cut back the brambles and nettles impeding the pathway running along the edge of the park to the school gate. This is an area with no clear responsibility for maintenance.
- 8.6.2. Update on lease A hard copy of the lease had been received. It was signed by the Chair and the Vice Chair and witnessed by a member of the public attending the meeting.
- 8.7. Clerk's update
- 8.7.1. TRAYE It was reported that the Clerk has been in touch with one of the TRAYE trustees with regards to funding for youth activities in the 2023/24 financial year. It was noted that TRAYE will be submitting an application to the Community Benefit Fund before the deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> September. The trustee had asked if it was likely that an application above the current maximum £1000 would be approved. It was agreed to respond that all applications are reviewed on their merits at time of application. **It was RESOLVED** to transfer the £1750 pledged to TRAYE immediately, along with the £152 that had been raised for TRAYE by children at Harbertonford Primary School and banked by the Parish Council in July. It was agreed that TRAYE should liaise directly with organisers of the Ford Fiesta event with regard to any funds that had been pledged by the festival's committee. It was agreed that the upcoming consultation on proposed increases to the 2025/26 precept in order to meet TRAYE's request for funding in the 2025/26 year could provide an opportunity for members of the public to respond to a call for fundraising for the shortfall in the current financial year.
- 8.7.2. District Council Play Area Agreement 2024/25 Cllrs are informed that the automatic renewal for the 12-month agreement with the District Council (first entered into in 2020) came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> September. The service, subsidised by South Hams District Council, includes: Public Liability Insurance in respect of the play equipment and safety surfacing, monthly inspections by qualified South Hams District Council Mobile Locality Officers, plus an annual engineering report (currently by Allianz). SHDC comments that for the vast majority of play areas, the cost of £235 + VAT per play area does not cover the cost of the Allianz inspection, without taking into account the other services included in this cost, so this remains a heavily subsidised service.
- 8.7.3. Landing Site Visits Cllrs are informed that the annual re-survey will take place at both Harberton and Harbertonford landing sites on 18<sup>th</sup> September. The re-survey is undertaken each year as part of Devon Air Ambulance Trust's (DAAT) requirements to ensure the continuing safety of helicopters, crew and patients and that nothing has substantially changed as far as any potential obstacles or height of trees, access etc. Local contacts for both sites have been informed by DAAT directly.
- 8.7.4. Pavement Licences The District Council has confirmed that its Estates department is currently issuing temporary table and chair licences until 31<sup>st</sup> September 2024 and Environmental Health Licencing Team will be issuing all table and chair licences from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 onwards. The D.Cllr has suggested that if the Parish Council wishes to object to seating in position outside the Church House Inn to contact Estates directly, copying in the D.Cllr. The Parish Council's standing orders were briefly suspended to enable comment by members of the public in attendance on their opinion on seating outside the pub. After discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council would not pursue an objection in reflection of comments made by the public in attendance.
- 8.7.5. Flooding in Harberton It was reported that the Clerk has exchanged correspondence with a resident of Mill Cross with concerns that re siting access to the fields at Screw Lane could increase the risk of flooding of properties at Mill Cross and impacts on Screw Lane. They expressed disappointment that they were not informed. Information was provided on why re-siting the gate was considered important and further contacts were provided. The Clerk notes the C.Cllr's efforts to engage County Council officers in attending a meeting at Harberton Parish, and will pursue this.

## 9. Tree Condition Report

- 9.1. Receive condition report and consider recommendations It was reported that a tree condition inspection had been undertaken at Harberton Playing Fields, Harbertonford Play Park and Harbertonford Football Club on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024 and the resulting report had been received and circulated to all cllrs. **It was AGREED** that the condition report be forwarded to Harberton Parish Hall, HPFA, HPAAC for information and to Harbertonford Football Club for consideration. Cllrs were reminded that whilst the Parish Council had agreed to pay for a condition assessment on the trees at Harbertonford Football Club, it accepted no responsibility for any works recommended by that report.

The report made the following recommendations on trees within the boundary of Harberton Playing Fields:

- Monitor Ash trees in Compartment 1 annually during summer months for Ash Dieback Disease.
- Consider through bolting union of the oak tree in Compartment 1.
- Check swing on ash going through dead branch in Compartment 2. Install cambium saver for rope swing.

The report made the following recommendations on trees within the boundary of Harbertonford Play Park:

- Crown raise low branches at park gate entrance up to 2.5 m from ground level. (In Compartment 1)

The work priority for all recommendations was low – works to be carried out within 12 months.

**It was RESOLVED** to send out an invitation to tender for works, in accordance with the Parish Council's Financial Regulations.

- 9.2. Consider request from neighbour re stability of mature sycamore at Harbertonford Play Park It was reported that a resident of Harbertonford neighbouring the park had written to the Parish Council regarding the mature sycamore the Harbertonford Play Park on the bank along the back of Marl Park gardens, described as 'a beautiful and healthy tree'. The resident requests that particular attention is given to the stability of this tree at the annual tree survey, given its height and proximity to the house. It was requested that work is done this winter to reduce back the length of the higher overhanging branches.

**It was RESOLVED** to reply to the resident with a copy of the Tree Condition Assessment as discussed above, in which it was noted that the sycamore is in health and no further works are required at the moment. The Parish Council would be amenable to the resident pruning the tree, if they were to bear the cost.

10. **Neighbourhood Plan Housing Consultation Draft Document** *To consider making comment on the first draft summary of consultation, and any considerations for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering group to take into account when formulating its proposed housing policy.* It was reported that members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (HNPSG) have completed a first draft of an analysis and summary of responses to the housing consultation which was circulated to cllrs with meeting papers. The following matters were noted:

- HNPSG will consider this document at its next meeting, approve the final version for publication, and use it as a basis for writing a proposed housing policy.
- The proposed housing policy will cover what site or sites to allocate for housing development in the Neighbourhood Plan, and with what conditions attached, with rationale including evidence on public opinion (ie the summary of consultation responses) and planning regulations/guidance.
- HNPSG hopes to submit the proposed housing policy to the Parish Council for discussion and approval in October.
- To support this process, the Parish Council is asked to provide comments on the consultation summary, and considerations for HNPSG to take into account when formulating its proposed housing policy.
- Whilst detailed and final decisions are not needed at this stage, two issues are worth noting:
  - Flood risk: The HNPSG is aware of the Parish Council's discussion of the work going on to develop an understanding of flood risks in Harberton village and possible mitigation. This work clearly will have implications for the Neighbourhood Plan, including the proposed housing policy. The HNPSG will endeavour to feed it into the NP as appropriate.
  - Winsland House: The HNPSG did not consider the site suitable for allocation and it was not included in the consultation questionnaire. There have been some discussions about allocation of the site at consultation events and at meetings of the HNPSG following advocacy of inclusion of the site by the landowners and developers.

Cllrs commented that they recognised the summary of responses to the housing consultation questionnaire were in line with their observations of views shared at the consultation events attended. It was commented that the Parish Council knows why the sites have come forward for inclusion in the plan, but perhaps members of the public do not. It was commented that it had not been explained at the consultation event that even if the site at Winsland House had been included, it wouldn't change the housing targets for the villages and that there needs to be a clearer explanation for members of the public interested in this. Cllrs commented that the HNPSG needs to be really clear about why certain sites have been chosen over others.

11. **Community Benefit Fund Guidelines** *To review the application criteria* A proposal had been made to review the application criteria for the Community Benefit Fund in view of the fact that the fund was diminishing, with the suggestion that the cap on maximum grants could be reduced in order to enable the fund to go further.

During discussion it was noted that many of the applications received are for the maximum grant amount, as applicants generally apply for the maximum amount available. It was commented that some organisations in attendance at the Annual Meeting of the Parish had commented that they would struggle without an annual application to the Fund. Cllrs queried what those organisations will do when the fund runs out, and is there a way to update the criteria to prepare organisations for when funding is not available.

It was commented that the current maximum cap could remain but that the Parish Council take a much tougher view when making its decisions on what projects it will fund. Comments were made on suggestions on tightening up requirements on demonstrating tangible benefits to the community, or tightening up qualifying criteria on which organisations could benefit and to fund what types of activities. An example was given that the fund could support specific projects, rather than in the administration of groups. It was suggested that a review could include the creation of listings of other avenues for funding, so that organisations eligible for other pots of funding could apply to those to match projects and alleviate the number of applicants to the Community Benefit Fund. **It was RESOLVED** that the Finance Committee be tasked to discuss this at its October meeting and bring back a proposal for the consideration of the Full Council.

12. **Financial Regulations Review\*** *Consideration of revised model regulations for adoption by the Council* Cllrs were reminded that the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) published an update to its model Financial Regulations in May 2024. It was agreed that the Clerk bring the new model document to the Parish Council, having compared the updated version with the Parish Council's current regulations. The Clerk had undertaken this review. It was noted that the new 2024 model Financial Regulations document is broadly similar to the previous model document last revised by NALC in 2019. The 2024 version is shorter and more streamlined, with statutory requirements now highlighted in bold and use of plain language making some clauses easier to understand. Many clauses are identical in wording and the Clerk was able to carry over 'either/or' options available in the model from previous regulations. Updates have been made in recognition that online banking is more common and tenders for contracts are often submitted electronically rather than by post. Some proposed regulations are new, but in most cases, the Parish Council's current practice complies and can be adopted without need for any changes. The Clerk had circulated the full Financial Regulations document with comments on each of the clauses, noting where they are the same, broadly similar or new, and if new, whether the Parish Council's practice complies. Any deletions that had been made to clauses in previous Financial Regulations had already been carried across. A two page summary sheet was prepared with specific points for consideration by the Council. The following resolutions were made:
- Clause 2.2: **It was RESOLVED** not to adopt this clause.
  - Clause 2.6: **It was RESOLVED** to carry wording from previous regulations, outlining arrangements for checking and signing bank reconciliations at the meetings of the Finance Committee.
  - Clause 3.12: It was noted that this clause clarifies that ensuring the competence of the Internal Auditor rests with the Council.
  - Clause 4.2: **It was RESOLVED** to update the date of review of the budget for salaries and wages from December to January to enable the Finance Committee to discuss at the January meeting. It was commented that it would also be advantageous for the Finance Committee to review the Clerk's Salary at the July quarterly meeting; this being the first meeting that falls after the anniversary of the Clerk's appointment (in May).
  - Clause 4.5: **It was RESOLVED** to adopt this clause, noting that it would only refer to the Neighbourhood Plan Committee at this stage.
  - **It was RESOLVED** to adopt the threshold amounts referred to the regulations as follows
    - Clause 5.6 *For contracts estimated to exceed [£60,000] including VAT*
    - Clause 5.8. *For contracts greater than [£3,000] excluding VAT*
    - Clause 5.9. *where the value is between [£500] and [£3,000] excluding VAT*
    - Clause 5.18: *the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to [£2,000] excluding VAT*
    - Clause 5.20 only requires a letter or official order to be issued for goods, works or services {above [£250] excluding VAT}.
  - Clause 6.6 **It was RESOLVED** not to adopt this clause, as the current practice of authorising each and every payment at monthly meetings is more streamlined.
  - Clause 6.7. **It was RESOLVED** not to adopt this clause, as the current practice of the chair signing the payment schedule at meetings is adequate.
  - Clause 7.1 **It was RESOLVED** to add the following wording at the end of the clause: *"Payments should be authorised by two councillors. In exceptional circumstances - where two councillors are not available to authorise payments - the Parish Council must resolve that the Clerk/RFO may be a signatory on the transaction in question and this resolution noted in meeting minutes."*
  - Clause 7.4: **It was RESOLVED** to update 'two signatories' to 'the signatories' to reflect current practice of emailing all signatories so that the first two available authorise payments.

- Clause 7.7: **It was RESOLVED** to remove reference to printing out evidence of online transactions, as evidence is held electronically instead.
- Clause 7.8 **It was RESOLVED** not to adopt this clause, as it duplicates the practice of including payments directly within the minutes.
- Clause 7.13. There was discussion on whether the current arrangements for security, anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software was considered adequate. **It was RESOLVED** to raise this question with the Devon Association of Local Councils.
- Clause 9.4 **It was RESOLVED** to set the maximum amount that personal credit or debit cards of members or staff can be used for expenses as up to £500. **It was RESOLVED** that the Clerk apply for a debit card for use as permitted under clause 9.1 It was commented that credit cards can provide more protection, if use is permitted.
- Clause 17.2. **It was RESOLVED** not to adopt this clause.
- Clause 19.1 **It was RESOLVED** to adopt this clause, noting that the Financial Regulations will be reviewed annually, and following any change of Clerk or RFO.

**It was RESOLVED to** adopt the 2024 Model Financial Regulations with amendments being made.

### 13. Correspondence

- 13.1. Temporary Traffic Order - Bluepost to Hazard, Hazard Cross to Fork Cross along ZC794, Fork Cross to Dorsley Barton & Dorsley Barton to Follaton Gate, Harberton, South Brent, Dartington, Totnes, Rattery, North Huish, Ugborough (TTRO2458579) *For information* Cllrs were informed of the temporary road closure in place between 14<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> October to enable patching works. A diversion will be in place.
- 13.2. South Hams bus service changes for 1st September 2024 *For information* Cllrs were informed that Stagecoach has given notice on the contract extension that provided additional evening journeys, funded by the Bus Service Improvement Plan grant from the Department for Transport. Due to the low number of passengers using these journeys, it is not possible to continue them. The following 92 Dartmouth – Totnes journeys are withdrawn: 2010 Totnes to Dartmouth journey. 2100 Dartmouth to Totnes journey. The bus will serve Dartmouth Park & Ride again. Additional journeys will operate between Dartmouth and the Park & Ride.
- 13.3. #34 2024 DALC E-Bulletin *For information* Cllrs were informed that this bulletin includes news that an eight week consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is underway and closes on 24 September. More information can be available here: [Proposed reforms to the NPPF](#).
- 13.4. Temporary Traffic Notice - Leigh Bridge to Broadpark Stile, Harberton TTRO2459043 *For information* Cllrs were informed of a temporary road closure in place from 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024 to enable drainage works.
- 13.5. #36 DALC E-bulletin *For information* Cllrs were informed that this bulletin includes information about DALC's annual AGM, conference and exhibition 10am – 4pm on Weds 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024, costing £50 plus VAT per person which includes access to all sessions, workshops, and networking opportunities.
- 13.6. Agenda item for September Support for Climate and Nature - Symposium 11th Oct *For consideration* Cllrs were informed that Sustainable South Hams, working with South Hams District Council is asking Town and Parish Councillors for feedback on what hampers Parish and Town councils from taking more action for climate and nature and what tools would be useful to help overcome these barriers. Collated feedback to responses to the questionnaire will be presented at a symposium on 11th Oct at Follaton House. As well as exploring what hampers action, Sustainable South Hams will showcase a wide range of solutions to help Parish and Town councils take more action for climate and nature, both from mitigation and adaptation perspectives. Any parish/ town cllrs who have not yet provided feedback were encouraged to complete this [short questionnaire](#). Cllrs interested in attending the Symposium at Follaton House on 11<sup>th</sup> October can [register for a free place here](#). **ACTION: Cllr Morris** agreed to complete the questionnaire and consider attendance to the event.
- 13.7. South Hams Festival *For consideration* Cllrs were informed that following the briefing about the South Hams Festival on 25<sup>th</sup> July, questions had been raised concerning the extent of the town and parish councils' involvement and contribution. A paper has been prepared setting out the offer for support and participation which was circulated to all cllrs for information. The paper indicated that SHDC is offering support for the development of creative and cultural activities in each town and parish across the District which will enable local groups to participate. At this stage all that is required from the town and parish councils is for each to provide their support for the festival together with a pledge to make the financial contribution of either £2,500 for town councils and £500 for parish councils and this be included in budget to be set for 2025/26. Payment will not be required until the next financial year. During discussion some cllrs thought that Parish Council should provide support and make the suggested financial pledge. There was some queries about what met the criteria for the capital grants that were available through the District Council, what level of support was being offered and how much work this could create for the Clerk and members. **ACTION: The Clerk** will make contact with the event producers to discuss these queries and bring back to the Council for discussion at a future meeting. The C.Cllr commented that some Parish Councils are applying to the D.Cllr for a £500 grant from the Sustainability Fund to contribute to the Festival. It was also commented that it is likely the Festival will be a topic of conversation at the upcoming 'Support for Climate and Nature Symposium' in October.
- 13.8. #38 DALC E-bulletin *For information* Cllrs were informed that this bulletin includes a link a new round of 'Being a Good Councillor' online training for councillors, available from September.

- 13.9. Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Places 2024 - South Hams *For information* Cllrs were informed that the District Council is carrying out a review of Parliamentary polling districts and places and the opportunity is also being taken to review the polling stations. This is not a review of the parish boundaries; this process is to review the polling places for each polling district within parishes. The District Council would like to hear from those people who are happy with their polling station as well as those who are not in order to have a balanced view to consider. No proposed changes have been made for Harberton Parish. More information is available here: <https://www.southhams.gov.uk/elections-and-voting/statutory-review-polling-districts-and-places>
- 13.10. #39 DALC E-bulletin *For consideration* It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk book a place on training advertised in this bulletin that covers new rules of the Procurement Act 2023, which comes into force on 28 October 2024 and replaces the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The session covers the basics of procurement for local councils – inviting quotes, producing specifications and tender documentation, achieving competition and value for money. Training costs £35 plus VAT.

## 14. Finance

### 14.1. Annual Audit

- 14.1.1. Receive outcome of 2023/24 External Audit It was reported that the External Auditor has completed its review of the Parish Council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and has written to the Parish Council to provide the External Auditors Report and Certificate, a completion letter, a Notice of Conclusion template and fee invoice.

The Clerk reported that the External Auditors Report and Certificate notes the following error in the completion of the return: *The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review. The Council has confirmed that it does not act as sole managing trustee for trust funds and thus the answer given this year in Section 2, Box 11 (a) is incorrect and should be 'No'*. The Parish Council noted this error. The Clerk will ensure that the correct box is ticked on the 2024/25 Return.

The Clerk confirmed that that to comply with The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234) the following requirements have been met: on conclusion of this review a 'Notice of Conclusion of Audit' has been prepared, which details the rights of inspection, with the statutory requirements. This notice was published, along with the certified AGAR (Sections 1, 2 & 3) on the 10<sup>th</sup> September on the Parish Council's website, and will be posted on notice boards on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024. This is before the statutory deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> September. In addition, copies of the AGAR will be kept available for purchase by any person of a reasonable sum and Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the published AGAR will remain available for public access for a period of not less than 5 years from the date of publication.

- 14.1.2. Consider 2024/25 Internal Auditor arrangements It was reported that the Parish Council's internal auditor had written to inform the Parish Council that he is significantly reducing the number of smaller Parish Councils that he works with in order to reduce his workload. The Parish Council must therefore find a new Internal Auditor for the 2024/25 financial year. The Clerk will request quotes from at least three auditors for consideration by the Parish Council at a future meeting.

### 14.2. Notice of income and expenditure since last meeting.

- 14.2.1. Having signed off payments at the previous meeting, the following updates were noted:

- Payment 2407\_2 to Cat Radford: Receipt for printing costs was 40p more than noted on payment schedule.
- Payment 2407\_4 to Harberton Parish Hall: The Parish Council overpaid the invoice by 70p. The account is therefore in credit and 70p can be taken from the next invoice .
- Payment 2407\_7 to Prana Simon: Actual costs of gaffa tape was 50p more than the estimate given.
- Payment 2407\_9 to HMRC Shipley was £4.96 more than estimated.
- Payment 2407\_11 to HMRC Shipley was £4.96 more than estimated.

- 14.2.2. The following reimbursements as signed off by the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had been paid in between meetings:

- Payment 2407\_16 to Prana Simon as reimbursement for stationery materials with respect to the Neighbourhood Plan housing consultation event= £29.48 no VAT.
- Payment 2407\_17 to Peter Cogley as reimbursement for 50 croissant for HNP consultation = £19.50 no VAT
- Payment 2407\_18 to Sally Lougher as reimbursement for the cost of refreshments for the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Housing Consultation event = £24.79 no VAT
- Payment 2407\_19 to Alex Crow as reimbursement for the cost of black and white photocopying = £1.20 no VAT
- Payment 2407\_20 to Jem Friar as reimbursement for the cost refreshments/catering and use of Eventbrite for Neighbourhood Plan Housing Consultation event. = £18.99 no VAT

### 14.3. To consider payments as per the September payment schedule

- 14.3.1. Payment 2409\_1 to Cat Radford, payslip dated 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2024 includes Clerk Sept salary £518.27, Neighbourhood Plan Sept Salary at £59.80 and overtime payment 3 of 3 at £328.90 = £906.97 no VAT

- 14.3.2. Payment 2409\_2 to Cat Radford, Clerk expenses claim dated 5<sup>th</sup> Sept 2024 for mileage at £5.85, and broadband for September at £7.50 = £13.35 no VAT
  - 14.3.3. Payment 2409\_3 to Dartforest Tree Works inv C690 to undertake a ground based visual tree assessment of significant trees growing within Harbertonford Play Park, Harbertonford Football Club and Harberton Playing Fields, and produce a report at £575 plus £115 VAT = £690
  - 14.3.4. Payment 2409\_4 to PKF Littlejohn LLP inv 20240240 for limited assurance review of Annual Governance & Accountability Return for year ended 31 March 2024 at £210 plus £42 VAT = £252
  - 14.3.5. Payment 2409\_5 to Harberton Parish Hall for hall hire 10<sup>th</sup> September = £13.00 no VAT
  - 14.3.6. Payment 2409\_6 to South Hams District Council invoices 22317358 and 22317456 for Annual insurance and inspection fee for Harberton and Harbertonford play areas at £470 plus £94 VAT = £564
  - 14.3.7. Payment 2409\_7 to TRAYE, includes £1750 donation from Parish Council for the 2024/25 financial year plus transfer of £152 as donation from Harbertonford CE Primary School children, banked by the Parish Council to transfer to TRAYE = £1902 no VAT *Grant made under the Local Government Act 1972 s137.*
- 15. E-Circulars for information** include Citizens Advice South Hams, Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency, Devon Communities Together, Devon County Council Community News Round-up, Devon Home Choice, Emergency Planning newsletter, Green Lanes Environmental Action Movement (GLEAM), Harberton Village Email, Healthwatch Devon, Information Commissioners Office, One Devon NHS Integrated Care Board, Parish Online, Rural Services Network, SLCC Membership, South Hams Society.
- 16. Matters at the discretion of the Chairman**  
Bamboo planter on Moreleigh Road It was noted that the resident had been asked to move the planter from the drain cover. In response, the resident showed the damage that had been made to the side of the house and drainpipe by cars. The suggestion to put the planter on blocks to allow water flow has not been acted upon. It was commented that should there be further queries or complaints, they should be passed on to Highways to pursue.
- 17. Date and location of next ordinary meeting** Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

The meeting was closed at 21:32