

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL HVRA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT 7.30PM ON TUESDAY, 2 MAY 2023 IN THE SMALL HALL**

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

WELCOME

Peter was pleased to welcome everyone and thanked them for coming out on a lovely sunny evening when they could be busy in the garden.

PRESENT

Peter Spence (Chairman)	Andrew Capey (Vice-Chairman)	Paul Woodford (Treasurer)
Rosemary Hewitt (Secretary)	Jill Armshaw (RR & HPC)	Peter Cannon
Catherine (Cacs) Hinds	Janet Howe	Angus & Janet Idle
Jerry Morley	Brenda Morris	David Mynors
Nancy Pomfret	Becky Rycroft	Kate Messenger (School)
Michael Sole (Village Hall)		

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Jane Boughton, Elaine Merrilees and Louise Jones.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 APRIL 2023**

As AI believed items were missing from the 7 March and 4 April Minutes, the Minutes of the last meeting were not signed as a true record, and accordingly they will be held over until the next meeting when AI will raise the items.

AI

3. **VILLAGE SUMMER FETE – SATURDAY, 15 JULY**

As a member of the organising team, PW reported on the promotional items for the event. The **Save The Day** flyer and programme are both intended to go to all properties in the catchment area, delivered, ideally, by the Road Reps. The flyer will be printed next week and available for delivery mid-May. After that, the next message will be within the magazine, scheduled to be delivered 7 – 8 July when a programme will have been produced, the same size as the magazine.

Road Reps
Flyer
Mid-May

Jane Birkenhead will be selling raffle tickets, going door to door. She will have a team and to please get in touch with her if you wish to help. Contact details to follow.

Raffle
Tickets>JB

JNP are supplying the advertising signs; 2 large ones going at the top of Cryers Hill and at the top end of Warrendene Road. There will be 10 smaller signs, and please get in touch with PW if you would like a sign to attach to your fence etc. Kate Messenger agreed to have one at the school. A large banner will go up in front of the Village Hall from 1st June. MS to check with the Football Club who put theirs up from 24th June.

PW>KM
MS>HFC

JA reminded PW to get in touch with the Parish Council to seek permission to erect the signs.

PW>HPC

4. **PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

a) **INTRODUCTION** – PS wanted the discussion to be about the documents that accompanied the Agenda.

1. **Does the HVRA have any issues impacting adversely on its future?
Succession of Officers? Where will they come from?**

He recognised that a gap in activities had been caused by the pandemic, but in his discussions with residents and neighbours etc, they are unsure what the HVRA is for and what we do. Inside our circle of friends, they may know but those outside do not. The perception is that the HVRA reacts to residents' individual issues but is not pro-active in leading village affairs.

2. **If the answer to the above question is Yes, what are these issues?**

PS believed there are structural weaknesses in the set-up of the HVRA as it is democratically deficient to have 4 elected Officers and Road Reps who are not elected but automatically become part of the Committee. There is a feeling, on his part, that younger residents, say, less than 65, do not wish to engage with a group of older people. There are deficiencies in the way we communicate with them, and we need to debate these issues.

3. Identify and discuss potential solutions.

Is there a difference with the Association from what you want it to be?

Change the name of the Association? PS accepts that there are issues about this. He asked what it would mean to the rest of the village? "Perhaps that something is going on here and I want to know more."

He is trying to introduce subtle differences to the Association e.g., to remove the onus on Road Reps to do more. There are a number of Road Reps who do not turn up to meetings and there are Road Reps who don't want to turn up to meetings. This should be addressed by modernising our communications and doing it in a different way.

4. Map out a way forward

PS wanted "indicative votes" to take place. MS, KM and LJ do not have a vote at HVRA Executive Committee Meetings. He needs to get some idea how the group feels because it is the group who will take things forward, not him.

b) DISCUSSION – ALL

MS – Do we have issues going forward? Probably. He believed that many of the residents who settled here in the last 10 or 15 years would not know about the HVRA, believing it's only the older residents who do. We need to explain it by promoting the profile of the Association.

Promote Profile of HVRA

RR: As a Road Rep she believed it was difficult to explain the purpose of the Group.

RH believed the Welcome Letter given to newcomers would help and will be even better when we have a Welcome Pack.

RH/Welcome Pack

PS referred to a Mission Statement and read out the Aims & Objects of the HVRA which are very good.

RR believed it was a big onus on Road Reps to have to explain this, and she questioned that it is a lot for a Road Rep to be expected to do, especially new Road Reps.

BM has 4 new members who have received the Welcome Letter, 5 people who do not want to join the HVRA because they are not interested, although she puts the magazine through their letterboxes.

JA thanked **PS** for providing this opportunity to discuss these issues, adding that the HVRA has clear Aims & Objectives but to have a Mission Statement you have to hold yourself to account.

Initial questions she would ask are: *What would success look like? What do we want to achieve?* Only when we have clarified this can we change our direction. The role of Road Reps does require discussion and we need more taking part in the management of the group.

JI believed **JA** was an example of someone who was involved with the HVRA when she was young, went away and has come back. She believed we should remember that.

AC: There was a huge momentum 50 years ago when there were some large and very clear objectives then – it's a little vaguer now because we don't need to build a Village Hall or create a playing field.

PC mentioned that potholes have been repaired – It is some success, whether it's down to individuals or Bucks Council or the Parish Council. He had looked at the Aims & Objectives of Gt Kingshill RA which are very similar. He suggested a strap-line - **A collective voice for the majority**. The 500 members of the RA have more weight than one member, and definitely more clout regarding planning applications, speeding and complaining about the state of our roads.

Strap line

c) SUCCESSION

Chairman: We are not engaging with the younger generation.

There is a democratic deficit. We need more Officers. Presently there are 4 – we are the Executive. We need someone in charge of communications, someone formally in charge of the magazine, an events person. But for the Potter Quiz it was RH and PS; for the AGM it's RH and PS. A larger core Committee is needed to be involved < e.g., 1 person to cover Road Rep co-ordination, 1 person to cover communications & publicity and 1 person to cover events etc. If he was setting up a village Association today, he would do it in a different way, asking: **What is the vision for what we do?**

JA remarked that she had never come across so many RA's before as here in Bucks, and suggested the *Hughenden Valley Community Association* as an alternative that would naturally encompass Bryants Bottom, Church Farm and Cryers Hill Road.

CH has 5 new families in her road, and she believed we should ask residents **What would you like the RA to do and look like?** As a street party for King Charles' Coronation will be held in Cherry Tree Close, she will take the opportunity to ask them. Other members agreed with this approach.

JI believed Road Reps do a lot and she and Angus keep in contact with their neighbours – a baby next door, 2 deaths in the road. Basically, if the Road Reps are not there, there would be a great loss. **RH** had informed them that an elderly lady living in Coombe Lane, recently bereaved and very lonely, needed company and within 3 hours contact was made with her and help will be available from the Church.

PS agreed that Road Reps play a very important part in village life.

AI queried **PS**'s statement "**democratic deficit**" because it is definitely written in the Constitution that the Officers and the Road Reps are the Executive Committee, and that this ethos goes back to the setting up of the HVRA and formulating its Constitution and is set out in a 1948 Covenant.

The starting point: The Executive Committee of 4 Officers and all the Road Reps. To have more Officers they would need to be elected by the members.

BM believed a lot of Road Reps already do as much as they can. The amount of work that she does is considerable, and she cannot do more.

MS agreed with **AI** about the wording of the Constitution, adding that the skills we are seeking can be defined and then we can co-opt other members.

JA: Widmer End RA have changed their membership criteria, ie everyone who lives in their geographical area is automatically a member and there is no fee. Funding comes from grants and other activities that result in community engagement. She asked – What is our membership? Do we pay?

JI: The money we ask for from the Parish Council is for the magazine.

JA responded that a condition of the grant is that the magazine goes to all residents in the catchment area.

**Magazine to
all residents**

RR agreed that it is a very good point about being inclusive. She is not very keen collecting subs and there is no reason to join if there is a way to include everyone – it would be more inclusive for the community. Her concern was where are the people coming from to run all these fund-raising activities? **RH** expressed concern that volunteers are hard to come by.

PS: We need to engage with younger people, e.g., the people who are organising the Fete.

PW responded that the membership of the HVRA who pay the £5 sub is @ 75% of all households, and this has remained consistent over the years.

BM puts a note through residents' letterboxes to say, e.g., between 2 – 4 pm on a Saturday she will be collecting the subs. This works for her.

RH: Most of her residents who see her coming, ask if she wants some money for subs even when they are not due.

AI: We must not forget to ask: What is our reputation outside the area as our Road Rep system is recognised and admired?

JI: The lockdowns of the pandemic caused a lot of slow down in activities and groups. She believed we were looking at everything from a big pot/little pot and acknowledged that things have changed.

KM lives in Lacey Green where their magazine goes to every household, although residents are informed of the cost of producing it and are asked for a donation. If she were to have our magazine, she personally would donate more than £5.

PW: It costs approx. £1,600 to produce each issue of *Hughenden News*.

JH: A lot of the new younger residents do not want the magazine put through their letterboxes but would prefer to read it on-line.

JI: The Naphill Gazette is issued monthly, although not by NAWARA, and there is a digital version.

PS responded that **AC** and himself are working on this.

He also referred to the Climate Group members who could potentially be Officers and even join the HVRA Committee in the future.

Jl: mentioned re-introducing Coffee Mornings as a way of raising funds.

PS responded that the Coffee Shop next door is always very busy.

c) **SUMMING UP**

Chairman:

Some Issues: Identify where they lie.

How do we move things forward?

What do we do about it?

- Set up a Sub-Group outside this group and the explain to others their findings.
- The HVRA is such an important body and its future needs to be not in our hands but others.
- We need to do something different, or we do nothing.

**Set up
Sub-Group**

AC: We could have a survey in the magazine or on-line. The Parish Council have held surveys and the top priority is always Speeding traffic.

DM: We have had surveys in the past.

RR: Planning applications and speeding are not appealing in attracting new members.

PS attended the Annual Parish Meeting on 25 April when the biggest contingent was from Hughenden Valley. A survey was mentioned but still had not been published although **JA** believed the results were on-line.

MS was disappointed that only 2 out of 10 Councillors were present along with 24 members of the public.

He liked the idea of the HVRA being inclusive and to include Bryants Bottom, Church Farm and Cryers Hill Road residents. We need to look at the methods of funding. i.e., the grant from the Parish Council plus other doors to tap to get funds. We need to improve the organisation and have free membership.

**Methods of
Funding**

AC: We could have the magazine on-line, with hard copies for those who require them to cut the cost – let's look 10 years ahead.

MS: Monthly events could be held to raise funds, e.g. a Cinema Night

Jl: There is a £7 charge for the Naphill Gazette,

d) **VISION**

Chairman: This is where we want to be and this is how we get there.

AI reminded everyone that we are all volunteers.

PS asked who was on board?

MS expressed his keenness.

PS: To leave it with him to get a group together.

JA: It's evolution, not revolution.

At the end of the discussion the Chairman thanked everyone for their involvement. He will now put together a sub-group to take this matter forward.

[NOTE: Four of those present offered to join the sub-group which will begin to prepare recommendations to be considered by the Executive Committee. It will be made up of PS, AC, MS, JA and RR. Others may be added.]

**PS/
Sub-Group**

5. **AOB**

Wycombe Wildlife Group are holding their AGM on 19 May at 7.45pm in the Village Hall for those interested.

The meeting closed at 9pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

The next meeting will be the AGM on Friday, 12 May at 7.30pm.

The next Executive Meeting will be Tuesday, 6 June at 7.30pm.