

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HINXWORTH PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
THURSDAY 1st DECEMBER 2011 IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.00 PM.**

Present:

Mr L. Whitfield (Chairman)
Mr A. Cullen
Mr D. Osmond
Mr E. Sore
Mr P. Watler
Mrs W. Kitchener (Clerk)

Other Persons Attending: Tony Hunter Hertfordshire County Councillor, Ken Barnett Village Resident.

6. Highways: The Councillors agreed to bring this item forward.

The Chairman then asked Tony Hunter to address the meeting for an update on the Highways situation. Tony outlined Hertfordshire Highways finance and spending plans for the current year 2011/2012. Funds are still tight and there has been a lot of juggling of monies to fund the current Highways programme. Each County Councillor has been allocated a £10K local budget. The Joint Members panel has been down sized thus freeing up £90K for each County Councillor to allocate to structural projects. Hinxworth is one of the three chosen Villages to benefit, £26K has been allocated for the strip patching, planing and skimming of the road surface in the High Street. This will take place in Spring 2012. Additionally Tony has a £25K budget for other local issues plus £10K towards the Olympic Games. Tony was also pleased to notify the Councillors of the availability of a salt allocation for each Village this winter of 850 kg's. He provided the Clerk with the contact name at H.C.C. Finally he was pleased to notify the meeting the final tranche of H.C.C. funds that were deposited with the defunct Icelandic bank is about to be repaid.

Questions raised:

Ken Barnett who has campaigned for the resurfacing of the High Street for a number of years asked what area of the High Street is to be repaired. Tony expects it to be the area with the most potholes but this specific information has not been decided yet. With the Highways budget in mind Ken also asked Tony if he knew what funding H.C.C. are proposing to spend on the "Abbey Flyer" rail project between St Albans and Watford. In his opinion such funds would be better spent on the Highways within the County. Tony will follow this up as at present he has no knowledge of the project.

The Chairman thanked Ken for attending and he left the meeting at 7.20pm.

The provision of the salt allocation was then discussed and the Councillors agreed to apply for the 850 kg's in 34 number 25 kg bags. They will ask for volunteers by areas within the Village to collect the salt from a central distribution point. **Wendy Kitchener to arrange for the salt to be ordered from H.C.C.**

Paul Watler asked Tony for confirmation that the gritting lorry will continue with the current arrangement to continue the gritting "run" from Hinxworth High Street through to the Dunton Road. Tony has no reason to believe this arrangement will be changed.

The Chairman thanked Tony for attending and he left the meeting at 7.35pm.

1. Minutes of the last meeting: The minutes of November 3rd were accepted as a correct record and

signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Andy Cullen and seconded by David Osmond.

2. **Matters arising not elsewhere on the Agenda:** Nothing to report.
3. **Correspondence:** (Available on request).
4. **Finance:**
 - **Current Parish Council Funds:** The Councillors agreed to sign the cheques for the current month's expenditure, (list available on request) proposed by Les Whitfield and seconded by Andy Cullen. The current income and expenditure figures were distributed at the meeting.
 - **Risk Assessment:** The Council has been advised by BDO to provide an updated risk assessment. **Paul Watler to action. Held over to next month.**
 - **Precept 2012/2013:** The budget as compiled by the Clerk was agreed by the Councillors. They agreed unanimously the Annual Precept 2012/2013 is to remain at £10370 for the seventh consecutive year. **Wendy Kitchener to notify N.H.D.C along with a copy of the approved minutes to N.H.D.C.**
 - **The N.H.D.C Rural Pot:** £1K has been received from this fund to be allocated to the provision for the hardstanding area by the bottle bank. **Paul Watler is trying obtain three competitive quotes for the work.**
 - **Election Expenses:** The Council received an invoice on November 17th for £565.91 for the May election expenses. The invoice for the 2007 election was for £166.27. The Councillors agreed Andrew Young should be notified as it is their intention not to pay the £565.91. **Wendy Kitchener to write to Andrew Young.**
5. **Planning:** Nothing to report.
6. **Highways:** See above.
7. **Village Hall:** The Parish Councillors agreed to write to the Village Hall Management Committee to convey their thanks for a very successful Village Supper held on November 19th. An all time record sum of £3000.00 was raised on the evening. **Wendy Kitchener to notify the V.H.M.C.**
8. **Recreation Ground:** Nothing to report.
9. **The Tennis Court:** To be held over to the January meeting.
10. **Allotments:** The Councillors are concerned over the lack of communication with and response from HAG. **Andy Cullen is going to speak to HAG about what communication is required between HAG and the Parish Council.**
11. **Any Other Business:**
 - **North Herts Association of Parish Town and Community Councils:** Wendy Kitchener has been a member of the working party to bring all the groups as detailed together to broadly encourage co-operation between member councils for their mutual benefit. It is hoped group arrangements will also help to reduce costs. To date the annual inspection of Hinxworths Childrens Play Area has benefited from a group contract reducing the cost from £66.00 per annum to £47.50. To date there is a programme in place to try to get all of the groups signed up so the association can go ahead. The Councillors agreed to Hinxworth being a member of the Association.
 - **The Notice Board in the Pub Car Park:** It has been brought to the Councillors attention the inside glass requires cleaning. As always Margaret Patten has agreed take on the task on this occasion. Many thanks Margaret.
12. **Date of the Next Meeting:** Thursday January 5th 2012 at 8.00 pm in the Village Hall. The meeting closed at 8.20 p.m.