

Notes of the Meeting of
Harmston Parish Council
 at The Memorial Hall, Harmston
 on Tuesday 21st January 2025 at 7.30 pm

Present	Title	Role
Cllr Paul Wallace	Parish Councillor	Chairman
Cllr David Harrison	Parish Councillor	Vice Chairman
Cllr Brian Hamilton	Parish Councillor	
Cllr Phil Chapman	Parish Councillor	
Cllr Barry Smith	Parish Councillor	
Cllr Graham Robson	Parish Councillor	
Mrs Helen Jones	Clerk & RFO	Clerk & RFO
Cllr Ian Carrington	Councillor	County Councillor
Cllr Matthew Cooper	Councillor	District Councillor
Cllr Lance Pennell	Councillor	District Councillor

OPEN FORUM – 15 minutes held before meeting commenced.

There were no residents in attendance.

1/1 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Parish Councillor Hamilton submitted his apologies, and his reasons have been accepted.

Parish Councillor Kevin Goodwin has resigned his position. The Chair has on behalf of all members and the clerk, passed on thanks for his contributions to the Parish Council, and wishes him well.

2/1 CO-OPTION

- a) To discuss new applications and vote. An application was received and it was **RESOLVED: Mr Graham Robson become a Parish Councillor for Harmston.** Councillor Robson was welcomed by the Chair.
ACTION: Clerk to share training dates with new councillor, T/D: 30.9.24
- b) Newly elected Councillors to complete mandatory forms. Cllr Smith completed and signed the necessary forms, enabling him to then take part in discussions and votes. *ACTION: Clerk to submit the forms and keep a copy on file, TD: 5.2.25 ACTION: Clerk to share training with GR & BS when the new training schedule has been received from LALC, T/D: once received*

3/1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Full list is available to view on <http://harmston.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/>

Cllr Chapman declared for items 9a, 9b and 9C.

Cllr Robson declared for item 10b.

It was agreed that both councillors could remain in the meeting for the stated items, but that they not take part in any votes where needed.

4/1 REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES

- a) Local Police No report received.
- b) County Councillor Report Cllr Carrington extended an invitation to our newest and existing members of Harmston Parish Council, to attend a County Council meeting.
 LCC budget has been set with a 3% increase. Budget is out for consultation on the website, and Cllr Carrington encourages residents to respond.
 LCC continue to commit money and resources to the Relief Road, and are continuing to push the Government for their contribution (which has been put into question following the general election).

They hope to start works at the end of 2025 and complete in 2028. A form may be delivered to each home – Cllr Carrington urges residents to complete it and respond.

With regards to the sub-station – Cllr Carrington explained that if NKDC refuse (and they would need to have sound planning reasons to do so), then the National Grid will then look for another site locally.

Flooding recommendations will be published Jan/Feb 2025.

- c) District Councillor Reports Cllr Pennell explained that there is a 3% increase on 2025-2026 budget, as the government have requested all County and District councils use all available funding as the govt will not be supplementing them

Sleaford market place has been repurposed and reopened.

Cllr Peter Burghley of Bracebridge Heath passed away over Christmas and a by-election is to be expected.

New Chief Exec commenced in new role on 1.2.25.

Cllr Cooper had nothing to add.

5/1 TO APPROVE THE NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was **RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 19th November 2024 were approved, and signed** by the Chair.

6/1 CLERKS REPORT

1. Christmas installation organised and lights added
2. Christmas event prepared and held (leftover mulled wine donated to HYF)
3. Christmas event readvertised
4. Quote requested for removal and disposal of Christmas tree – neither can provide this service
5. Quote for noticeboard restoration and outstanding play area repairs requested
6. Preparations for precept and budget setting for 2025-2026 carried out
7. Meeting with Chair to create budget ahead of January meeting
8. Alternative quotes for Payrolls services researched
9. Savings accounts with current bank researched
10. Re-installing light on Chapel Lane investigated
11. HMH contacted and outcome shared re pledged grant of £2,000. Requested letter submitted to HMH.
12. Cllr Carrington and LRSP emailed again re A607 crossing concerns. No response as yet from LRSP
13. LALC notified of outcome of vote taken re audit agreement and form submitted
14. Articles submitted to Graffoe Link and Harmston Matters for January 2025 editions
15. Play area equipment manufacturer chased for response – still no response as yet
16. SpID battery received and delivered to Chairman
17. HYF asked re maintenance to Orchard on the field – unfortunately there is no one available to do this currently
18. Cllr Carrington and concerned residents contacted re new brighter lights on HPA. Still no response from LCC
19. Highways and Cllr Carrington emailed regarding obtaining an additional salt bin and location for it. No response as yet from Highways
20. Scams shared by Cllr Cooper added to HPC website and FB page
21. All actions set for the Clerk at the last meeting have been carried out

NB: Please remember this report only lists some of the main actions, and not all actions carried out by the Clerk

7/1 FINANCIAL MATTERS

- a) To consider the Financial Overview to date for 2024-2025 (emailed) It was **RESOLVED: That the Financial Overview be accepted.**
- b) To consider the VAT report to date, for January 2025 It was **RESOLVED: That the VAT Report to date, be accepted** Appendices 3
- c) To consider the Financial Report for January 2025 It was **RESOLVED: That the Financial Report for September, Part A be accepted** Appendices 1
- d) Monies to be paid Invoices of pending payments were checked against proposed spend, and it was **RESOLVED: that the Financial Report, Part B for January 2025, be accepted and for the Clerk to make these payments** Appendices 2
- e) Approve donation to Salvation Army This was agreed at November's meeting.
- f) Discuss and agree payroll fee It was **RESOLVED: That the new payroll fee of £8 per payslip be accepted** (£1 increase on the £7 fee which has been paid for the past 2 yrs)
- g) Discuss and agree Clerk suggested pay increase from NALC Chair recommended that the NALC guidance be followed, and it was **RESOLVED: That the clerk's hourly rate be increased from £12.36 to £13.26 per hours (as per the scale), and pay be back dated to when new scale was agreed by NALC. ACTION: Clerk to contact payroll and instruct them of new hourly rate, and ask them to back date and pay accordingly. T/D: for March payday (if too late for February's).**
- h) Discuss and agree opening a savings account It was **RESOLVED: That the clerk open a notice savings account with £10,000 ACTION: Clerk to open notice savings account, T/D: 28.2.25**
- i) To agree budget for 2025/2026 The Chair and Clerk worked through the proposed budget (with projected figures based on year end projected spend for 2024/5 and cost of living %) with the Parish councillors. The expense code amounts were all agreed and it was **RESOLVED: That the total budget for 2025-2026 for Harmston Parish Council be set at £19,814.**
- j) Agree on precept figure for 2025/2026
It was RESOLVED: Budget spend: £18,714.46
Income £660.00
Precept claim: £18,054.46 (£5.57 increase for the year with total council tax amount of £62 per household being claimed (2024-2025 - £56.00).
- k) Clerk to complete and sign precept form The precept form was completed and signed by the clerk and checked by both the Chair and Vice Chair. **ACTION: Clerk to submit precept form by Friday 24.1.25**

8/1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a) **TREE WORKS** None
- b) **PLANNING** None

9/1 VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

- a) To discuss quote re HPA noticeboard and agree actions Quote now expected by our next meeting on 27.2.25. **ACTION: Clerk to add this to February's agenda. T/D: 24.2.25**
- b) To discuss play area quotes and agree actions Quote now expected by our next meeting on 27.2.25. **ACTION: Clerk to add this to February's agenda. T/D: 24.2.25**
- c) To discuss play inspection report and agree works required New inspection report has been received, showing the play area to be in a good state of repair, with only very minor works being required. **ACTION: Clerk to liaise with handyman to ascertain works needed, and request quotes. T/D: 24.2.25**

10/1 STREET LIGHTS AND ROADS

- a) To discuss Chapel Lane light and agree actions Following email from residents, **It was RESOLVED to start the process of re-installing the street light on Chapel Lane. ACTION: Clerk to speak to National Grid and E-ON to start the process of re-installing the light.**
- b) To discuss HPA lights and agree actions Currently 2 streets are in total darkness after midnight on Harmston Park. This was a county council decision, where they have been gradually reducing the hours of lighting over the past few years. Some lights are turned off at midnight, and some are not. Some residents have concerns that the car thefts and burglary that occurred over Christmas on these two streets are linked to the streets being in darkness.

The parish council had been informed they could request the lights to be turned back on. The Chair investigated this. This is an option - there is a cost, and the Police and residents would need to be consulted. However, this would not prevent Lincolnshire County Council from then turning lights off on another street in the village.

Cllr Carrington had been contacted regarding this, and he has asked for Police information regarding the crimes committed in the specific streets. Evidence is essential.

ACTION: Clerk to ask our local Police for Police Reports and evidence, and to ask if the Police have identified a casual relation between the crimes and the lights being switched off. T/D: 10.2.25. Such evidence would help in having the lights reinstated.

ACTION: Clerk to 'cc' Cllr Carrington in all emails regarding this issue. T/D: ongoing. Cllr Carrington has offered to help find a solution.

ACTION: Clerk to email LCC and ask why these particular streets were selected, and what are the mechanisms for changing this decision. T/D: 10.2.25

The Chair shared further details re the process/charges of the Parish Council turning lights back on which Lincolnshire County Council have chosen to turn off (from midnight), and what information LCC would require:

Process and charges

- Cost of £300.00 per light, £150.00 within a maintenance period
- All lights on a street selected have to be turned on at the same time, with the £300/£150 per light charged

Information required by LCC

- Number of lights on each specified street
- Statement from Parish Council explaining that the Police, residents and local businesses have been contacted and consulted; impact on businesses if lights turned back on
- Map showing the location of lights

A leaflet drop was considered in order to gauge residents' opinions. *ACTION: GR and Clerk to draft a leaflet, T/D: 27.2.25*

It was agreed a map of the streets where the lights have been switched off, with the streetlights clearly shown, and the positions of where thefts happened would be helpful. *ACTION: GR and BS to create a map, with locations shown, T/D: 27.2.25*

11/1 DATE FOR NEXT MEETING *It was RESOLVED that the next meeting of Harmston Parish Council will be held on Thursday 27th February 2025* at the Memorial Hall, Harmston, at 7.30pm, as opposed to the previously published date of 18.2.25. *ACTION: Clerk to confirm change with HMM, T/D: asap.*

There being no further agenda matters to discuss the meeting was closed by the Chair at 10.24pm.

Please be advised that these are notes of the meeting taken by the Clerk and cannot in any way be regarded as the official minutes.